

PDF-Version of the Commentary (Doctoral Thesis)

Propositions for Unfinished Thinking: The Research Score as a Medium of Artistic Research

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Colophon

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Propositions for Unfinished Thinking: The Research Score as a Medium of Artistic Research

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Acta Scenica 59, 2020

ISBN: 978-952-353-026-3

ISSN: 2242-6485

PUBLISHER: University of the Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy, Performing Arts Research Centre

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Abstract

This research exposition presents the process and results of the author's doctoral research at the Performing Arts Research Centre of the Theatre Academy at the University of the Arts Helsinki, and is the final written part—the *commentary*—to fulfil the degree requirements. The research tackled the division between embodied and conceptual modes of reflection – a problem that is considered a key challenge for research into performer training. Crafted around Body Weather performance training, the research explored the epistemic potential of a touch-based body practice called the Manipulations, and engendered the transformation of this practice into a medium of artistic research—the research score—which is both the main method and outcome of the research. In the commentary, the research score is considered to be a way of facilitating unfinished thinking that dissolves the division between physical practice and conceptual reflection, and which enables a shift from a representational towards a post-humanist performative model of knowing. Unfinished thinking is not the property of an individual, intentional, agential subject, but emerges from within an expanded network of inter-corporeal relations; it expresses thought without uncoupling language from its affective tonality, and it defies definite statements. The commentary covers a broad range of theoretical considerations on embodiment, materiality, (bodily) knowledge, technique, and reflection, and thus contributes to the debate on the epistemology and methodology of artistic research. Combining analytical and descriptive forms of scholarly writing with performative modes of experimental writing, the commentary expands the format of academic dissertation writing and offers new knowledge to the fields of dance (research), performance (research), performer training, and artistic research.

Artistic research; Body Weather; dance (performing arts); performer training; embodiment; knowledge; embodied reflection; experimental writing; research score; unfinished thinking.

Tiivistelmä

Tässä kirjallisessa työssä esitellään kirjoittajan väitöskirjatutkimuksen tulokset ja tutkimusprosessin kulku, ja se toimii samalla tohtorintutkimuksen tutkintovaatimusten viimeisenä, kirjallisena osana – *kommentaarina*. Tutkimus on tehty Taideyliopiston Teatterikorkeakoulun Esittävien taiteiden tutkimuskeskuksessa, ja se pureutuu kehollisen ja käsitteellisen reflektion välillä yleisesti tehtyyn jaotteluun – käytäntöön, joka muodostuu merkittäväksi haasteeksi esiintyjäkoulutusta käsittelevässä tutkimuksessa. Väitöskirjatutkimus perustuu pitkälti Body Weather esityskoulutukseen, ja siinä tarkastellaan *manipulaatioiksi* kutsuttujen, kosketukseen perustuvien kehollisten käytäntöjen episteemistä potentiaalia. Näistä käytännöistä kootaan taiteellisen tutkimuksen väline—tutkimus-score—josta muodostuu sekä tärkein tutkimuksessa käytetty menetelmä että sen merkittävin tutkimustulos. Tutkimus-score esitellään kommentaarissa tapana, joka edistää keskeneräisiä ajatusprosesseja ja tekee turhaksi jaottelun fyysisen toiminnan ja käsitteellisen reflektion välillä. Score mahdollistaa myös representaationaalisten tietomallien korvaamisen posthumanistisilla, performatiivisilla malleilla. Keskeneräistä ajattelua ei pidetä työssä yksittäisen, intentionaalisen ja agenttiivisen subjektin ominaisuutena, vaan se nousee esiin kehonvälisten suhteiden laajennetusta verkostosta: siinä ilmaistaan ajatuksia tavalla, jossa kieltä ei eroteta sen affektiivisista sävyistä, ja näin ollen sitä on vaikea tarkoin määritellä. Kommentaarissa käsitellään kattavasti kehollisuutta, materiaalisuutta, (kehollista) tietoa, tekniikkaa ja reflektiota eri teoreettisista näkökulmista, ja tällä tavoin se muodostuu osaksi taiteentutkimuksen epistemologista ja metodologista keskustelua. Tieteellisen kirjoittamisen analyttiset ja kuvailevat muodot yhdistyvät kommentaarissa kokeellisen kirjoittamisen esittäviin tapoihin. Työ monipuolistaa täten akateemisen väitöskirjan toteuttamistapoja ja tarjoaa uutta tietoa tanssin (tanssintutkimuksen), esityksen (esityksen tutkimuksen), esiintyjäkoulutuksen ja taiteentutkimuksen aloilta.

Taiteentutkimus; Body Weather; tanssi (esittävät taiteet); esiintyjäkoulutus; kehollisuus; tieto; kehollinen reflektio; kokeellinen kirjoittaminen; tutkimus-score; keskeneräiset ajatteluprosessit.

Acknowledgements

The incipience of my doctorate reaches back far before joining the doctoral program in 2011. Training and performing with Body Weather Amsterdam between 2002 and 2009 created the grounds for my doctoral research, and I am greatly indebted to Frank van de Ven and Katerina Bakatsaki for sharing their knowledge, as well as the many practitioners I was able to work with at this time, especially Ailed Izurieta, Ema Nik Thomas and Milou Veling. From 2007-2009, I joined the first cohort of the Artistic Research Master Program at the University of Amsterdam; the MA studies were key in giving a direction to my desire to unite academic research and artistic practice, and I am particularly grateful to Henk Borgdorff for the significant theoretical impulses that he gave to my own research and the emergence of the field of artistic research as a whole.

Throughout the years of my doctorate, the pedagogical and research input as well as the administrative support I received from the staff of the Performing Arts Research Centre were overwhelming and beyond any expectations. I want to thank Annette Arlander, Annika Fredriksson, Elina Raitasalo, Esa Kirkkopelto, Hanna Järvinen, Hanna Westerlund, Isto Turpeinen, Kay Lehtikoinen, Kirsi Heimonen, Kirsi Rinne, Laura Gröndahl, Leena Rouhiainen, Pilvi Porkola, Riita Pasanen-Wilberg, Siiri-Maija Heino, Stefano de Luca, Teija Löytönen and Tuija Kokkonen. The knowledge and expertise of the other doctoral candidates at the department was a huge source of learning and growth. Thank you Outi Condit, Simo Kellokompu, Tuuja Jännicke and Vincent Roumagnac in particular for generously sharing not only the issues concerning your own research, but also your feedback about the research of other colleagues. I deeply appreciate the commitment of everyone else working at the Theatre Academy and your efforts to serve the students' growth and development; during my doctorate there was not a single moment when a request for help would have been rejected. Thanks also to Anna Estarriola and Julius Elo, and their partners, for generously hosting me during my regular trips to Helsinki.

For the development of my research—and for its methodology—my participation in, presentations for, and exchange of ideas at conferences, symposia, meetings and festivals were highly useful. I want to thank the Theatre

Academy Helsinki and the Performing Arts Research Centre for their travel grants that allowed my participation at these events, as well as the people behind the following organizations:

ADiE (Artistic Doctorates in Europe)
Body IQ Festival/Somatische Akademie Berlin
Colloquium for Artistic Research in Performing Arts
Conference Series on New Materialisms
Festival for New Dance and Performance (Ehkä/Turku)
German Dance Congress
German Society for Dance Research
Hollo Institute
Institute of Philosophy/Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic
Interdisciplinary Colloquium SCIENCES COGNITIVES ET SPECTACLE VIVANT:
Langages, Émotions, Communication
International Platform for Performer Training
Nordic Forum for Dance Research
Nordic Summer University
PSI/Performance Philosophy
Society for Artistic Research
Society for Dance Research (UK)
Summer Academy for Artistic Research
Tanzfabrik Berlin
Theatre Academy Helsinki
Zodiak Helsinki

The collaborative research for the second artistic part in 2016—made possible by a generous production grant from the Performing Arts Research Centre—was one of the highlights of my doctorate. It was a huge pleasure to be able to work with Josh Rutter, Outi Condit, Paula Kramer, Riikka T. Innanen and Tashi Iwaoka. The short but intensive collaboration with these artists was crucial to enable my research to show its mettle.

The journal articles written during the course of the doctorate helped to sharpen the conceptual articulation of what is at stake in my research. I want to thank:

- Undine Eberlein, for inviting me to contribute to her anthology *Intercorporeity, Movement and Tacit Knowledge* (2016), and to the publisher Transcript, for the permission to reproduce this contribution, entitled *Modes of Knowing in Body Weather Performance Training*.
- Mary Paterson, for editing the special issue *Showing and Writing Training* (2016) of the journal *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training*, and the

publisher Taylor & Francis, for the permission to reproduce my article *Writing with Practice: Body Weather Performance Training Becomes a Medium of Artistic Research*.

- Daniela Jobertová and Alice Koubová, for editing the anthology *Artistic Research: Is There Some Method?* (2017), and for the permission to reproduce my contribution *No Solutions: The Research Score as a Medium of Artistic Research*.
- Outi Condit, especially, for co-editing the issue *Poetics of Writing* (2017) of the online journal *Nivel*. My article *To Call that 'Writing?'* was prompted by one of our discussions during the collaborative research for my second artistic part.

I am indebted to the Ella & Georg Ehrnrooth Foundation for supporting my doctoral thesis with research grants (2012-2014), as well as to the Performing Arts Research Centre for the allocation of Research Associate positions (2015-2018) that enabled me to carry out my research and to complete the commentary (2019).

My heartfelt thanks go to Christine Quoiraud, Frank van de Ven, Katerina Bakatsaki and Viviane Duvergé, for sharing their experiences and personal views about Body Weather, as well as for their feedback on the manuscript. Le Centre National de la Danse cordially provided me access to the archive of Christine Quoiraud. Contemporary Arts Media in Melbourne granted me the permission to use two images by Serge Tampalini from his work *Butoh - Body Weather Farm, A Personal Insight to the Work* (Contemporary Arts Media, Melbourne, Australia. Copyright 2009. www.artfilms-digital.com).

Many thanks to my pre-examiners, Dr. Jaana Parviainen and Dr. Peter Snow, for their insightful and helpful comments about my artistic parts, as well as about the pre-publication version of the commentary. My colleagues from AREAL_Berlin—Andrea Keiz, Bettina Mainz, Crosby McCloy, Katja Münker, Paula Kramer, Sabine Zahn and Susanne Martin—collegially supported the evolution of my research at various moments of the process by sharing their feedback, both about practical elements as well as on pieces of writing. Zoe Goldstein edited my

non-native English and thus made the text part of the commentary much more readable and understandable. Tero Heikkinen provided vital technical and editorial support for the publication on the RC.

The creation of the commentary was far more challenging than I ever expected and took me to my personal limits. My deepest thanks go to my supervisors, Erin Manning and Leena Rouhiainen, for guiding me through this time with all their patience and persistence.

Finally, I want to thank my partner, Dagmar Frohning, for going with me through all the ups and downs, and for standing by, time and again, with advice and encouragement.

June 2020
Joa Hug

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Introduction

Research Approach

This research exposition presents the process and results of my doctoral research at the Performing Arts Research Centre of the Theatre Academy at the University of the Arts Helsinki. My artistic research is crafted around Body Weather, a comprehensive approach to training and performance developed by the Japanese avant-garde dancer/choreographer Min Tanaka and his entourage from the late 1970s. Initially, the aim of my investigation was to articulate the impact and epistemic potential of the so-called Manipulations, a duo hands-on practice based on yoga, shiatsu and acupuncture, and one of the core elements of the training. In the course of my research, my focus shifted, however, from the Manipulations to the main practical method of my investigation, the so-called 'research score'. The research score is a modified solo version of the original duo practice, and combines the physical re-creation of the experience of receiving the Manipulations with the concurrent expression of thoughts and observations.

The focus in this commentary is on tracing the evolution of the research score, from a method of embodied reflection in and on the Manipulations into a medium of artistic research. This account is a necessarily partial and fairly idiosyncratic (re-)construction of a process of research and knowledge-making that inevitably leaves open many questions. For example, despite the fact that up to now there is still relatively little scholarly research about Body Weather,¹ from the outset the aim of my research was not to take an art historical approach and to make a contribution to the field of dance history, but to focus on a specific part of the training, the Manipulations, and to explore the epistemic potential of this practice from the perspective of artistic research.

For this reason, I have dedicated some attention to the origins and philosophical foundations of Body Weather (Chapter One) and to the Manipulations (Chapter Two and Chapter Three) in order to contextualize my undertaking. My proposed

¹ Notable exceptions, and important references in my research, are the PhD theses by Snow 2002 and Fuller 2016. For a concise introduction to Tanaka's work, see Fuller 2018.

contribution, however, consists less in creating knowledge *about* Body Weather, than in indicating the knowledge potential of continued experimentation and artistic research *with* this particular approach to performer training. The subject of my research, and of this commentary, is thus not Body Weather per se, but the exploration and unfolding of the Manipulations' epistemic potential in the course of its transformation from an artistic medium into a medium of artistic research (Chapter Four). Furthermore, for reasons that are discussed in Chapter Five and Chapter Six, the approach that I have taken towards the research was not to first create a coherent theoretical framework and then to apply a pre-fabricated system of concepts to my own practice as a method of knowing, but instead to draw on diverse theoretical resources as a means to further my understanding of the practice.

This eclectic approach resembles more a kind of *tinkering* (Spatz 2017) with concepts than a systematic building of a robust theoretical method as a tool for analysis. Some readers may find it irritating that concepts are taken up and dealt with rather pragmatically, and often without the more detailed analysis they would surely receive and deserve in a more theoretical context. However, my take on artistic research does not strive for the same conceptual rigour as one would expect in the humanities or philosophy. In my understanding, the core task of artistic research is to create a *medium* of reflection, which *also*, but not *predominantly*, operates on a conceptual level of thinking in and through artistic practice. A medium of artistic research offers contact points (Elo 2014) for concepts to change and transform (Badura & Dubach 2015).

The aim of this commentary is to trace the evolution of the research score into a medium of artistic research, and to indicate its epistemic and performative potential *in relation to* concepts, rather than turning the practice into an object of conceptual thought. Concepts are considered mainly in terms of their capacity to connect to, and to co-articulate with, physical practice as a means of generating a kind of thinking that is unfinished (Borgdorff 2010).

Artistic Research into Performer Training

In the context of research into performer training, the duality between ‘practice’ and ‘reflection’ is seen as one of the central challenges. Being engaged and immersed *in* the training is typically understood to be incompatible with the action of documenting or reflecting *on* the training (Pitches 2011). By pausing and stepping back, the critically reflecting practitioner-researcher inevitably has to separate him- or herself from the practice, turning the latter into an object of thought that comes to be represented through language. On the other hand, the bracketing of language during practice is often seen as necessary in order to attain, and maintain, a state of immersion in the world of sensing. Thus, the action of non-verbal bodily reflection *in and through* practice is conceived as virtually incompatible with the action of critical linguistic reflection *on* practice. This separation of verbal and non-verbal modes of reflection into different action complexes (Brown et al. 2011) reaffirms the often-bemoaned gap between practice and language, and by extension the division between theory and practice, which artistic research is committed to challenge and overcome.

The epistemic proposition that I want to make with this research exposition is to consider the research score as a practice that questions the logics of this division. The research score is constituted by techniques that foreground the connectivity and relationality between modalities of reflection that are typically divided into separate action complexes. It explores how to co-articulate conceptual and non-conceptual modes of thinking without subordinating one to the other. It is a practice, I want to suggest, that has the capacity to bring thought to expression in a way that is sensitive to the ecology of experience from which language emerges, and which allows for the expression of the ineffable as that which also has its say in the articulation of discursive thinking and writing.

The research score is a proposition that addresses the problem of the separation between modes of doing and thinking, yet without making any claim to give a definite answer. Different from a statement, the question raised towards the proposition of the research score is not whether it is the ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ way to tackle this problem, nor is it a question of whether my account of it is ‘true’ or ‘false’, but whether the proposition of the research score as a practice of

unfinished thinking is more or less well-articulated (Latour 2004) – a question whose answer needs to be left to the reader.

Dissertation Writing and the Institutional Framework

A substantial part of the framework, within which this articulation has been able to find its written form, is provided by the official degree requirements of the Performing Arts Research Centre of the Theatre Academy at the University of the Arts (Uniarts) Helsinki, in which the written part that is required to obtain the doctoral degree is called the ‘commentary’. According to these requirements, the commentary is “aligned with the artistic parts, and it justifies the aims and methods of the doctoral research with respect to the research and practices of the field explored”. The commentary is further expected to “demonstrate an ability to analyze, articulate, conceptualize and theorize the artistic designs of research, and to contextualize these in ways that are characteristic of artistic research”. The degree requirements offer a range of possibilities for how the writing of the commentary can be realized. One of the options that are given is the format of “a web publication or other multimedial form”.²

The subject of ‘writing’ has been at the forefront of discussions in and about artistic research in recent years. Over time, there has been a shift in the debate from establishing the epistemic qualities of art to the question of how these qualities can be made known (Schwab 2012). Parallel to this shift, there have been attempts to re-define the frame of academic writing in the field of artistic research, and to extend the possibilities for exposing art as research (Schwab & Borgdorff 2014). With the development of the Research Catalogue (RC) as a platform for publishing artistic research, the horizon for writing research has been expanded, giving artist-researchers the possibility to re-negotiate the frame of academic writing in ways that suit the specific necessities of their projects. I happily accept the invitation articulated by the degree requirements, and embrace the opportunity offered by the RC, to write the commentary in the form of a multi-medial research exposition. At the time when I was deciding about

² Degree Requirements of the Doctoral Programme of Artistic Research in Performing Arts (2015-2020), University of the Arts Helsinki/Theatre Academy.

how to write and publish my doctoral research, in spring 2017, I was speculating that this format would be more appropriate to the specific qualities and needs of my research than the format of a book. I took the opportunity to write the commentary in the form of a research exposition as an incentive to continue, if only in a modest way, to experiment with the potential of the research score as it becomes transposed into the ecology of an enhanced digital publication format.

While I do not regret my decision, I must admit that the feeling of exposure that comes with this particular publication format makes me a little uneasy. I do not at all consider myself an expert in web design, and my technical means and skills continue to be very limited. The main reason for justifying the decision to work towards a web-based publication format has been my conviction, and a clear intuition, that this is what the artistic research process needs. The only way to be faithful to my own research, and to what I consider to be the goals of artistic research, is to allow myself to *not know*, and to bear the feelings of doubt and failure concomitant with the process of writing, and finally publishing, my doctoral research in the web-based format of a research exposition.

Body Weather

Chapter One outlines the points of departure for my research, and consists of two parts. The first part traces the origins of Body Weather's formation in the late 1970s and the foundation of Body Weather Laboratory in Tokyo in 1979. Drawing mainly on *Drive On* (Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980), a bi-monthly and bi-lingual (English/French) newsletter that served as the mouthpiece of Min Tanaka and his group, as well as on the recollections of practitioners who joined Body Weather Laboratory in Japan during the 1980s and 1990s, the chapter provides an outline of what I consider to be some of the main ideas that inform the philosophy of Body Weather, and which underlie its development into an approach to training and performance practice.

The notion of Body as a *medium* of Weather³ takes a foundational place in Body Weather's thinking, and it plays an important role, likewise, in the practice of the

³ I capitalize *Body* and *Weather* whenever I refer to these terms in a specific Body Weather sense, either as a concept (of *body*) or as a metaphor (of *weather*). In all

Manipulations, whose inception in the late 1970s is closely connected to the formation of Body Weather. Bodies are conceived as open and constantly changing entities. Weather, in this sense, can be understood as the potentially infinite influences that occur inside and outside a body. These influences may occur at any scale, from small to large, from short-term to long-term, from micro to macro, from the past to the future, from real to imagined. They might be related to other—human or non-human—bodies, sensations, thoughts, memories, objects, things, processes, events, etc. Becoming a ‘medium’ is to render bodies open and receptive to these influences, and the Manipulations are a practice that foregrounds and fosters the capacity of bodies to change and transform by becoming Weather(ed).

The second part of this chapter briefly outlines my time of training with Body Weather Amsterdam as a practitioner from 2002 to 2009, and as a performer in the performance project Something Here That Is Not There (SHTINT) from 2005 to 2009. I situate my engagement with Body Weather Amsterdam and SHTINT in the wider context of research-oriented dance in the Netherlands, and briefly sketch my first experiments with the Manipulations while undertaking the Artistic Research Master program at the University of Amsterdam from 2007-2009. In my graduation project for the MA, there remained a gap between theory and practice, which became one of the departure points for my doctoral studies at the Performing Arts Research Centre (Tutke), which I began in 2011.

The Manipulations

Chapter Two zooms in on the Manipulations, as I was introduced to this practice during my time with Body Weather Amsterdam. I highlight in particular those aspects of the practice that I consider to be crucial with regard to the further course of my doctoral research: its transmission; its bracketing of language and the associated tendency to exclude thinking (in the medium of words); the techniques of breathing, of attending to bodies, of releasing muscular tension, and of reflecting; the relationship between the ‘giver’ and the ‘receiver’ of the

other cases, for example when speaking of concrete bodies and of weather in the proper sense, I use the lower case.

Manipulations; and the shift from inter-subjective relationship between two bodies to the foregrounding of the material relations of their inter-corporeality. I discuss at more length the issues that I see in the bracketing of language, and in the underlying understanding of the relationship between language and embodiment.

While I recognize the pedagogical motivation behind suspending verbal communication between the two partners during the practice, I also see the risk that the ongoing exclusion of language could eventually become tacitly embodied as a division between words and the world. Against the idea of language as framing and fixing experience, I emphasize its generative and performative potential. The chapter concludes by considering the Manipulations through Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1987) notion of the 'Body without Organs', and by indicating some of the ethical implications and possible pitfalls of this practice, which has been described as a path towards killing the body-ego (Cardone 2002).

Knowledge

The third chapter further opens and develops the discussion of the practice on a conceptual plain by considering the Manipulations as a knowledge-practice, and by relating it to different notions of knowledge. Drawing on Bruno Latour's (2004) notion of 'articulation' and Ben Spatz's (2015) notion of 'technique as knowledge' that structures practice, I propose conceiving of the Manipulations as a practice that is structured by techniques to articulate bodies in order to activate and enhance their capacity to affect and be affected. In line with Jaana Parviainen and Maija Eriksson (2006), I suggest that the knowledge constituted by the Manipulations is created in the overlap between 'positive' and 'negative' knowledge, i.e. it is equally constituted by a linear and constructive process of accumulating knowledge of *how to do things*, as well as of knowing what is better *not to do*.

Whereas Spatz considers the automatization of technique to be the hallmark of advanced training, in my understanding, precisely the opposite is the case in the Manipulations: the aim of repetition is not the embodiment of movement to the

point of its automatised, but its reflective re-articulation in order to proliferate (the perception of) difference, instead of minimizing it. In the Manipulations, reflection both *in* as well as *on* the perception of movement is key to the performativity of this practice – which consists in its capacity to produce difference by *not* repeating movement and its perception either automatically or habitually.

Reflection

Reflection is typically considered to be a key method in the transformation and making explicit of practitioners' tacit knowledge. However, we will see that there are differing views concerning the modality of reflection in which this transformation is accomplished. Robin Nelson (2013) argues that critical reflection *on* and *about* the practitioner's practice in the medium of language and concepts creates knowledge of what works ('know-what') in the doing of a given practice. For Parviainen (2002), on the other hand, bodily knowledge is created via non-linguistic modes of kinaesthetically reflecting *in* and *through* the body; according to her, the knowledge engendered through bodily reflectivity cannot be translated into verbal language. In line with Susan L. Foster (1995) and Leena Rouhiainen (2003), I question Parviainen's disjunction between experience and conceptual reflection, and suggest instead to foreground the productive and performative potential that is activated in the encounter between dance and language.

Language is involved both in learning and in making dance. The fact that language becomes tacit, as it were, in the process of embodiment should not lead us to think that it does not have a say in it, or that it has become absent. In the process of embodiment, language becomes implicit. The (back-)translation of corporeal writing into discursive writing is therefore very well possible, but it requires a heightened sensitivity to the particular requirements of bodily discourse. Writing *about* the body has to take place in dialogue *with* the body, and it must be aware of the traditional hegemony of language. Foster (1995) proposes creating an interdisciplinary space in which both modes of writing are at eye level. I understand the research score as a practice that creates such a

space on a corporeal (micro-)level, and artistic research as a trans-disciplinary field that cultivates the (macro-)relations, connections and transitions between the conceptual and the corporeal.

Reflexive Dance

A further problem of Parviainen's conception of bodily knowledge is its tendency to bind knowledge in dance to movement. André Lepecki (2006) has criticized an ontology of dance that is tied to movement, because such an approach belongs to a political ontology that subjects bodies to an economy of mobility and thereby sustains late capitalist modernity. Next to Lepecki's critique, profound changes in (European) contemporary dance since the 1990s have made it more than questionable whether the knowledge that is created in the medium of dance can be reduced to non-propositional forms of knowing in and through movement.

While there may have been a time when it was important to establish the dancer's tacit knowledge in and through the body as a mode of knowing in its own right, and to push back language as the dominant medium of knowledge- and meaning-making, it seems to me that in the current situation, a non-essentialist and up-to-date epistemology of dance needs to account for the close entanglement between conceptual and more-than-conceptual modes of knowing.

Rudi Laermans (2015) has proposed the term 'reflexive dance' when referring to the work of a new generation of dance artists that began to emerge in the 1990s, who started to question the traditional parameters of dance, such as movement, and who shared instead an affinity with reflexive, collaborative and discursive modes of working. While certainly not all contemporary dance artists in Europe whole-heartedly adopted the principles and values of reflexive dance, this movement unquestionably has had a broad and lasting impact – indeed, today, reflectivity and discursive knowledge play a crucial role in learning and creating dance.

Method

Peter Snow (2002) points out that the researcher's task is to translate a body's experience into verbal language, and that for this reason it is vital for the researcher to engage corporeally with the practice that he or she is writing about. But how to approach the act of translation? Typically, in the context of (academic) research in the arts, the methodological problem of transposing a non-linguistic mode of embodied knowing into a discursive language is solved by the application of 'method': the researcher pauses and steps back in order to critically reflect *on* the practice by applying a (prefabricated) conceptual framework that is imposed onto the practice. This application of critical reflection as a method of knowledge-making not only implies a division between practice and reflection (Pitches 2011), but it typically also goes hand-in-hand with a subordination of the practice to the needs of theory and the production of discursive knowledge (Massumi 2002, Cull 2012).

Employed as a method that is applied to practice, reflection maintains the dichotomy between theory and practice, and reaffirms the hegemony of language. Against this division, Snow (2002) emphasises the productive connections between practice and language, and the performativity of practitioners' rhetoric in the training as well as the artistic process. The words that are used make two things happen: first, they create new realities; second, they articulate the deep corporeal insights that are the result of years of extensive practice, which otherwise remain hidden to those who are not initiated. Thus, the possibility of language to create shortcuts can bring the uninitiated nearer to practice – and practice nearer to them. Furthermore, it can help to demystify practice, open the door to participation, and create a kind of accessibility that is vital in a research context.

The Research Score

Chapter Four tries to accomplish this task through a double articulation of the practice of the research score with two modes of writing. One is a more analytic and descriptive mode of writing *about* the research score, the other is a performative mode of experimental writing *with* the research score. The descriptive articulation of the research score starts out by briefly reiterating

what I consider to be the key aspects of the Manipulations, in order to create a basis for understanding what is at stake with the research score: the alteration of (self-)perception; a body becoming a medium; the activation of techniques as modes of knowing how to articulate bodies. This is followed by a detailed analysis of the research score, which not only carves out the *differences* between the research score and the Manipulations, but also emphasizes the *continuities* between the two. Whereas the re-creation of the sensation of receiving the Manipulations aims to restore the ecology of experience brought forth by the original practice, the undoing of the bracketing of language marks a significant change and aligns the altered version of the Manipulations to the specific needs and goals of artistic research, driving its transformation from an artistic medium into a medium of research.

Parallel to the descriptive articulation *of* the research score runs another thread of writing, which was created on the basis of writing *with* the research score over a period of several years during the course of my research. This second thread of experimental writing offers a specific articulation of the concepts and notions that activate, and are activated by, the research score – but this time from *within* its practice. In this way, a representational mode of writing *about* practice and a performative mode of writing *with* practice touch on each other. By bringing into contact two modes of writing that emerge from different practices—and materialities—of language-making, the chapter prepares the ground for an expanded mode of academic writing – towards a kind of experimental writing in which the research score itself is given the opportunity to show its mettle.

First Artistic Part

In the structure of the doctorate at the Performing Arts Research Centre at Uniarts Helsinki, the so-called ‘artistic parts’ take a central place. According to the degree requirements, an artistic part is expected to “display profound understanding of the research topic, and ability to approach the research problem in a mode that critically renews the particular field of art”. In principle, a doctorate includes between one and three externally-examined artistic parts, which can be “performances, demonstrations, experiments, workshops or other

kinds of performative arrangements”.⁴ Whereas most of the regular coursework of the program focuses on theoretical subjects, the research that is accomplished in and through the artistic parts is crafted on the researcher’s artistic practice.

As outlined in Chapter Five, the aim of my first artistic part was to create a written articulation of the impact of the Manipulations, and of the modes of knowing that are embodied and activated by this practice. The way I approached this task was by creating a glossary. The idea behind the making of a glossary was to source language by drawing on the vocabulary from inside the practice, rather than by imposing a conceptual framework from the outside. The Glossary created in the course of the first artistic part thus offers a glimpse at the language of instruction that was employed in directing the training, for example in the process of transmitting the Manipulations.

While it may not seem very original to make recourse to Body Weather’s ‘own’ language in order to articulate the (bodily) knowledge created by this practice, the main advantage of drawing on the lingo of Body Weather is that it maintains a certain continuity in the movement from the physical articulation of a body to its verbal articulation, and it keeps intact what Latour (1999) calls the ‘chain of transformation’. In addition to this, the Glossary makes explicit the language that becomes embodied in Body Weather training, and which then tacitly shapes the practitioner’s experience and perception of the practice, thus problematizing the notion of ‘non-conceptual content’ that is embodied in the artist’s practice. Instead of postulating such a notion, I think it is more appropriate from the perspective of artistic research to speak of *more-than*-conceptual content, thus emphasizing the connectivity and intertwinement of the physical and the conceptual rather than the division between the two.

The Evolution of the Research Score

The research score was one of the main practical methods that I used to think through the Manipulations and to create the Glossary. By embedding linguistic reflection *on* the practice *within* the practice itself, rather than creating a division

⁴ Degree Requirements of the Doctoral Programme of Artistic Research in Performing Arts (2015-2020), University of the Arts Helsinki/Theatre Academy.

between the two, the research score, like the Glossary, preserves the continuity between practice and its linguistic translation. It places linguistic articulation in the middle of the relations that are constituted and activated by the practice, instead of working from opposite ends. The research score thus creates the inter-disciplinary (micro-)space called for by Foster (1995), which affords the dialogue between discursive language and corporeal writing, without subordinating one to the other.

Besides the Glossary, another outcome of the second artistic part was the establishment of the research score as a method of embodied reflection. In the further course of my research, I used this method not only to think through the Manipulations, but I also started to regularly employ it as a means to reflect on possibly *any* concept that I would come across in my theoretical research. The process of writing two articles about my research in 2015 and 2016 further advanced the research score's detachment and differentiation from the Manipulations. It forced me to closely examine my main practical method, made me more aware of the distinctions between the two practices, and created a healthy distance—though not a separation—between the committed Body Weather practitioner and the artist-researcher who follows different research goals and interests.

The Research Score as a Medium of Artistic Research

As a result of continued practice in combination with critical reflection, the research score gradually evolved into a practice in its own right, and it became the main epistemic subject/object of my research. In line with Esa Kirkkopelto (2015), I consider this process in terms of the transformation of an artistic medium into a medium of artistic research. Kirkkopelto argues that a medium of artistic research not only performs a change, but enacts this change in such a way that the materiality and the techniques that mediate the change can become experientially perceptible, and therefore intelligible and accessible, to us. Through the transformation of the artistic medium—the Manipulations—into a medium of research—the research score—the former becomes available for its discursive re-negotiation and critical re-assessment.

In the case of the research score, its evolution into a medium of artistic research was further driven by two small but significant changes in its practice. The first change is related to the impact of alteration on the practitioner's body and (self-) perception, and concerns the subject/object relations in the research score. Whereas, typically, a knowing subject reflects on an object to be known, in the altered ecology of the research score, the mode of intentionally reflecting *on* a word or concept is superseded by a relational modality of reflecting *with*.

The second change has to do with a technical adjustment of the research apparatus. At the beginning of 2015, I changed my way of working, from immediately writing my thoughts out on paper to making a recording of their verbal expression. The recording of my voice interfered much less with the process of re-creation than the act of physically isolating my right arm in order to note down my thoughts. As a result of this technical adjustment, and by using the voice as a recorded writing tool, it became easier to negotiate the precarious balance between the different modes of verbal and non-verbal reflection. Both of these changes in combination enabled the shift from reflecting *on* to reflecting *with*.

With this shift from *on* to *with*, the conventional relationship between a knowing subject and a known object—mediated by language—becomes transformed. In the research score, the knower is not separated from the known, standing outside of the practice and reflecting upon it, but is an 'exteriority within'. With Karen Barad (2003, 2014), I came to consider the research score as a 'diffractive' way of thinking and writing that questions deeply-sedimented dichotomies. As a practice, the research score has the capacity to make felt, and intelligible, the shift from a representational model of knowing to a post-humanist performative model.

Second Artistic Part

Chapter Six opens with a presentation of the aims and objectives of the collaborative research for my second artistic part. My main concern was to put my research to the test by working with a group of artists and artist-researchers, and to explore the epistemic potential of the research score as a medium of

artistic research. As an effect of the collaborative work, the research score evolved from a solo practice into a collective practice. I elaborate on the implications of this expansion of the practice, and I suggest that it brings forth a different kind of thinking—and writing—that exists in its own right, and which is difficult to put into words.

In starting to approach a conceptual re-articulation of the research score, I draw on Erin Manning's (2012, 2013) exploration of the writings of people with autism, on the basis of which she theorizes about the making of language. Trying to follow her theory of language brings my ability to think to its limits. In the endeavour to reach towards, and to connect with, the complexity of her philosophical thinking, I draw on the research score as a tool of writing *with* the concepts proposed by Manning, instead of writing *about* them. For the reader, this part of the commentary may be the most difficult and challenging. It may even be perceived as presumptuous, lacking a thorough discussion that would help the reader to better understand the relations between Manning's thinking and the research score. However, my intention is neither to run over nor to frustrate the reader, but to test another strategy of creating relations to Manning's concepts through the research score.

Following on from Manning's ideas, as developed in her book *The Minor Gesture* (2016), I re-consider the research score as a system of techniques that open up a field of experimentation and of knowing – techniques which are in themselves not (yet) art. According to Manning, it is by going beyond the mere re-enactment of technique—what she calls the 'outdoing of technique'—that the ineffable *more-than* of technique—what she refers to as 'technicity'—can be brought to expression. The challenge and difficulty in the process of writing about my research, then, is to articulate the ineffable more-than of the research score's techniques, and the knowledge that is engendered by its technicity, through words.

In academic arts research, the default solution is the application of 'method'. However, in line with Manning, and further elaborating on the discussion in Chapter Three, I consider method to be a problem, and not the solution: by aligning knowledge to reason, method not only creates hierarchies between

modalities of knowing, but it also fails to account for knowledge that occurs outside of existing registers and in the ineffable more-than of technicity.

This problem of method leads me to discuss the question of what other options exist to approach the writing and publication of (doctoral) research, other than the standard format of dissertation writing; a kind of writing that is able to accommodate the performative mode of knowing within a more conventional model of representational knowledge-making. Following Borgdorff (2010), the task of artistic research is not so much the production of formal propositional knowledge, but providing a specific articulation of the non-conceptual content of art, its 'unfinished thinking'. Nevertheless, some strands of artistic research are—more or less firmly—tied to the tradition of academic research, as is the case with the doctoral program at the Performing Arts Research Centre of the Theatre Academy in Helsinki. These strands of artistic research are therefore expected to meet certain criteria of 'research' set by academia, such as the appropriate documentation and dissemination of research outcomes. The question is therefore how to negotiate the tension between the singularity of artistic modes of knowing and academic modes of knowledge production (Rouhiainen 2017).

Propositions for Unfinished Thinking

Michael Schwab (2012) observes that the requirement to meet the standards of academic research has often meant that the essential qualities of the artwork are lost in the process of translating the non-propositional knowledge embodied in the artwork into language. With the creation of the Research Catalogue (RC) and the launch of the *Journal for Artistic Research* (JAR), there exist novel and, it seems to me, much more appropriate opportunities for artist-researchers to bridge the gap between theory and practice, and to publish their art as research.

Chapter Seven accepts the invitation to negotiate the limits of academic writing and to extend the performative research into experimental exposition writing, by articulating seven propositions for unfinished thinking. Propositions One, Two and Three were created based on recordings made during the first phase of the collaborative research for my second artistic part, with Paula Kramer and Josh

Rutter; Propositions Four, Five, Six and Seven were composed with material recorded during the second and third phases, together with Outi Condit, Riikka T. Innanen, Tashi Iwaoka, Paula Kramer and Josh Rutter.

All audio material used in this chapter was created through the collective practice of the research score, with the exception of Propositions One and Four. The material for Proposition One was generated by a trio of practitioners: *one* practitioner alternately gave the Manipulations to *two* other receiving practitioners; while one of the receiving practitioners was silently experiencing the touch-applications, the other receiver was doing the research score reflecting with 'diffraction'. The material for Proposition Four was created by three couples doing the Manipulations simultaneously, with the receivers reflecting with 'difference'. Proposition Two draws on recordings from a research score reflecting with 'know-how', while Proposition Three is based on two sessions in which we practiced the research score together, yet each of us reflected with a different concept: 'alteration', 'touch', 'giving', 're-creation', 'connection' and 'self'. Proposition Five was edited with audio material drawn from collectively practicing the research score with 'difference', Proposition Six with the concept 'research score', and Proposition Seven with 'translation'.

All seven propositions were edited and composed at the beginning of the process of writing this commentary, and before all of the other chapters had been written. One crucial link between the second artistic part and this commentary is the research exposition *To Call That 'Writing'?* (Hug 2017b), published in an issue of the online journal *Nivel* that is dedicated to the 'poetics of form'. In making this piece, I took up the work previously commenced in the collaborative research for the second artistic part. In the absence of my collaborators, I conducted my own series of research scores, reflecting with 'writing'. Each time I practiced, I imagined being given the Manipulations by one of my previous collaborators. In this manner, I created five tracks, as well as an additional sixth, where I worked with an unknown imaginary giver. With only a few additional supplements, I put these six tracks of writing with the research score together into one piece.

The Research Catalogue functioned as a test bed for the creation of To Call That 'Writing'?, which in turn became a sample for the composition of Chapter Seven and the creation of the seven Propositions for Unfinished Thinking. In the course of my doctorate, other occasions, similarly, provided ground for experimentation and for developing my research: conferences, festivals, workshops, publications, etc., all of which had their share in the activation of the research and in the evolution of the research score, from a method of embodied reflection into a medium of artistic research.

InConclusion

Traditionally, a thesis ends with a conclusion that summarizes the findings of the research, points out the contribution to the knowledge of a specific field, and indicates the open questions that could be the subject of further research. For the purposes of this commentary, however, and of the approach that I have taken, I do not see the advantage of closing the work in such a conventional way. This thesis is conceived and realized as a research exposition that re-negotiates and expands a traditional mode of academic dissertation-writing. It would be clearly against the concept and objectives of this approach to complete the work by returning to a type of academic writing that ultimately aims only to harness the performative potential of the research by claiming its possible contribution to knowledge. More than a fixed product, the research outcome is an ongoing process. By remaining open to the changing influences of Weather, each iteration of the research score has the potential to bring forth something new and different.

The InConclusion, therefore, strives not for a definite summary of the commentary, but continues to explore the performative potential of experimental writing with the research score, and to bring it to expression in the particular (digital) ecology of a multi-media research publication. It draws on fragments that are extracted from the Propositions in Chapter Seven, and which are re-composed and re-mixed with material created at the final stage of writing the commentary, which happened at a studio and at my home in Berlin-Weißensee. The InConclusion rounds off this commentary without making any

final statements, thus gesturing at the open-endedness and the future of unfinished thinking with the research score.

Chapter One

Preliminary Notes on My Artistic Research with Body Weather

The Origins of Body Weather in Japan⁵

Body Weather emerged in the late 1970s in Japan out of a series of workshops led by the Japanese dancer and choreographer Min Tanaka. Born in Tokyo in 1945, Tanaka was trained in classical ballet and modern dance, but decided to break with these forms to embark on a solo career in the early 1970s. Though deeply influenced by butoh pioneer Tatsumi Hijikata (“I would like to declare that Min Tanaka is a legitimate son of Hijikata”⁶), instead of becoming his student, Tanaka chose to search for his own way of dancing and dance-making. He specialized in performing with the environment (“We do not dance in a place, we dance the place”⁷) and became well-known in Japan as an avant-garde solo dancer (“I am an avant-garde who crawls the earth”⁸).

In *Drive On*, a bi-monthly and bi-lingual (English/French) newsletter published by Body Weather Laboratory from 1978 to 1980, Tanaka explains that the term Body Weather⁹ originally emerged from his discussions with the writer, editor and publisher Seigo Matsuoka, and that it first came up in 1977.¹⁰ In the following year, Tanaka led the first Body Weather workshop:

The first Body Weather Training was initiated by Min Tanaka in June, 1978, in a small studio in Tokyo. It was based on the pursuit and discoveries of Min

⁵ If not cited otherwise, my account of the formation of Body Weather is based on Snow 2002 and Fuller 2016, as well as on personal communication with Bakatsaki 2018, Duvergé 2015, Van de Ven 2018 and 2019, and Quoiraud 2015.

⁶ Tanaka 1986b, 155.

⁷ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 80.

⁸ Tanaka 1986b, 153.

⁹ In Japanese: *Shintai* (Body) *Kisho* (Weather). According to Frank van de Ven (2018), who was a member of the Maijuku Dance Company from 1983 to 1991, the adjunct term *Kenkyujo* (Laboratory) was inspired by Grotowski’s ‘Laboratory Theatre’. According to Christine Quoiraud (2015), Maijuku Dance Company member from 1985 to 1990, Tanaka was influenced by Grotowski, but he never made this explicit.

¹⁰ See Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 24. According to Fuller (2016, 13), it was Matsuoka who came up with the term.

Tanaka over many years through his self-education and various experiences. This open training workshop called 'Body Weather training' marked the first step of the present Body Weather Laboratory, which was founded by the leadership of the workshop participants. The concept of Body Weather has been gradually expanding and consolidated since then. Among our daily activities is the training workshop.¹¹

This training workshop mentioned here focused on practices that would later come to be known as the Manipulations.¹² Yoga, acupuncture and the meridian system of shiatsu are generally recognized as the main sources of the Manipulations, complemented by physical therapy and sports medicine. After the two-week workshop was over, some of the workshop participants continued to work with Tanaka, and together they founded 'Body Weather Laboratory'. The members of the group, approximately fifteen to twenty, equally male and female, came from various backgrounds: they included primary school teachers, musicians, calligraphers, intellectuals, a Buddhist monk and an acupuncturist. Only a minority of participants were dancers and performers.

In the book 'Conscious Body, Contagious Mind', Matsuoka and Tanaka have the following dialogue:

Seigo Matsuoka: *You had already done a lot of things to become able to foresee the results while playing alone as a child, haven't you?*

Min Tanaka: *Yes. I'd been already doing it by myself alone. So, also the pair work of Manipulation is something that I arranged things I had already been doing alone. But I was executing it by feeling the pressure or tension of hands of the imaginary partner(s) while doing it alone. I suppose I became able to do such things because as a child I used to play alone a lot of time and didn't even think that was lonely.*¹³

Tanaka had obviously been experimenting on his own with practices similar to the Manipulations long before the collaborative research at Body Weather

¹¹ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 60.

¹² According to Duvergé (2015), the practice was originally referred to as 'Basic Work'. In an issue of *Drive On* from 1980 (72-78), there is an illustrated description of the complete series and the practice is referred to as 'editorials'.

¹³ Tanaka & Matsuoka 2013, 342. I am greatly indebted to Tashi Iwaoka for directing me towards this passage, and for its translation.

Laboratory. The formation of Body Weather Laboratory, then, provided the space for further experimentation and development. Due to the absence of any further records, documentation or testimonies, it remains somewhat unclear exactly how the pieces came together in the process of creating the Manipulations. For the moment, it is worth noting that the evolution of Body Weather and the foundation of Body Weather Laboratory were closely linked with the inception of the Manipulations, a practice that would become the “backbone”¹⁴ of Body Weather.

Body Weather Laboratory

In April 1979, the group moved to a former textile factory in Hachioji (Tokyo), where they further developed the training workshop.¹⁵ Rather than claiming the leadership, Tanaka considered himself as *one* ‘medium’ amongst many others. In *Drive On*, the aims and organizational principles of the group are described as follows:

We do not have any specific leader or mediator. Various fluxes rush in, flow together here, by the medium of each member. Various fluxes also rush out. [...] We are going to maintain a positive attitude to take in various kinds of knowledge (especially scientific knowledge) concerning bodies and perception, so as not to make our activities dogmatic and unbalanced in developing the issues. We will use this knowledge as a mirror, to reflect objectively our approach to the bodies and perception. [...] Our activities such as workshop, research and study are based on four teams. They are ‘Body’, ‘Sound’, ‘Visual Perception’, and ‘Language’.¹⁶

In 1980, Body Weather Laboratory announced that it had grown into a platform for transdisciplinary artistic research, and that it would welcome anyone who was willing to engage in body-based research, regardless of their previous training and experience.

¹⁴ Quoiraud 2015.

¹⁵ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 40.

¹⁶ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 40.

The Body Weather Laboratory aims at posing questions to and re-editing the disciplines of science, art, politics, etc., that have been consolidated on the basis of hitherto history. Our basis is the BODY. We must admit that even the word 'discipline' is becoming inappropriate for us. We welcome any problems that would be presented here from various people and various things. Our daily activities are devoted more to such works as to closely examine the body in fundamental terms. [...] We do not have any fixed rules, but we have some thoughts about what an organization should be like. We have no particular leader, and everybody has rights and responsibilities. [...] If one wants to gain from this place, one must contribute something to it. Such interchange is called 'participation'. The program of our activities is not dictated by somebody arbitrarily, but it is decided upon the discussion of members. [...] Study sessions are held for us to actively absorb scientific knowledge and academic achievements in the periphery of Body and Perceptions. By learning existing knowledge, we can objectively examine our approach to the body as well as expand the scope of our perspectives. Each member is expected to study his or her interested field for a period, and to make a presentation to the rest of us. Through workshops, we can expand our scope from the body to recognize ourselves as a perceptive body involving vision, language, etc. It does not require any prior technical training or experience. Anybody can have his or her own discovery and gain on one level or another. But the important aspects of each other's experience must be collectively shared.¹⁷

While this statement emphasizes participation and shared responsibility over rules and leadership, it is probably not an exaggeration to say that Tanaka was one of the main driving forces behind the emergence of Body Weather Laboratory, as well as its most prominent figurehead. No other member of Body Weather Laboratory has ever received similar international attention and prestige.

According to Katerina Bakatsaki, member of Maijuku Dance Company from 1985 to 1991, Tanaka embodied a philosophical discourse and social dynamics that already existed in that era, connecting different trainings and practice

¹⁷ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 58.

technologies that were either already existing in Japan or coming from Europe. Comparing him to Steve Paxton, she considers Tanaka as a charismatic and visionary artist who had the capacity to not only channel multiple forces already underway, but also to articulate a proposal that others—dancers, performers, visual artists, philosophers, yoga and shiatsu practitioners¹⁸—were eager to engage with. Zack Fuller, similarly, sees Tanaka as the “catalyst”¹⁹ of Body Weather Laboratory.

Body Weather’s More-Than-Human Body

*It is impossible to seal off everything merely with one piece of skin. [...] We had better regarded our body not as independent entity, but as a medium resonating with the world with a rather complex and multi-level frequency.*²⁰

*We absolutely deny the practice of looking at the body as a stationary entity and to establish its standards and hierarchy.*²¹

*We have been taught that our bodies can be counted as one, two, ... and that this individuality is the proof of our existence. But is this really true? I can hardly believe that this body of mine, covered with skin, is an independent entity.*²²

*I would like to emphasize the relations between entities rather than entities themselves.*²³

Bakatsaki points out that the encounter with Western philosophy, in particular Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari,²⁴ had a significant impact on Tanaka’s thinking

¹⁸ *The Body Weather Laboratory consists of members with equal rights and responsibilities. Presently, the Laboratory at Hachioji (Tokyo) has over 30 regular members and more than 50 associate members. (Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 59)*

¹⁹ Fuller 2016, 119.

²⁰ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 58.

²¹ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 60.

²² Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 80.

²³ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 80.

²⁴ Fuller writes (2014, 197) that Michel Foucault and Félix Guattari admired Tanaka. The documentary “Tanaka Min à La Borde” by Joséphine Guattari and

and his conception of Body Weather. According to her, it is one of the core ideas of Body Weather to dismiss the notion of the body as a separate entity in favour of the conception of an unbounded and multiple body that always exists in excess of itself; and not only in relation to other human bodies, but also to non-human bodies, weather, objects, places, diverse temporalities, etc. *Body* in Body Weather is always more than human, and more than itself.

Body Weather Moving Abroad

During the founding years of Body Weather, the practice of the Manipulations took a central place in the training workshop. According to Viviane Duvergé, who was the first European to join Body Weather Laboratory in Japan in 1982, a Body Weather workshop led by Min Tanaka in Nantes in March 1980 consisted mainly of the Manipulations, followed by some exploration work outdoors.²⁵ When she organized another workshop by Tanaka in France in May 1980, she initially hesitated to announce it as a 'dance' workshop because she was afraid that people would complain that it was not close enough to dance. "But nobody complained. People were just mad and so happy with the experience", she recalled. At first, Duvergé herself had the impression that the Manipulations were designed to specifically prepare the dancer's body. However, over the course of time, she came to realize that the practice was not only useful for dancers, but that it could benefit anyone interested in training body awareness, regardless of their background and pre-experience.²⁶

*We always hope that our workshop be one where anybody can start with his or her present situation.*²⁷

According to Duvergé, there is a crucial difference between Body Weather's notion of dance and Western practices: whereas Western dance, at that time, was about mastering space and moving from the inside out, in Body Weather the

François Pain from 1986 shows Tanaka performing in 1985 at the psychiatric clinic where Guattari was working at the time.

²⁵ It was only later, in 1981, that the part of the training called 'M/B' was created.

²⁶ Duvergé 2015.

²⁷ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 60.

stimulus for movement comes from the outside, entering bodies through the skin that is rendered more permeable by the training.²⁸

Skin, Touch, Transposition

Duverg  recalls Tanaka stating that dance happens on both sides of the skin.²⁹ It is indeed from the earliest inception of Body Weather that Tanaka attributes a key role to the body's skin.³⁰ In the Manipulations, for example, it is by means of entering the body of the other through touching the skin that the notion of *the body* as a separate and fixed entity is called into question. The transposition and projection of one's own body into the body of the other is understood as a means to learn more about one's own body by getting to know the bodies of others. This enhanced knowledge in, through and about bodies, and the ability to take on the perspective of another body, increases the practitioner's capacity to embody new relations, which is a core aspect of all Body Weather training, but in particular of the Manipulations.

We do not, in our daily life, observe other persons' breathing with this much seriousness. Nor do we touch their skin with this much attention. Neither do we have 'other person' who would let us touch his/her skin in such a manner. To become somebody means to become and identify with what is inside that body. It means to slip into the body beyond the surface (skin). As the workshop proceeds, you must come to realize how easy it is to 'be in other persons' position'. You will also come to question why you have been so much concerned with your own body alone, giving it special care. Be the other person's body, your own body - compare and learn. This provides you with a rich reference for 'being in other person's position'. It is one of the most important points of this workshop (to make it rewarding) to establish a relationship of infinite influences.³¹

²⁸ Duverg  2015.

²⁹ Duverg  2015.

³⁰ "It was [in 1975] that I discussed with Mr. Seigo Matsuoka that 'the key is the skin.'" (Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 24)

³¹ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 61.

The capacity to transpose oneself into the body of the other is understood as a way of learning more about your own body. Another way to learn more about its anatomical reality is to physically articulate a body, and to differentiate it into different parts, thus creating relations between them.

Right now we are trying to feel different parts of our body separate from each other at our laboratory's workshop - [to] feel and concentrate on a certain part of the body independent from others, and not [to] feel the entire body as one - such as the palm, the head etc. Needless to say, the body is made of different parts united in one, and the parts will not actually become separate from one another. It is important to feel the entire flow of the body (and many methods have been developed to do so from older times), but will our body wake up only through such methods? At most you might get only an arbitrary physical sensation. We must be more specific about each part of the body, and we should not only depend on the flowing system (anatomical as well as physiological) of the body. Face the field in front of you only with one fragment of your body - face the cosmos only with your right bun, or face the water horizon only with your spine. That every part chosen will be inspired, and you will be able to look at that part in the context of your entire body. There is no need any more to be over-concerned as to where lies the boundary of your body.³²

The isolation of body parts in the Manipulations, for example the movement of the receiver's head at the end of sequence Number Two,³³ is not only a way to study the relations between body parts (head, neck, shoulders, etc.), but it is likewise a means to re-negotiate the boundaries between the body of the giver and the body of the receiver, raising the question of ownership. Surrendering to be moved by the giver, the question arises: Whose head is it?

It is really an admirable experience to feel our head, though connected to our trunk, rapidly losing its identity - eventually we will not be sure to whom it belongs.³⁴

³² Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 39.

³³ See the manipulation of the head/neck in the video recording of the Manipulations Number One & Two starting at 7'02 minutes.

³⁴ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 61.

The experience of a body ‘losing’ its head, allowing it to be moved in unprecedented directions, releasing the muscles of the neck and becoming ‘isolated’—to a certain extent—from the torso is a unique experience. Such a ‘decapitation’ would be impossible without the sensitive and diligent handling of the receiver by the body of the giver.

Co-Embodiment and Ownership

The ethical implications of the relationship between the giver and the receiver of the Manipulations are complex. Practitioners learn to enable their partners to safely experience their bodies in ways that they would never be able to accomplish by themselves, working alone. This ethical stance of *being there for the other*, up to the point of *becoming the other*, is key for Body Weather, particularly in the partner work of the Manipulations.³⁵

In this workshop [...] it is important to place oneself in the other person's position - become the other person's body.³⁶

The kind of co-embodiment that is enacted through becoming the other touches not only on the question of boundaries between bodies, but particularly, as already observed above, on issues of ownership. Who owns a body that is created through co-embodiment in the practice of the Manipulations?

³⁵ In common everyday use, the word ‘manipulation’ is fraught with negative connotations: To ‘manipulate’ somebody has a strong touch of deceptive and unethical behaviour in order to influence someone to do something to their own disadvantage. However, if we look at its etymology, the semantic field of the word ‘manipulation’/‘manipulate’ is much broader, offering a number of meanings that do not have the smell of fraud or pretence, and that are morally less charged. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, ‘manipulation’ can also refer to “the action of handling of an apparatus in experiments” (chemistry), or to the “manual examination or treatment of a part of the body, especially the production of specific passive joints in chiropractic, osteopathy, or physiotherapy” (medicine). ‘To manipulate’ can mean “to handle, especially with skill or dexterity; to turn, reposition, reshape, etc., manually or by means of a tool or machine”; “To process, organize, or operate on mentally or logically; to handle with mental or intellectual skill”; “To alter or transform into something by manipulation”. (Oxford English Dictionary. Accessed 5 February 2019. <https://www.oed.com/>.)

³⁶ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 61.

We do not start from 1, but from 2. We are constantly reminded of the fact that *two* is the ultimate minimal unit. Through this workshop in which we work in the units of two people together, we embody the body that belongs to nobody.³⁷

The goal of being able to articulate, isolate and differentiate body parts is to increase the capacity to *decide* at any given moment which parts of a body are at work, and which are at rest. Increasing the number of body parts that are at rest is seen to increase the freedom of the performer to move (by being moved).

In many parts of this workshop we are expected to concentrate on a specific part of our body. We call this process of concentration 'installing many switches on the whole body'. At any given moment, some parts (maybe certain muscles) of the body are at work, while others are not (but at rest). And if there are more parts at rest, the scope of freedom in the next moment is greater than the other way around. That is, if there are more parts at work, then the freedom in the next moment will be less.³⁸

Becoming Weather

One effect of the Manipulations is an altered perception of the receiver's body in relation to itself and to other human and non-human bodies. Similar to how the physical *intra*-corporeal relations between *parts* of a body change as an effect of the specific manipulation by the giver, so do the *inter*-corporeal relations *between* bodies. What is set into motion through the practice is an ongoing process of change and alteration on the level of (micro-)perceptions. The *intra*-corporeal changes that are effected by the changing *inter*-corporeal relations loop back into the relations between bodies, altering the perception that a body has in relation to itself and to other bodies. This kind of looping between *inter* and *intra* is potentially infinite, and the process of alteration, of becoming *Weather*, is by its very nature open-ended.

The body becomes awake through the correspondence of the outside weather and the inside weather. The outside weather could be somebody else's body. So

³⁷ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 60; original emphasis.

³⁸ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 61.

true and so interesting to witness this. And what sort of a history do our bod[ies] have to undergo to weaken this very credible technology of exchange?³⁹

From a Body Weather perspective, the issue is that our bodies have been historically conditioned to act and behave as bounded entities that are separate from each other. One of the main concerns of the training is to question and undo the separation between 'inside' and 'outside', Body and Weather⁴⁰, and to foster the capacity of bodies to become receptive to multiple influences. Consequently, one of the key questions in the partner work of the Manipulations is how to undo a body's historical conditioning; how to render bodies open, again, and how to activate their potential to become Weather for others.

'Dancing the Place' - Becoming 'Medium'

According to Tanaka, the undoing of the separation between bodies, and between Body and Weather, requires a different notion of our body as a 'medium':

We had better regarded our body not as independent entity, but as a medium resonating with the world with a rather complex and multi-level frequency.⁴¹

Tanaka's idea of a body as a 'medium' stands in sharp contrast with the notion of dance as a form of personal self-expression. He rejects an existentialist approach to dance which draws on the personal ideas and emotions of an independent subject as the source of an individual artistic creativity. Claiming to go beyond such an individualist approach, Tanaka's proposition is to explore how bodily sensations become alive in relation to 'place', and to the history of humanity. For him, dance emerges from a temporal and spatial ecology and must not be separated from its field of emergence. Consequently, he states that he does not dance *in* a place, but that he dances *the* place, affected by its spirit.

The kind of dance that I studied after I grew up was 'existentialism'. They had a slogan 'engaging one's

³⁹ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 24.

⁴⁰ See my remarks on the capitalization of the terms 'body' and 'weather' in the introduction.

⁴¹ Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980, 58.

body to express personal emotions and ideas'. What I want to know, however, is the source from which my internal sensations come from. I want to dance the dance that the body remembers. Our body expresses the two million years of humanity. It is intolerable for me to think that the dance of a single person is commented upon and evaluated as an absolute entity. Dance is truly established only if it incorporates the state of the soul of the place. The complex vacillation that happens in any person's spirit is dance. So, dance cannot become a piece of art. It is by no means a personal expression. We don't dance in a place, but dance the place, affected by the spirit of the very place.⁴²

One might be left wondering about who or what is moving (in) Tanaka's dance. What is the driving force behind his dance? Tanaka has no simple answer. For him, to dance is not about being driven, but about he himself becoming the dance's driving force.

Drive is not the desire to go somewhere, but one's very determination to become the driving force itself.⁴³

Nevertheless, for Tanaka the quest to become the driving force of his dance has very little to do with the idea of an independent subject that is expressing his personal creative agency. Instead, his concern is how to meet the challenge of becoming the body that *Body Weather* wants him to be.

My eyes are gazing at *Body Weather*. My ethical response to my body that happened to dance is to enjoy this endless process of learning. Min Tanaka is a dancer created by *Body Weather*, and he is feeling responsible to develop Min Tanaka into a Min Tanaka that can be admired more and more.⁴⁴

Dissolution

In 1981, still based in Tokyo, Tanaka founded Maijuku Dance Company, which was made up of an international group of dancers. Many of them followed

⁴² *Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980*, 80.

⁴³ *Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980*, 80.

⁴⁴ *Body Weather Laboratory 1978-1980*; original emphasis. The responsibility to be admired seems an odd conclusion to draw.

Tanaka to Japan after seeing his performances and participating in his workshops. In 1985, the group moved from Tokyo to Hakushu, a small village in the Japanese countryside, and founded the Body Weather Farm, where they combined organic farming with intense training and performing, both locally as well as abroad. Each summer, a festival was organized in Hakushu that attracted many international artists and visitors.

The farm existed for more than 20 years and served as a base for Tanaka and the members of Maijuku, as well as for artists who were temporarily visiting and working at the place. Maijuku was disbanded in 1997. Some of the former members returned to their home countries and continued to develop their approach to Body Weather in laboratories. These include Katerina Bakatsaki and Frank van de Ven (The Netherlands), Andres Corchero (Spain), Stuart Lynch (Denmark), Tess De Quincey (Australia), and Christine Quoiraud (France); Oguri established his base in Los Angeles (US); founding member Hisako Horikawa returned to her home town of Niigata in Japan while frequently travelling to Europe to perform and to teach; and Yasunari Tamai stayed at the farm until recently, regularly travelling to Europe and the US to realize his own independent productions.⁴⁵

In 2011, Tanaka dissolved the Body Weather Farm and stopped all activities related to Body Weather.⁴⁶ He continues to work as an actor and performer.

Body Weather Amsterdam

In 1993, Katerina Bakatsaki and Frank van de Ven returned to Europe and founded Body Weather Laboratory Amsterdam⁴⁷ in 1996 as a platform for training and performance research. In autumn 2002, after graduating from the School for New Dance Development (SNDO) in Amsterdam, I began to join the weekly trainings organized by Body Weather Laboratory Amsterdam, the so-called 'Thursday training'. No longer taking dance classes at dance school, I wanted to follow some kind of regular physical practice in order to continue my

⁴⁵ Van de Ven 2019.

⁴⁶ See Fuller 2016, 7-9.

⁴⁷ The word 'Laboratory' was later dropped.

training. I had had my first encounter with Body Weather at a workshop that was jointly facilitated by Frank van de Ven and Peter Snow at SNDO around 2001. The experience of the workshop had left a deep impression in me, and I was keen to learn more about the work. I found that Body Weather offered a highly sophisticated and interesting approach to investigating connections between mind and body, movement and perception, physicality and consciousness.

In principle, the Thursday training was open to anyone who was interested in the work and who had 'passed' an introductory workshop. It did not matter whether they were professional or amateur. The main pre-requisite for being admitted to the training was an open attitude, and the capacity to engage with the training in a manner that made it workable, not only for the individual participant, but also for the group. Katarina Bakatsaki and Frank van de Ven took turns in leading the training.⁴⁸

The training at Body Weather Laboratory Amsterdam consisted of three parts, which basically followed the structure of Maijuku Dance Company's daily training routine at the Body Weather Farm in Japan:

- The first part is called the 'M/B' (short for 'mind/body' or 'muscles/bones'). The M/B is a physically highly demanding and vigorous workout that focuses on developing strength, endurance and coordination. While moving in parallel lines back and forth across the studio and repeating given patterns of movement, practitioners are asked to closely observe any bodily changes, particularly in relation to the kinaesthetic awareness of the body, its alignment, placement and muscular tension, while at the same time paying attention to the overall movement of the group.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ The Thursday training did not pursue any commercial interest, but the wish to share and further develop the work. The fee for the 6-hour training was merely a contribution to cover the rent for the studio, and was about the same as the fee for a 1.5-hour dance class at a local non-profit organization in Amsterdam, which offered regular training for professional dancers.

⁴⁹ The M/B was developed in 1981. The opening sequence of the third part of the documentary "Tanaka Min et Mai-Juku" by Eric Sandrin (Sandrin 1987) shows excerpts from an M/B session at the Body Weather Farm. Taylor (2010, 75) writes that the M/B is a "dancers' version of aerobics [that] comprises a series of exercises sourced from international folk dance and sport, travelling across

- The 'Manipulations' is the second part and is concerned with stretching, breathing and relaxation. It is a hands-on practice that draws on diverse Eastern and Western somatic practices, such as yoga, shiatsu and acupuncture, and is conducted through partner work, with one practitioner giving and the other receiving a series of specific touch-manipulations, with alternating roles. The entire practice consists of approximately 90 touch-based operations that are structured into a numbered sequence of one to seven, and typically takes between one-and-a-half and two hours to complete.

- The third part of the training is called 'Laboratory' and consists of a wide range of practices aimed at exploring movement and the perception of the body in relation to itself, to the bodies of others, to time/speed, space, images, touch and so forth.

Typically, we would spend around one-and-a-half hours on each section with a short break between the M/B and the Manipulations and a longer break before the Laboratory. One of the effects of the M/B is to heat up and exhaust bodies by taking them to their physical limits, which makes them 'ready' for the more quiet and calm work of the Manipulations, which in turn prepares bodies for the explorative and improvisational work in the Laboratory.

During the years that I joined the Thursday training, I considered it to be a form of research in the medium of the body, and as a practice deeply entrenched in a different kind of knowledge than what would usually be taught in most other classes and workshops in the context of contemporary dance. The training was not about learning certain movement skills, or about becoming more proficient in controlling the body. It was a methodology to test, to probe, to inquire, to experiment, to get to know your own body as well as the bodies of others, to try and to fail the impossible, to negotiate, to question and to doubt what you thought you knew – collectively, collaboratively, and in the spirit of furthering

space to rhythmic music". The M/B certainly has the potential to be interpreted as some kind of aerobics. However, in my view, this depends not only on how the training is led, but also on how practitioners themselves activate the practice. I have experienced intense versions of the M/B that focused on detailed sensing, careful listening, exact placement and alignment, both in combination with, as well as without, taking dancers to their physical limits. As always, it is not just a matter of *what* but of *how* to do—and at the same time to question—things.

each other's knowledge and capacities. Tasks were tools for experimenting and studying together, and a means to open up to new experiences and perceptions, to learn more about the body's potential to generate and create the new and the different. The training was comprehensive and demanding; it addressed me in my fullest capacity as a human being, not just as a dancer, and it greatly inspired my thinking and my imagination of how things, the world, might be otherwise. The training was a great source of inspiration and food for thought.

Body Weather: Ideology or Training Method?

Whereas Peter Snow considers Body Weather to be a training and performance practice, Zack Fuller argues that for Tanaka, Body Weather is "an ideology or personal philosophy"⁵⁰, and he emphasizes the distinction between these two conceptions:

While practitioners outside of Japan may well consider Body Weather to be a way of life or philosophy, their promotion of Body Weather as a type of performer training has influenced the broad perception of Body Weather as a specific training method. Because of this I wish to distinguish Body Weather as an ideology from the idea of Body Weather as a training method.⁵¹

According to Fuller, it was never Tanaka's intention to establish Body Weather as a training method: "For Tanaka to call his first workshop a Body Weather workshop was not to establish Body Weather as a training method, but to denominate a collaborative investigation informed by the ideology of Body Weather".⁵² Fuller holds that the fixation and commodification of Body Weather into a formalized methodology for training and performance was against the nature of Body Weather, which "envisions the body as a force of nature: ever changing, omni-centered, and completely open to external stimuli".⁵³ He continues:

Tanaka often complains about people formalizing Hijikata's approach to dance, or his own training exercises, in order to make money. While Tanaka is not opposed to making money from dance, he is opposed to

⁵⁰ Fuller 2016, 2.

⁵¹ Fuller 2016, 129.

⁵² Fuller 2016, 129.

⁵³ Fuller 2016, 129.

establishing or fixing it as a form in order to do so, because this would limit the capacity for change and experimentation that he sees vital to his practice, to practice *butô* as 'spiritual existence'. He clearly sees the establishment of a form as a type of commodification, and his own practice embodies the idea that one cannot invest oneself in a commodified art and maintain personal agency, just as one cannot have a conventional life and create experimental dance.⁵⁴

In my view, Tanaka's rejection of the formalization of Body Weather as a training method, and his opposition to the fixation of *butoh*—and Body Weather—as a form of dance and movement practice, indicates an interesting tension in the conception of Body Weather. If bodies are indeed "ever-changing, omni-centered, and completely open to external stimuli", i.e. invariably changing under the influence of Weather, then what would be the point of resisting—undesired—changes to Body Weather, and of attempting to fix it as an 'ideology' centred around the authority of Min Tanaka? This resistance to fixation, formalization and commodification can be interpreted as an expression of the desire to construct an essentialist idea of Body Weather, and as an attempt to (re-)claim the interpretative sovereignty over its 'true' meaning.

Nevertheless, if Body Weather is truly committed to constant change, omni-centredness and complete openness to the world, as it proclaims, then any attempt to essentialize Body Weather, and to claim the control over Body Weather's—past and future—movements and stoppages, its stretches, turns, twists, leaps and possible aberrations, appears to be a contradiction in itself. The paradox, it seems to me, is that if Body Weather aims to be true to itself, it needs to embrace the potential risk of becoming other than it was, and it needs to forfeit any attempt to control what it might become. To put it differently: the paradox is that the only way of affirming Body Weather's identity is by actually letting go of it.

But maybe things are not altogether this black-and-white. Bakatsaki and Van de Ven, for their part, always highlighted that they conceived of Body Weather as an *approach* to training and performance, and as an ongoing and open-ended *investigation* into the body, not as a fixed and formalized method. At the Body

⁵⁴ Fuller 2016, 62.

Weather Farm in Hakushu, a relatively like-minded group of highly motivated and skilled international performers combined the harsh daily work on an organic farm in the Japanese countryside with intense training and international touring. This was *one* situation in which Body Weather took shape. The artistic, socio-economic, geographic and cultural landscape of Amsterdam in the 1990s looked quite different, and in this sense the Weather conditions in Western Europe of the 1990s and 2000s there were not the same as those in Japan in the 1970s and 1980s.

The way in which Van de Ven and Bakatsaki further developed the training can be seen as an ongoing negotiation of the heritage of Body Weather in relation to their own goals and preferences, as well as to the prevalent Weather conditions and the local particularities they encountered after their return to Europe, which were different from those in Japan. Theirs was no longer a life on a farm in the Japanese countryside, but in the urban landscape of Amsterdam, a city that Deleuze and Guattari consider as being “entirely without roots, a rhizome-city with its stem-canals, where utility connects with the greatest folly in relation to a commercial war machine”.⁵⁵ In light of this, it seems to be only a logical consequence of the altered conditions of the prevalent Weather that the way in which Bakatsaki and Van de Ven further developed Body Weather as a training and performance practice responded to the changing context—without being *determined* by it—and that their way of developing Body Weather differed in certain ways from how Body Weather was continued by other Laboratories in Australia, Denmark, France, Spain and the US – or even in Japan by Tanaka himself.⁵⁶

Body Weather and butoh

⁵⁵ Deleuze & Guattari 1987, 15. Making roots in sand and water can be quite difficult, as I experienced myself during more than ten years of living in Amsterdam.

⁵⁶ Frank van de Ven continues to teach Body Weather workshops worldwide; Katerina Bakatsaki has been active for many years as a teacher, mentor and artistic advisor at SNDO, as well as a lecturer and program advisor at the Utrecht School of Arts.

Another contested issue is the recurring denotation of Body Weather as (a form of) butoh. According to Fuller, the identification of Tanaka as a butoh dancer is a misconception of Tanaka's artistic position and of his innovative approach to dance-making. One of the reasons for conflating Tanaka and Body Weather with butoh, Fuller explains, was the commodification of butoh as a traditional form of Japanese dance: "Originally an avant-garde practice engaged in by radically experimental individuals, in order for *butô* to be commodified it had to be constructed as a dance form related to traditional Japanese culture".⁵⁷ The labelling of butoh as a traditional Japanese dance form promoted its successful import to the West, Fuller writes. When Tanaka came for the first time to Europe to perform at the *Festival d'Automne* in Paris in 1978, he was announced as a butoh dancer,⁵⁸ although in Japan he was perceived as an outsider of butoh.⁵⁹

In part, Body Weather's conflation with butoh may have been fuelled by Tanaka's own statement that he was the 'legitimate son' of butoh founder Tatsumi Hijikata, but Tanaka himself has always rejected being categorized under this term. According to Fuller, the link with butoh is likely to have promoted Tanaka's international career, but the differences between Hijikata's butoh and Tanaka's Body Weather are undeniable, and labelling him as a butoh dancer "has obscured Tanaka's significant innovations in the interrelated fields of improvised collaboration, performer training, and choreographic process".⁶⁰

The superficial rooting of Tanaka's art in traditional Japanese culture would fail to see that he "was strongly influenced by the work of the American post-modern dance pioneer Anna Halprin",⁶¹ Fuller writes. Rather than being "tied to ancient Japanese traditions",⁶² as RoseLee Goldberg states, Fuller points out that Tanaka "has utilized experimental tactics originally employed by U.S. based choreographers such as Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton and Trisha Brown, and extended, combined, and developed them in unprecedented ways".⁶³ According

⁵⁷ Fuller 2016, 44.

⁵⁸ See Fuller 2016, 18.

⁵⁹ See Fuller 2016, 18 and Aslan 2002, 177-189.

⁶⁰ Fuller 2016, 59.

⁶¹ Fuller 2016, 5.

⁶² Goldberg 2011, 207.

⁶³ Fuller 2016, 5.

to Fuller, “the ultimate goal of his training was an ideal non-hierarchic body”,⁶⁴ and the underlying principles of the Body Weather training methodology, such as *omni-centrality* and the *omni-centred* body, were “fundamentally opposed to what is often taught as *butô*”.⁶⁵ In addition, rather than working with visual imagery as a tool for creation, which is characteristic of *butoh*, Tanaka’s workshops emphasized physical stimulation as a movement resource.⁶⁶

Peter Snow draws an even more complex picture of Body Weather’s place in the landscape of dance and performance training. He claims that Body Weather’s lineage is rooted in more than one tradition:

There are many ways to position Body Weather practice: as an inter-cultural practice with bases in Japan, Europe, America and Australia; as an avant-garde Japanese performing practice with links to traditional Japanese performing arts (cf. Suzuki); as a counter-cultural move away from city to country with the purpose of reinvigorating a performance aesthetic (in the spirit of Copeau or Grotowski); as a post-modern performance form decentring bodies and relativising ‘knowledges’ and subjectivities; and so on.⁶⁷

While Fuller notes that Body Weather envisions the body as “a force of nature: ever-changing, omni-centered, and completely open to external stimuli”, as well as “opposed to hierarchization or formalization”,⁶⁸ Snow elaborates on the notions of ‘body’ and ‘weather’ as follows:

It is my contention that *bodies* in Body Weather practice can be envisaged as not only multiple, receptive and changing, but also as relatively permeable and unbounded, and thus open to the multiple influences of weather. *Weather* can be understood as a multivalent, capricious, cyclic and unpredictable system of influences occurring ‘inside and outside’ bodies, and in fact throughout the world. On this view, bodies and the world as weather would be interpenetrable, capable of infinite difference and endless change.⁶⁹

What Snow highlights here is that ‘bodies’ and ‘weather’ are unpredictable and uncontrollable in their becoming. Hence, it appears that any attempt to define

⁶⁴ Fuller 2016, 114.

⁶⁵ Fuller 2016, 114.

⁶⁶ Fuller 2016, 117.

⁶⁷ Snow 2002, 69.

⁶⁸ Fuller 2016, 129.

⁶⁹ Snow 2002, 67; added emphasis.

and to fix Body Weather as an ideology or as *the other* of butoh would undermine its own beliefs. Neither the movement of ever-changing bodies, nor the impact of Weather's movements, can be subject to control. One of the flipsides of endless change and infinite difference is inevitably also a potential for commodification and fixation. If bodies are indeed unbounded, omni-centred, multiple, non-hierarchical and open to infinite influences, then the marking and fixing of boundaries, and the essentializing of Body Weather as an ideology—as opposed to a method of training, to a form of dance, to a commodity, to butoh, etc.—, is problematic, to say the least.

Performance Project 'Something Here That Is Not There'

In 2005, together with the dancers Ailed Izurieta, Ema Nik Thomas and Milou Veiling, I initiated the performance project 'Something Here That Is Not There' (SHTINT). For this specific project, under the umbrella of Body Weather Amsterdam, we organized an additional day of training and rehearsing in a studio at OT301,⁷⁰ a legalized former squat turned into a socio-cultural centre with self-organized low-cost workspaces for artists. We dancers took care of the space, shared the modest rent amongst ourselves, and invited Katerina Bakatsaki to collaborate with us. Typically, we would spend the mornings training by ourselves in the group; Bakatsaki would then join later in the afternoon to lead the work for the rest of the day. By establishing ourselves at OT301, we were largely able to work without the pressure to deliver output. Outside of the conventional dance circuit and without any funding, we were able to determine our own way of working, to develop the artistic process in its own time, and to choose for ourselves the venues where we wanted to perform.

In this way, between 2005 and 2009, SHTINT realized dozens of mainly self-organized group performances directed by Bakatsaki at predominantly non-theatrical locations, both indoors as well as outdoors: private apartments, market places, streets, homes for the elderly, shelters for the homeless or for people with drug addictions or in rehab, care settings for people with cognitive disabilities, but also at dance festivals and at our home base OT301. The artistic

⁷⁰ See <http://www.ot301.nl/page=site.home>

leadership was in the hands of Bakatsaki, while the tasks related to the production of the performances were equally divided amongst all of us.

'Research-Oriented' Dance Production

At that time, there were two main production houses for independent choreographers in the Netherlands: Danswerkplaats Amsterdam and Dansateliers Rotterdam. As part of their tasks as production houses, these institutions provided space, time and a modest budget for dance productions that were oriented towards research and experimentation. Typically, such research projects were offered four weeks of production time and a moderate budget to realize a research proposal, concluding in a public presentation.

In my perception, and based on my conversations with other dancers and choreographers, these research-oriented dance productions frequently suffered from a recurring pattern. Though they would initially start out as a keen exploration of new and unfamiliar territories, halfway through the process the date for presenting the results would draw nearer, and this created anxiety amongst the participants, in particular the project leader, about the anticipated result of the project: *the* performance. To this end, the publicity machine had to be activated: a programme flyer had to be written; the announcement of the presentation had to be sent out; the curator of festival X had to be invited, the director of theatre Y, the representative of foundation Z, a hip dramaturge to possibly work with in the future, a favourable dance critic to get a (positive) review. The whole network had to be informed. Decisions had to be made: Where do you want the audience to be seated? What dance floor do you need? What is your lighting design? What costumes will you be using? What music have you chosen? When can we have the photographer come in to the rehearsal to take pictures? When will you be ready for a run-through? On Monday we scheduled a technical rehearsal! On Thursday we have the general! Guys, we have to be ready for the premiere on Friday evening!

As the end of the working period drew nearer, the atmosphere in the studio would tend to get more and more tense, shifting in mode from experimenting to quickly composing and setting some material, in order to give it a structure that

resembled a dance piece. When coming to watch these 'pieces', I would often wonder: "What have they actually been researching?"

Too often, giving in to the pressure and habits of performance-making suffocated the research process, long before it had actually been given any chance to get off the ground. At other times, it appeared that some choreographers were simply taking the opportunity of a 'research' production to put together a piece that they had more or less already conceived of beforehand. Thus, they were using the time and resources that they had been given for conducting 'research' in order to put together a finished dance performance that would hopefully come out well enough to be sold and taken on tour. Again, I would ask myself: "What does this have to do with 'research'?"

In my view, the problem of 'research-oriented' dance at that time was that the production houses were adhering to an idea of giving individual dance-makers the opportunity to realize 'their' personal proposal in order to develop 'their' personal artistic 'signature'. This format of doing 'research' more or less followed the conventional scheme of producing a dance performance. It was aimed at strengthening the artistic identity and the profile of the individual dance-maker, much more than promoting continued exchange between artists or developing a sustainable research culture.

Nevertheless, on the part of dance artists, one could perceive a growing desire for new and different formats of self-determined collaborative research and exchange at the conjunction of artistic practice and academic research.

My Path into Artistic Research

After some years of training with Body Weather Amsterdam and performing with SHTINT, there came a point of stagnation. While the training provided a solid and fruitful basis for the continuous investigation into and through the body, our attempts to put SHTINT on an economically more sustainable track were hitting a wall. We were working in the studio a minimum of two days a week, spending additional time with production work and rehearsals in the run-up to performances. Our attempts to obtain at least some basic funding were unsuccessful. Except for an occasional (small) compensation of our expenses by

the hosts of our performances, none of us received any salary for the work we did, and there was no indication that things were going to change fundamentally in the future.

At the same time, after years of focusing on dance, my interest in theory and philosophy was growing stronger—once again—and I was searching for opportunities to combine movement research based on Body Weather with theoretical research and discursive modes of reflecting on dance. The main motivation for me for originally exiting academia⁷¹ and entering the dance field had been my conviction that dance was *the* most adequate medium to practically study the connections between body, perception and consciousness. I was looking for an institution that could offer a proper framework for pursuing my interests in combining dance and theory/philosophy.

When the University of Amsterdam announced the launch of a multidisciplinary Artistic Research Master program that brought together artistic practice and academic research in 2007, it was clear to me right away that this was exactly what I had been looking for. I applied to enter the program and was admitted as one of five artists in the first cohort of students.⁷² At that time, the duration of the course was one-and-a-half years. In the first year, the curriculum focused entirely on theory classes. In the following six months, we were supposed to realize an artistic project.

In the practical research for my final project, I was experimenting with a solo version of the Manipulations, a sort of predecessor of what would later evolve into the so-called 'research score'. In the written part, which actually had to be submitted *before* even beginning to work on the practical part, I tried to come to terms with the epistemological foundations of artistic research in dance. At that time, the debate in the emergent field of artistic research was focused by and large on questions about the nature of the knowledge that was created in and through the arts, about the boundaries between art as such and art as research, and about the demarcation between academic and artistic 'research'.

⁷¹ I studied history, sociology and political science at the University of Freiburg and the University of Eugene/Oregon from 1990 to 1997.

⁷² The group of students consisted of a fine artist, a video maker, a playwright/theatre director, a pianist, and myself.

When I graduated from the program in early 2009, there remained a large gap between the theoretical and the practical part of my research. Partly, this gap was an effect of the program structure, which made a clear division between theory and practice. The work in the first year consisted exclusively of theory courses. During the phase of the practical project, there was no teaching at all except for a few meetings for supervision and for preparing the exhibition of our graduation works ("The Best of Both Worlds") at W139, a presentation and production space for contemporary art on the edge of Amsterdam's red light district. At the time of working on the written part, I still had only a vague idea of what I would actually be doing during the practical part, my final work.

The gap between practice and theory was, in a sense, also the result of a certain reluctance and hesitation on my part to write about Body Weather. In the wake of my participation in the Artistic Research Master's program, my relationship to Body Weather changed: I began to rethink and apply the work from the extended perspective of a practitioner-researcher. In my perception, this created a certain tension between me and in particular Bakatsaki, with whom I was working very closely at that time. It seemed that an issue of power and control had emerged between master and apprentice, teacher and student: I felt that I was not *officially* entitled to write about Body Weather, and that the permission was being withheld. In this situation, I decided to rather write about the discursive theoretical context of my artistic research in my Master's thesis, instead of about Body Weather as the practice from where I came.

My graduation work consisted of a mixed-media research-installation that ran for one month in the entrance room of the exhibition space. In this room, which was about 15m² in size and was visible both from the inside (the main exhibition space) as well as the outside (the street), I displayed various materials and documents (video, sound, image, text, diagrams) gathered during the course of my research. During the period of the exhibition, I used the installation space not only as a place for (re-)presenting my research, but also as a rehearsal studio and performance venue. I continued to practice in my little space during the opening hours while visitors were passing through, and performed both indoors and

outdoors. The presented material was continuously updated, and I was available to answer visitors' questions. In addition, I gave two lecture performances.

With the concept of a 'research installation', the performative research process was not interrupted or stopped by the move into the space of representation; rather, it continued to develop under the altered and somewhat unconventional conditions of an art space that was located on the edge of the city's red light district. Despite the unresolved problem of the gap between theory and practice in my research, this way of presenting the products of my research process was very different from what otherwise could typically be produced in four weeks under the roof of a dance production house, and in my perception it was much more appropriate to the specific needs and requirements of artistic research.

Chapter Two

The Manipulations with Body Weather Amsterdam

Introduction

Having outlined in the previous chapter some of the basic guidelines and ideas that underlie the Manipulations, this chapter further elaborates in more detail on the practice of the Manipulations in the context of the training with Body Weather Amsterdam. I will focus in particular on those aspects of the Manipulations that I personally consider most relevant in order to indicate what was at stake in the development of my doctoral research, and in the transformation of this training practice into a medium of artistic research.

As a result of this bias, my account of the Manipulations is necessarily partial and highly subjective.⁷³ It is, furthermore, provisional in the sense that it is open to future change and modification, and it is propositional in that it does not claim to make any statements about the practice of the Manipulations itself that can be proven as either true or false.⁷⁴ Refusing any authority, my aim is to share my understanding of the practice, and to articulate it in a way that encourages further unfinished thinking, with the hope of cultivating the potential for difference, rather than suppressing it.

My experience and conception of the Manipulations is largely shaped by my work with Body Weather Amsterdam, and by training with the two founders of the platform: Katerina Bakatsaki and Frank van de Ven. Moreover, I wish to acknowledge here that my knowledge and understanding of the Manipulations is based on countless times of practice with a great many practitioners who have contributed—each of them in their own way—to how I have come to conceive of this practice.

Transmission

⁷³ See Snow 2002 for a more comprehensive analysis and description of the Manipulations.

⁷⁴ See Latour 2004, 211-214, as well as my discussion of his notion of 'proposition' in Chapter Three.

I want to begin my account with a description of the typical process of transmission, as it took place at Body Weather Amsterdam. Usually, the transmission of the practice to newcomers would happen over the course of several days during a one-week intensive workshop. Every day, one or two sequences of the Manipulations would be introduced, for example Numbers One and Two on the first day, Numbers Three and Four on the second day, Number Five on the third, Six on the fourth, and Seven on the last day. At this initial stage of transmission, the focus would be on teaching the *form* of the Manipulations, i.e. on the specific way in which a touch-manipulation is given, where and how to place one's hands in order to give weight to the receiving body, how to direct one's weight in relation to the particular anatomical structure and individual features of the receiver's body. The teaching would be done by either Bakatsaki or Van de Ven, by demonstrating one individual touch-manipulation after the other on the body of an experienced practitioner. This demonstration would be accompanied by verbal explanations and there would be time to address further questions brought up by novice students.

After the introduction of a complete sequence, for example Manipulations Number One, participants would get together in couples and repeat the same sequence together as a group. Ideally, the couples would be mixed so that a more experienced practitioner would partner up with a novice, to ensure that the latter would not only have the experience of *giving* the newly learned Manipulations, but would also get a first-hand experience of how it feels to *receive* them from someone with experience. Typically, a few more guidelines would be given out beforehand as how to approach the actions of giving and receiving. For example, the givers would be instructed to work gently and carefully, and to not push or force anything. The receivers would be asked to relax their bodies, to make themselves available to be moved, and to breathe out making an audible hissing sound. The giver would be instructed to closely listen to the breathing of the receiver and to always give a touch-manipulation in sync with the exhalation.

In the course of the workshop week, a new section of the series would be introduced every day, and the sequences learned during the previous days

would be repeated. Accumulating knowledge in this way, sequence by sequence, participants would thus have learned the entire series from One to Seven by the end of the week. At this stage of the transmission, the focus is mainly on teaching the form of the Manipulations, to make sure that the novice acquires enough basic knowledge to continue the practice—if desired—in the regular weekly trainings.

This first phase of the transmission of the Manipulations provides novices with no more than a starter's package that consists of some basic tools, the main components and a succinct manual. It is the kick-off to an open-ended process of learning-by-doing. It is then literally in the hands of the practitioners to find out, in the future, what it is that they will come to learn in and through the practice. After the initial week-long introduction, it typically takes some time for the practitioner to first become familiar with the *form* of the practice, to learn each individual touch-manipulation by heart, and to remember their order. In this early phase of getting acquainted with the practice, the focus is on learning to *give* the Manipulations. In line with Spatz, one could say that the emphasis at this stage is on embodying the technical knowledge that structures the practice of the Manipulations in the form of relatively stable and reliable pathways of action.⁷⁵ Repetition, and practicing the Manipulations with more advanced and experienced practitioners, are crucial factors in the time following the initial transmission. In the weekly trainings, the knowledge that had been embodied in and through the Manipulations would be passed on from practitioner to practitioner through learning-by-doing.

As soon as newcomers have become more acquainted with the basic technical principles of the form, the focus gradually shifts from learning *what* to give to learning *how* to give. This is the moment when one has gathered enough knowledge of the practice in order to open up to the Manipulations' complexity. One starts to realize that the aim of training is not the successful execution of a pre-conceived action, but to construe the practice as a site of investigation, where questions are potentially more interesting and productive than finding

⁷⁵ See Spatz 2015, 41, as well as my discussion of his notion of 'technique' in Chapter Three.

answers. These questions may at times seem banal, but they invariably touch on fundamental issues of the human condition – what a ‘body’ is and what it does. One soon comes to realize, furthermore, that there are no definite answers, because bodies are different every day, and that knowledge in and through the body can only ever be provisional, since the conditions for the possibility of bodily knowledge are constantly changing, as are the bodies themselves.

Learning the practice of the Manipulations is not the same as learning how to ride a bike or to swim. While both riding a bike and swimming can be construed as practices structured by technique, the extent to which these daily practices become automatised is very different from Body Weather’s approach to the process of embodying the Manipulations. In the Manipulations, any form of automatised action is considered as cutting into and limiting the wealth of possibly infinite relations. Automatisation is understood as a form of fixing and reducing the complexity of experience. To learn and to master a technique to the point that its automatisation masters the practitioner is completely the opposite to the aim of the Manipulations, which is a practice that underlines the active role of reflective awareness in the process of embodiment.

The Bracketing of Language

One of the strategies employed in the Manipulations, and at the same time one of the few outspoken rules, is to abstain from using language during the practice. In their interaction, giver and receiver should not talk to each other to share their experience or to immediately give feedback to their partner; for example, whether or not a specific touch-manipulation is effectively ‘working’ for the receiver. The idea behind the suspension or bracketing of language during the Manipulations is that it prompts practitioners to activate and intensify, by all means, other modes of non-verbal communication; for example, listening to the rhythm and quality of their partner’s breathing, sensing the effect of touch and weight on their partner’s body, and being alert to any kind of bodily reaction to their giving.

To avoid misunderstandings, what I consider the ‘bracketing of language’ in the Manipulations refers first and foremost to the suspension of verbal conversation

between the giver and receiver during the practice, in order to focus on sensation. This does not mean that language is *fully* bracketed, but that the exchange between the two bodies is restricted to non-verbal physical means of communication. The ‘bracketing of language’ in the Manipulations thus concerns a particular *modality* of the expression of language – the verbal exchange between the two partners.

Having said that, the following also needs to be pointed out: as I witnessed in my own and others’ practice, the risk of bracketing this particular modality of explicit verbal expression is that it is also extended to another modality, which is the implicit action of thinking in the medium of words. In other words, the imperative of ‘No talking!’ can easily become misunderstood as an imperative to not think (in the medium of words) in order to be able to better focus on sensation. In this latter case, then, the bracketing is no longer partial, but becomes extended—whether intended or not—into a comprehensive suspension of language.⁷⁶

...

“Is this body part really completely relaxed?”

“Does this feel like the right direction?”

“Could it relax even a bit more?”

“Is this too much weight?”

“Are we at the limit?”

...

“Is this painful?”

“Can we go any further?”

“Are you aware of this tension here?”

“Is it possible to breathe through the pain?”

“What happens if I change my focus and re-direct my attention?”

...

⁷⁶ See also below the section ‘Suspending Thinking (in the Medium of Words)’.

Questions like these, amongst many others, inevitably come up in the course of the practice. The problem is not the fact that they *do* come up. On the contrary, these questions genuinely belong to the practice. They are a vital part of the ongoing negotiations between the giver and the receiver during the practice. The worst thing that can happen is to stop asking questions, because this is a sign that the doing of the practice has become automatic, and that the potential richness of the experience has become reduced. Indeed, the constant questioning of one's own perceptions is the driving force that keeps the practice alive and thriving.

The idea behind the suspension of speech is to shift the mode of articulating these questions from verbal to non-verbal, and to work on refining the sensorial capacities so that the conversation can happen by means other than through language. The bracketing of language as the privileged means of human communication requires practitioners to establish and develop new or different sets of relations between each other. It asks practitioners to tune in more deeply to each other's bodies and to open themselves up to other sensorial channels of communication. Bracketing language provides the opportunity to read and listen to, more closely, not only the body of your partner, but also to your own body. The suspension of language is thus a constraint that enables the reconfiguring of the material means of communication by refining the sensorial tools of exchange, in particular the sense of touch. Touch becomes the privileged medium of a mode of communication that happens in between bodies and under the skin – subcutaneous communication.

If the worst thing that can happen is to stop asking questions, the second worst thing is to ask your receiving partner whether a given touch-manipulations feels 'right', or to explicitly comment on your partner's giving, for example by asking them to give more (or less) weight, or by telling them that the direction of the given weight does not feel good to you. Of course, one is always free to speak up in a situation of immediate danger, for example in case of an existing injury, or because of a real risk of contracting one. But as a general rule, one should abstain from using any language to communicate. Linguistic shortcuts are seen as reducing the complexity and intensity of experience, and as obstacles to the

development of sensuous knowledge. The use of language is considered too easy a solution to the challenge of non-verbal communication between giver and receiver; it provides the possibility to make shortcuts, and to bypass the necessary creation of new sets of inter-corporeal relations and of other modes of knowing between the two bodies – which are the actual goals of the practice.

Linguistic Framing

There is yet another issue, which has to do with the understanding of language that underlies its bracketing. According to Bakatsaki, it is one of the key targets of all Body Weather training to strip the process of sensing from linguistic frames. While she acknowledges that sensing does not happen outside of language, and that a pre-linguistic stage does not exist, the undoing of embodied language concepts is a major point of concern for her. Bakatsaki herself has experimented with different modes of speaking during work that is similar to the Manipulations, but she deliberately chose not to work with speech during the Manipulations, since she preferred to keep concept-forming and the process of speaking completely separate from this practice.⁷⁷

The problem that I see with the notion of undoing linguistic frames from sensing is that it seems to suggest a uni-lateral power relationship between language and sensing. It appears that language is conceived as the oppressive power that colonizes and dominates the sensing body, which thus makes it desirable to liberate bodies from the imperialism of words and concepts. To me, however, this seems a one-sided and limited idea of the relationship between language and body. While there may be some truth to conceiving of language as holding the potential power to frame our sensing and to shape our perception of experience, it also seems possible to me to construe the relationship differently, and to emphasize the transformative potential of language as a tool for changing these very frames.

To me, the question is whether language can possibly be employed in the Manipulations in such a way that neither imposes linguistic frames, nor immediately reduces the complexity of experience by offering potential

⁷⁷ See Bakatsaki 2018.

shortcuts. How can we change and re-configure the material conditions of communication between the two bodies, while at the same time maintaining the complexity of experience, and without principally excluding the use of language during the practice? Is there a possibility for sensing and language to co-exist, and to correlate, without one dominating the other?

Apart from this, it seems to me that the proposed undoing of existing language frames does not itself operate outside of language, and that the aim of undoing language concepts must not be to end up simply in speechlessness. The pedagogy of *Body Weather* is crafted not only on non-verbal learning-by-doing, but also on words. It employs language as a means to transmit and direct practices. As we will see in Chapter Four, *Body Weather* draws on a particular vocabulary in the instruction of the training and when giving feedback. Therefore, it seems not entirely unproblematic to me to proclaim the undoing of linguistic frames, while smuggling in new ones by the back door. Even if these new linguistic frames advocate notions such as change and openness, they are still framing, and potentially fixing, experience in these terms.

Suspending Thought (in the Medium of Words)

In my own experience of practicing the Manipulations for many years, the suspension of language and the emphasis on the sensorial qualities of experience often went along with a rather repressive attitude towards thought occurring during the practice.⁷⁸ One of the side effects of bracketing language is that any thoughts that emerge during the practice, and which are not directly related to it, are considered to be distracting, and to interfere with the material practice. It seems that the bracketing of language in the Manipulations, and the foregrounding of the tactile, kinaesthetic and proprioceptive properties of experience, often go together with the assumption that the having of thoughts, likewise, needs to be suspended, as if the proper place of thought—and by extension the act of thinking—is outside of the actual practice.

⁷⁸ I do not want to generalize my experience to other practitioners, but I would guess that my case is not an exception.

There may be good pragmatic reasons for why the bracketing of language in the Manipulations is chosen as a pedagogical strategy, particularly in the phase of transmission and early learning. It is important for practitioners to train their sensitivity and to develop their capacity to communicate non-verbally, in the medium of the senses. I do also acknowledge that it is important to emphasize that there is a kind of thinking beyond words – a thinking *in* the doing, *in* the sensing, *in* the action of making dance. It has been an important philosophical project to situate thought beyond language,⁷⁹ and to develop alternative epistemologies of practice that are able to account for non-linguistic modes of knowing.⁸⁰

I want to propose that the revaluation of non-linguistic modes of thinking and knowing would be better enforced not by the *exclusion* of linguistic modes from the practice, but by their *tempering*. In the case of the Manipulations, I see a real risk that the repeated and continuous exclusion of language over the course of years of practice may eventually become embodied as a separation between language and practice, creating a gap between words and worlds. I consider it one of the core issues of artistic research to challenge this division, and to give equal value to linguistic and non-linguistic modes of articulating the knowledge that is created in, and embodied through, artistic practice. My research reconsiders and revises the bracketing of language in the Manipulations, and it explores how its inclusion can possibly lead to new and different kinds of thinking and knowing.

(Imaginary) Breathing Through

An important aspect of the Manipulations is the cultivation of a specific mode of attention: omni-central, non-hierarchical, distributed, peripheral and reflective. One of the practices that I was introduced to in the training with Body Weather

⁷⁹ See for example Manning 2012, 213-228, and Manning 2013, 149-171.

⁸⁰ The notion of non-linguistic modes of thinking is further discussed in Chapter Three and Chapter Six.

Amsterdam as a means to develop this particular kind of attention—and that I came to rely on in my own research—is called ‘Breathing Through’.⁸¹

In this hands-on duo practice, one person lies on the ground with closed eyes, relaxing their body and breathing out so that it makes a hissing sound.⁸² After the lying partner has taken a couple of breaths to arrive on the floor, and the giving partner has tuned in to the rhythm of lying partner’s breathing, the giving partner gently places one hand somewhere on the torso of the lying person, without giving any extra weight. The person lying on the floor then starts to send their breath towards the hand, breathing in and out, as it were, through the place of touch. The person touching the lying body observes the movement of the breath with their hand on the torso, while paying close attention to the smallest perceivable sensations, which might be a change of the skin’s temperature, a tiny movement or a tremor of a muscle – anything that can be perceived.

After a couple of breaths, the giver’s hand moves to another place on the lying person’s torso, who now re-directs their breath and sends it to this new place of touch. Both partners continue to work in this way for some time. After having visited a couple of spots on the torso, the giver starts to touch parts of the body beyond the torso; then, after some more time has passed, the giver can also use the other hand for touching, offering the lying partner the opportunity to breathe through two places of touch simultaneously (both partners are still accompanied and supported by the hissing sound of the lying person’s breath).

This may go on for altogether about ten 10 minutes, until the touching person withdraws. The lying person then continues to work alone. By drawing on their memory and by using their imagination, they return to as many places of touch

⁸¹ It was Frank van de Ven who first developed this practice (Van de Ven 2019).

⁸² This hissing sound is created by curling the front part of the tongue upwards towards the gums, leaving open a small gap through which the exhaled air can pass. In the Manipulations, the hissing sound supports the attuning of the two bodies. Originally, when I was introduced to Breathing Through, the hissing was not a part of the practice. However, in the course of the collaborative research for the second artistic part, we realized that the hissing sound not only intensified the bodies’ perception of space, but that it also helped both partners to stay attentive and not drift away.

as they are able to, and they continue to breathe through these virtual hands. They may choose to explore the difference between breathing through one place of touch and several places of touch at the same time. They may also imagine being touched at other places of their own choice, and combine these places of virtual touch with places where they have actually been touched. There is no limit to the potential number of—virtual and actual—places of touch that can become part of the exploration.

In the practice of Breathing Through, no part of the body is privileged or the centre of attention. The attention is not fixed to, or focused on, any particular place of the body, but is distributed to many 'centres' at the same time. It reaches out to the body's peripheries, touching the perceptual limits at the threshold to the unknown. It is completely up to the receiver how to construct the process, and how to employ memory and imagination in order to (re-)create the experience of Breathing Through.

After having worked alone for a couple of minutes on what I call 'Imaginary Breathing Through',⁸³ the receiver brings the work to an end and the two partners have a verbal exchange about the observations they made during the practice. This exchange might encompass observations about places where the sensation of the breath's movement could pass through the body more or less easily; about the difference between breathing through either one or several places at the same time; about the differences of intensity between actual and virtual places of touch; about the capacity to split one's attention to several places of touch simultaneously, and about how this omni-central mode of attention affected the body's perception in relation to itself and to its environs.

(Imaginary) Breathing Through as a Relational Technique of Alteration

Both versions of the exercise, Breathing Through and Imaginary Breathing Through, can be conceived as open-ended investigations into the relations between touch, skin and breathing. But they are more than that. The practice(s) of (Imaginary) Breathing Through offer(s) an approach to studying the process

⁸³ In the collaborative research for the second artistic part, we also spoke of 'Imaginary Hands'.

of perception through an exploration into the constitution of attention. (Imaginary) Breathing Through fosters a notion of 'receiving' that foregrounds the share of activity in the process of perception. There is a great amount of action in perception,⁸⁴ regardless of the fact that the particular modality of action—attention—is not easily available to be perceived from the outside.

Omni-central reflective attention plays a crucial role in the alteration of a body's perception in relation to itself and to its environs: the image of wholeness and of the unity of one's own body becomes dissolved, and the body's self-perception as a separate entity is destabilized. As a result, what comes to the fore are a body's inner and outer perceptual peripheries. The skin plays a particular role as a boundary and passage that is activated from both sides by—actual and virtual—touch, as well as by the receiver sending their breath to the place of touch. Both the actions of touching/being touched as well as breathing through the place of touch increase the perception of the skin's permeability. This bilateral, reciprocal opening of the boundary-passage marked by the skin enables the activation and creation of different relations between the two bodies, and, by extension, of the relations between body, place, things, objects, etc.

(Imaginary) Breathing Through is a preparatory practice for the Manipulations that enables a body to alter the relations it has to itself and to other bodies. According to the sociologist Olli Pyyhtinen (2016), the notion of 'relations' is broader than that of 'relationships'. Following him, relations are not connections between pre-existing elements. Instead, relations constitute the properties and capabilities of the related elements, which are 'connectivity', 'connectedness', 'connections', 'links' and 'associations', as Pyyhtinen writes.⁸⁵ He further underlines that the existence of relations cannot be taken for granted, but that their creation is a laborious task. Following Pyyhtinen, I suggest that we consider (Imaginary) Breathing Through as a laborious practice for (re-)creating relations, structured by techniques of breathing—hissing—and by an omni-central mode of reflective attention. The relational technique of

⁸⁴ See Noë 2004.

⁸⁵ See Pyyhtinen 2016, 29.

(Imaginary) Breathing Through plays a crucial role in the constitution of 'receiving' in the Manipulations.

Sensing, Perceiving, Reflecting

What else is there, besides Imaginary Breathing Through, that informs the process of receiving in the Manipulations? I have already mentioned above that the Manipulations are concerned with a deep relaxation of bodies. One of the main tasks of the receiver is to work constantly on minimizing muscle tension, and making their body available to be moved. Any kind of movement that could possibly be initiated by the receiver should be bracketed during the practice, similar to the bracketing of language. In order to drive on the action of minimizing muscle tension, receivers are prompted to constantly reflect on the following three questions:

1. Is my muscle tension zero?
2. Are there any places of holding?
3. Are there any places where I am in a mode of stand-by, i.e. ready to move by myself?

By approaching the action of sensing-receiving through reflecting on these three research questions, practitioners have concrete points of reference through which they can examine the process of perception in relation to different qualities of tension in their bodies. However, reflecting on the perception of sensations may create more problems than solutions. Already, the differentiation of tension that is implied by the three questions may be a reason to rack your brain, because they presuppose the existence of different kinds of tension by making a distinction between 'zero', 'holding' and 'stand-by'. However, what *are* the qualitative differences between these kinds of tension? Can the differences actually be detected and felt?

From a pedagogical perspective, the point of making this differentiation is to encourage the practitioner to search for appropriate strategies to efficiently tackle each particular kind of muscular tension in its most appropriate way. For example, there is the kind of tension that can be released by the act of will: as

soon as you notice tension in your shoulders, you may be able to let go of it by telling yourself to drop your shoulders.

There is another kind of tension that often cannot be released so easily by an act of will, because it has hardened to the extent that it has become fixed in the form of a permanent holding. In this case, the tension might stay, even when you make the deliberate attempt to relax, for example, your shoulders. It may be possible to release some of the holding—for example, by breathing through, or by letting your arms hang loose—however, holding is a more persistent form of tension, and it may take more time and practice to get rid of it.

‘Stand-by’, finally, is yet another kind of tension that is so minimal that it is hardly perceptible. Stand-by is a state of getting ready, of building up a certain readiness potential to move *before* the actual execution of a movement – it is a proto-movement.⁸⁶ In the Manipulations, for example, stand-by is created by the mere expectation of being touched or moved by the giver, and by the receiver’s attention moving to the according body part.

The task for the receiver is to constantly check their body in relation to the three questions, and to ‘cut’ any of these different kinds of tension as soon as they come into their perception. The action of cutting and switching off tension, holding and stand-by is an ongoing and open-ended practice that by its nature cannot ever reach its goal. Throughout the Manipulations, tensions of all kinds inevitably build up. The action of releasing tension can easily become a habit and routine. One of the objectives of reflecting on the three questions is to continuously reactivate one’s attention in order to avoid falling into automatic repetition.

Meta-Reflection

⁸⁶ Manning conceptualizes the building up of movement potential in the form of stand-by through the notion of ‘preacceleration’, which she defines as follows: “Preacceleration refers to the virtual force of movement’s taking form. It is the feeling of movement’s in-gathering, a welling that propels the directionality of how movement moves. In dance, this is felt as the virtual momentum of a movement’s taking form before we actually move.” (Manning 2012, 6)

The experience of a touch-manipulation can be overwhelming. The sensation of pain, for example, can be so intense that all of your attention is drawn to one place in the body. As an effect of working (too) hard on cutting the tension that is building up, and of trying to breathe through the pain, your attention may eventually become fixed and focused on one particular area (of touch, tension, pain) that starts to assume a central place and captures all your attention. What can you do if this happens? How can you get out of it? How did you get into this situation in the first place?

Most likely, it was out of habit. Your attention became attracted and focused by the intensity of sensations, and your perception of these sensations signalled: "PAIN! Oh! MY pain!" You got stuck in the perception of pain, and the more attention you paid to the sensation of pain, the more fixed you became in the organization of this sensation, in your perception of the sensation, and the more difficult it became to make a change.⁸⁷ Your attention got fixed and centred in the perception of the sensation of pain; everything else, every other sensation of your body, was pushed into the background. Your perception was captured by one particular sensation amongst the potentially infinite number of sensations you were possibly able to attend to. All your attention went to a sensation, allowing it to take centre stage.

This is the cue for meta-reflection to intervene. By constantly reflecting on the process from a macro-perspective, practitioners strive to obtain a picture of the overall situation and to possibly intervene in the ongoing process.⁸⁸ The act of receiving should not at all be mistaken for passivity or submission, although this is how it may seem when looking at it from a distance, from outside the practice. The receivers are neither extradited to their givers, nor do they become merely

⁸⁷ There are, of course, also other kinds of sensations than pain, sensations that are enjoyable and that one does not tend to resist. The point here is not to judge a sensation as being good or bad, pleasurable or uncomfortable, but to highlight that it can potentially (conventionally, habitually) become subtracted and placed at the centre of attention, drawing attention away from other parts and places of the body, and reducing multiplicity in the field of experience. Against such a contraction and centring of attention, Body Weather promotes a radically non-hierarchical approach to sensation and attention. See also Fuller 2014.

⁸⁸ In the vocabulary of Body Weather, this is called 'monitoring'. See Chapter Five for the Glossary.

passive objects of their own experience. Instead, they play an active role in how the practice takes shape. By reflecting on the process of perception, and by constantly re-directing attention, the receiver cuts into the process of perception before it has the chance to organize micro-sensations into a macro-perception.

To give an idea of the workings of reflection, consider the following example. In Manipulations Number One, the giver places their hands on the receiver's legs above the knees and directs weight through them into the ground. Typically, the perception of the receiver will recognize the accompanying sensations as being caused by the hands of the giver; it will extract the recognition of 'hand' from the field of experience and focus solely on that. What meta-reflection does is to cut this exclusive perception of 'hand' and to re-direct attention to the field of sensory experience. This effectuates a shift in the mode of perception from recognizing and knowing that "This is the hand of my partner" to a mode of directly experiencing sensations. The macro-perception of 'hand' becomes dissolved into micro-sensations of intensities. With this cutting and dissolving of perception from macro into micro, the linguistic frame of the concept of 'hand' is undone.⁸⁹ In my understanding, it is this technique of triangulating sensation, perception and reflection that sets the grounds for an altered perception of 'body', for an altered ecology of experience, and for a 'body without organs'.⁹⁰

Giving and Receiving

I have already indicated above that the roles of giving and receiving the Manipulations alternate throughout the practice. Partners seamlessly swap

⁸⁹ This is how I understand the operation of undoing linguistic frames, as discussed above. The concept representing the perception of 'hand' is undone and broken apart into the specific sensations that are possibly triggered by 'its' touch. I say 'possibly', because as a result of the omni-centric mode of attention, one does not actually know who or what exactly *causes* a sensation to happen. A sensation is most likely constituted by multiple relations. As a product of co-embodiment between giver and receiver (and the environment), one can never be sure which other influences have taken a share in its formation. The number of possible influences is infinite.

⁹⁰ The concept of the 'body without organs' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) is discussed further below.

roles after Manipulations Number Two, Four, Five, Six and Seven, with the giver becoming receiver, and vice versa. It is important to see that the actions of giving and receiving are not separate from each other, but rather overlapping and interweaving. Not only do the two partners alternate the roles of giving and receiving, but the approach to the act of giving also draws on some of the same techniques that structure the process of receiving, such as the minimizing of muscle tension and the heightened awareness to breathing in order to intensify the connections between the bodies.

I also mentioned above in the section on transmission that the main focus at the beginning is on learning by heart the *form* of the touch-applications. As soon as the form has become sufficiently internalized, the focus shifts to questions related to the *how* of giving, and a whole new field of investigation comes within reach, opening up the potential complexity of the practice. While it may seem from the outside that 'giving' is the active part and 'receiving' the passive one, I hope that I have been able to show that it is far more complex than that.

Throughout the practice, the two partners enact both roles and swap perspectives, carefully listening to, and reading, each other's bodies. They train and learn to use non-verbal means of communication in order to negotiate their limits and boundaries. They enable their partners to experience their bodies in ways they would otherwise never be able to do. They agree to bracket their emotions and their preconceptions of what they know about each other in order to enable one another to have an encounter with the unknown. They render their bodies into *Weather* for the other. In this sense, they *become Weather*.

From Inter-Subjectivity to Inter-Corporeality

Becoming *Weather* in the Manipulations coincides with a significant change in the terms of relations between the two partners in the practice. The usual social conventions between two human subjects are temporarily suspended as a means to clear the path for a mutual agreement between the two bodies to lend themselves to each other as tools for changing the condition of their bodies. What is the goal of this (ex-)change?

One of the aims of the Manipulations is to alter a body's relations to itself and to other bodies, human as well as non-human. I consider the process of alteration in terms of a shift from the inter-subjective to the inter-corporeal. In the Manipulations, for the time of the practice, the social, psychological, linguistic and emotional conventions of inter-subjective human relationships become bracketed. Instead of inter-subjective relationships, it is the physical properties of inter-corporeal relations in terms of touch, breath, kinaesthesia and proprioception, among others, that become foregrounded and intensified. Needless to say, this shift from the inter-subjective to the inter-corporeal is not a state that can ever be fully attained by a practitioner, but is a matter of degree. 'Alteration' is not the ultimate endpoint that one finally arrives at, but a movement *towards*. It is not a result or a product *of* the Manipulations, but a process *with* the Manipulations. Here, the process *is* the product.

Bracketing

In the phenomenological tradition, the action of bracketing, or suspending, the 'natural attitude' in the encounter with a given phenomenon is a key methodological principle. The idea behind this is that by suspending our ordinary way of taking a certain phenomenon as given, the focus is shifted to the question of *how* this phenomenon is given to us, i.e. how its appearance is (co-)constituted through our conscious engagement with it.⁹¹

Similarly, in the Manipulations, the bracketing of language and of emotions is a way to suspend our 'natural attitude' in relation to the body of our partner, and to shift our attention from what seems to be a body that is simply given to the question of how this body is given to us, i.e. how it is constituted in and through our conscious experience of it. It needs to be pointed out, however, that to 'bracket' something does not mean that what is bracketed has become completely absent. Parviainen and Aromaa (2015) suggest that "bracketing is not neglecting or ignoring something but changing focuses regarding the contemplated object".⁹² I understand 'bracketing' as a kind of putting at rest, a

⁹¹ See Pakes 2011, 41.

⁹² Parviainen and Aromaa 2015, 10.

temporary disabling, a deactivation. According to this, the bracketing of language does not mean that you no longer know how to speak, but that you are not making use of that knowledge, and instead are shifting your focus to other means of communication.

Similarly, bracketing emotions does not mean that you do no longer have emotions, but that you choose not to express them, for example by rather shifting your attention to the concomitant feelings and sensations. Bracketing subjectivity does not mean that you get rid of it, but that you focus, for example, on suspending the will to move 'by yourself', and on allowing yourself to be moved by someone else. The technique of bracketing thus plays an important role in the process of alteration, because it lays the ground for the emergence of an altered network of inter-corporeal relations, in which inter-subjective relationships are backgrounded.

The 'Body without Organs'

Training with Body Weather has been likened to the killing of your body ego.⁹³ I do not agree with this assessment. In my understanding of the training, it is misleading. The drastic language suggests an unnecessary—and unintelligent—degree of violence against the body-self. I do not consider the *bracketing* of the self as a *killing* of the body-ego. My notion of training with Body Weather is closer to what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write about the making of the 'body without organs' (BwO).⁹⁴ Following them, making yourself a BwO is an

⁹³ See Cardone 2002. See also Taylor 2010 for a critique of the notion of 'emptiness' in butoh and Body Weather training.

⁹⁴ In Chapter One, I have already pointed out the connections between Min Tanaka/Body Weather and the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. In 1997/1998, Frank van de Ven and Rolf Meesters led a research project titled 'How do you make yourself a dancing Body without Organs', inspired by the Master's thesis of dancer/choreographer Claudia Flammin (1996), who draws on the concept of the BwO in order to articulate the philosophical implications of Body Weather and Tanaka's work (see <http://www.rolfm.dds.nl/webbwo/textzero.htm>).

The concept of the BwO was very important for my own development as a performer and artist-researcher. I first came across the BwO in 2001, when I read the corresponding chapter in *A Thousand Plateaus* in a theory course at the School for New Dance Development in Amsterdam. Some time after I started

endeavour that needs to be approached with caution and intelligence. It does not mean killing your ego, but always retaining enough subjectivity in order to survive the existing reality while advancing the creation of the BwO:

You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn; and you have to keep small supplies of signifi-ance and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it, when things, persons, even situations, force you to; and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality [...] If you free it with too violent an action, if you blow apart the strata without taking precautions, then instead of drawing the plane you will be killed, plunged into a black hole, or even dragged toward catastrophe. Staying stratified—organized, signified, subjected—is not the worst that can happen; the worst that can happen is if you throw the strata into demented or suicidal collapse, which brings them back down on us heavier than ever.”⁹⁵

The point is thus not to kill and get rid of your organism, but to keep alive a sufficient share of your subjectivity so that you are able to change the *organization* of the organism:

[...] The BwO is not at all the opposite of the organs. The organs are not its enemies. The enemy is the organism. The BwO is opposed not to the organs but to that organization of the organs called organism.”⁹⁶

training at Body Weather Amsterdam in 2002, the connection between the two became clear to me, which felt like a kind of revelation at that moment. Body Weather and the BwO were a perfect match. However, the connection was so obvious to me that articulating Body Weather through the BwO seemed to be anything but innovative. Therefore, when I started with my doctoral studies in 2009, I *bracketed* the BwO, hoping to discover concepts in relation to Body Weather that would be able to shed new and different light on the practice. Nevertheless, I recapture the concept of the BwO here, to point out the spirit of rigorous and relentless experimentation that is at work in Body Weather, and to indicate the potential risks and pitfalls. As Deleuze and Guattari state so clearly, making yourself a BwO is not a question of violent exorcism or self-destruction, but one of careful and well-considered action, requiring the development of adequate *techniques*. The Manipulations can be considered a technique designed for making a BwO. One of the original aims of my research was to articulate the (bodily) knowledge that is created in this process, and to reveal the language that is employed in directing it. In the further course of my research, the focus shifted to the question of how a BwO *thinks*, and how this thought can be brought to expression through language (see Chapter Three to Chapter Seven).

⁹⁵ Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 160/161.

⁹⁶ Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 158.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, by striving to *kill* your body-ego, you are missing the target. You will botch making yourself a BwO, because if your subjectivity is completely erased, then who or what could be the drive behind the re-organization of the organism? Instead of killing your ego, it is wise to retain enough subjectivity in order to advance a rigorous program of experimentation. They propose approaching the project of creating the BwO like this:

This is how it should be done: Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times. It is through a meticulous relation with the strata that one succeeds in freeing lines of flight, causing conjugated flows to pass and escape and bringing forth continuous intensities for a BwO. Connect, conjugate, continue: a whole 'diagram', as opposed to still signifying and subjective programs. We are in a social formation; first see how it is stratified for us and in us and at the place where we are; then descend from the strata to the deeper assemblage within which we are held; gently tip the assemblage, making it pass over to the side of the plane of consistency. It is only there that the BwO reveals itself for what it is: connection of desires, conjunction of flows, continuum of intensities. You have constructed your own little machine, ready when needed to be plugged into other collective machines.⁹⁷

One thing to keep in mind during all work of experimentation is that making yourself a BwO is a practice of going *towards* a limit, and that it is not an endpoint that could ever be reached: "You never reach the Body without Organs, you can't reach it, you are forever attaining it, it is a limit."⁹⁸

Body Weather training, and in particular the Manipulations as part of that program, affords practitioners a way to study, and experiment with, techniques of displacing subjectivity by cultivating a kind of inter-corporeality that foregrounds relations to the more-than human. In my own experience, practicing the Manipulations with sensitivity and intelligence provides relatively safe grounds for such a displacement, and for encountering the unknown in a

⁹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 161.

⁹⁸ Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 150. For a discussion of the BwO in relation to touch, see Manning 2007, 134-161.

responsible and informed manner. Nevertheless, the displacement of subjectivity and the encounter with the unknown do not come for free. They inevitably require exposing oneself to situations of vulnerability, and this may not be suitable for everyone. Sometimes, and for some practitioners, it may be better not to take the risk. Pushing the limits can be serious stuff, and before pushing them it might be better to approach them with care, or even to stay safely away from them. Sensitivity and sharpness of mind are indispensable elements at all times and for all parties.

There is, however, a protection mechanism that usually prevents some, particularly newcomers to the practice, from physical or emotional harm. The process of learning the Manipulations, and of acquiring the capacity to enter the practice in-depth, usually takes long enough so as to prepare practitioners for the boundary experiences that might show up at a more advanced stage of the practice. At this point, one is usually able to read the signs indicating whether this is the right way to go or not. It is never the aim to cause someone to suffer mental, emotional or physical injuries. The practice can, nevertheless, be very powerful, and for some it may be better to stay away from it.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ During my time with Body Weather Amsterdam, Bakatsaki and van de Ven always approached newcomers with the utmost care and sensitivity. There were cases in which they advised practitioners not to join or to drop out of the training because it overburdened them.

Chapter Three

The Manipulations as a Knowledge Practice

Introduction

Chapter One introduced the Manipulations by providing a short outline of the emergence of the practice in the context of Body Weather's formation in Japan, and by presenting some of the main ideas underlying the training. It also traced my own engagement with Body Weather Amsterdam in the wider context of research-oriented dance in the Netherlands, and my motivation to enter the field of artistic research. Chapter Two looked at the process of transmitting the Manipulations, and outlined in more detail the techniques that inform and activate the practice. This chapter takes the discussion further onto a conceptual plane. In the first part, I consider the Manipulations as a knowledge-practice from various perspectives.¹⁰⁰ The second part presents different views about the relationship between movement/experience, language, and embodiment in order to offer a basis for understanding the significance of the research score and how it responds to a number of both theoretical and practical challenges.

The Manipulations as a Practice of Articulating Bodies

Following Spinoza, Bruno Latour (2004) proposes conceiving of the action of knowledge in terms of knowing how to *articulate* bodies in order to enhance their capacity to affect and be affected. Latour develops his notion of 'articulation' through an example from the perfume industry, where the students' sense of smell is trained with the help of an odour kit (*malette à odeurs*), a collection of distinct fragrances used to enhance their capacity to differentiate various scents. As an effect of training the sense of smell with the odour kit, Latour explains, the students become more and more articulate by being able to differentiate smells in ever more detail.¹⁰¹ To be articulate,

¹⁰⁰ See Gehm et al. 2007.

¹⁰¹ "Through the training session, [the student] learned to have a nose that allowed her to inhabit a (richly differentiated odoriferous) world. Thus body parts are progressively acquired at the same time as 'world counter-parts' are being registered in a new way. Acquiring a body is thus a progressive enterprise

according to Latour, has nothing to do with claiming authority, but rather indicates a capacity to be affected by differences. Eventually, the goal of learning to be affected is to be able to produce differences, because the more differences there are, the more articulations of these differences can possibly exist.¹⁰²

Whereas in Latour's model it is the odour kit that serves as a toolbox to learn how to be affected by the sense of smell, I propose considering the Manipulations to be a toolkit that is made up of a series of specific tactile-kinaesthetic hands-on operations that articulate a body through the sense of touch, and as a practice to articulate bodies in order to enhance their capacity to affect and be affected. By training to articulate bodies with the Manipulations, practitioners increasingly learn to produce and register differences created by touch.

Latour conceives of an articulation as the making of a 'proposition', which is very different from making a 'statement'. Whereas propositions are more or less articulate, statements are true or false,¹⁰³ and the facts they represent are non-negotiable.¹⁰⁴ "With statements", he writes, "one can never compose a world at once solid, interpreted, controversial and meaningful. With articulated

that produces at once a sensory medium *and* a sensitive world. [...] Through his kit and his ability as a teacher, he has been able to render his indifferent pupils attentive to ever more subtle differences in the inner structure of the pure chemicals he has managed to assemble. He has not simply moved the trainees from inattention to attention, from semi-conscious to conscious appraisal, he has taught them to be affected [...]" (Latour 2004, 207)

¹⁰² Latour repeatedly points out that the point of learning to be affected is the production of difference, which in turn enables more articulation: "Articulations [...] may easily proliferate without ceasing to register differences. On the contrary, the more contrasts you add, *the more differences and mediations you become sensible to.*" (Latour 2004, 211; original emphasis) "The more mediations the better when acquiring a body, that is, when becoming sensitive to the effects of more different entities [...] The more you articulate controversies, the wider the world becomes. [...] I want to be alive and thus I want more words, more controversies, more artificial settings, more instruments, so as to become sensitive to even more differences. My kingdom for a more embodied body!" (Latour 2004, 211/212) "[...] The more artificiality, the more *sensorium*, the more bodies, the more affections, the more realities will be registered [...] Reality and artificiality are synonyms, not antonyms. Learning to be affected means exactly that: the more you learn, the more differences exist." (Latour 2004, 213; original emphasis)

¹⁰³ Latour 2004, 206.

¹⁰⁴ Latour 2004, 212.

propositions, this progressive composition of a common world [...] becomes at least thinkable”.¹⁰⁵

What is it, then, that makes a proposition *more* or *less* articulated? The benchmark for Latour is *difference*: propositions are more articulate when they produce and proliferate differences, whereas less-articulate propositions minimize them.¹⁰⁶ On this account, the touch-manipulations that are given during the practice of the Manipulations can be understood as a series of propositions. The criterion for assessing the proposed touch-articulations is not whether they are true or false, but whether they are *more* or *less* articulate, i.e. whether they produce and proliferate differences, instead of minimizing them. Following this, I want to suggest that the Manipulations’ performativity consists in the capacity of this practice to multiply difference, and in their potential to enable *différance*, i.e. repetition with difference.¹⁰⁷

To sum up, following Latour, I propose considering the Manipulations to be a practice for learning how to articulate bodies in order to enhance their affectability, and to produce difference. To this effect, learning to be affected by differences is a relational and generative process: a body does not precede its capacity to be affected, but it comes into being, in the first place, by articulating relations to itself and to other (non-)human bodies, and by multiplying its differences. Thus, becoming a body¹⁰⁸ is a matter of learning how to articulate,

¹⁰⁵ Latour 2004, 212.

¹⁰⁶ See Latour 2004, 220. Latour makes a link between more or less articulate propositions and good or bad generalizations: “The good ones are those that allow for the connection of widely different phenomena and thus generate even more recognition of unexpected differences by engaging a few entities in the life and fate of many others. The bad ones are those which, because they had had such a local success, try to produce generality, not through connection of new differences, *but by the discounting of all remaining differences as irrelevant.*” (Latour 2004, 220; original emphasis) “Generalization should be a vehicle for travelling through as many differences as possible – thus maximizing articulations – and not a way of *decreasing* the number of alternative versions of the same phenomena.” (Latour 2004, 221; original emphasis)

¹⁰⁷ See Bolt 2016, 132-135.

¹⁰⁸ In Latour’s formulation, it is to “to *have* a body” (2004, 205; my emphasis). Yet on a relational account, bodies are constantly becoming, and are not a separate entity or property that can be owned.

and to be affected by, differences. Following this, I suggest conceiving of the Manipulations as a relational practice of articulating the body's becoming.

Technique as Knowledge

In my account of the Manipulations, so far I have repeatedly referred to them as a practice structured by techniques. With this, I follow, to a certain extent, Ben Spatz (2016), who argues that we should draw a distinction between 'practice' and 'technique'. According to him, technique "is not merely a repeated pattern or set of rules but an area of practical and technical knowledge".¹⁰⁹ By making a distinction between 'practice' and 'knowledge', Spatz argues, we are able to see the epistemic relationship between the two, and to conceive of 'practice' as a site of knowing: "*Technique is knowledge that structures practice*".¹¹⁰

According to Spatz, technique structures practice

through an epistemic engagement with the relative reliability of material reality. Technique consists of discoveries about specific material possibilities that can be repeated with some degree of reliability, so that what works in one context may also work in another.¹¹¹

Whereas every moment of practice is unique and not repeatable, "technique as knowledge is precisely repeatable, and, moreover, it is not bound to a particular moment, place, or person".¹¹² Technique enables us to come to know the world: "We do not first 'know' the world and then develop technique. Rather we come to know the world through different kinds of techniques [...]".¹¹³

Spatz uses the metaphor of branching pathways to enable a visualization of the relations between practice and technique. Specific areas of technique are sedimented in the body as "repeatable pathways of action within the practitioner",¹¹⁴ though later on they branch out into different lineages "of related practices undertaken by different groups or individuals".¹¹⁵ Following

¹⁰⁹ Spatz 2015, 40; original emphasis.

¹¹⁰ Spatz 2015, 1; original emphasis.

¹¹¹ Spatz 2015, 42.

¹¹² Spatz 2015, 41.

¹¹³ Spatz 2015, 43.

¹¹⁴ Spatz 2015, 44.

¹¹⁵ Spatz 2015, 44.

this, I have come to consider the Manipulations to be a practice that is structured by a number of specific techniques that eventually become embodied as relatively stable and repeatable pathways: the technique of knowing how to give touch-manipulations to another body; the technique of minimizing muscle tension; the technique of negotiating limits; the technique of knowing how to bracket language, emotions, and knowledge; the technique of knowing how to activate an omni-central reflective mode of attention; the techniques of reflecting *in* and *on* practice; etc.

Combining Spatz's account of 'technique as knowledge that structures practice' with Latour's notion of 'articulation' as a relational technique for learning how to affect and be affected, I propose considering the Manipulations as a practice—structured by techniques—to articulate bodies in order to enhance their affectability and their capacity to produce difference. The series of touch-articulations in the Manipulations brings forth relatively stable and repeatable pathways of action, which offer practitioners the material possibilities to study a body's changing relations to itself and to other (human and non-human) bodies. As a technique of articulating bodies, the Manipulations hold the potential for practitioners to come to know the world by learning to affect and be affected by the world – i.e. by Weather. Bodies that are capable of affecting and being affected by Weather not only come to know the world *differently*, but they know *how to co-create a different world*.

Not-Knowing

With the Manipulations, while it is indispensable to know how to do things, it is no less crucial to know how *not* to do them. Jaana Parviainen and Marja Eriksson (2006) refer to these two different ways of knowing as 'positive knowledge' and 'negative knowledge'. Positive knowledge takes place in "a constructive, linear and accumulative process", whereas negative knowledge is characterized by "giving up' or 'bracketing' knowledge in certain situations".¹¹⁶ Negative knowledge includes "unlearning, bracketing knowledge, having failures, and

¹¹⁶ Parviainen & Eriksson 2006, 140.

ignorance”.¹¹⁷ While both modes of knowledge exist independently of each other, they emphasize the possibility of overlap between the two, which manifests itself in the form of ‘knowing what one does not know’ and ‘knowing what not to do’.¹¹⁸

The notion of negative knowledge and its possible overlap with positive knowledge depicts the situation in the Manipulations very aptly. Learning how to give the series of touch-articulations, for example, is not merely a matter of accumulating knowledge in a constructive and linear process. Of course, the question is about knowing *what* and *how* to give; but it is not *only* that. It is also about knowing how *not* to give – for example, to not give with force, to not impose yourself onto the other body, to not give automatically and without listening, to not project your idea of what you think the other body needs, etc.

Likewise, in the act of receiving, positive knowledge overlaps with negative knowledge; for example, knowing how to minimize muscle tension, how to make yourself available to be moved, how to bracket language and emotion, how to distribute your attention, and how to reflect in the action are intimately interwoven with knowing how not to build tension, how to receive without resisting, how not to fix your attention, how not to use speech, how not to let the emotions take over, and how not to drift away.

There is an important dimension in suspending positive knowledge and in not-knowing how to do things, which has to do with a body’s capacity to change and to differ. One can never be entirely sure of knowing exactly how a touch-manipulation should be given or will be received. All acquired knowledge about one’s own body and about other bodies is only ever provisional, and nothing, no *thing*, should be approached as already known, or be taken for certain or for granted. Bodies are changing day by day. What seems to work well for *this* body may not work in a similar way, or even at all, for another body. The limits of a muscle stretched today are likely to be different from yesterday or tomorrow. What is too much weight given to *this* body may be too little weight for another. What feels ‘good’ and ‘right’ today may feel ‘wrong’ and ‘bad’ tomorrow.

¹¹⁷ Parviainen & Eriksson 2006, 144.

¹¹⁸ Parviainen & Eriksson 2006, 144.

Understanding the Manipulations as a series of propositions implies that a given touch-manipulation is neither right nor wrong, but that it is articulated with more or less differentiation. What is 'more' or 'less' in a given situation needs to constantly be re-examined and critically questioned in the training. You may think you know a certain physical limit, until you realize that your body can actually go further when being touched by someone else in an articulate way. In this way, it is possible for you to experience your body in unprecedented ways.

The idea behind the foregrounding of negative knowledge, and its overlap with positive knowledge, is not to entirely discard the possibility of positive knowledge or to diminish its value, but to maintain openness to the dynamic relations between knowing and not-knowing in order to prevent a situation in which positive knowledge becomes fixed and automatized. The overlap between negative and positive knowledge keeps alive the spirit of curiosity, of research, and of experimentation; not knowing drives the proliferation of difference, and thus enables performativity and *différance*.

In Spatz's epistemology of practice, on the other hand, 'technique' appears to be reduced to the acquisition of positive knowledge. It is constructed and accumulated along linear pathways, and it becomes extended through research into the creation of new technique, i.e. by adding on to its heritage. In my conception of knowing with the Manipulations, however, the creation of positive knowledge is intimately connected to the activation of negative knowledge as a force that animates the process of knowledge-making. Not knowing and failing are the necessary conditions for keeping the event of knowing in flux, and for preventing knowledge from becoming fixed and automatized.

Reflection vs. Automatization

For Spatz, the goal of any advanced training is to increase the capacities of practitioners to the extent that their actions become unconscious and automatized. This kind of automatization, he writes, is "a form of deeply sedimented agency that is the hallmark of advanced training in any field".¹¹⁹ The idea of automatized technique as deeply sedimented agency does not match with

¹¹⁹ Spatz 2015, 52.

how I conceptualize embodied knowing in and through the Manipulations. As pointed out above, reflection *in* and *on* action is key to preventing practitioners from falling into automatized repetitive behaviour – both in giving and receiving the Manipulations.

If the ‘automatization of technique’ is understood in terms of minimizing the share of reflectivity in the execution of a task or movement, then nothing could be further from an advanced form of practicing the Manipulations than this. Exactly the opposite is the case: making tacit knowledge reflectively explicit, becoming aware of the impact of touch, repeating *with* difference, constantly negotiating multiple tasks and techniques running at the same time, not fixing the organization of attention, and constantly reflecting on the process – and all of this, once again, is done not by distancing or separating oneself *from* the action, but by reflecting from *within* the action.

The potential of repetition in the Manipulations is to reflectively (re-)articulate bodies, again and again, as a way of becoming aware of deeply sedimented patterns of tactile-kinaesthetic and proprioceptive perception, and not of internalizing automatized movement as evidence of its successful execution. A hallmark of advanced training with the Manipulations is the reflective production of difference through repetition. The performativity of the Manipulations consists in the capacity of this practice to engender new perceptions and experiences out of repetition, and not to automatize a body’s actions as a means of controlling or mastering it.

In the Manipulations, technique as knowledge consists in consciously negotiating and deciding, from moment to moment, again and again, how to articulate *this* body, how to touch and move *this* part of it, how to attend to *this* sensation, etc. The process of embodying technique in this practice is not a matter of minimising reflectivity, but of its cultivation and proliferation as a means of articulating difference. If anything, the research value and knowledge potential

of the technical knowledge created with the Manipulations is bound to reflectivity and difference, and not to automatization.¹²⁰

What is striking about Spatz's notion of technique, and his epistemology of practice in general, is the complete omission of any consideration concerning the role of reflection in the process of embodying technique as knowledge. While he does explicitly mention, though only in passing, the division between theory and practice as a separation between scholarly research and embodied research,¹²¹ he does not give any attention to the question of how reflection actually participates in the action of research and knowledge-making, and what the implications are of this division for his epistemology of practice or for his model of embodied research at the university.

Reflecting on the Manipulations

While language is bracketed during the practice of the Manipulations, it is greatly valued as a medium of reflection after and about the practice. Once the whole series from Number One to Number Seven is completed, the two partners are given some time to exchange on their experiences and to give feedback to each other. This is a moment to sit up and reflect, face-to-face and together, on the experiences and observations made in relation to the concrete issues and specific questions raised during the practice.

Different from other situations during the weekly Body Weather Amsterdam trainings, the feedback between the two partners following the Manipulations was usually not shared with the whole group, but rather stayed between the two. In the training session the following week, however, the insights gleaned from reflecting about the practice would become part of the embodied

¹²⁰ This is not to say that training with the Manipulations could not promote the creation of new habits. All training eventually does. (I am grateful to my pre-examiner Peter Snow for pointing this out.) However, the point in the Manipulations is to constantly identify—and undo—habits as a means of proliferating difference instead of eliminating it. Therefore, the creation of new habits can be seen as a necessary pre-condition for the production of difference. Going even further, I want to suggest that training with the Manipulations is the practice of a paradox: it is a form of automatizing the techniques of undoing automatized behaviour.

¹²¹ See Spatz 2015, 221.

knowledge that tacitly found its way into the body of the group. For example, the feedback might have raised a technical question concerning the direction of a particular touch-manipulation, or it might have made someone more aware of the importance of listening to their partner's breathing as an indication of having reached a limit. No matter whether the content of the feedback was perceived as profound or banal, when tacitly re-infused into the practice, it would become part of the embodied knowledge that circulated in and through the Manipulations, and thus it would have a certain influence on its further development within the body of the group.

Reflecting in/on action

Donald Schön (1987) draws a distinction between two kinds of reflection: reflecting *on* action and reflecting *in* action. Reflecting *on* action is either a kind of thinking back on past action, or it is an interruption of the action in order step back and think about it. In both these cases, Schön points out, reflection is no longer directly connected to the action.¹²² Reflection and action are separated, and each of the two belongs to a different action complex. He further implies that reflecting-*on*-action happens in the medium of words.

Reflecting *in* action, on the other hand, takes place in the midst of action and is a non-verbal mode of thinking *in* the doing that is integrated into the performance of a task, without interrupting it.¹²³ Reflection *in* action does not happen in the medium of language,¹²⁴ but is “a process we can deliver without being able to say what we are doing”.¹²⁵ It is a way of making “new sense of uncertain, unique or conflicted situations”,¹²⁶ where practitioners are “holding a conversation with the materials of their situations”, through which “they remake a part of their practice world and reveal the usually tacit processes of worldmaking that underlie all of their practice”.¹²⁷

¹²² Schön 1987, 26.

¹²³ Schön 1987, 29.

¹²⁴ Schön 1987, 30.

¹²⁵ Schön 1987, 31.

¹²⁶ Schön 1987, 35.

¹²⁷ Schön 1987, 36.

With regard to the practice of the Manipulations, it is evident that both modes of reflection are employed. There is reflection *on* action in the medium of words *after* the practice, when the two partners verbally share their observations; and there is non-verbal reflection *in* action *during* the practice, for example when the practitioners tacitly negotiate the limits of giving and receiving the touch-manipulations, when they work on minimizing muscular tension, or when they reflect on (re-)directing and distributing their attention.¹²⁸

Know-What

Robin Nelson (2013) considers critical reflection on (artistic) practice to be one of the key methods in practice-as-research. Following Michael Polanyi (1966), he argues that practitioners' know-how is a form of tacit knowledge that is unconsciously embodied. The task of practice-as-research, according to Nelson, is to critically reflect on tacit knowledge and to make it explicit, thereby transforming know-how into what he calls know-what. He further explains his notion of know-what:

Know-what, unlike know-how and know-that, is not an established mode but, as I construct it in the model, it covers what can be gleaned through an informed reflexivity about the processes of making and its modes of knowing. The key method used to develop know-what from know-how is that of reflection – pausing, standing back and thinking about what you are doing. Put thus, it sounds straightforward, but in the actuality of PaR [practice-as-research] it demands a rigorous and iterative process. [...] The *know-what* of PaR resides in knowing what 'works', in teasing out the methods by which 'what works' is achieved and the compositional principles involved.¹²⁹

In Nelson's model, critical reflection on know-how in and through the medium of language thus operates in similar ways to Schön's reflection *on* action: by separating ("pausing, standing back and thinking about what you are doing") non-linguistic practice and linguistic reflection into different complexes of action.

Bodily Knowledge

¹²⁸ I will challenge such a patterning of reflection, as in Pitches (2011) and Allain (2006).

¹²⁹ Nelson 2013, 44; original emphasis.

Dance researcher and philosopher Jaana Parviainen (2002) has a different understanding of the way in which tacit knowledge is transformed. According to her, knowing how “is characteristic of an expert who acts, makes judgements, and so forth without explicitly reflecting on the principles or rules involved”.¹³⁰ It is a skill to solve problems, “but not an ability to reflect on the rules”.¹³¹ As the tacit knowledge of bodily skills is focalized and physically reflected upon by the dancer, it transforms into bodily knowledge. Bodily knowledge is more than technical ability or muscular skill: through becoming kinaesthetically aware of movement, the body reflectively develops the capacity to make choices about *how to move*.¹³²

Parviainen’s ideas about bodily reflexivity as a way of creating bodily knowledge are very close to Schön’s notion of reflecting in action. Bodily knowledge is created in the midst of the action by reflectively negotiating the possibilities of the concrete material situation of bodily movement. It is a kinaesthetically intelligent form of reflection *in action*, and a non-linguistic mode of knowing “in and through the body”.¹³³ It is an ability to think in, through, and with movement.

The Role of Language in the Formation of Bodily Knowledge

¹³⁰ Parviainen 2002, 18.

¹³¹ Parviainen 2002, 18.

¹³² Parviainen 2002, 19. She further specifies: “[...] [B]odily knowledge aims to describe the living body’s movement ability, which is not doing itself; however, this learning evolves on the basis of bodily awareness, kinaesthesia, and perception. As mentioned in the example of the pianist who practices a new musical piece, bodily knowledge is developed with the doubleness of tacit and focal aspects in practicing the piece, but it differs from actual doing, which is playing the piece skilfully. The pianist’s bodily knowledge is the realization of her or his living body’s movement ability to push and release fingers on key with a certain intensity and rhythm to produce the sound the piece demands. 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) See also Leena Rouhiainen’s description of how body schema relates to bodily knowledge (2003, 105-112). “[...] [B]odily knowledge does not imply the exposition of bodily skills, though there is an intimate correlation of bodily knowledge and bodily skills. [...] The body chooses an appropriate movement in a situation not automatically, but ‘reflectively’ by negotiation with the environment the body if necessary modifies the movement.” (Parviainen 2002, 20)

¹³³ Parviainen 2002, 13.

For both Parviainen and Nelson, reflection thus plays a key role in the transformation of 'knowing how' into what Nelson calls 'know-what', and into what Parviainen calls 'bodily knowledge'. While these forms of knowing are quite similar to each other, the starting points for their creation are different modes of reflection. For Nelson, the transformation of know-how is accomplished by critically reflecting on tacit knowledge in the medium of verbal language; knowledge is created through an "informed reflexivity"¹³⁴ *about* the doings of practice.

Parviainen, on the other hand, has a different notion of 'reflection', which has to do with her understanding of the role of language in the process of creating bodily knowledge. Following her, "knowing in dancing always has something to do with verbal language; nevertheless it *essentially concerns the body's awareness and motility*".¹³⁵ Dancers, she writes, know "in and through the body",¹³⁶ and this knowledge is "for the most part [...] nonverbal".¹³⁷ Accordingly, for Parviainen, it is not verbal reflection *on* the action of movement that transforms physical skills into bodily knowledge, but it is a non-verbal mode of kinaesthetic reflection *in* the action, which operates for the most part beyond language.

In a more recent and co-authored contribution,¹³⁸ Parviainen reiterates the view that bodily knowledge cannot be verbally articulated, and that there is a clear distinction between linguistically articulated knowledge and bodily knowledge.¹³⁹ However, she also remarks that "bodily knowledge is usually developed in dialogue with co-movers, teachers and coaches"¹⁴⁰ who "have a

¹³⁴ Nelson 2013, 44.

¹³⁵ Parviainen 2002, 13; my emphasis.

¹³⁶ Parviainen 2002, 13.

¹³⁷ Parviainen 2002, 13.

¹³⁸ Parviainen & Aromaa 2015.

¹³⁹ "Our articulation of bodily knowledge cannot translate or transform bodily knowledge to a literal form; it can only indicate the existence and significance of bodily knowledge. [...] We do not wish to reduce all kinds of knowing to 'embodied knowledge', but see a clear difference between conceptual/articulated knowledge and bodily knowledge. By articulated /conceptual knowledge, we simply mean a mode of knowledge, expressed in words, numbers, formulas and procedures, communicated in an exact manner, though never exclusively so." (Parviainen & Aromaa 2015, 12)

¹⁴⁰ Parviainen & Aromaa 2015, 12.

crucial role”¹⁴¹ through their feedback and encouragement. The paradox, she writes, is that bodily knowledge cannot be translated into language, but that its existence can only be indicated through language:

The paradox in discussing bodily knowledge is that I am trying to articulate a phenomenon that happens only in bodily awareness. This articulation cannot translate bodily knowledge to a literal form; it can only indicate the existence of bodily knowledge. [...] In a sense it is living knowledge, transmitted from a body to a body very often through learning-by-doing.¹⁴²

Parviainen’s ambiguity concerning the relationship between language and bodily knowledge continues through her notion of ‘reflection’. While she argues that bodily—kinaesthetic—reflection plays a decisive role in the transformation of tacit knowledge into bodily knowledge, she likewise acknowledges the important role of linguistic modes of reflection such as dialogue, feedback, and discussion for its formation – yet without elaborating any further on how both modes of reflection might be interrelated.¹⁴³

Language and the Epistemology of Dance

One reason for Parviainen’s ambiguity towards language could be related to the philosophical foundations on which her epistemology of dance rests. Phillipa Rothfield (2005) has criticized Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, one of Parviainen’s main references, for creating a disjunction between lived experience and conceptual reflection:

According to Sheets-Johnstone, the lived experience is immediate. It precludes reflection, criticism and evaluation. [...] The disjunction between immediate, lived experience and the reflective realm is sustained throughout Sheets-Johnstone’s analysis. Put simply, the action of

¹⁴¹ Parviainen & Aromaa 2015, 12.

¹⁴² Parviainen 2002, 22.

¹⁴³ It appears to me that Parviainen considers the practice of dance and the practice of linguistic reflection as separate actions, with each taking place in their own distinct time and space. In her conceptualization of bodily knowledge, reflection in the medium of movement and reflection in the medium of words seem to be divided into two separate complexes of action.

reflection nullifies lived experience. This is because reflection transforms the experiential event into an object of thought.¹⁴⁴

Rothfield suggests that the disjunction between experience and reflection in Sheets-Johnstone's phenomenology of dance serves as a means for "protecting the immediate experience of dance from the polluting action of reflection, criticism and so forth".¹⁴⁵ Leena Rouhiainen offers a similar explanation for Parviainen's ambivalence towards language:

Parviainen's aim is to reinstate cultivation of an understanding of the body's felt sense, the lived body, in the context of understanding dance. She does this in a manner that initially is rather hostile to the objective and theoretical conceptions of the body in addition to a linguistic articulation of the dance event. There is, consequently, an undercurrent in her thinking that prioritizes the lived body and even explicitly holds on to the dichotomy between it and the objective body.¹⁴⁶

Rothfield's critique of the separation of experience and reflection in Sheets-Johnstone's phenomenology of dance connects with Rouhiainen's observation that Parviainen's understanding of dance is based on the primacy of the lived body, and that it precludes a linguistic articulation of the experience of dance. The impression of a separation between the experience of dance and its linguistic articulation is reinforced by Parviainen's assertion that bodily knowledge cannot be literally translated into verbal language, because it is a living knowledge that is typically transmitted through learning-by-doing, which is a non-verbal mode of experiential learning.¹⁴⁷

In my interpretation of Parviainen, her notion of bodily knowledge rests on the assumption that there is a clear-cut separation between the ability to think, or

¹⁴⁴ Rothfield 2005, 45/46. Note that Rothfield implies a conceptual mode of reflection here.

¹⁴⁵ Rothfield 2005, 46.

¹⁴⁶ Rouhiainen 2003, 152.

¹⁴⁷ Might it be so that the separation between bodily knowledge and articulated knowledge possibly functions as a strategic move to secure the place of bodily knowledge as an epistemologically distinct mode of knowing – against the dominant propositional mode of articulated knowledge? Is the assumed impossibility of translating bodily knowledge into language an effect of 'protecting' bodily knowledge from articulated knowledge in order to stabilize the epistemological distinctiveness and the identity of bodily knowledge against the hegemony of language and—critical—conceptual reflection?

reflect, in and through movement, on the one hand, and the possibility to think through, and to articulate, the experience of dance in the medium of words, on the other. At any rate, in theorizing the encounter between dance and language, her emphasis is far more on the limitations of language than on its potential to take a share in the articulation of a body and of bodily knowledge.

In Rouhiainen's phenomenological approach, which mainly draws on the work of Merleau-Ponty, the relationship between dance and language is understood differently. According to her, "both bodily and linguistic practices direct the meaning of dance art",¹⁴⁸ and "the heritage of dance necessarily flows through both 'non-verbal' and 'verbal', or bodily and conceptual practices".¹⁴⁹ With Merleau-Ponty, she suggests that dance and language exist at the intersection of each other:

Inferring from Merleau-Ponty's suggestion that the body exists in the exchange or crossover of sensing and being sensed, of oneself and the other, of nature and culture, one could view it to likewise exist in the exchange of physical and conceptual or linguistic expressions [...] Dance as a corporeal endeavour could then be understood to exist in the last crossover as well.¹⁵⁰

Rouhiainen agrees with Parviainen to a certain extent when she notes that "dance practices and perhaps the elementary meaning of dance are probably best passed on by being directly in contact with dancing and learning to dance oneself",¹⁵¹ and that the capacity of language to articulate the lived experience is limited: "[...] The meaning of the bodily heritage of dance is obviously never totally furnished by speech and writing".¹⁵² However, she also suggests that the transmission of dance should not be limited to physical practice, but that it "should also include all embodied ways of expression that are relevant to the formation of meanings related to dance".¹⁵³

¹⁴⁸ Rouhiainen 2003, 155.

¹⁴⁹ Rouhiainen 2003, 157.

¹⁵⁰ Rouhiainen 2003, 157.

¹⁵¹ Rouhiainen 2003, 155.

¹⁵² Rouhiainen 2003, 155.

¹⁵³ Rouhiainen 2003, 155/156.

Accordingly, Rouhiainen emphasizes the significant role of language and the discourse around dance, both in the process of transmitting and of creating dance, when she writes:

[...] It is common for teachers and choreographers to work with verbal instructions alongside of physical demonstration in teaching dance material. Added to this, my experiences of being a dancer have confirmed my belief that discourse affects how dancers understand dance as well as how they in fact dance [...].¹⁵⁴

Rouhiainen's remarks clearly demonstrate that in the learning of dance, verbal instructions typically go hand-in-hand with physical demonstration, and that the creative process cannot be understood outside of the linguistic discourse in which it takes place. Most important to my mind, however, is her observation that the discourse around dance does not only affect how dancers *think* about dance, but that it clearly affects *how* they dance; that is, their way of thinking *in and through* dance. What this suggests is that movement and language, dance and discourse, cannot be understood as entities that are separate from each other, but only through their interconnectedness. Put differently: while non-linguistic modes of thinking *in* movement and conceptual modes of thinking *about* movement are practices that exist in their own right,¹⁵⁵ they need to be seen as interrelated with, and not separate from, each other.

Corporeal Writing and Translation

Rouhiainen's understanding of the relationship between dance and language builds not only on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, but also on the work developed by Susan L. Foster (1995) in her seminal book *Choreographing History*. Foster calls for a re-conceptualization of the body that

can expose and contest such dichotomies as theory vs. practice or thought vs. action, distinctions that form part of the canonical scholarship. [...] Are not reading, speaking, and writing varieties of bodily action? Can theory attain definition apart from the medium in which it finds articulation?¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Rouhiainen 2003, 156.

¹⁵⁵ See Manning 2016, 3.

¹⁵⁶ Foster 1995, 12. She further elaborates: "A body, whether sitting writing or standing thinking or walking talking or running screaming, is a bodily writing. Its habits and stances, gestures and demonstrations, every action of its various regions, areas, and parts – all these emerge out of cultural practices, verbal or

Foster argues that the body's movements are a kind of corporeal writing in its own right. Despite the fact that corporeal writing is a kind of "writing that has no facile verbal equivalence",¹⁵⁷ she considers the possibility of its translation in terms of collaboration—a form of 'partnering'—between movement and linguistic articulation.¹⁵⁸ Concerning the politics and the ethics of translation, Foster pleads for an equality of the relationship between verbal discourse and corporeal writing, and for acknowledging the particularities of the latter:

Where bodily endeavors assume the status of forms of articulation and representation, their movements acquire a status of function equal to the words that describe them. The act of writing about bodies thereby originates in the assumption that verbal discourse cannot speak *for* bodily discourse, but must enter in 'dialogue' *with* that bodily discourse. The written discourse must acknowledge the grammatical, syntactical, and rhetorical capacities of the moved discourse. Writing the historical text, rather than an act of verbal explanation, must become a process of interpretation, translation, and rewriting of bodily texts.¹⁵⁹

In contrast to Parviainen, Foster thus assumes that the translation from movement to writing is indeed possible. Nevertheless, she also makes clear that translation is not something that can easily be accomplished. Discursive writing requires a heightened state of sensitivity to the particular properties of bodily discourse. Translation is not a unilateral operation that moves in one direction only, but one that takes place in a reciprocal partnership and as a dialogue between body and discourse.

Next to this, it is important to reiterate Rouhiainen's observation that the moment of translating corporeal writing into discursive writing is not the first

not, that construct corporeal meaning. Each of the body's moves, as with all its writings, traces the physical fact of movement and also an array of references to conceptual entities and events. Constructed from endless and repeated encounters with other bodies, each body's writing maintains a nonnatural relation between its physicality and its referentiality. Each body establishes this relation between physicality and meaning in concert with the physical actions and verbal descriptions of bodies that move alongside it. Not only is this relation between the physical and the conceptual nonnatural, it is also impermanent. It mutates, transforms, reinstantiates with each new encounter." (Foster 1995, 3)

¹⁵⁷ See Foster 1995, 9.

¹⁵⁸ "As translations from moved to written text occur, the practices of moving and writing partner each other." (Foster 1995, 10)

¹⁵⁹ Foster 1995, 9; original emphasis.

time that dance and language encounter each other. They have met before: in the dance studio, in the lecture hall, in the dance class, in the rehearsal space, in the memory of a body, in its imagination. Each moment that language is virtually present and actually expressed in the teaching and directing of dance, it is embodied in and through movement. In hindsight, we may be tempted to believe that tacit bodily knowledge is a non-linguistic mode of knowing. Nevertheless, in its inception, tacit knowledge has been co-constituted with language. The fact that the words that were used in the course of teaching movement, and in the discursive negotiation of movement, have become tacit in the process of embodiment, should not seduce us into thinking that language is *not* involved in the learning of movement. It is obvious for practitioners that language is involved in the transmission of practice, even in approaches that privilege learning-by-doing.

From Foster's idea that corporeal writing and linguistic articulation are intertwined, we can infer that we do not actually need to create relations between the two. We can assume that relations to some extent are always already existent. However, her point is that the translation of corporeal writing is likely to fail if these relations are not activated with the necessary tact and sensibility.¹⁶⁰ It is, moreover, equally important to acknowledge that there is always an excess of corporeal writing, of thinking in movement, and of tacit knowledge that resists translation. Regardless of their being interrelated, corporeal writing and verbal discourse cannot be reduced to each other, and they both exist in their own right.

Finally, a critical approach to translation must acknowledge the traditional hegemony of language, and the fact that verbal discourse *about* dance has historically played a dominant role in dance studies. One way to temper the hegemony of language, Foster suggests, is to establish an interdisciplinary space

¹⁶⁰ Snow makes a similar point about translation in relation to performance research: "Whatever the reason, for a theorist to write about performance without dealing with the corporeal details of what it is to practise seems as nonsensical to me as writing about the practice of medicine without engaging with the experiences of feeling sick and being ill." (Snow 2002, 13)

where the dialogue between bodily discourse and verbal discourse can take place on an equal footing.¹⁶¹

The Primacy of Movement

Apart from Parviainen's ambiguous articulation of the relationship between dance and language, there is yet another problem in her conception of bodily knowledge, and that is the tendency to confine a dancer's knowledge to the realm of movement.¹⁶² This tendency to foreground movement as the primary mode of a dancer's knowledge is problematic in at least two ways. First, it rests on the ontological assumption that dance is essentially bound to movement. This assumption has been criticized by the dance scholar André Lepecki (2006), and debunked as a "notion that ontologically associates dance with 'flow and a continuum of movement' and with 'people jumping up and down'".¹⁶³ According

¹⁶¹ "The act of translating such physical endeavors into verbal descriptions of them entails, first, a recognition of their distinctiveness, and then a series of tactical decisions that draw the moved and the written into an interdisciplinary parlance." (Foster 1995, 15)

¹⁶² Note that I speak of a *tendency*. There are many examples in Parviainen's key text from 2002 that argue for a strict alignment of 'bodily knowledge' to 'movement', compared to the very few that indicate a connection to verbal language and propositional knowledge: "Knowing in dancing always has something to do with verbal language; nevertheless, it *essentially* concerns the body's awareness and motility" (13; my emphasis). "If we acknowledge that dancers know something and that for the most part their knowing is nonverbal, it leads us to ask, *What* do they know, and even more importantly, *How* do they know?" (13; original emphasis) "I consider a theory of knowledge that could explain a mode of knowing in terms of bodily movements." (15) "[...] Bodily knowledge aims to describe the living body's movement ability [...]" (19) "Bodily knowledge does not involve a mere technique or production of a skill; together with the body's reflectivity it offers possibilities to choose ways to move." (19) "[...] Bodily knowledge is not about correctly performing a movement skill [...] but the ability to find proper movements through bodily negotiation." (20) "The body chooses an appropriate movement in a situation not automatically, but 'reflectively,' by negotiation with the environment the body if necessary modifies the movement." (20) An example of a connection between bodily knowledge and articulated/propositional knowledge is Parviainen's statement that "articulated and bodily knowledge [...] are usually interwoven or complimentary modes of profound dance knowledge" (22). She also states that her aim is "not to define dance knowledge but to approach an epistemology that can recognize the element of knowledge in a dancer's skill" (15).

¹⁶³ Lepecki 2006, 2.

to Lepecki, such an ontology of dance is predicated on an attachment “to the ideals of dancing as constant agitation and continuous mobility”.¹⁶⁴ The ontological bind of dance to movement, he criticizes, is directly related to a political ontology that subjects “bodies to a constant display of motion”,¹⁶⁵ and that aims to incorporate these bodies into a “general economy of mobility that informs, supports, and reproduces the ideological formations of late capitalist modernity”.¹⁶⁶

Reflexive Dance

The second way in which an epistemology of dance—that is predicated on the notion of dance as being grounded in movement—is problematic, and which is related to Lepecki’s critique, is that it ignores the profound changes in (Western European) contemporary dance and choreography that have occurred in the past few decades. Already since the 1990s, conceptual approaches to dance began to expand upon the notions of dance and choreography.¹⁶⁷ The sociologist and dramaturge Rudi Laermans (2015) proposes the term ‘reflexive dance’ to refer to a new generation of dance-makers such as Jérôme Bel, Boris Charmatz, Anne Teresa De Keersmaker, Xavier LeRoy, Vera Mantero, Mårten Spångberg, and Meg Stuart, amongst others. According to Laermans, despite the marked differences in their aesthetics, these artists “share an attitude of reflexivity and research: they do not take the traditional parameters of dance or choreography for granted but performatively question, displace and re-define these ingredients”.¹⁶⁸

“Reflexive dance”, he further explains, “radically de-essentializes dance by deliberately subtracting elements that are usually regarded as being constitutive for dance”.¹⁶⁹ One of the traditional parameters of dance that has regularly been displaced and subtracted by reflexive dance is the element of movement. In this regard, Laermans notes a connection to the work of John Cage, who pointed out that the necessary condition for the possibility of sound is silence. Similarly, by

¹⁶⁴ Lepecki 2006, 2.

¹⁶⁵ Lepecki 2006, 9.

¹⁶⁶ Lepecki 2006, 16.

¹⁶⁷ See Laermans 2015.

¹⁶⁸ Laermans 2015, 49/50.

¹⁶⁹ Laermans 2015, 50.

subtracting movement from dance, the proponents of reflexive dance would make us realize that “non-movement is the ultimate condition of movement: the absence of dance makes dance possible”.¹⁷⁰

An epistemology of dance that is grounded in an ontology of dance as being bound to (human) movement, and that locates (bodily) knowledge primarily in the dancer’s ability to negotiate and reflectively choose the proper movements, does not take into account the significant changes in contemporary dance that have been brought about by the proponents of reflexive dance. They propose a radically different approach to the creative process and to the production of knowledge. In this approach, movement is no longer the primary or main medium of making dance; rather, it is precisely the absence of movement that is generative, in that it gives space for other modes of knowing to take place in the studio as factors in the creative process. Laermans outlines this approach as follows:

Whatever the peculiarities and the specific context, working in a reflexive mode always comes down to a particular kind of knowledge production about dance and choreography. The information is generated in mostly collaborative research processes whose variegated nature exceeds the essentialist premises of earlier forms of movement research. Each activity that may lead to the delineation of a framing problematic and the formation of fitting ideas or concepts is equally valued. Studio-based research is therefore alternated with the reading of texts, dialogues with theorists and discussion with peers, or quasi-ethnographic fieldwork in a setting deemed relevant for one’s project. In short, reflexive dance is a way of doing dance studies in other modes than the academic [...].¹⁷¹

Knowledge production through collaborative research into ideas and concepts, through texts, dialogues, discussion, and fieldwork – *in the medium of dance*. This is what the radically altered situation for many artists working in the field of

¹⁷⁰ Laermans 2015, 52. He further elaborates: “At least as far as human bodies are implied, this negation is a virtual one, a state that a skilled performing body may try to approach but never actually reaches. Since it is nevertheless a constitutive absence, non-movement must be included in the definition of movement. Emphasized stillness exposes the transcendental structure of dance, that which permits movement and its articulation to exist. It shows that an action can only surface in relation to the ever present eventuality of its cessation. The unity of the difference between movement and non-movement therefore defines the medium of dance” (52/53).

¹⁷¹ Laermans 2015, 210.

contemporary dance has looked like since the first decade of the new millennium. It is a way of working that breaks with traditional company structures and with the traditional division of labour, where the choreographer used to author the work while the dancers mainly functioned as the executors of the choreography without having a significant voice in the process of creation.¹⁷²

To be sure, the terms and conditions of reflexive dance cannot be generalized for all dance artists working in the field of contemporary dance. Not everyone active in the field has been able or willing to adopt the working modes heralded by the proponents of the conceptualist movement. Their deconstructive works have often triggered fierce reactions and have been rejected as a betrayal of dance,¹⁷³ as anti-dance, or even as killing dance. Nevertheless, one can easily recognize the lasting impact that reflexive dance has had on the development of the field, particularly in terms of developing new formats of collaboration and exchange. For many artists, working on theoretical questions and with concepts has become a self-evident and integral part of their work. To them, dance has become a medium of research at the conjunction of movement and discourse. In this respect, one might even say that reflexive dance has helped to pave the way for the emergence of artistic research, and that conceptual approaches to dance have significantly contributed to the development of the field.

Dancing as Theorizing

The signs of change were already discernible at the beginning of the new millennium. Rouhiainen, for example, observed in her interviews with Finnish freelance dancers around that time that they considered reflection upon their dance practice to be an integral part of their work, and that the relationship between doing, moving, and thinking was a major topic of interest for them.¹⁷⁴ Nowadays, it has become acceptable to consider contemporary dance as a tool

¹⁷² See Laermans 2015, 212.

¹⁷³ See Lepecki 2006, 1.

¹⁷⁴ See Rouhiainen 2003, 315-332.

for thinking and discussing,¹⁷⁵ and to view dance-making as a form of theorizing that is embedded in bodily practice, rather than a result of distanced critical reflection.¹⁷⁶ Dancers are keen to engage in the theoretical discourse and the larger aesthetic discourse, without neglecting movement as a tool of their work.¹⁷⁷

At a certain moment in the debate about the epistemology of dance, it was important to establish a tacit mode of knowing in and through movement as a distinct form of knowledge in its own right,¹⁷⁸ and to foreground non-linguistic modes of knowing against the dominance of propositional knowledge and the hegemony of language. However, given the recent fundamental changes in the landscape of contemporary dance, it now seems equally important and timely to develop an epistemology that takes into account the fact that the notion of dance and choreography has become expanded, and that considers bodily knowledge to be co-constituted by language and discourse.

Writing About Body Weather

Peter Snow's PhD thesis (2002) was the first comprehensive scholarly account of Body Weather as a training and performance practice. Building on his own practical experience of working mainly in the Australian context, he combines an in-depth analysis and description of Body Weather's training program with what he calls an 'empirical phenomenology' based on the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Alfred North Whitehead. Snow's thesis about Body Weather is an extremely rich and highly insightful piece of scholarly writing from the perspective of a theatre practitioner and theorist – a situation that he considers

¹⁷⁵ "Most work in contemporary dance is not intended to create anything new. The work is more about using dance to *think* and *discuss*." (Rynnänen 2014, 107; original emphasis)

¹⁷⁶ "Dancemaking [...] becomes a form of theorizing, one that informs and is informed by instantiations of bodily significance—athletic, sexual, fashionable, mediatised—that endure alongside it. The theoretical, rather than a contemplative stance achieved afterwards and at a distance, becomes embedded (embodied) within the practical decisions that build up, through the active engagement of bodies, any specific endeavor." (Foster 1995, 15/16)

¹⁷⁷ See Berg 2014, 37/38.

¹⁷⁸ See Manning 2016, 42.

to be at the in-between of both disciplines: “Performance research”, he writes, is “a kind of embodying this in-betweenness”.¹⁷⁹

In reflecting further on the situation of an artist-theorist writing about a performance practice, Snow highlights two aspects. First, he asserts that it is absolutely vital for the researcher to engage with the corporeality of the practice in order to be familiar with it in all its subtleties and nuances. According to him, writing about a performance practice without practical knowledge of the corporeal details of this practice is senseless.¹⁸⁰ Second, he argues that the task of the researcher is “to translate bodily experiences [and] to articulate in words the experiences of living bodies”.¹⁸¹ The task of translation, he writes, is “to do justice to the methodological problem of transposition from one mode of researching to another”.¹⁸²

Two things stand out here. In relation to Snow’s first point, I am reminded of an ongoing sense of doubt and anxiety, during the first years of my doctorate, about whether I was indeed well-enough equipped with knowledge and experience of Body Weather practice to have the legitimacy to write about it. After joining Body Weather Amsterdam in 2002, my engagement gradually increased from participating as an independent dancer in the weekly training, while simultaneously working on other projects, to becoming a committed performer in, and co-founder of, the performance project Something Here That Is Not There (established 2005). After entering the Artistic Research MA program at the University of Amsterdam in 2007, my engagement with Body Weather began to shift, and further expanded in the direction of (artistic) research.

Entering the emergent field of artistic research fulfilled a long-held dream of mine to bring together my artistic and academic backgrounds. However, the prospect of writing about Body Weather caused me some headaches. How do you determine and define the moment when you have engaged long enough with the corporeality of a practice so that the writing can start to make sense? When are you actually entitled and authorized to write about (a) practice? During this

¹⁷⁹ Snow 2002, 23.

¹⁸⁰ See Snow 2002, 13.

¹⁸¹ Snow 2002, 13.

¹⁸² Snow 2002, 13.

period of transition, despite all those many years of intense training and performing with Body Weather Amsterdam, I was held back by my fear of not being able to do justice to Body Weather, and not being able to deliver writing that was good enough to satisfy the practice. After starting my doctoral research in 2011, it took me several years until I felt ‘ready’ to write about Body Weather, and to have this writing published in an academic context. I will return to this issue later.

Method and the Problem of ‘Application’

The other point made by Snow highlights the methodological problem of transposing one mode of research into another – the task of translation. Traditionally, in the context of academic research in the arts, the problem of transposition is related to the question of how to translate artistic practice into academic language. A conventional way of approaching the problem of translation is to draw on existing concepts and to create a theoretical framework that is then applied to the practice as a method of articulating the experience that is embedded in an artistic work or process. In practice-as-research in an academic context, the creation of a conceptual framework and its application as a method for critically reflecting on and about (artistic) practice has been understood as an essential supplement that justifies speaking of practice *as* research.¹⁸³

However, the problem of ‘applying’ a conceptual framework to a given practice, as Laura Cull has criticized, is that “a fixed idea is superimposed upon a pliant example, a predetermined theory over a passive practice”, and that “application implies the subordination of the powers of one practice or process to the needs of another”.¹⁸⁴ Brian Massumi makes a similar point about the ‘application’ of concepts to ‘material’. He writes:

If you apply a concept or system of concepts, it is the material you apply it to that undergoes change, much more markedly than do the concepts. The

¹⁸³ Robin Nelson’s model can be considered an example of this approach to practice-as-research (see Nelson 2013). For a comprehensive critique of the application of ‘method’, see the chapter ‘Against Method’ in Manning 2016.

¹⁸⁴ Cull 2012, 21.

change is imposed upon the material by the concepts' systematicity and constitutes a becoming homologous of the material to the system. This is all very grim. It has less to do with 'more to the world' than 'more of the same'. It has less to do with invention than with mastery and control.¹⁸⁵

Cull and Massumi thus reject the application of a pre-fabricated conceptual framework as a form of domination that subjects (artistic) practice to the needs of theory.¹⁸⁶ Inhibiting the potential of invention rather than stimulating it, the mode of 'application' subordinates artistic practice to academic discourse, and it reinforces the hegemony of language as the privileged tool for knowledge-making.¹⁸⁷ For many artists conducting doctoral research within an institution of higher education, the requirement of applying a conceptual framework as a method of translating, articulating, and reflecting on their practice poses a serious problem, because of what they perceive to be the incommensurability of the (non-propositional) language of artistic practice with the (propositional) language of academic discourse.¹⁸⁸

Typically, critically reflecting about practice in and through the medium of verbal language is understood as the act of pausing, standing back, and thinking about practice from a certain distance.¹⁸⁹ This mode of reflection requires the practitioner-researcher to step outside of the practice and to take the perspective of the spectator. This shift of perspective, chosen or forced, is reminiscent of the ideal of the distanced and objective observer as the privileged subject of knowing; an ideal that is still upheld in many quarters of academic

¹⁸⁵ Massumi 2002, 17.

¹⁸⁶ Both Cull's and Massumi's critiques of 'application' do not rest on the idea that there could be such a writing that is neutral and not informed by theory. They would certainly approve of the notion that all writing is historically and culturally situated, and that it is always imbued with theory. Their critique is directed against the ethics and politics of an approach to theorizing that operates entirely on its own terms, and that colonizes (artistic) practice in order to extract knowledge, without caring much about the particular needs and sensibilities of the ecology of practices from which this knowledge emerges.

¹⁸⁷ See Sollfrank 2016, 102.

¹⁸⁸ In my experience, based on the encounters and exchanges I have had throughout the entire time of my doctorate, this is a persistent problem for artist-researchers working in academic contexts. This impression was most recently confirmed at a meeting of doctoral students organized by the ADiE research project in Stockholm in 2018 (<https://www.artisticdoctorates.com>).

¹⁸⁹ See Nelson 2013, 44.

research. The action of linguistic reflection thus tends to create a separation between an actively knowing/reflecting subject and a passively known/reflected object.¹⁹⁰ It instantiates a separation between two different action complexes: the action complex of being *in* the experience and the action complex of linguistically reflecting *about* experience.¹⁹¹

The problem of critical reflection on and about practice in the context of artistic research is that it not only tends to create a gap between practice and language—a gap that practitioner-researchers often find difficult to bridge—but that when it becomes aligned to a disciplinary academic regime where language is the dominant signifier, critical reflection about practice in the medium of words becomes the privileged method of knowledge production. The dominance of linguistic modes of knowledge-making typically goes along with a failure to grant equivalent value to more-than linguistic forms of knowing that are activated and embodied in and through (artistic) practice.¹⁹² What it all comes down to, finally, is that the dichotomy between theory and practice that so many protagonists in the field of artistic research want to leave behind is reinforced instead of weakened.

Performer Training and the Duality between Practice and Reflection

Jonathan Pitches points out that one of the main challenges for practitioner-researchers investigating performer training is the duality between being immersed in the act of training on the one hand, and adopting a reflective separation that takes distance from experience on the other.¹⁹³ For him, the question is how to “balance an *engagement* in ‘hands on’ practices with a state of *separation* from those very same practices, the second being more appropriate for reflective thinking and expression?”¹⁹⁴ Pitches quotes Paul Allain with the following statement about the duality of immersion and reflection:

We need to be able to train with conviction and practice without inhibiting analysis, so that when we emerge [on] the other side, when we

¹⁹⁰ See Anttila 2007, 81.

¹⁹¹ See Brown et al. 2011, 499 ff.

¹⁹² See Manning 2016, 42.

¹⁹³ See Pitches 2011, 137 ff.

¹⁹⁴ Pitches 2011, 138; original emphasis.

stand back and judge we can speak with embodied insights. Reflection can rarely be done within the flow of the work, because it is always enough just to do. We need to allow ourselves to be immersed, and yet also to know when and how to reflect. This duality is still the central challenge for those documenting performance processes.¹⁹⁵

While I do agree, in principle, with Allain that we need to know when and how to reflect, I do wonder about the opposition he makes between an ‘inhibiting analysis’ and ‘embodied insights’, as well as about his claim that in training for performance, ‘it is always enough just to do’. Is it not precisely this duality between practice and reflection that artistic research has vowed to deconstruct? Could it be that a conception of training that postulates an ontological duality between experience and reflection, and thus implicitly also between practice and research, is possibly itself at the root of the problem that practitioner-researchers are continuously struggling to overcome? Can we envision a kind of reflection—as well as its documentation—that does not follow the logics of separation?

Pitches suggests tackling the problem of the duality of reflective and experiential modes of thinking through a nuanced research design. His proposition is to “decide how (and if) to punctuate practical work with periods of writing”, and to “distinguish between *formative* writing (to help understand the work), *documentary* writing (to record the work), *reflective* writing (to allow space for personal evaluation) and *critical* writing (to draw on ideas from a wider context)”.¹⁹⁶

While I think that it is a good idea to distinguish different ways of writing about practice, I am not convinced that the kinds of writing suggested by Pitches really go to the heart of the problem, which has to do with the way in which the relationship between writing and practice is conceived under the conditions of academic research. It seems to me that by proposing distinctive modes of writing *about* practice, the main problems of the language-practice gap and the hegemony of language are bypassed rather than effectively challenged.

¹⁹⁵ Allain (2006) in Pitches 2011, 141.

¹⁹⁶ Pitches 2011, 142; original emphases.

The Rhetoric of Practice

Let me return to Snow. While reminding us that the corporeality of performance and writing about performance are phenomenologically distinct processes, Snow likewise emphasizes their commonalities. Not only do performance and writing share the goal of “bringing something to life”,¹⁹⁷ but they are both “material processes” and “embodied activities that are carried out by people”.¹⁹⁸ He further points out yet another important link between language and practice, namely practitioners’ ways of using language in their ‘rhetoric’:

The rhetoric [...] acts to initiate newcomers, as well as to re-invigorate the work of existing disciples. But it also acts upon the talkers and writers; i.e. on the artists themselves. It helps them to clarify their thinking and their practising, and pushes them to go further in both these intertwined activities. [...] The point is that rhetoric is employed to have effects; effects on practice, effects on thinking about practice, and effects on the relations between the two. It makes things happen.¹⁹⁹

What Snow highlights here is that the words used in the rhetoric of practitioners are never merely descriptive of their practice. Invoking Austin’s notion of ‘performativity’, he highlights the performative power of the words that are carried towards the practice, and that are “endowed with the rhetorical force of getting the participants to go where they have not ventured before, into new and emerging territory”.²⁰⁰ Words are productive: they have the capacity to make things happen,²⁰¹ and to create new relations between practice and thinking. Words are generative: they are able to stir our imagination, and to give us an idea of worlds that are beyond the present, that are still to come.²⁰²

Snow further mentions that practitioners are often wary of the words that are applied by themselves, or by others, to their practice. Many of them are afraid that words could impose stasis, that they could frame or fix (the perception of) experience.²⁰³ Rather than emphasising the risk involved in the verbal

¹⁹⁷ Snow 2002, 15.

¹⁹⁸ Snow 2002, 16.

¹⁹⁹ Snow 2002, 21.

²⁰⁰ Snow 2002, 22.

²⁰¹ See Bolt 2016, 133.

²⁰² Snow 2002, 16.

²⁰³ See Snow 2002, 22.

translation of practice, however, Snow points to the key role that words—literally—can play in the articulation—and unlocking—of the deep corporeal insights that can typically only be gleaned through years of arduous practice. The verbal articulation of profound corporeal insights brings them closer to those who are not as thoroughly initiated as the select few expert practitioners. Language can thus work towards the demystification of artistic practice and can help to create, for good or for bad, a pathway, possibly even a shortcut, to profound bodily knowledge that is otherwise exclusive and inaccessible.

Snow's point about the performativity of the words being used as part of transmitting, training, and directing practice, about their capacity to create worlds and to make these worlds accessible to us, if only in our imagination, seems utterly important. Practices never arise from, or exist in, a linguistic vacuum. Even though *Body Weather* is a training practice that highly values learning-by-doing as a form of transmission, and even though the bracketing of words and speech is employed as a tool to articulate bodies beyond language and with ever more sensitivity, we cannot ignore the fact that language participates in constituting these very same processes, and that it contributes to the formation of embodied experience.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ I am reminded of my first experience of *Body Weather* when taking part in a workshop at the School for New Dance Development in 2001. The workshop was co-facilitated by Frank van de Ven and Peter Snow. Van de Ven directed the physical part of the workshop, while Snow observed the work from some distance, taking notes. Every now and then, after we had finished with an exploration, Snow would join the group discussion in order to share his observations. His reflections, based also on his own firsthand experience of the work as a practitioner, were highly inspiring and imaginative, and I remember being absolutely thrilled by the combination of physical practice and conceptual reflection, which made the workshop a highly successful learning experience for me.

Chapter Four

The Research Score

Introduction

At the beginning of my doctorate, the practice of the Manipulations was the departure point for considering the knowledge that is created in and through dance. In the further course of my research, however, my focus shifted from the Manipulations to the so-called research score.

The research score is a translation of the original duo practice of the Manipulations into a solo practice. In this solo version, the receiver works without a giver and explores how to re-create—all alone—the sensory experience of receiving Manipulations Number One and Number Two from an imaginary partner. In addition to re-creating the sensation of receiving the Manipulations, there is yet another additional task and modification of the original practice, which is to keep an eye on the process of thinking, and to articulate thoughts that arise in relation to a word or concept chosen beforehand. These thoughts are instantly written down, or they are spoken out loud.

What is key with regard to the research score is that the written or verbal articulation of thoughts is embedded *within* the practice of re-creation itself, rather than being separate from it. Instead of creating a gap between the physical practice and language, which separates the two into different action complexes, the research score interweaves into one and the same practice an exploration of the process of sensing with the expression of thoughts. By undoing the bracketing of language in the Manipulations, and by embedding a linguistic mode of reflection *within* the practice itself, instead of postponing it till afterwards, the research score challenges the duality of physical practice and linguistic reflection that is considered to be one of the main problems of research into performer training, as we saw in Chapter Three.

In the following, I first briefly reiterate what I take to be the most important characteristic features of the Manipulations, before elaborating in more detail on the techniques that constitute the research score.

Shifting Relations with the Manipulations

As elaborated in Chapter Three, I consider the Manipulations to be a practice for learning how to articulate bodies in order to cultivate their affectability. Based on the idea that bodies are open and constantly changing entities, the Manipulations foster an altered ecology of experience by cultivating a body that is fundamentally entangled with its environment, and which has the capacity “to establish a relationship of infinite influences”.²⁰⁵ By foregrounding the intercorporeal physical relations between two more-than human bodies, rather than the inter-subjective social relationships between two individual human beings, the practice has the potential to alter the perception of a body in relation to itself and other bodies.

One of the main concerns when practicing the Manipulations is learning how to become Weather for the other body. This transformation of a body into a medium calls into question conventional notions of agency as the property of an individual body that is separate from other human and non-human bodies, and it raises issues of ownership: Who owns “*the body that belongs to nobody*”,²⁰⁶ created and co-embodied by the two partners during the Manipulations? What are the properties of this third body? How is it constituted, and what are its limits and extensions?

Training with the Manipulations is not so much about learning how to move, but rather about learning how to *not* move. The habitual relationship between proprioception and kinaesthesia is changed. Typically, a body’s proprioception is predominantly activated by its own kinaesthetic system—i.e. by movement—thus creating sensory feedback about this body’s relations to itself. However, in the Manipulations, the tactile-kinaesthetic articulation of the giver connects the receiver’s proprioception to a different kinaesthetic field of relations, thus

²⁰⁵ Body Weather Laboratory 1978 ff, 61.

²⁰⁶ Body Weather Laboratory 1978 ff, 60; original emphasis.

manipulating the habitual perception of the receiver's body in terms of how movement is initiated, and cultivating its capacity to experience being moved by someone—or potentially *something*—else. The practice thus prepares the grounds for the emergence of an altered ecology of experience in which a body's relationality and processuality are emphasized.

A body's capacity to become a medium—Weather—is valued more highly than the expression of individual or personal creativity. By allowing the body to be moved and manipulated by a giver, and by becoming receptive to Weather, the receiving body is given the opportunity to have a most unique experience, one which it could never have were it to move predominantly from the perception of relations within the body itself. The practice thus creates the grounds for an altered ethics of a 'we can', which differs from the ego-logics of the 'I can'. The eco-logy of the 'we can' consists in a heightened capacity of the more-than-human body to be moved by potentially infinite influences, both in relation to itself as well to other human or non-human bodies, organisms, things, etc.

Learning to become (receptive to) Weather, it bears repeating, is an arduous and open-ended endeavour, and the training was developed in order to craft and provide appropriate tools along the way. In this sense, the Manipulations are a toolkit for learning how to articulate bodies, which consists of several intricately interwoven relational techniques of articulating a body in order to cultivate its affectability: techniques of touching, bracketing, releasing, breathing, attending, and reflecting. These techniques constitute the embodied knowledge that is created by the Manipulations.

What is at Stake with the Research Score?

The reason for reiterating what I take to be the most prominent features and aims of the Manipulations is because I want to highlight, as succinctly as possible, what is at stake with the research score. On the one hand, the research score is deeply anchored in—and indebted to—the heritage of the Manipulations. It builds on its conception of movement and body, continues its work, and strives for similar aims: to shift relations and to foreground an altered ecology of movement. On the other hand, the research score makes some significant

changes to the practice in response to the particular aims and necessities of artistic research, thus enabling the Manipulations' transformation into a medium of research (see Chapter Five). For practitioners who are more familiar with the tradition of Body Weather, the research score may appear to go against the grain of the original practice. However, I consider the research score to be a re-invention of the Manipulations that is more faithful to the aims and the philosophy of the original practice than it might at first seem.

At any rate, changing the Manipulations from a duo form into the solo practice of the research score raises a number of questions and issues. First, on a practical level and in relation to the process of re-creation: How does one physically re-create the sensation of being touched and moved by an absent body? How does one re-create the process of alteration, the becoming of a medium, of Weather? How does one single-handedly articulate 'the body that belongs to nobody'?

Second, with the inclusion of language and verbal reflection in the practice: How does one negotiate the relations and the economy of attention between reflecting in the medium of the senses and reflecting in the medium of words – without subordinating one to the other? How does one construct the process of activating—and simultaneously tracing—different modalities of thinking without suffering a loss in the precision and specificity of their articulation? How does one re-create the shift from the inter-subjective to the inter-corporeal, as simultaneously thought and language become included in the practice and acknowledged as factors of experience? How does one prevent language from becoming the dominating factor of experience? Finally, what and how does a 'body that belongs to nobody' think?

Re-Creation

Many of these questions can be addressed pragmatically on the level of the techniques that structure the Manipulations. To begin with the issue of re-creation: I explored a number of ways of re-creating the sensation of being given the Manipulations by re-creating the effects of the technique of touch. One possibility is to imagine—as concretely as possible—where precisely the giver touches the receiver, and to localize the exact contact-point where the weight

passes through the skin, and where it moves the body, or (a) part(s) of the body, for example the arms, the legs, or the head. Another way of re-creating the sensation of receiving is to draw on the memory of sensations experienced during exercises in the past, and to remember—in as much detail as possible—how it felt to be moved by an actual giver, when the weight entered the body, when it was directed through the body and into the ground, stimulating intense sensations of compression, densification, stretching, expansion, pain, opening, release, etc. Another approach to re-creation is to diligently trace and reproduce the *form* of a received touch-manipulation; for example, the spatial trajectory of the arms lifted and pulled backwards at the beginning of Manipulation Number One. It is also an option to try out a combination of these possibilities, either by going back and forth from one approach to the other, or by layering several of them simultaneously, which considerably increases the complexity of the process of re-creation. Finally, other ways of approaching re-creation may still be discovered in the future.

The Paradox of Re-Creation

No matter how carefully the process is constructed by the practitioner, the re-creation of being touched and moved by someone else will inevitably lead to the following paradoxical situation: How can you attain sensory feedback from movement when you are supposed to not move ‘by yourself’ and from the perception of your own body? How do you release, for example, the muscles in your neck when you actually need to use muscular effort in order to re-create the sensation of the head being lifted up from the ground and moved by the hands of an imaginary giver? How do you re-create the kinaesthetic-tactile sensation of being moved by someone else while at the same time working on suspending movement ‘by yourself’, and on minimizing muscle tension?

In the case of the Manipulations the situation is clear: the work is to switch off all muscle tension and to cut all volitional movement, as well as the stand-by mode of being ready to move by yourself. In the research score, however, the imperative to bracket volitional movement needs some recalibration, due to the different situation. Re-creating the feeling of being given and of receiving the

Manipulations is impossible without moving the body at least minimally by oneself. The activation of memory and imagination alone will not suffice. No matter how hard the receiver tries to imagine and memorize the past experience of being manipulated by another body, the feeling of being moved by an imaginary giver will necessarily require *some*—if only minimal—volitional movement²⁰⁷ as a means to activate the proprioceptive system and to receive sensory feedback from it.

In my experience, imagination and memory alone are not sufficient to re-create the sensation of being moved. In order to obtain any feedback from the proprioceptive system and to actually get a sensation of being moved, the receiver *has* to invest muscular effort. In short, re-creation is impossible without softening the strict imperative to bracket intentional self-movement. The question is: Just how much self-movement is actually necessary in order to re-create sensations that are similar to those when being actually manipulated?

As long as the laws of gravity are in place, it is unavoidable to invest muscular effort in order to move and displace a body, or parts of it. However minimal that muscular effort may be, in terms of quality and intensity the concomitant sensation will inevitably differ from the sensation of being touched and moved by an actual giver. Due to the laws of gravity, an identical reproduction of the effects of the duo form of the Manipulations through the solo form of the

²⁰⁷ On a strictly relational account, ‘volitional’ or ‘wilful’ movement is actually impossible. The feeling of volitional movement is the *effect* of consciousness that habitually makes us *perceive* movement as volitional: “Volitional movement understood as movement belonging to the subject and fully directed by the subject is [...] impossible. Such an account of volition [...] can only be narrated after the fact” (Manning 2016, 19). According to Manning, the act of volition or of willing movement does not *precede* movement, but is *in* the movement: “Volition is not where we usually assume it is: it is not ahead of experience, but *in* experience, in the ecology of practices” (Manning 2016, 149). Following this, instead of speaking of ‘volitional movement’ in the research score, it seems more appropriate to speak of activating the *perception* of volitional movement as a means of re-creating the sensation of being moved. The paradox of re-creation, then, consists in the deliberate *re-activation* of a perception of movement that the research score actually aims to leave behind. Volition is active *in* the experience of re-creation, and in the ecology of practices that constitute the research score.

research score is impossible. Any attempt to accomplish a truthful replication is necessarily bound to fail.

Negotiating Failure with Precision

This paradoxical situation can be perceived by a practitioner as frustrating and like 'hitting a wall'. How can one handle the paradoxical situation that is created by these two contradictory tasks? How can one move towards the impossible, and cope with the inevitable failure? On the other hand, what is the benchmark for 'failing' or 'succeeding' at a task in the context of artistic research, where the value of a research practice consists less in its successful execution than in its potential to generate new knowledge?

Simply because it is obviously impossible to accomplish the mission of re-creation 'successfully', this does not automatically imply that all attempts will fail equally. The point is to not give up on the task of re-creation, merely because there is no way to do it 'right'. Working *towards* re-creation is a matter of difference and degree. Eventually, some attempts to re-create the sensation of receiving will be *more articulate* and will create more differences than other attempts.

If the action of knowing consists in articulating a body in ways that proliferate rather than minimize differences, as we saw in Chapter Three, then the challenge of 're-creation' consists in always failing with utmost precision. Each time the research score is practiced, failure produces difference, which makes it a practice that thrives on techniques of negotiating failure, and not a practice to be mastered. It is crucial to articulate the exact terms of failure in as much detail as possible, and to fail with ever more nuances and *differently* each time.

Negotiating Failure and Meta-Reflection

The technique of negotiating failure in the research score is similar to the technique of reflecting in and through the practice of the Manipulations, except for the difference that in the latter case negotiation takes place in relation to a real giver, whereas in the research score it happens in relation to the absent body of an imagined giver. In both cases, the negotiation of muscular tension and

effort happens in and through a perceptual mode of reflection-in-action, i.e. in the medium of the senses, in particular the sense of touch and the kinaesthetic-proprioceptive system.

What makes the situation for the practitioner of the research score far more complicated, however, is that the activation of memory, imagination, and minimal muscular effort, as well as the tracing of their sensory effects, comprises an extremely demanding set of tasks that requires a considerable amount of effort on the level of attention. The intensity and complexity of the different tasks pursued in the research score require high-speed thinking-at-the-same-time, which can easily lead to a feeling of overload. This feeling can quickly lead to a collapse of multi-modal reflexive attention – the receiver’s focus becomes boiled down to one particular strand of activity, or to one particular mode or object of attention. In the vocabulary of Body Weather, this breakdown of multi-modal attention is referred to as ‘falling into tunnel-perception’.

This is when meta-reflection comes in. Meta-reflection is reflection *on* reflection-in-action. It is a technique to prevent the receiver from falling into tunnel-perception and from becoming controlled by their ‘autopilot’. Meta-reflection is a macro-perspective *on* the practice from *within* the practice. Decisions are made at high speed concerning the ‘cutting’ and (re-)directing of attention, the breaking of ‘flow’, the negotiation of effort and tension, etc. Meta-reflection asks: What is the overall situation and what is needed in order to (re-)activate the practice? This constant meta-reflective interrogation and observation of the practice from a macro-perspective is crucial both in the Manipulations and in the research score.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Paula Kramer, a close colleague and one of my collaborators in the second artistic part made, the following comment with regard to this way of working: “One of my notes was: ‘Was ‘ne krasse Praxis!’ [What a crazy practice!] And that was related to this really highly mental focus, that we talked a lot about in Berlin: This constant cutting, not-allowing of entering any deep elongated feeling states, because that somehow equals getting lost and blurred, the constant hacking, cutting and re-alerting the mind, which is super-interesting because sometimes I can have the sense that I can feel the friction between body and mind, both are somehow quivering and activated, and I’m not—as I would maybe in other somatic practices—dive into this luscious world of sensing-feeling expansiveness and endlessness and feeling feeling feeling. So I am really

Imaginary Breathing Through in the Research Score

In the process of re-creating the sensation of receiving, the negotiation of muscular effort and the distribution of attention are crucially supported by the technique of Imaginary Breathing Through. As outlined in Chapter Two, Imaginary Breathing Through is a solo version of the duo hands-on practice of Breathing Through. In the Manipulations, Breathing Through provides the receiver with a technique to mentally and physically reach toward the place of the touch, to attune to the giver, to make the skin permeable, to release tension, and to (re-)direct the attention.

I want to emphasize, again, the significant role of Breathing Through in terms of shifting relations between the giver and the receiver of the Manipulations, from inter-subjective to inter-corporeal. This shift enables the creation of an altered network of corporeal relations between the two bodies, which is crucial for the capacity to become articulated by the other body, by infinite influences and flows of intensities – by Weather. This capacity to kick-start the process of alteration makes Breathing Through a key technique for the process of receiving in the Manipulations.

In the research score, likewise, Imaginary Breathing Through plays a prominent role in re-creating the sensation of receiving the Manipulations, and the perception of being moved by Weather. The practice aims to restore relations with the (imaginary) giver, and, thus, the ecology of ‘we can’ that is key for the Manipulations. This is to say that the act of re-creation encompasses far more than merely reproducing a locally-confined sensation of being touched and moved by an imaginary partner. Re-creation is about reliving as comprehensively as possible the complex ecology and network of relations of a body that is being weathered. Aided by the technique of Imaginary Breathing

intrigued by this cutting. It took me a while to appreciate it, I think, or to understand it as something really interesting and positive, but I think it is something that is really specific and crucial. So there is all this and then there is also this sense of close proximity and deep care and intimacy and tenderness that is also in it. So I am just saying all kinds of things that I have in my now small experience of the Manipulations and the research score” (Research Diary, 30 June 2016).

Through, the research score strives for no less than the re-creation of a constantly changing and unbounded body of infinite influences—‘the body that belongs to nobody’—with the exception that this end is worked towards using the surrogate body of an imaginary partner instead of an actual one.²⁰⁹

It is therefore, in a way, misleading to call the research score a ‘solo’ practice. It seems to presuppose *the* body as a separate entity that enters into relations with its environs and with other bodies. But it is precisely this conception of ‘*the* body’ as a separate unit and pre-existing entity that is fundamentally contested by Body Weather. Bodies are conceived as multiplicities and in a state of constant becoming through embodying infinite relations. Bodies are always already more than one. It is therefore more appropriate to say that in the research score, Body re-creates Weather.²¹⁰

Undoing the Bracketing of Language

As demonstrated in Chapter Two, the bracketing of verbal communication between giver and receiver is a key technique of the Manipulations (‘No

²⁰⁹ The artist-researcher Alys Longley sent me the following reflection on my research presentation at a conference in Reykjavík in 2015: “I am moved and impressed thinking of the implications and determination of practicing a duet practice solo – and thinking on the implications of Joa *imagining* the trace of his duet partner through his flesh, so that patterns are activated and muscles respond, a sense of lifting and falling, of pressing and releasing, with imagined hands tracing real muscles. Thinking of the virtual partner – an assimilation of all the partners Joa has ever had, condensed in his imagination and reliving in the studio. I somehow sense a profound philosophical resonance in this. Questions of absence and presence, of the travel of bodies. Of re-creating sensation through a disciplined, focussed imagining. A transsubjective state” (Longley 2015).

²¹⁰ In this specific situation, Weather refers to the physical experience that was originally constituted by the practice of the Manipulations. Re-creating Weather in and through the research score, then, means for example re-enacting the (memory of the) sensation of touch-movement by the giver, of the displacement and extension of certain body parts, of weight entering the body, of the sensation of compression and possibly the pain that goes along with it, etc. In other situations, Weather could include place and/or landscape, urban architecture, the social and cultural situation in which a body takes shape, or even the conditions that are shaped by the weather in its literal sense: temperature, precipitation, wind, etc. As I have argued, in training with the Manipulations, certain aspects of Weather are deliberately edited out, such as language. The research score aims to re-edit Weather by including language.

talking!'). To briefly reiterate, the idea behind the suspension of verbal communication is that it enables the two partners to refine their non-verbal tools of exchange by foregrounding alternative modalities of relating such as touch, breath, kinaesthesia, and proprioception.

While the suspension of speech during the Manipulations is reasonable from a pedagogical perspective, as a means of supporting the transmission and the deepening of the practice, I see the risk that in the long run, the technique of bracketing language—and of bracketing thinking in the medium of words—could sediment as a habit, and that the separation of practice and language could become embodied as tacit knowledge.

From the perspective of a Body Weather practitioner, this separation may be justifiable, and even desired, as a means of shifting relations between bodies from inter-subjective to inter-corporeal, and in order to create an altered ecology of experience. However, combined with an implicit understanding of language as framing and fixing experience, the ongoing exclusion of language in the Manipulations is problematic, because it fosters a dualistic division between verbal language and physical practice.

The bracketing of language in the Manipulations is thus exemplary of the duality of physical practice and linguistic reflection, something that is considered a key challenge for research into performer training.²¹¹ It is important in this respect, however, to highlight that this duality is not an ontological given, but the result of a pedagogical method that deliberately separates physical practice and linguistic reflection into two different complexes of action: *first* we silently do the practice; *afterwards* we verbally reflect on and talk about it. The problem of this separation is that while it may be intended to be an emancipatory strategy to undo linguistic frames, it subjects bodies' experiences to a new form of regulation by imposing a division between language and practice.²¹²

²¹¹ See Chapter Three.

²¹² To avoid possible misunderstandings, I do not claim that Body Weather is fundamentally opposed to *any* use of language during training practice. The bracketing of language in the Manipulations is clearly the most extreme case. Furthermore, it needs to be mentioned that both Frank van de Ven and Katerina Bakatsaki from Body Weather Amsterdam have experimented extensively, each

Towards a Medium of Artistic Research

By undoing the bracketing of language, the research score breaks with the logics of separation. Considering language as just one more aspect of Weather, and as equivalent to other non-verbal modalities of expressing a body's thinking, the research score embeds linguistic reflection in the ecology of experience that is created by the process of re-creation. It connects kinaesthetic-tactile and proprioceptive modes of thinking *in and through* the experience of movement with conceptually reflecting *about* the experience of movement. By including verbal articulation in the flow of practice, the research score creates an ecology of (interdisciplinary) practices that foregrounds the relations between bodily discourse and verbal discourse, thus challenging the ontological assumptions—and doing away with the methodological obstacles—that separate language and practice into categorically different domains and complexes of actions.

Laermanns suggests that “the unity of the difference between movement and non-movement [...] defines the medium of dance”.²¹³ Following this, I propose that it is the unity of the difference between movement and language that defines the medium of the research score.²¹⁴ The research score embodies principles and values that have been advanced by the proponents of reflexive dance: the conjunction of movement and discourse, the rapprochement between theory and practice, and the attitude of research and reflexivity. Nevertheless, different from a conceptual(-ist) approach, it neither starts from an idea, nor is its main interest to experiment with the absence of movement. The aim of the research score is not to suspend movement in order to give more space to conceptual modes of knowing, or to bring concepts into the studio as a means of reflecting about the practice, but to build on the heritage of the Manipulations and to create a specific ecology of practices in order to explore the potential of the Manipulations as a medium of artistic research.

in their own way, with the relationship between speech and movement: Van de Ven, a.o., in the performance project ‘Thought/Action’ (1999-2012), Bakatsaki, a.o., in the performance project ‘Something Here That Is Not There’ (2005-2009).

²¹³ Laermanns 2015, 53.

²¹⁴ One might further add to this the unity of the difference between absence and presence.

B. Writing with the Research Score²¹⁵

Switching Off
Suspending the habitual mode of thinking
 Changing the place of thinking
 Relocating the place of observation
 Observing thinking
 Is there a difference between sensing and observing sensing?
 Is there a difference between thinking and observing thinking?
 Placing observation
 Placing attention
 Placing imagination
 In the body
It seems that if I am able to *observe* sensations I am also more able to *observe* my
 own thinking
 It seems like
 There is something like a third place
 Maybe also one is embedded in the other
The process of sensing is embedded in the process of thinking or reflecting
 And the process of thinking embedded in sensing
 Sensing thoughts while thinking sensation²¹⁶

 Observing thoughts
 Observing sensations
 Giving equal significance to thoughts and sensations
 Giving time to what usually is not perceived
Giving time to the continuum of sensing through the body not just the surface
 Not just the skin
 But the deep tissues as well, muscles
 Re-aligning body, re-aligning thinking

²¹⁵ All of the following writing was created on the basis of my solo practice of the research score from 2015 to 2019.

²¹⁶ Excerpt from research score with 'place' (edited), 12 February 2015.

Connecting sensing and thinking through touch
Releasing thoughts
Thinking from the deeper muscles, deeper tissues, the fasciae, organs, bones
Getting closer to the imperceptible, insensible.
Peripheral proprioception
Is the third space rather a specific mode of being in time, a specific
temporality?²¹⁷

Changing the material texture of thinking
Thinking through the neck
In touch with another reality than the one that is given
Method of undoing subjectivity²¹⁸

You become what you practice
By practicing becoming²¹⁹

It seems that whenever I start with the work
The body already recognizes and goes into a mode of deep relaxation
Muscles of the legs softening
Memory and imagination activate the sensation of receiving
The legs and the arms know better how to relax than the torso
Learning the form of the Manipulations means to become able to do the form
without being verbally instructed
Learning the sequence by heart by translating the explicit into the implicit²²⁰

Release in the chest
Not everything can be articulated
Not everything can become explicit
Being touched by someone else allows for a knowledge of the body that
Otherwise would not be possible

²¹⁷ Excerpt from research score with 'third space' (edited), 12 March 2015.

²¹⁸ Excerpt from research score with 'method' (edited), 11 May 2015.

²¹⁹ Excerpt from research score with 'tacit knowledge' (edited), 24 May 2015.

²²⁰ Excerpt from research score with 'tacit knowledge' (edited), 23 June 2015.

That one might not be able to get on one's own²²¹

Either too much or too little
Negotiating the excluded middle
Reflecting *in* the doing and *with* the doing
To practice thinking by thinking with the practice
Training thinking 'with'²²²

Creating the physical space for the permeability of thinking
To think also through your back
To expand the network
Training thinking and thinking training²²³

Training another mode of perceiving
Another mode of thinking
Changing the condition of the body
Is changing the state of mind²²⁴

The research score is not damaging the ecology of practice
In the process of translating practice into language
It is changing the ecology without destroying it
An interdisciplinary micro-practice
A technique of partnering verbal and non-verbal practices articulating the body
Creating an ecology that affords the co-existence and co-articulation of linguistic
and non-linguistic modes of expression
Trying to articulate the difference between thought that is expressed in a
language that grammatically repeats the notion of a subject
And a language beyond the bounded subject
How to express language in a way that does not re-invoke a subject of research?

²²¹ Excerpt from research score with 'tacit knowledge' (edited), 26 June 2015.

²²² Excerpt from research score with 'thinking' (edited), 10 July 2015.

²²³ Excerpt from research score without reference (edited), 22 July 2015.

²²⁴ Excerpt from research score with 'training' (edited), 14 July 2015.

Is Breathing Through creating the possibility for a thinking-through-and-
beyond?

Composing language with re-creation²²⁵

Non-volitional reflection intentionally reflecting
A mode of reflection that does not want to achieve something
But that is open for whatever comes
A mode of reflection that allows for ideas
To come forth from some other place than the rational
A mode of reflection that makes sense differently
Doing thinking
Thinking doing
In relation to the ground, sound, light, the spine, mouth, breathe
And all the other things that are here and that are not here²²⁶

The research score as a re-activation of modes of thought in the Manipulations
Re-creation is not just re-creation of the sensation of the movement or touch-
manipulation
But of modes of reflection²²⁷

Touch as a mode of reflection
As a mode of thinking through the body
Thinking through the body of an other
Reflecting on the experience of the touch
The quality
Reflecting not on 'what does this mean?'
But on 'what does it do?'
'How does it work?'
'What does it need?'
'What does the other need?'²²⁸

²²⁵ Excerpt from research score without reference (edited), 13 March 2018.

²²⁶ Excerpt from research score with 'embodied reflection' (edited), 13 October 2015.

²²⁷ Excerpt from research score without reference (edited), 2 November 2018.

How could you forget that you need a body to create knowledge?

Knowing how to release thinking

How to sense thinking

Wiggle the brain and shake the thoughts²²⁹

Going through the skin

Creating space

Listening

Articulating experience not as a definition

But as a proposition

Articulating with breathing through

Noticing pathways of breath and of passage

Coming in

Passing through

And going out

Breaths are touching²³⁰

Imagining to be articulated manipulated by J.

Breathing out through all pores of my skin simultaneously

Bringing into articulation sensations and altering the perception of the body

Altering habitual modes of self-articulation

Articulation as a practice of reading and writing the body

Sensing is a writing practice

Perception is a reading practice

Reflection is ~~about~~ the relationship between sensing and perceiving

Between reading and writing²³¹

²²⁸ Excerpt from research score with Zahavi's (2015) 'Phenomenology of Reflection' (edited), 14 October 2015.

²²⁹ Excerpt from research with Johnson's (2010) 'Embodied Knowing Through Art' (edited), 15 October 2015.

²³⁰ Excerpt from research score with 'breathing' (edited), 24 February 2016.

²³¹ Excerpt from research score with 'articulation' (edited), 9 March 2016.

Bracketing emotions
In order to think
With a trans-subjective state of mind
Not getting into expressing
What or how the self thinks
Thinking with a body
That is in a mode of reassembling its parts
Dis-membering and re-membering²³²

Trajectories
Updating the here and now
Images of past giving
What's different today?
Is it possible to sense a qualitative difference?
Imagination feeding into memory
They never coincide
The weather is different
The temperature
Never exactly the same twice
The sounds
Irreplaceable from the point of view of true and original experience
Repeatability as variation
There is difference in repetition
A sort of delimiting the horizons of experience²³³

With you
My imaginary partner
Together we re-create this body
Together with multiple other bodies
We don't know, yet, what this technique can do
But we know that it works²³⁴

²³² Excerpt from research score without reference (edited), 15 November 2016.

²³³ Excerpt from research score with 'memory' (edited), 18 June 2018.

Sedimentation of space in the body
Sedimentation of body in the space
The hissing sound signals arrival on the floor
Relaxation
A change of mode
The activation of peripheral proprioception
Aligning bodies and minds
Agency as a temporal displacement of will
Non-volitional agency
Allowing technique to do its work
Not providing solutions
But a way of creating a field of study
Providing a repeatable set of actions
To compare and differentiate
A way of organizing organism
Its relations to itself and to other organisms
Present or not present
Not-yet-present
Still coming to be²³⁵

Where is the knowledge?
Has the technique become exhausted?
Has it exhausted itself?
Has it become completely outdone?²³⁶

Activating different modes of reflection
By attending through/to
Different modes of experience
By attending to multiple layers of experience simultaneously

²³⁴ Excerpt from research score with 'technique' (edited), 2 October 2018.

²³⁵ Excerpt from research score with 'technique' (edited), 4 October 2018.

²³⁶ Excerpt from research score with 'technique' (edited), 8 October 2018.

Not only to what there is
But also to what has been
To what is yet to come
Memory and Imagination
Adding to what makes itself felt as present
The given Weather
If reflection instantiates a separation
Then attention is creating a stretch
A reaching towards
Creating not a separation
But a relation
Connecting different modes of reflection
In the medium of the senses
With reflection in the medium of words
In relation not only to the body
But also to other non-linguistic things
Are other things doing reflection with me?²³⁷

Allowing thoughts to emerge
By allowing for silence
For stillness in the movement of thoughts
A stillness that is alert and attentive
Ready to change direction at any moment
Attending also to what does not happen
What might come to the fore unexpectedly
A visual image from the past
An idea that has been waiting around the corner
An idea that I would not have been able to have otherwise
An idea that is born from a relation I have not had before
Born from a different temporality
From a different rhythm
A different kind of effort

²³⁷ Excerpt from research score with 'reflection' (edited), 16 October 2018.

Bodily state
Mental state²³⁸

Breathing through space
Spacing through breath
If one is many
Then the minimum unit is more than two
Sometimes touch is following breath with breath leading
Sometimes touch directs breath
Leads breath to find the opening created by touch
Working hand in hand
The research score is a partnering practice
Partnering imagination and memory
Breath and Attention
Finding the release
Finding openings²³⁹

Cutaneous thinking
Thinking with the skin as a relational organ
Breathing through the brain
Solidity of the skull
Versus the permeability of the soles of the feet
Sometimes it doesn't need extra weight by another body
One's own weight is just enough
The stranglehold of representational language
The stranglehold of language representing experience
How to open that up?
How to get out?²⁴⁰

Slightly different path

²³⁸ Excerpt from research score with 'reflection' (edited), 17 October 2018.

²³⁹ Excerpt from research score without reference (edited), 24 October 2018.

²⁴⁰ Excerpt from research score without reference (edited), 6 November 2018.

Pushing thought into another direction
Letting it orbit around body
It enters your head
From the back
Through the neck
Through the ribs and through your hands
Into the touch
It comes not with will
But with clarity and determination
To the point
Making itself felt
Forcefully
But without force
Carried by the weight
And sweetened by the honey of your touch
Delicately tasting the sole of the foot
Opening the honey-trap
Undoubtedly missing you²⁴¹

Sensations that create a perception of surrender
Surrendering to someone or something else
Coming in and passing through
Legging
Skinning
Feeting
Touching
Grounding

Creating space for imagination to activate relations and intensities
Space in-between
Ma
Real time entering
Pre-creation for future enterings

²⁴¹ Excerpt from research score with 'research score' (edited), 12 February 2019.

An opening to the past
Enabling an opening to the future
Is it an opening
Or is it an activation of a dormant potential?
Is the relation already there
Or is it generated?
Is it significant to make a distinction between that which is activated
And that which is created?²⁴²

Temporality
Created by the rhythm of breathing
In collusion with the sequence
Expectations of how it feels
Action and perception patterns
Established modes of perception
Orienting the sensations of imaginary receiving
Can the practice of the research score undo
Established modes
Of sensing and perceiving in the practice of the Manipulations?
Established modes
Of perceptual thinking?
Can it expand
The register of thinking?
Can it change
The practice of the Manipulations?²⁴³

Has 'translation' become exhausted?
Has the concept become tacit?
Has it become unproductive?
Merely habitual?

²⁴² Excerpt from research score with 'research score' (edited), 12 November 2018.

²⁴³ Excerpt from research score with 'undoing' (edited), 27 November 2016.

Repetitive without difference?
Or can it still produce difference?
Can that difference be articulated?
Does it *need* to be articulated verbally?
Is it not enough to articulate it perceptually?
In movement?²⁴⁴

Words activating the practice
Retrieving relations
Words as a means to re-access past experience
Relations
Touching the concept with my mind
Putting all the effort in the listening
Without tensing
Searching for the right tonus
Allowing thoughts to come to expression
Curious about the futurity of the research score
Looking forward to leave behind this still kind of lonely practice²⁴⁵

Putting together and apart
Separating and joining
Isolating and connecting
At the edge of the articulatable
The effable
Staying long enough with prearticulation
For the not-yet-thought to emerge
The different
The new
With and through the floor
Weight puncturing
Body as passage

²⁴⁴ Excerpt from research score with 'translation' (edited), 11 December 2018.

²⁴⁵ Excerpt from research score with 'research score' (edited), 23 January 2019.

Thought becoming felt
Coming to expression with touch
Is it a method to capture thought
Or a technique to release thinking?
Minimizing the effort of thought's extraction
Minimizing the effort to com-pre-hend
How are the notions of the untouchable
And the ineffable
Related to each other?²⁴⁶

To think a body from its limits
To take thought into the touch
Creating a different set of relations
To think with you
Articulating the body differently
Reflectively
With difference
Your thinking entering
Passing through
Our thinking coming together
Thought that belongs to no body
Touching skin-ground
Reaching into the floor
Beyond body
Floor knows how to support
Knows how to take weight
Embedded in an ecology
Body experiencing floor
Floor experiencing body
Floor in my skin
Body activating floor
Activating floor in my head

²⁴⁶ Excerpt from research score with 'articulation' (edited), 13 February 2019.

Floor in my chest
Thinking through a floored body
Body in the floor
And floor in the body
Floor-ing thoughts
Affected by deep touch
Knowledge in the technique of creating that ecology
Thought's organization
Distribution of sense
Sensing and sensed
Stillness and moving
Listening
Resting
Spacing time
Deeply touched by the floor
Breathing through the touch
Proper sense of touch touching its metaphorical sense
Is it possible to touch on those layers
Of deeply sedimented knowledge?
What do the ribs have to say?
The repetition of bodily knowledge
Conscious and unconscious reflectivity
A repetition of the same?
A repetition of possibilities instead of potential?
Articulating the space between the ribs and the floor
Articulating space around
Trusting the practice to do its work
Staying in prearticulation is not the worst that can happen
Is the existing ecology sufficient?
Is it ever sufficient?
To open up the practice to its potential?
Isn't there always
A necessity to generate

New articulations
New relations?
To produce something new?
What if the new is non-conscious?
That would be not-knowing what one knows²⁴⁷

Installing 'language'
Allowing it to be part of the game
Relaxing the tongue
Tickling out words
Teasing them
Pleasing them a little
Multiple places of articulation
And dis-articulation
Reading as writing
Weathering language
Changing corporeal relations
The ecology of speech
Including that pain in the right lower back²⁴⁸

In the mess of thoughts
Waiting
Listening for something to come to the fore
Articulated by the vocal chords
Without becoming forced
Kenosis
Non-descriptive
Or at least *not only* descriptive
Sedimented words that are touched upon
Depth versus surface

²⁴⁷ Excerpt from research score with 'bodily knowledge' (edited), 15 & 18 February 2015, as well as with 'reflection' (edited), 20 February 2019.

²⁴⁸ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 28 July 2018.

To infinity
Where nothing ever returns
Diffracted and inflected
On its way to
Becoming dissolved²⁴⁹

Suspended
But not absent
A way of communicating
Touching
Or in touch with the more-than-human
Reflectively touching
Without projecting one's own needs
To be for the other
A kind of knowing that emerges between two bodies
Always going to the edge of not-knowing
Studying
Without grasping
Holding
Moving through together
Allowing experience to speak
Maybe not for itself but
In its own terms
Not outside of language
But in a language that
Is more adequate to
The heart of the experience²⁵⁰

An alphabet of touch
Each touch a letter
Attention as the ink

²⁴⁹ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 21 June 2018.

²⁵⁰ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 27 June 2018.

Not written *on* the body
But a kind of writing *with* the body
Not the body speaking for itself
But with many others
Touch is not inscribing *onto* the body
The body is not a surface of inscription
Not a blank sheet of paper
The body is with language
Multiple languages
Multiple streams of signs²⁵¹

Writing with the other
Editing together
Being written
Co-articulation
Breathing word by word
Creating space for words to pass through
For thoughts to be affected²⁵²

Spelling out experience differently each time
Shifting attention to another page
Repetition and singularity
Singularity through repetition
Maintaining a close relationship with the phrasing of receiving
Insisting on difference
Attention as a means to not fall into automatisms
Maintaining alive the conversation with imagination
Refreshing the body's experience of the work today
The desire to give myself to the other
To let the other in
To re-experience 1000 plateaus of touch

²⁵¹ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 29 June 2018.

²⁵² Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 2 July 2018.

Together²⁵³

Words

The world

Worlds in a word²⁵⁴

Articulating the body

Creating space

For creating words²⁵⁵

Giving weight to words

Giving ground

Relating words to place

Placing words

Taking words to the limits²⁵⁶

Not everything can be felt and sensed

And not everything can be spoken out and said

There are limits to what can be said

Same as there are limits to what can be felt and sensed²⁵⁷

²⁵³ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 13 July 2018.

²⁵⁴ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 17 July 2018.

²⁵⁵ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 20 August 2018.

²⁵⁶ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 29 June 2018.

²⁵⁷ Excerpt from research score with 'language' (edited), 14 July 2018.

Chapter Five
Imaginary Properties:
Thinking Through the Manipulations
(First Artistic Part)

To know is not simply to explore, but rather is to be able to make your way back over your own footsteps, following the path you have marked out.
(Latour 1999, 74)

The proposal for the research towards the first artistic part of my doctorate was to articulate, in writing, the impact of the Manipulations on the body of the practitioner, as well as the knowledge created in and through the practice. At the beginning of my doctoral research, I was looking back at many years of training with the Manipulations, and I knew the practice fairly well. What I did not know was how to verbally articulate the knowledge that was embedded in, and created by, the Manipulations.

How to approach such a written articulation? How to articulate the non-linguistic content of experience? How to translate the tacit knowledge that is created in the process of alteration into verbal language? And how to approach writing about the Manipulations, not by imposing a pre-fabricated theoretical framework onto the practice, but from within the practice, and in a way that implicates the practice itself in the process of writing?

The Glossary

One starting point was the idea to create a glossary. Typically, the purpose of a glossary is to explain the technical terms and concepts that are used in a certain profession or discipline. In the early stage of my doctorate, I was very much occupied with the question of how to communicate the background and the aims of my research to the research community. The purpose of creating a glossary was to facilitate a better understanding of my artistic background, and to make my research more accessible by introducing the lingo used in the Body Weather training. In addition, I hoped that thinking through the Manipulations and

creating a glossary would be helpful to take stock of the practical and linguistic departure points of my research at the outset of my doctoral studies.

As discussed in Chapter Three, words are always implied in the processes of teaching and negotiating dance. These words are neither neutral, nor are they merely descriptive; they are, rather, performative, in the sense that they do things in the world – they make things happen. The rhetoric of teachers and practitioners directs the process of learning; it directs how a body moves, how a body articulates, and how it is articulated, how it attends to itself and to other bodies, how it imagines, how it thinks, etc.

The tacit physical articulation of bodies goes hand-in-hand with the articulation of the words that direct the experience of our bodies. Verbal instructions orient and direct *what* we attend to, and the way *how* we attend. Activated and oriented by words, attention is key in creating the contents and the modes of our experience. Attention is a generative force in the articulation and constitution of bodies by creating links between words and experience.²⁵⁸

The words listed in the Glossary are typically used in directing the process of transmitting the Manipulations. By sourcing the language from within the realm of practice, instead of looking in other fields or disciplines, I compiled a list of words that are important in the rhetoric of practice and the process of embodiment. The Glossary can be seen as a back-translation of practice into the same language that earlier had been employed in the activation of the practice and the generation of experience.

Unearthing the language that is used in the direction of the training maybe does not sound like a highly original and innovative approach to the task of linguistically articulating and translating the practice. Nevertheless, despite the lack of innovation and originality, the main advantage of drawing on the

²⁵⁸ Merleau-Ponty points out that attention does not just register what is present, but that it actively constitutes objects: “To pay attention is not merely further to elucidate pre-existing data, it is to bring about a new *articulation* of them [...] Attention is [...] the active constitution of a new object which makes explicit and articulate what was until then presented as no more than an indeterminate horizon” (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 30; quoted in Csordas 1993, 138; my emphasis). See Chapter Three for a discussion of Latour’s notion of ‘articulation’.

language found in *Body Weather* is that the continuity of the movement from physical articulation to verbal articulation is not broken. By approaching the question of translation from within the familiar environment of *Body Weather*'s own vocabulary, the continuity of the movement of translation across different modes of expression was maintained. The reversibility of the operation—i.e. translating language into practice, and vice versa—enabled continuity and kept “the chain of transformation”²⁵⁹ intact. Whereas the application of a theoretical framework imposed from the outside onto the Manipulations would have entailed the risk of subordinating the practice to theory, using *Body Weather*'s own terminology in the creation of the Glossary kept the balance between the two.

Words activating the practice
Retrieving relations
Words as a means to re-access past experience and past relations

Touching the concept with my mind
Putting all the effort into the listening
With minimal tension

Searching for the right tonus
Allowing thoughts to come into expression²⁶⁰

The Research Score as a Method of Embodied Reflection

In the process of creating the Glossary, the research score was one of the main practical methods²⁶¹ used to reflect on the Manipulations, and to verbally articulate the practice. Each time I conducted the research score, I chose one word from the Glossary to reflect on, and wrote down the ideas that came to my mind in real time. I called the documents that were produced by this procedure ‘The Scribblings’. In addition, I conducted a series of speed writing exercises for each word in a more conventional setting, i.e. sitting at a desk and typing words

²⁵⁹ Latour 1999, 70.

²⁶⁰ Excerpt from research score with ‘method’ (edited), 23 January 2019.

²⁶¹ Henk Borgdorff defines ‘method’ as “a well considered, systematic way of reaching a particular objective” (Borgdorff 2011, 50).

into my computer. I edited the material gathered from all of these writing procedures and created a final version as an entry into the Glossary.

What's the difference between practice and method?

Am I practising a method?

Am I turning a practice into a method?

Does it have to do with the intention underlying the practice
Whether something is a 'practice' or a 'method'?²⁶²

Similar to the Glossary, the research score was conducive to maintaining the continuity of the movement of translation in the passage of thought from the physical to the conceptual, and vice versa. By embedding verbal reflection within the Manipulations, the research score does not reiterate the separation between physical practice and linguistic articulation – something that is typically the case when reflection is approached by way of pausing, standing back, and looking at the practice from a temporal distance.

In the research score, the action of physical reflection and the action of conceptual reflection belong to the same action complex. Instead of following the logics of separation by working from one end of the continuum to the other, the research score situates the act of translation in the midst of relations, from where it works in two opposite directions at the same time. Instead of creating a unit of 'non-verbal practice' that is separate from a unit of 'linguistic reflection', the research score generates a shared ecology. It fuses physical and verbal modes of expression without confusing them: both modes of expression continue to exist in their own right – distinct from each other while still being connected, and differentiated from each other without being divided.

The techniques of articulation that are embodied and activated by the research score foster an ecology in which the translation of physical into verbal discourse is sensitive, aligned and alert to the particular needs and properties of corporeal writing. The research score creates an intra-disciplinary micro-space in which

²⁶² Excerpt from research score with 'method' (edited), 5 May 2015.

the hegemony of language is tempered: language is not imposed *on* the corporeal, but dialogues and co-articulates *with* it. The linguistic articulation of verbal thinking does not come at the expense of a strict division from non-verbal corporeal thinking. The research score thus supports the continuity of the movement of thought and its passage from one mode of expression to another.

The Evolution of the Research Score into a Medium of Artistic Research

In October 2012, I presented the results of my research for the first artistic part in a lecture-demonstration at the Theatre Academy Helsinki. Next to the creation of the Glossary, one of the main outcomes of my investigation was that the research score became established as a method of embodied reflection²⁶³ in, through and about the Manipulations. In the time after the first artistic part, I continued to work with the research score and to explore its epistemic potential, while the Glossary took a backseat.

In the following years, my continued experimentation with the research score triggered a number of shifts that changed the orientation and the focus points of my research, both conceptually as well as practically. The first shift was a gradual shift of emphasis from the Manipulations to the research score itself as the main epistemic subject and object of my research. At this stage of my doctoral research, the repeated presentation of my research on different occasions and in changing contexts asked me to reconsider my investigation from the different thematic angles offered by these various events. Whenever it was possible, I included a performance of the research score in one of my research presentations at the Performing Arts Research Centre's seminars, conferences, festivals or symposia. It would not have made much sense to only show a video of the Manipulations and to talk about it. I was striving for a balance, and interaction, between performative and discursive modes of articulating my research. Performing the research score became a way of

²⁶³ Kinsella (2007) makes a distinction between two modes of reflection: an embodied mode of reflection *in* the action, which "arises through the bodily, lived experience of the practitioner and is revealed in action" (396), and an intentional mode of cognitive and rational reflection *after* the action. In my conception of embodied reflection in and through the research score, intentional reflection is embedded and embodied *in* the action.

performatively enacting the practical grounds of my research in the space of representation.

So I'm reflecting on method
With a method of reflection²⁶⁴

A second shift took place as I started to use the research score differently: no longer primarily as a method for reflecting on the Manipulations, but also as a means of reflecting on concepts that I encountered in my theoretical research, and as a way of generating material for my research presentations. In May 2015, in the process of creating a lecture-demonstration for a conference on dance research, I conducted a series of research scores reflecting on and with the word 'method', and I included the transcripts in my presentation. In the autumn of that same year, preparing for a contribution to another conference on the methodology of practice-as-research, I conducted yet another set of research scores reflecting on and with a variety of notions: 'struction',²⁶⁵ 'embodied knowing',²⁶⁶ 'embodied reflection',²⁶⁷ 'reflection',²⁶⁸ 'diffraction'²⁶⁹ and 'unfinished thinking'.²⁷⁰ Again, I included the transcripts in the exposition part of my presentation as a way of documenting the outcomes of my process of working with the research score.

What came to the fore over the course of these shifts was that I could use the research score as a technique to establish relations with a range of diverse concepts; it became a versatile tool for reflecting on possibly *any* notion that I encountered in the realm of my theoretical studies. Consequently, I began to lie down frequently in my study at home to practise the research score, in addition to the more habitual way of 'dryly' thinking through ideas and typing them into my computer while sitting at the desk. In the course of 2015, I practised the research score to reflect on and with, among others, the notions of 'place', 'time', 'participation', 'third space', 'potential', 'method', 'cut', 'tacit knowledge',

²⁶⁴ Excerpt from research score with 'method' (edited), 6 May 2015.

²⁶⁵ See Nancy & Barrau 2015.

²⁶⁶ See Johnson 2011.

²⁶⁷ See Kinsella 2007.

²⁶⁸ See Zahavi 2015.

²⁶⁹ See Barad 2003.

²⁷⁰ See Borgdorff 2010.

‘thinking’, ‘training’, ‘not-knowing’, ‘touch’, ‘struction’, ‘embodied reflection’, ‘diffraction’, ‘unfinished thinking’, ‘specificity’, ‘emptiness’, ‘relation’, ‘exhaustion’ and ‘articulation’. These are the examples that I worked with, but the possibilities are obviously endless.

With this expansion of the practice, the research score evolved from a method of reflecting on the Manipulations into a consistent practice of embodied reflection its own right. As a translation of the Manipulations, the research score gradually moved away from the original and took on a life of its own. In the poetic language of Walter Benjamin, the research score was now set on a “straight path to infinity [...] thereupon pursuing its own course according to the laws of fidelity in the freedom of linguistic flux”.²⁷¹

A method of folding sensing into reflection
Reflection into sensing

With minimal effort
With a maximum of receptivity and listening

Not one *over* the other, but one *with* the other

Not a method of finding solutions
But a method of taking a problem to its core, its edge, its extreme

Observing what happens
Reflecting as it happens
Reflecting *on* and *in* action²⁷²

Academic Writing *on* Practice

Another important moment in the evolution of the research score, and in its emancipation from the Manipulations, was the writing of two articles during 2015. In the early years of my doctorate, the prospect of writing about Body Weather made me feel uneasy. I continuously questioned whether I was at all authorized and entitled to make any statements about the practice, and I felt a tension in myself being at once the practitioner and the artist-researcher. The

²⁷¹ Benjamin 1968, 80.

²⁷² Excerpt from research score with ‘method’ (edited), 7 May 2015.

practitioner in me was committed to the original practice, and concerned with preserving its unique strengths and qualities. On the other hand, the artist-researcher in me not only had great esteem for the heritage, but was also eager to critically question it, and curious to explore what else could possibly be done with the Manipulations other than employing them in the orthodox way as a practice for performance training. What was the potential of the Manipulations as a knowledge practice? How could I further explore and develop this potential in the context of artistic research?

Knowing that my research was in tension with some of the teachings of Body Weather, I was rather hesitant to share it with Body Weather practitioners in the early years of my doctoral studies. In contrast to this, it felt emotionally less charged to introduce my work to my peers from the field of artistic research, and to discuss it with them. The writing of the two essays, which were published in 2016, got things moving. “Modes of Knowing in Body Weather Performance Training”²⁷³ articulates the tacit modes of knowing and the bodily knowledge that is created in and through the Manipulations. “Reflecting *with* Practice: Body Weather Performance Training Becomes a Medium of Artistic Research”²⁷⁴ goes a step further: it not only articulates the knowledge that is created in and through the process of alteration, but it also offers a detailed analysis of the research score as an embodied approach to think through the Manipulations and to create the Glossary. The article concludes by suggesting that the research score enables a shift in the mode of reflection from reflecting and writing *on* practice to reflecting and writing *with* practice, and that by making this shift happen, the research score transforms the Manipulations into a *medium* of artistic research.²⁷⁵ Before elaborating on this shift in more detail, I take a closer look at the notion of ‘medium’.

From Artistic Medium to Medium of Research

²⁷³ Hug 2016b.

²⁷⁴ Hug 2016a.

²⁷⁵ See Hug 2016a, 188.

Esa Kirkkopelto²⁷⁶ argues that artist-researchers transform their artistic medium into a medium of research.²⁷⁷ The artistic medium, he writes, “enables a certain change, a transition from one state of things to another, and *displays* it, performs it”.²⁷⁸ In the process of becoming transformed into a medium of artistic research, the artistic medium “not only changes its function, but it also brings forth its *medial* nature in a new and problematic way”.²⁷⁹ Following Kirkkopelto, a ‘medium’ is different from a ‘method’:

A medium is not only a path, a ‘method’, a transition from one place to another, but also the material and technical ground on which that path is traced, a place for placing and a happening. A medium not only enables a change, but it makes it happen in a certain way, according to the conditions set by the mediating material or technique. The medium inscribes itself into the change by the singular way the change takes place.²⁸⁰

Thus, according to Kirkkopelto, unlike an artistic medium, a medium of research has a double function, which consists in the capacity to accomplish two things: first, similarly to an artistic medium, it enables a change and transition; second, and in addition to this, a medium of research not only performs the change, but it enacts this change in such a way that the underlying materiality and techniques become perceptible to us. What is usually implicit in, or hidden by, the artistic medium—i.e. its mediating function in effecting a change, as well as the techniques and strategies that enable the ‘transition from one state to another’—is made accessible and intelligible to us by the medium of research, Kirkkopelto argues. Once the artistic medium has been transformed into a medium of research, it becomes discursively negotiable. We are placed in the position of critically assessing and discussing it; we are able to reflect on and with it; we are able to (re-)define our relations to it, and to learn something from or with it. If

²⁷⁶ Kirkkopelto, Esa. 2015. “Artistic Research and its Institutions.” In *Artistic Research: Yearbook 2015*, ed. Torbjörn Lind, 49–53. Stockholm: Swedish Research Council.

²⁷⁷ See Kirkkopelto 2015, 49.

²⁷⁸ Kirkkopelto 2015, 49, original emphases.

²⁷⁹ Kirkkopelto 2015, 49, original emphasis.

²⁸⁰ Kirkkopelto 2015, 49.

we wish, we may even change the medium, or be changed by it, if we allow it to do so.²⁸¹

Following Kirkkopelto's model, I want to suggest that the research score transforms the Manipulations from an artistic medium into a medium of research. As I have proposed, the change performed by the Manipulations is what I refer to in terms of 'alteration', i.e. a shift or transition from a mode of (self-)perception that re-activates the social and psychological conventions of inter-subjective relationships between two human bodies, towards a mode of perception that foregrounds the physicality of inter-corporeal relations between two more-than-human bodies. Not only does the research score perform this change in a similar way as the artistic medium of the Manipulations; beyond this, as a medium of research, it also brings forth its medial nature by articulating, both verbally and nonverbally, the materiality, language, techniques and philosophical underpinnings that underlie the process of alteration. Moreover, the research score is not only the driving force behind the transformation of the Manipulations into a medium of research, but it also emerges from this transformation as a practice that exists in its own right.

The writing of the two articles, likewise, played a key role in the evolution of the research score and in the transformation of the Manipulations into a medium of research. The differentiation of the research score from the Manipulations into a

²⁸¹ See Kirkkopelto 2015. He further elaborates: "This kind of research medium is 'techno-logical' in a broad sense. It produces knowledge concerning the techniques of producing or acting, whether or not it consists of some new technical device, an instrument, or of a mere conceptual rearrangement concerning the ways we perceive, produce or act. In the latter case, this new technology may reach the level of our psychophysical constitution, our 'body-minds'; it may reorganize our modes of moving, feeling, emitting voices, perceiving and encountering other beings like or unlike us, and communicating with them. [...] A project accomplishes and displays a certain change in relation to a practice and its practitioner and, in this way, sets a scene for further changes in the practices, communities and contexts with which the research deals. [...] The results of artistic research cannot necessarily be verified empirically by comparing them to facts. Like art making in general, artistic research produces something new, unseen, unheard of; it suggests new ways of perceiving, talking and acting, or existing. Unlike an artwork, the result of an artistic research project has to explain its existence, i.e. establish itself discursively, in relation to other already existing practices and the discourses supporting them" (49/50).

practice in its own right was not only an effect of repeated reflection and writing from *within* the practice of the research score; it was also driven by a more conventional mode of reflecting conceptually *about* the practice. In the course of writing the two articles, this conceptual mode of reflection took place both in close proximity to the Manipulations, as well as by stepping aside and taking distance from the practice. This co-presence of performative modes of reflecting in and through practice with representational modes of reflecting on and about practice has been crucial in the transformation of the artistic medium of the Manipulations into a medium of research.²⁸²

From ‘Reflecting *on*’ to ‘Reflecting *with*’

Let me return to the shift from reflecting *on* practice to reflecting *with* practice. In the concluding remarks of “Writing *with* Practice: Body Weather Performance Training Becomes a Medium of Artistic Research”, I suggest that this shift correlates with the transformation of the Manipulations into a medium of artistic research, from which the research score emerges as a practice in its own right. In the following, I want to further specify what I take to be the distinction between reflecting *on* and reflecting *with*, which is mainly related to how thoughts find their way into expression in the research score.

The research score started out as a method for reflecting on the Manipulations and creating the Glossary. At this early phase in the evolution of the research score, words served as a means to focalize my reflections on a particular aspect of the practice, and to clearly orient the expression of thoughts towards that

²⁸² In addition to this, the writing of these two papers had the effect of dissolving the tension between being at once the practitioner and the artist-researcher. After the articles were published, I felt deeply relieved, because I had finally articulated and externalized a large part of the ideas I had accumulated throughout the first years of my doctoral studies. I also felt liberated, because the task of writing turned into an act of taking on my share of the heritage of the Manipulations and of claiming ownership for my translation of it: the research score. Kirkkopelto notes in relation to this: “The outcome of [artistic research], no matter what its final mode of composition, consists of a medium of research, which can be publicly discussed and reasonably assessed. In addition, the project gives birth to a new kind of artistic agent, an *artist-researcher*, the primary expert of the medium that she herself has created” (Kirkkopelto 2015, 49; original emphasis).

word. In this mode of reflecting on and about a word, there is a more or less stable, fixed relationship between a knowing subject of reflection and a known word, or concept, as an object of reflection, which is at the centre of attention and which becomes represented through language. This mode of intentional and representational linguistic reflection on the practice of the Manipulations is embedded in a nonverbal performative mode of reflecting in and through practice.

In the further evolution of the research score into a medium of artistic research, there is a small but potentially significant change in the relationship between the reflecting subject and the reflected object. This is not merely the change of function that Kirkkopelto speaks about, as the artistic medium is transformed into a medium of research, and it goes beyond a change of just the context or the purpose of the practice. The change takes place on the micro-levels of the practice, more specifically on the level of the specific techniques that constitute the practice. It is an effect of the impact of the practice on the practitioner, and is related to the process of alteration in and through the Manipulations that I discuss in Chapter Two.

To briefly recapitulate, one of the aims of the research score is to explore how to re-create the process of alteration in the Manipulations, and to articulate the knowledge that is engendered in this process. Despite the fact that an identical reproduction of the effect of the Manipulations through the research score is impossible, many of the same techniques employed in the original practice are also activated by the research score: the techniques of minimizing and negotiating muscle tension; the technique of reflecting-in-and-on-action; the technique of Imaginary Breathing Through; and the technique of omni-central attention. In addition to this, the network of relations engendered by the techniques of the research score is no less complex than the one created by the Manipulations. On the contrary, given the superior number of tasks and techniques that are activated and continuously negotiated, the research score potentially creates an even more complex altered ecology of experience than the one we encounter in the Manipulations.

The suspension of volitional movement, the availability to be moved by someone or something other than oneself, the becoming of a medium and the incorporation of infinite influences both within and beyond the perceived boundaries of the body, the displacement of agency and the becoming of Weather, the questioning of ownership and the becoming of an ecology of the 'We', the distribution of attention towards the body's peripheries, the non-hierarchical articulation of corporeal relations, the body's heightened capacity to affect and be affected – all these are the properties and the effects of the techniques of alteration that are activated in the Manipulations. To the extent that these techniques become (re-)activated in the research score, and to the extent that the research score succeeds in re-creating and re-articulating the process of alteration, the altered ecology of experience affects the constitution of the particular subject/object relationship that underlies the mode of reflecting *on* practice, and potentially transforms it into a relational mode of reflecting *with* practice.

Precarious Equilibrium

The re-creation of alteration with the research score should not be taken for granted. As discussed in Chapter Four, re-creation is a complex and laborious task that is necessarily bound to fail, and the undoing of language's bracketing in the research score further complicates the situation. The inclusion of language can be perceived as creating an obstacle to the process of alteration; it reintroduces an element of (inter-)subjectivity into the practice, which previously had been deliberately excluded in the Manipulations in order to foster the shift from the inter-subjective to the inter-corporeal.

The inclusion of language thus holds the concrete risk of impeding or even reversing the process of alteration, and of re-territorializing the inter-corporeal relations back onto the plane of inter-subjective relationships. Another possibility is that practitioners end up being locked into a process of going back and forth between either the physical or the conceptual plane, without ever being able to establish relatively stable and reliable relations between the two. The inclusion of language thus entails the concrete risk of botching the process of

alteration; you may be practicing the research score, but nothing is really changing.

Nevertheless, based on my own experience, continued practice increases the chances of acquiring the skills to negotiate—more or less successfully—the potential conflict between physical and conceptual modes of reflection. The practice does its work. Gradually, one becomes more articulate in establishing and maintaining relations between the two modes without having to switch back and forth, or without subordinating one to the other. Once the equilibrium between the two is established without getting fixed, the process of alteration can do its work. The relations between a knowing subject of reflection and a known object can begin to transform. The mode of reflecting *on* practice clears the way for a mode of reflecting *with* practice.

Peripheral Reflection

In the mode of reflecting *with*, the word is no longer the fixed and focalized object of attention that it was in the mode of reflecting *on*. The word, or concept, becomes decentred and displaced. Moving from the centre to the periphery of attention, the word constantly travels²⁸³ across the body, dialoguing and co-articulating *with* it, rather than *about* it. In this mode of peripheral reflection, the concept has no privileged position as the main reference of signification. It is just another *relatum* in the field of experience. Reflecting *with* is not a volitional or intentional mode of reflection that turns practice into an object of thought, but one in which the activation of physical relations, combined with a de-activation of muscular effort, enables thought to circulate and pass through intensities of physical experience.

The creation of an altered ecology of experience with the research score transforms a conceptual mode of reflection *on* practice, in which practice figures as the *object* of thought, into a mode of reflection *with* practice ('practice' understood as an ecology of practices that are constituted by techniques). I do

²⁸³ This could be seen as taking Mieke Bal's (2002) notion of concepts that travel between disciplines a step further, towards the idea of concepts as travelling between relational bodies.

not assume that the constitution of a different network of relations creates a direct causal relationship between the physical and the conceptual. For example, the minimizing of muscular effort does not imply that reflecting *with* happens with minimal effort. Nothing would be further away from the reality of reflecting *with* than the idea that minimal muscular effort alone is sufficient to make the shift happen. On the contrary, reflecting *with* requires a high intensity on the level of activating the techniques that are necessary to initiate the process of alteration, and on the level of negotiating multiple—often conflicting—tasks. On the micro-level of the practice of the research score, reflecting *with* is constituted by a set of relational techniques of thinking that not only de-activate certain habits of moving and thinking by cutting relations, but that simultaneously also instantiate new ones. Cutting and creating relations is not a no-brainer. It is a laborious task, and failure is at all times immanent.

The Agency of the Apparatus

The research score not only creates an altered ecology of experience, but is also created by its own apparatus. Other things likewise have their say in the evolution of the research score and in the shift to reflecting *with*. According to Giorgio Agamben, an apparatus is “literally *anything* that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings”.²⁸⁴ Lepecki adds that Agamben’s characterization of the apparatus as “‘*anything*’ matches quite well with the definition of choreography, which can be understood precisely as an apparatus for the control of gestures, mobility, dispositions, body types, bodily intentions, and inclinations for the sake of a spectacular display of a body’s presence”.²⁸⁵ And Karen Barad notes that “[a]pparatuses are open-ended practices”.²⁸⁶ Following these lines of thinking, the apparatus of the research

²⁸⁴ Giorgio Agamben 2009, *What Is an Apparatus? and Other Essays*. Stanford: Stanford University, 14; original emphasis. Quoted in Lepecki 2012, 85.

²⁸⁵ Lepecki 2012, 86; original emphasis.

²⁸⁶ Barad 2003, 816. She further elaborates that “apparatuses are not static arrangements in the world that embody particular concepts to the exclusion of others; rather, apparatuses are specific material practices through which local semantic and ontological determinacy are intra-actively enacted. That is,

score can be considered an open-ended practice that choreographs the body's articulations and its ways of expression.

At the beginning of 2015, I introduced a change to the apparatus of the research score that was mainly motivated by practical considerations concerning the documentation of the thoughts and words that emerged in the course of reflecting on and with practice. Instead of writing my thoughts down on paper, I started to express them verbally and to make an audio recording. After the practice, I made a transcript of the recording.

What first appeared to be merely a minor technical adjustment turned out to pave the way for significant changes in and of the practice. It was only afterwards, following this technical adjustment, that I realized how much the physical act of writing with pen and paper had been disrupting the unity of the difference between sensorial and conceptual reflection. The physical act of translating thoughts by spelling them out on paper required far more attention and effort than the recording of speech. It became much easier to negotiate the needs and demands of reflecting in the medium of words with the needs and demands of reflecting in the medium of the senses when I used my voice and recording equipment as writing tools. The precarious equilibrium between the two modes of reflection suffered far less from the recording of speech than from the writing on paper.

Co-existence
Methods of thinking
To build in a delay

To not speak out the thought right away
But to let it sink a bit deeper
To stay a bit longer

Keeping it liquid
Liquefying thought

apparatuses are the exclusionary practices of mattering through which intelligibility and materiality are constituted. Apparatuses are material (re)configurings/discursive practices that produce material phenomena in their discursively differentiated becoming" (Barad 2003, 820).

To give affect a bit more time to do its work
To test the concept's affectability
To circulate the concept through the series of the Manipulations

Redistributing the concept
Taking it into different places of attention
Getting in touch with the body

Think the concept through the body

Touching it

Mobilising it

Checking its weight

Its texture

Its density

Its quality

Taking the concept to the limits
To the periphery of the conscious
The sensible

Allowing it to pass through the limits to the non-conscious and unknown
Allowing it to pass through
To have its own journey

Not owning the concept
The concept is a collective property
It travels to do its work²⁸⁷

²⁸⁷ Excerpt from research score with 'method' (edited), 12 May 2015.

It seems to me that this change in the apparatus of the research score is closely related to the shift in the mode of reflecting *on* to reflecting *with* the practice. The technique of recording speech slightly reduces the complexity of the research score, because it lessens the mental and physical effort that is necessary to perform the writing. As a result of this, some part of the attention is liberated and can be redirected to other tasks and techniques, for example to the observation of sensations, to reflection-in-action, and to the negotiation of the equilibrium between the two modes of reflection. This tempers the tendency to fix the attention to the word, to foreground subject/object relationships between a reflecting knower and a reflected known, and to fall into an intentional mode of reflecting *on* practice. In this way, the change in the apparatus strengthened the technique of reflecting *with*, and contributed to the evolution of the research score into a medium of research.

From ‘Reflection’ To ‘Diffraction’²⁸⁸

What might be the epistemological consequences of shifting, or expanding, the mode of reflection in the research score from a mode of reflecting *on* towards a mode of reflecting *with*? The question is whether the advanced version of the research score still fits into an epistemological model that presupposes a separation between a reflecting subject and an object of reflection, between a knower and a known.

Karen Barad launched a powerful critique of a representationalist epistemological model that assumes an ontological gap between a knower (someone representing) and the known (that which is represented), which is then mediated by the representation of (propositional) knowledge.²⁸⁹ She calls for an alternative, post-humanist and performative model, one that does not make a separation between a subject and an object of knowing, and in which the observing knower is not *exterior* to the observed phenomenon. In her account, objective knowledge is rather “a matter of *exteriority within (material-discursive)*

²⁸⁸ The following account is largely based on a section in “No Solutions: The Research Score as a Medium of Artistic Research” (Hug 2017a).

²⁸⁹ See Barad 2003.

phenomena".²⁹⁰

Changing the diffraction grating
Changing the mode of reflection to diffraction
Imagining thoughts going through the body
Wavelike

Attention taking thoughts through and out of the body
The body becoming permeable for thoughts outside itself
Diffracting thoughts as they enter
Through the touch

Thoughts becoming part of the meridian system
The circulation of the blood
The breath
Getting in touch also with other agents

Affecting and being affected
Rendering the body affective
And by rendering one's own body affective
Allowing other bodies to become affective, too

The form of the Manipulations as a means or medium for something else
Not an end in itself

Co-presence of matter and thought
Thinking matter and thought as a distributed process

An intra-action
Not an inter-action between a word and a thing
An object or a phenomenon
In inter-action we tend to see ourselves as isolated agents of thought

And yes we enact
We are accountable for what we enact and how
What we activate
And what we de-activate

Representation
Performativity
It is not either one or the other

²⁹⁰ Barad 2003, 825; original emphasis.

The question is if there is a third²⁹¹

A knowing subject, according to Barad, is not outside or exterior to the known object or phenomenon, but is itself an integral, yet separable, part of the phenomenon that it aims to understand – an exteriority within. Therefore, instead of referring to the process of knowing in terms of ‘reflection’, she proposes the notion of ‘diffraction’. Diffraction, Barad writes,

troubles dichotomies, including some of the most sedimented and stabilized/stabilizing binaries, such as organic/inorganic and animate/inanimate. Indeed, the quantum understanding of diffraction troubles the very notion of *dicho-tomy*—cutting into two—as a singular act of absolute differentiation, fracturing this from that, now from then.²⁹²

In the context of artistic research, what might be the implications of the onto-epistemological shift from a model of representation to a post-humanist performative model, from reflection to diffraction? What could be the place of the research score in accommodating or facilitating such a shift? Would it be conceivable for both models to coexist in one and the same practice, or are they mutually exclusive?

It seems to me that the research score has the potential to mediate the oscillation between both epistemological models, and to make felt—as well as intelligible—their differences: the difference between a system of representation in which a knower reflects *on* the known, and a post-humanist performative model in which the knower is an integral part of the ecology of practices she tries to understand, diffractively articulating the doing-thinking *with* practice. In a similar vein, Barad points out that “reflection and diffraction are not opposites, not mutually exclusive, but rather different optical intra-actions highlighting different patterns, optics, geometries that often overlap in practice”.²⁹³

Sensation reflecting the intensity of memory and imagination
‘Reflection’ as part of a system of representation

²⁹¹ Excerpt from research score with ‘diffraction’ (edited), 27 October 2015.

²⁹² Barad 2014, 168; original emphasis.

²⁹³ Barad 2014, 185, footnote 2.

'Articulation' as part of a performative model that is more adequate to the
needs of performance-as-research or practice-as-research
Where articulation happens *with* practice, *through* practice, or *in* practice
And not *about* practice

Where modes of doing and reflecting coincide
Having an encounter
Diffracting each other

Maybe artistic research needs to be able to oscillate between both models
The representational model and the performative model
Depending on the context of its enactment

Is it the studio?
Is it the classroom?
Is it a lecture hall?
A conference room?
A conversation on the street?

When is it appropriate to take a certain distance, stepping back, broadening
the focus?

The research score can be a practice that houses both models
Reflection and diffraction
Different kinds of languages
Different kinds of thinking through
Different kinds of knowing and unknowing²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴ Excerpt from research score with 'reflection' (edited), 13 July 2016.

Chapter Six
Reflecting *with* Practice:
The Research Score as a Medium of Artistic Research?
(Second Artistic Part)

Aims of the Collaborative Research

I invited five experienced dance and performance artists—Outi Condit, Rikka T. Innanen, Tashi Iwaoka, Paula Kramer, and Josh Rutter—to collaborate with me in the research for my second artistic part in 2016. The proposal was simple and straightforward: I wanted us to put my research to the test through collaborative performative research. The aim was to test my proposition of the research score as a medium of artistic research, and, following Barad, to explore its potential to shift the knower-known relations from a representational system of knowledge-making to a post-humanist performative model.

The goal of the collaborative interrogation of my research was not to prove or falsify its outcomes, or to achieve consensus and agreement with my collaborators, but to create a situation that was favourable to critically examine and reflect on the research score, and to eventually bring forth a more differentiated and multi-vocal (re-)articulation of my research. The focus was thus on the research score as the main driver of our collaborative investigation. The participants' experience and their critical reflections were an important part of the process, of course, but my main interest was to see if and how the research score could also possibly work for others. This is to say that, strictly speaking, my collaborators were not the 'objects' of research in this second artistic part, but rather the research score and its capacity to become a medium of artistic research for other artists and artist-researchers.

Expanded Peer Review

I envisioned the collaborative research process to be a kind of expanded peer review. Previously, some of my academic writing had been peer-reviewed, but my reviewers had had no first-hand experience of my practical research. Their feedback solely concerned the discursive articulation of my research. While their

comments certainly helped me to clarify my thinking and writing, it was at least equally important for me to obtain well-substantiated expert feedback about the practical part of my research – a *practice review*. How would my collaborators see the research score? Were the issues and questions raised by it of interest and relevance to them? What was it within the practice that they would possibly experience differently, and how would that change and add to my own understanding?

In addition to this focus on the practical part of my research, there was another question that was important to me, which concerned the relations between the research practice and its written articulation. Before starting to work together in the studio, I sent my collaborators the texts and articles that I had previously written about my research.²⁹⁵ Based on their existing bodily experiences and knowledges, what would they think about my conceptualization of the practice of the Manipulations and the research score? What was it that I had possibly failed to consider? What were the gaps and blind spots? What made this second artistic part a process of *expanded* peer review to me was that my collaborators were able to test and assess the articulation of my research in both its bodily and its academic modes.

Research Process

One of the challenges in relation to the aims of the collaborative research was of a pedagogical nature. Before the project started, only two of the participants had some experience with Body Weather and the Manipulations (Josh Rutter and Tashi Iwaoka). The other collaborators had only been briefly introduced to Manipulations Number One & Two by myself, before committing to the research project. Furthermore, none of them had ever practiced the research score before. In order to enable my collaborators to put to the test my proposition of the research score, and to critically assess my research based on their own embodied insights, I needed to come up with an effective means of transmission.

²⁹⁵ At the time, these were two published papers, Hug 2016a and Hug 2016b, as well as a draft version of Hug 2017a, and the 'linking paper' for my second artistic part (the purpose of the linking paper is to give the examiners an idea of how an artistic part is related to the entire doctoral research).

A research practice that had been developed over the course of several years had to be taught and learned within a few days.

The project was structured into *three* phases:

The *first* phase (10 days with Paula Kramer and Josh Rutter in Berlin) focused mainly on the question of the transmission and practice of the Manipulations and the research score.

The *second* phase (5 days with all participants in Helsinki in June 2016) focused again on transmission, as well as on the deepening of practice, interspersed with moments of (critical) reflection and discussion. One afternoon, I asked my collaborators to discuss with me—both one-on-one and in the presence of the whole group—the relationship between the practical research and its written articulation. Next to the Manipulations and the research score, I also introduced the practice of (Imaginary) Breathing Through.

During the *third* phase (5 days with all participants in Helsinki in September/October 2016), the focus opened up from collectively practicing the research score to discussions about the research score's connection to the Manipulations, and about its 'translatability'. In addition to this, I was gathering and selecting documentation material for the research exposition that I was building in a dance studio at the Theatre Academy. On two evenings, we invited audience for test runs in order to rehearse the presentation and to draft a script of the event.

Throughout the entire period of the collaborative research, together we conducted a series of research scores reflecting with the concepts 'diffraction', 'flow', 'knowing how', 're-creation', 'connection', 'self', 'alteration', 'touch', 'giving', 'perception', 'reflection', 'resistance', 'listening', 'peeling off', 'manipulation', 'research score', 'difference', and 'translation'. Twice, we experimented with embedding *reflecting with 'difference'* into the practice of the Manipulations. From all of these practice sessions, and the reflections and discussions following them, sound recordings were made and transcribed. On the basis of this material, seven 'Propositions for Unfinished Thinking' were written for this commentary (see Chapter Seven).

On some occasions, photographs were taken during the practice of the Manipulations and the research score, as well as video recordings. The one-on-one discussions with my collaborators were video recorded, and an edited version (“One-On-One”) was created from that.

Research Presentation

The examined research presentation combined elements of visual and textual documentation, re-enactments of practice, and discursive means of articulating the research. At the beginning of the event, visitors were given some time to stroll around and to have a look at the displayed materials, before I welcomed everyone and introduced the research project. After that, the research team split into couples and practiced the Manipulations, which was followed by the collective practice of the research score. For the purpose of the latter, I asked the audience to propose a word to us that we could take into the practice and reflect with; the suggested word we chose to work with was ‘war’.

After finishing the research score, I invited members of the audience to approach us individually with any questions they might have, about the shown practice or any other aspect of the presentation. Many audience members were keen to experience receiving the manipulations from someone from the research team, and they shared their impressions with the giver afterwards. This was followed by the last part of the presentation, a Q & A, which gave the examiners as well as the audience the opportunity to offer questions and comments.

The idea behind this presentation format was to create as much balance as possible between the performative enactment of the research process and its representation. More than merely documenting or representing the outcomes of our collaborative research by talking about it, I wanted us to extend the research process into the space of representation and into the expanded ecology of an examined artistic research presentation. The audience members were explicitly encouraged to follow their own curiosity and to move freely throughout the entire presentation, to witness us practicing from nearby, to look at the displayed materials while we were working, etc. The entrance door was left open

during the event as a way of gesturing to the freedom and possibility of exiting the space at any time, and refreshments were served in the hall outside.

The Evolution of the Research Score into a Collective Practice

To me, the most important outcome of the research for the second artistic part was the evolution of the research score from a solo practice into a practice of collective thinking. In this expanded version, the research score is co-enacted by several bodies working at the same time and in close proximity to each other. This way of collectively enacting the research score adds new layers to an already complex ecology of experience. Whereas in the solo version, the receiver works single-handedly to (re-)create an altered mode of reflecting in and through practice, in the expanded collective practice of the research score, several bodies simultaneously co-constitute an expanded network of influences and relations by breathing together, by re-creating the sensation of being touched together, by uttering words and listening to each other, by affecting and being affected by each other.

Multiplicities become further multiplied, and the field of relations is largely extended. The solo improvisation expands into a group piece, and each body has to (re-)consider and (re-)negotiate the questions of what to include and what to exclude in this 'dance of attention';²⁹⁶ of how to cope with 'too much'; and of how to fail with more or less articulation.

In the collective practice of the research score, the always already precarious balance between physical and linguistic modes of reflection in the solo version of the research score is further destabilized by the presence of speech uttered by several other bodies in close proximity. The activation of multiple tasks and techniques that constitute the solo practice of the research score has to be re-negotiated in relation to the altered conditions of collective practice: the Weather that is co-created by the presence of bodies that are audibly hissing-breathing, and that are expressing thoughts verbally, while at the same re-creating the sensation of being touched and moved by absent bodies.

²⁹⁶ See Manning 2013, ff.

How does the expansion of the network of relations in the collective practice of the research score change the way bodies think? What are the effects of this expansion on the economy of attention? What is the impact of the augmentation of speech on re-creating the shift from the inter-subjective to the inter-corporeal? Does the verbal expression of language by other bodies shift the modalities of thinking entirely away from material-physical modes towards linguistic ones? Do bodies revert again to an inter-subjective mode of being, or are they able to sustain the network of inter- and extra-corporeal relations with the other absent and present (non-)human bodies and things? Are they able to reflectively activate and maintain these relations without fixing their organization, i.e. without falling into automatisms?

In the collective practice of the research score, thought moves, forms and comes to expression in-between bodies, both present and absent ones. Thinking is not the property of an individual, intentional, agential subject, but rather emerges from within an expanded network of inter-corporeal relations. It moves in/through/with the sensation of being touched by absent bodies that are remembered, imagined and re-created by present bodies. Following Tanaka, who suggests that 'movement happens on both sides of the skin' (see Chapter One), it is tempting to say that in the research score, the movement of thought takes place on both sides of the skin.

Sometimes, thought comes to expression by moving back and forth between one body and another; at other times, it moves from one body to the next, and from there to yet another one, or it spreads out across several bodies concurrently. More often than not, thought seems to go nowhere and keeps circulating below the threshold of expression, dwelling in the realm of pre-articulation,²⁹⁷ and bodies remain silent. Nevertheless, these silent bodies are bursting with thought,²⁹⁸ even if this thought is not brought to expression through language.

Language in the Making

²⁹⁷ See the discussion of Erin Manning's concept of 'prearticulation' further below in this chapter.

²⁹⁸ See Hornblow 2006.

Erin Manning has theorized the making of language by drawing on practices of writing, for which Ralph Savarese coined the term 'autie-type'.²⁹⁹ According to Savarese, Manning explains, autie-type is a "modality of writing [that] is a genre on its own right, an intrinsically relational way of thinking and communicating" that "activates the associated milieu not simply of environmentality but of words themselves – a worlding in words".³⁰⁰

Wording world *with* the world
Moving in-between micro and macro
Worlding words and wording worlds
With objects and entities far beyond the skin³⁰¹

In autie-type, Manning explains, "language is a sensing practice in its own right – a field of affective tonality activated in rhythms and tones, in speeds and intensities".³⁰² In this kind of writing, which is created through methods such as facilitated communication and rapid prompting, "the turn to expression does not cut itself off from the experiential vastness of sensation and perception but writes with them".³⁰³

Spacing and placing thinking
With sensations
Thought is touching
And being touched
Thought is sensing
And being sensed³⁰⁴

Whereas (neuro)typically, writing would tend to express language by extracting thought from its associated milieu, and by cutting it off from the complexity of the ineffable of experience, autie-type, Manning notes, has the capacity to bring "the plane of feeling onto the plane of articulation, calling forth the more-than of

²⁹⁹ See Manning 2013, 155.

³⁰⁰ Manning 2013, 155.

³⁰¹ Excerpt from research score with 'prearticulation' (edited), 9 & 11 April 2019.

³⁰² Manning 2013, 156.

³⁰³ Manning 2013, 156.

³⁰⁴ Excerpt from research score with 'prearticulation' (edited), 9 & 11 April 2019.

language's expressibility" by "bridging the worlds of sensory eventness with the affective tonality of language in the making such that the dialogue between these co-arising worlds can begin".³⁰⁵

Techniques of the research score
Bring to expression
The more-than of language
Move thought into expression
From the midst of experience
Compose with sensations re-created
Articulated through touch
Express language from within
An altered ecology of thinking³⁰⁶

In autie-type, Manning writes, "language does not replace the sensual exploration of the relational environment", but "moves with it, becoming one more technique for composition. [...] Words are an extra component of the experience of articulation, not its final form".³⁰⁷ They are "the selected extraction from the nexus of experience that converge into appearance".³⁰⁸

Prearticulation

Manning proposes the concept of 'prearticulation' to indicate a way of bringing thought to expression *with* sensation; it is a becoming of language that retains the relational complexity of the environment from which thought arises, instead of cutting into it.

³⁰⁵ Manning 2012, 214.

³⁰⁶ Excerpt from research score with 'prearticulation' (edited), 9 & 11 April 2019.

³⁰⁷ Manning 2012, 215. She further elaborates on the relationality of autie-type: "Rather than disconnecting from the field of relation, it bridges it, conceptually, propositionally. This allows autistics to bring to expression the complex subtleties of the dance of attention that is at the heart of all incipient becomings. To bring this dance of attention to articulation is probably the biggest challenge any writer will face, as language invariably involves a certain sum of representation. To write-with language in the making is to dance-with experience rather than to exclude it from the dance" (Manning 2013, 157).

³⁰⁸ Manning 2012, 216.

The research score
A technique of making language
From within the welter of experience
A technique of expressing thought
From the midst of relations
What comes to expression
Is oriented by a word
Oriented
Not forced³⁰⁹

Thought prehends from the complex nexus that is the world in motion. Prearticulation is the preacceleration of language: it is where the language's affective tonality comes to expression. The world in motion is made up of planes of experience. The passage from the plane of sensation to the plane of articulation, a movement toward the actual from the virtual stratum, depends on thought's capacity to extract from the virtual chaos of experience's unfolding. This extraction is a kind of editing of the nexus.³¹⁰

Giving prearticulation its share
In the expression of thought
Without separating thought
From the ecology of experience
Including the absent body in the field of relations
Following the rhythm of breathing³¹¹

Like its movement-cousin preacceleration, prearticulation is about the virtual field of expressibility that precedes (or follows) expression as such. It is the feltness of language in the moving, before the saying, between the words. It can be gesture, rhythm, movement. It can be laughter, stuttering. It can be silence. From sensation to experience, from relation to perception, from feeling to writing, prearticulation makes felt how the more-than of expression—expressibility—accompanies language in the making. Prearticulation does not express some *thing*, or some *body*, it expresses-with. The proposition: there is no language that does not carry its share of prearticulation.³¹²

³⁰⁹ Excerpt from research score with 'prearticulation' (edited), 9 & 11 April 2019.

³¹⁰ Manning 2012, 216. The concept of 'preacceleration' is developed in Manning 2012, 29-42.

³¹¹ Excerpt from research score with 'prearticulation' (edited), 9 & 11 April 2019.

³¹² Manning 2013, 158/159; original emphases.

Sensing the difference of intensity
Between body feeling-floor
And floor making itself felt

Sensing the unity of the difference
Between weight that is imagined and remembered
And actual weight

Floor as a constituent of Weather
Animating
Articulating
Formatting
Shaping
The body
With touch³¹³

Foregrounding the share of expressibility within expression and shifting the register of experience toward articulation in language does not necessarily mean reducing experience to representation, and certainly does not mean undoing it of affective tonality. Language *can* remain expressive, *can* embody the more-than – this is what autie-type demonstrates so well. In fact, the foregrounding of language’s capacity to participate in an emergent, co-composing dance of attention is a gift autistics—like other wordsmiths—bring to writing.³¹⁴

My proposition: The research score is a practice of making language in its own right, expressing the more-than of language—its expressibility—without cutting itself off from the complexity of experience from which it arises, and without undoing language’s affective tonality.

Composing-With

Manning proposes the concept of ‘composing-with’ to indicate a way of expressing thought that gives prearticulation its share in the making of language. “Composing-with”, she writes, is not only “making felt the more-than of experience in the telling”, but also “the more-than of expression in writing”.³¹⁵

Composing with

³¹³ Excerpt from research score with ‘prearticulation’ (edited), 9 & 11 April 2019.

³¹⁴ Manning 2013, 159; original emphases.

³¹⁵ Manning 2013, 159.

Absent bodies

Re-creating absent bodies
The memory of their touch
The rhythm of our breathing

Composing with
The body
That belongs
To nobody

Composing with
The unity of the difference
Between touching
And being touched³¹⁶

Beyond the content of utterance—its most bare communicability—
composing-with makes felt the collective breath of the more-than in the
saying, makes heard the fragility of expressibility in its tuning to
expression.³¹⁷

Composing with
Floor

Floor supports
Connecting with touch
Becoming with
Expressing with

Composing with
The floor's horizontality

Composing with
The verticality of the absent body's weight
Passing through the body
Into the ground

Composing with
Floor-ness

Grounding thinking

³¹⁶ Excerpt from research score with 'composing-with' (edited), 12 & 16 April
2019.

³¹⁷ Manning 2013, 159.

By flooring thought³¹⁸

Composing-with offers a different perspective on language, opening the play of wor(l)ding across registers of perception, sensation, and affect, activating language's inherent capacity to write-with the edges of pure experience.³¹⁹

Taking time

For slow extraction

Taking Time

For slow editing

Taking time

To edit and compose with
Absent bodies

Taking time

To feel enunciation's resonance

Taking time

To balance the complexity
Of layering with layers of expression³²⁰

³¹⁸ Excerpt from research score with 'composing-with' (edited), 12 & 16 April 2019.

³¹⁹ Manning 2013, 160.

³²⁰ Excerpt from research score with 'composing-with' (edited), 12 & 16 April 2019.

To compose-with is to place language within an ecology of practices. It is to think-with in the time of utterance's becoming expression. To compose-with is to collectively write time in the shaping.³²¹

Taking time

To dwell in the messiness of prearticulation

Taking time

To be with pain

Taking time

To be with tension

Taking time

To experience repetition

Taking time

To resist thought's quick enunciation³²²

Composing-with [...] suggests a commitment to making the pure experience of the more-than of expression felt. This is an ecological approach to language. It does not seek to delimit or deny the complexities

³²¹ Manning 2013, 160.

³²² Excerpt from research score with 'composing-with' (edited), 12 & 16 April 2019.

(and unsayabilities) of expressibility. Rather, it addresses the fullness of autistic experience, adding to it another modality: words.³²³

Giving time

To inefficient language-making

From the midst

At the limits

Of experience

Giving time

To sense language's affective tonality

To the more-than

Of language's semantics

Giving time

To spinal thinking

At the limits³²⁴

My proposition: The research score is a practice of composing-with the absent bodies' thought in the making of language. It is composing-with the temporality and complexity that is created by the research score's ecology of experience: its particular rhythm of touch-articulation, its alignment of breathing with an omni-central distribution of attention, its re-creation of touch-relations with absent bodies, its flooring of horizontal thought punctured by the verticality of weight, its pain and resistance, its stretching of thought to the limits.

'Technique' and its Outdoing: 'Technicity'

³²³ Manning 2013, 162/163.

³²⁴ Excerpt from research score with 'composing-with' (edited), 12 & 16 April 2019.

Manning highlights that autie-type is a kind of writing that is intuitive, and not learned or honed.³²⁵ The research score differs from autie-type in that it is a practice of thinking and writing that is learned and honed by techniques of articulating a body, as well as by techniques of bringing thought to verbal expression. The research score's technicality consists precisely in the way in which different modes of thinking co-compose language with each other, and in how thought is expressed without cutting—too violently³²⁶—into the complexity of experience. Non-linguistic modes of thinking and conceptual (critical) reflection are not separated into different action complexes, but they belong to, and emerge from, one and the same ecology of practices. From a neurotypical perspective, the research score's way of writing is rather counter-intuitive; it does not come for free, but requires laborious practice and the refinement of technique. It has to be earned.

For Manning, 'technique' is not "an add-on to a pre-existing body-form but [...] a process of bodying", "an in-forming of a mutating body", and "a mode through which a body can express, aligning into this expression qualities of bodying".³²⁷ The specific qualities of bodying with the research score are constituted by the techniques of re-creation that articulate and inform a body, and that are aligned to the techniques of *reflecting with* through which thought is brought to expression.

According to Manning, the availability of technique on its own is not enough for the art of making language: "The technique will only open a field, altering the conditions of its emergence".³²⁸ Technique is needed in the art of thought, but it is not (yet) art in itself.³²⁹ What is needed, according to Manning, and what art can do, is the outdoing of technique, for which she proposes the concept of 'technicity': "Technicity is the modality for creating out of a system of techniques

³²⁵ "What is significant about autie-type is that autistics come to this kind of writing intuitively. It is not learned or honed." (Manning 2013, 157)

³²⁶ The extraction of thought always necessitates a certain degree of subtraction from the field of relations. The question is, how much of that ecology can be preserved in the process of extraction.

³²⁷ Manning 2013, 31. Manning's notion of technique is different from that of Spatz, who considers technique in terms of habituation and automatization.

³²⁸ Manning 2016, 125.

³²⁹ See Manning 2013, 40.

the more-than of a system”.³³⁰ It is “the experience of how the work opens itself to its potential, to its more-than”.³³¹ The issue in the outdoing of technique is that “this quality of the more-than that is technicity is ineffable – it can be felt, but it is difficult to articulate in language”.³³²

Following this, I want to re-consider the research score as a system of techniques for composing-with that opens up a field of experimentation. The creation of this new field of relations is not (yet) art in itself; it is only through the outdoing of technique that the potential of the practice, its more-than, can unfold. At this stage, the all-too-familiar problem that appears, once again, is the eternally returning question: How can we articulate the potential of the more-than that is technique’s technicity?³³³

³³⁰ Manning 2013, 32.

³³¹ Manning 2016, 40.

³³² Manning 2016, 40.

³³³ Manning further elaborates on technicity and its relations to technique as follows: “Think technicity as the process that stretches out from technique, creating brief interludes for the more-than of technique, gathering from the implicit the force of form. Think technicity as the field where movement begins to dance. Technicity: the art of the event” (Manning 2013, 33). “Technique and technicity coexist. Where technique engages the repetitive practices that form a composing body—be it organic or inorganic—technicity is a set of enabling conditions that exact from technique the potential of the new co-composition. Think the new not as a denial of the past but as the quality of the more-than of the past tuning toward the future” (Manning 2013, 32/33). “Technique comes out of practice as much as it is what goes into practice. In this regard, techniques are hard to come by – they demand the patient exploration of how a practice comes best to itself. Technicity is the dephasing of technique – it is the experience of technique reaching the more-than of its initial application. Technicity is a craft – it is how the field of techniques touches its potential. From technique to technicity we have a transduction. Technicity is a shift of level that activates a shift in process. This is how techniques evolve. Without transduction we would have only translation, mimicry. The copying of forms. Technicity captures the affective tonality of a process, a tendency, and catapults it toward new expression” (Manning 2013, 33). “Think technique as that which perfects a system and technicity as that through which a process is born that composes the more-than that is the body’s movement ecology” (Manning 2013, 34). “Technique is key, because of its rigorous method of experimentation and repetition, a method that allays any passivity in the passage from the form of experimentation to its force. Technicity—the associated milieu where form once more becomes force, where individual gesture becomes individuation—is the process through which the implicit is acted upon to generate something as yet unthought” (Manning 2013, 34/35).

The Application of Method (*Revisited*)

Typically, following the usual path of academic knowledge production, the proper procedure to follow in order to make sense of the ineffable more-than of the research score's technicity, and the reasonable and 'correct' way to linguistically make sense of it, would be the application of a conceptual framework, a method, in order to reflect on and about it, thereby turning 'it' into an object of thought. I have touched on the problem of the application of 'method' already, when writing about the first artistic part in Chapter Five. Following up on—and further adding to—this, I want to briefly outline Erin Manning's critique of method in order to highlight what is at stake in my research and, more generally, in the production of knowledge in the field of artistic research.

The problem with method, Manning writes, is its alignment of knowledge with a certain kind of reason that assumes to know in advance what it is that constitutes knowledge.³³⁴ Method thus "works as safeguard against the ineffable: if something cannot be explained, it cannot be made to account for itself and is cast aside as irrelevant".³³⁵ For Manning, therefore, method is an "apparatus of capture",³³⁶ and it creates "a cut that stills. Method stops potential on its way, cutting into the process before it has had a chance to fully engage with the complex relational fields the process itself calls forth".³³⁷ Thus, the alignment of method and knowledge to reason is "setting into place hierarchies of relevance whose work it is to include that which is seen to advance knowledge".³³⁸ As a result of this alignment, the complexity of multiple modalities of knowing is severely reduced to *conscious* knowledge as the privileged way of knowing:

[K]nowledge tends to be relegated to the sphere of 'conscious knowledge,' backgrounding the wealth of the relational field of experience in-forming;

³³⁴ Manning's critique is directed against the Kantian notion of 'reason'.

³³⁵ Manning 2016, 32.

³³⁶ Manning 2016, 32.

³³⁷ Manning 2016, 33/34.

³³⁸ Manning 2016, 31.

the force of change that animates a process is deadened; the uneasiness that destabilizes thinking is backgrounded or effaced completely.³³⁹

Instead of asking how knowledge can best be organized and made reasonable by method, Manning calls upon us to look more closely at what it is that knowledge actually *does*. By recognizing that knowledge occurs in “the field of relation as an ecology”, and outside existing registers, we would come to value what escapes that register, and what cannot be named or accounted for:

To engage the field of relation as an ecology where knowledge occurs, to place knowledge outside of the register of existing knower-known relations, allows us to consider the importance of what escapes that register. The ineffable felt experience of the more-than is also a kind of thinking, a kind of knowledge in the making, and it changes experience. That it cannot be systematized or hierarchized does not make it less important to the realization of the event.³⁴⁰

So here I am once again, faced with the difficulty of writing about my research for the second artistic part, and about the evolution of the research score into a practice of collective thinking and writing. I have already started to approach its conceptual articulation in terms of ‘prearticulation’, ‘composing-with’, ‘technique’, ‘technicity’, and ‘method’. I have started, indeed, to create a conceptual framework. How to move on from here, if not by creating and applying a method that stops the potential of the ineffable more-than through a cut that stills? How to continue, if not by pausing and standing back to critically reflect on my research, and by creating a separation between the knower and the known? How else to proceed, if not by making a division between modes of thinking. a division that subsequently needs to be patched up by the language of representation? How to write about my research, if not by reducing the complexity of the relational field of multiple modalities of knowing, and by creating hierarchies between the remaining registers of knowledge?

How to include, instead, what otherwise would typically escape the known registers of knowledge, and which cannot be named or accounted for by language?

³³⁹ Manning 2016, 32.

³⁴⁰ Manning 2016, 30/31.

Dissertation Writing

I consider the research score to be a system of relational techniques that articulate a body's thinking in a way that aims to preserve—as much as it can—the relations to the ecology of experience from where thought is brought forth into expression. I also consider that knowing in the research score resides outside of existing knower-known relations in the ineffable more-than of its technicity, i.e. in technicity's capacity to open the research score to its potential more-than. Given this, I question how it could be possible to accomplish the shift in register from a relational mode of writing *with* practice to a kind of writing *about* practice that demonstrates “an ability to analyse, articulate, conceptualize and theorize the artistic designs of research, and to contextualize these in ways that are characteristic of artistic research”,³⁴¹ as demanded by the current degree requirements of the Performing Arts Research Centre that form the institutional framework for the writing. How could I keep alive the research score's ecology of experience, and the force of change that animates the practice, as the work was moved and transposed from the studio to the realm of (academic) representation and publication? How could I extend, and negotiate, the writing with the research score into a format of (academic) writing, in a way that still grants space to the ineffable and to what escapes existing registers of 'knowledge'?

Stepping back and taking distance from the research in order to critically reflect about it shifts the mode of engagement from the performative enactment of practice to a representational mode of description.³⁴² Dancer and artist-researcher Siobhan Murphy emphasizes the primacy of writing *about* one's research project in order to cultivate reflexivity: “The articulation of what is at stake within the practice itself is the bedrock upon which other writing sits”.³⁴³ According to Murphy, the value of reflective writing consists in its

³⁴¹ Degree Requirements of the Doctoral Programme of Artistic Research in Performing Arts (2015-2020), University of the Arts Helsinki/Theatre Academy.

³⁴² Barbara Bolt (2016, 140; footnote 140) describes this as a shift from the performative to the constative.

³⁴³ Murphy 2014, 183.

transformative power: “If one writes about ongoing experimental studio practice, that practice will be shifted by the reflexive process of writing”.³⁴⁴ While in itself I do not dispute the necessity of cultivating critical reflexivity, a problem arises when critical reflection becomes aligned with the hegemony of language, and when discursive modes of reflexivity start to dominate artistic modes of embodied reflection, turning (artistic) practice into a fixed object of thought.

Could we instead consider the cultivation of artistic modes of embodied reflexivity as a way of transforming discursive academic modes of writing? What could it mean, more precisely, to theorize, contextualize, and write about one’s research in ways that are *characteristic* of artistic research?³⁴⁵ Is there possibly a way of placing the performative mode as an *exteriority within* the representational mode of academic writing? Could it all be different?

Unfinished Thinking

What is a tonus that is conducive to thinking?

For thought to stretch out

And to reach towards

The not-yet-thought

For thought touching

The not-yet-felt

For creating thinking

With the not-yet-sensed

How to make yourself an apparatus

Of unfinished thinking?

³⁴⁴ Murphy 2014, 183.

³⁴⁵ Badura & Selmbach 2015 write that the encounter between a non-propositional mode of thinking in and through art, and a conceptual mode of reflecting on and about art, has the potential to open up a new realm of experience. Under the altered conditions of this new realm of experience, conceptual reflection is put to the test at its own limits; it is confronted with itself and forced to think *differently*. Artistic practice thus has the potential to create new modes of thought, and to become a medium for the critical (self-)interrogation of conceptual thinking, leading to its change and to its thinking differently.

A thinking that can never reach its goal
For a bodily thinking
At the intersection between touching and being touched
A reaching-towards
A thinking at the intersection of bodies absent and present
That cannot be conclusive
Inconclusive thinking
Inconclusive, but not inarticulate
A thinking with the unity of the difference
Between
The known and the un-known
Between
Change and continuity
A thinking with
The affective tonality of a proposition
Not a statement
Not right or wrong
Not true or false
But more or less articulate
With more or less affective tonality
Thinking with the more-than
Of the research score's technicity
Escaping the cut that stills and stops potential
A thinking that co-articulates
The conceptual with the physical
The contents of my lungs and intestines
My head's brains
This thinking's artful-ness
Is to not make an epistemic claim
But to think with the feet
Slowly
To think with unfinished touch
Touch as a mode of unfinished thinking through the skin

To articulate a proposition
For unfinished thinking
What is the potential in the cut that stills?
What is the potential in bringing a practice to its end?
In bringing it to rest?
In resting the unfinished?³⁴⁶

According to Henk Borgdorff, the task of artistic research is “not so much to make explicit the knowledge that art is said to produce, but rather to provide a specific articulation of the pre-reflective non-conceptual content of art”.³⁴⁷ Formal knowledge production and theory-building are not the main concerns of artistic research, he writes, but the deliberate articulation of *unfinished thinking* in and through art. “[The] primary importance [of artistic research] lies not in explicating the implicit or non-implicit knowledge enclosed in art. It is more directed at not-knowing, or a not-yet knowing. It creates room for that which is unthought, unexpected – the idea that all things could be different”.³⁴⁸

Towards
Again and again
Re-opening the investigation
To its potential more-than
To infinite relations
And relations to the infinite
Relations in their making
And relations in their undoing

³⁴⁶ Excerpt from research score with ‘unfinished thinking’ (edited), 28 October 2015 & 12 May 2019.

³⁴⁷ Borgdorff 2010, 44. Borgdorff’s notion of a ‘non-conceptual’ content of art seems to be at odds with the idea developed in Chapter Three, according to which it is actually impossible to make a clear-cut separation between the conceptual and the non-conceptual, the reflective and the pre-reflective. These are not separate entities, but always already fundamentally intertwined. In my understanding, unfinished thinking exists in the midst of relations between these two. What artistic research seeks to bring forth is a specific articulation of the relations between modalities of expression that are not-yet-known and that escape existing registers of formal knowledge.

³⁴⁸ Borgdorff 2010, 61.

Infinite possibilities to think differently

To create new sets of relations

To change the ecology from within

To play with imagination³⁴⁹

Borgdorff further argues that the persuasive power of the non-conceptual embodied outcomes of artistic research “lies in the performative power through which they broaden our aesthetic experience, invite us to fundamentally unfinished thinking, and prompt us to a critical perspective on what there is”.³⁵⁰ Thus, according to him, it is the specific articulation of unfinished thinking in and through art, and not propositional knowledge, that artistic research seeks to bring forth. Artistic ways of knowing in this respect operate differently from academic ones.

How far to stretch the capacity of imagining?

Have I exhausted the possibilities?

Have I done enough?

What else could the research score be?

What could it be otherwise?

Into which ecology could this thing be transplanted?

In relation to which other practices?

How could it further proliferate and differentiate?

In the encounter with whom or what?

To what else can it become connected?

With whom or with what else could it think?³⁵¹

The Issue of Documentation and Dissemination

Insofar as artistic research stands in the tradition of academic research, it needs to satisfy certain criteria in order to qualify as (academic) research. One of the requirements is the documentation of the research and the appropriate

³⁴⁹ Excerpt from research score with ‘unfinished thinking’ (edited), 14 May 2019.

³⁵⁰ Borgdorff 2010, 47.

³⁵¹ Excerpt from research score with ‘unfinished thinking’ (edited), 14 May 2019.

dissemination of its outcomes.³⁵² Michael Schwab notes in relation to this that the standard conventions of academic writing have made “it difficult for artists to publish their research appropriately and, in turn, led to a writing culture far removed from practice – the site of their research”.³⁵³ The feeling of unease that Borgdorff attributed to the relationship between art and academia more than a decade ago³⁵⁴ seems to persist. Similarly, Rouhiainen has observed more recently that the singularity of the knowledge created in artistic research “establishes a tension with the scholarly investment in knowledge production and generalizability that belongs to research”, and that “[t]his tension is notably tangible in academic artistic research”.³⁵⁵ The relationship between art and academia thus remains complicated.

The problem that artist-researchers have to work their way through, time and again, has to do with negotiating what exactly is an ‘appropriate’ way of documenting and disseminating their research in an academic context.³⁵⁶ What is appropriate when it comes to accounting for the singular non-discursive knowledge that is created by an artistic research project? How to preserve the performative power and the qualities that are essential in the experience of the research process as the work becomes transposed into a more representational, scholarly form of writing? How to articulate appropriately, and in a way that is characteristic of artistic research, the unfinished thinking that is engendered by

³⁵² See Borgdorff 2010, 54.

³⁵³ Schwab 2012, 19.

³⁵⁴ See Borgdorff 2010, 59.

³⁵⁵ Rouhiainen 2017, 146.

³⁵⁶ In the current degree requirements of the doctoral programme of artistic research in the performing arts at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki, the publication format of the (written) dissertation is the so-called ‘commentary’. What this commentary needs to accomplish is regulated as follows: “The *commentary* shall demonstrate an ability to analyse, articulate, conceptualize and theorize the artistic designs of research, and to contextualize these in ways that are characteristic of artistic research. The commentary can be realised in many ways: a monograph with a recommended length of 150-200 sheets; an article-based doctorate comprising at least three peerreviewed publications and a summary; a web publication or other multimedial form. The publications can include co-authored publications if the author has an independent contribution to them. The doctoral research can consist of the commentary only when so conferred. The doctoral research commentary shall present the aims, methods, structure and results of the research” (original emphasis).

artistic research?

“[...] Artists have found it very difficult to expose their practice in ways that are acceptable as research”,³⁵⁷ Michael Schwab writes. The risk of translating the implicit, non-conceptual content embodied in the artistic research process into another medium—predominantly verbal language—is that its essential performative qualities will get lost in the work’s linguistic representation.³⁵⁸ The methodological ordering of the knowledge engendered in creative practice through the application of method, and the separation between doing-thinking and thought-thinking that is created by critical conceptual reflection, threaten to make a cut into the research process that severely diminishes its potential.³⁵⁹

Exposition Writing

One of the ways in which the problem of finding the appropriate form for the documentation and dissemination of artistic research has been addressed is by the development of the Research Catalogue (RC) as a multi-medial platform for publishing artistic research, and by the launch of the Journal for Artistic Research (JAR).³⁶⁰ The RC has been “a test bed for the possibilities of radically enhanced academic writing”,³⁶¹ while JAR functions as a peer-reviewed and openly accessible online journal that locates artistic research, and itself, in the tradition of artistic research.³⁶² Both the RC and JAR have been important in providing artist-researchers with the opportunity to publish their research in a manner that is, in many cases, most likely more appropriate than text-only publication formats.

³⁵⁷ Schwab 2014, 92/93.

³⁵⁸ See Schwab 2012, 20. See also Schwab & Borgdorff 2014, who quote a study on practice-based PhDs from 2007, which “has shown that the tension between art and writing is one of the central problems experienced by both students and their supervisors in the degree programs” (12). Based on my own experience as a doctoral student at the Performing Arts Research Centre and as a participant at many events with fellow colleagues throughout the years of my doctorate, the relationship between (artistic) practice and (academic) writing continues to be a major concern.

³⁵⁹ See Manning 2016, 33/34.

³⁶⁰ See Schwab & Borgdorff 2014.

³⁶¹ Schwab 2014, 100.

³⁶² See Schwab 2012, 20.

How does the grammar of the practice
 Condition the grammar of verbal language?
 Is one the condition for the other?
 That upon which the other is resting?
 Can there be a kind of writing
 That is not predicated
 On a non-discursive mode of thinking?
 Can spinal thinking come to expression
 In the medium of words?
 Or does it come to expression
 By making felt the spinal affectivity of language?
 Of language's being affected by spinal thinking?
 With a contribution from the ribs
 The floor³⁶³

Parallel to setting up the RC as an online platform, Michael Schwab, editor-in-chief of JAR, developed the concept of 'expositionality' as a form of research writing. The aim of expositional writing is to keep alive the essential qualities of the research across its transposition into another medium.³⁶⁴ Publishing research in JAR, as in the RC, does not primarily strive for a representation of the practice *by* the medium, but promotes its transformation *through* the medium. Exposing art as research, Schwab & Borgdorff write, is a

re-doubling of practice in order to artistically move from artistic ideas to epistemic claims. [...] Through such re-doubling, artistic practice is able to install a reflective distance within itself that allows it to be simultaneously the subject and the object of an enquiry. In this way, practice can deliver in one proposition both a thought and its appraisal.³⁶⁵

The epistemic claim of a research exposition is first and foremost made from *within* the language of artistic practice, less than by discursively writing *about* it. Expositional writing aims to bridge the gap between practice and theory, between experience and writing, by extending artistic practice *into* writing

³⁶³ Excerpt from research score with 'exposition writing' (edited), 7 May 2019.

³⁶⁴ See Schwab 2012, 25.

³⁶⁵ Schwab & Borgdorff 2012, 15.

through the medium of the RC or JAR,³⁶⁶ thus keeping alive something of the essential quality of the work across the chain of transformations.³⁶⁷

There can be no default solution for how to accomplish this transformation. Each artistic research project has to determine for itself how best to accomplish the transposition from the realm of practice to its online publication format. However, in general terms, according to Schwab, a successful research exposition is able to “negotiate the gap between practice and theory by exposing the epistemological potential of a practice, thus making real the theory enacted in it. This process may simply be called ‘thinking’”.³⁶⁸

The ecology of practices and things
That make up the entire action complex
Of writing with the research score
How to expose this thinking and writing
With the research score
In and through the medium of the RC?
How to expose
The creation of space for thinking?
What can be transferred?
What gets left behind?
Can the body’s organization
Be transposed?
The body’s organism?
Or only the organism’s expressibility?³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ These are the references for Schwab and Borgdorff. Other multi-medial online publication formats are not considered by them.

³⁶⁷ See Schwab 2012, 24/25. The notion of the ‘chain of transformation’, i.e. the act of transforming the material world through a successive chain of operations into abstract language, is borrowed by Schwab from Bruno Latour 1999.

³⁶⁸ Schwab 2012, 26.

³⁶⁹ Excerpt from research score with ‘exposition writing’ (edited), 7 May 2019.

Chapter Seven

Propositions for Unfinished Thinking

Proposition One: *Dislocate Thinking*

Even the
The action of the breathing
is transformed in form
It activates or agitates
Many

Dislocating and altering the position of bones

Diffraction structure

I think the diagram we
looked at is inadequate

Because the light and the
ball maintain their material
differentiation among them

Whereas I feel like in this
situation, where, let's say, a
person is diffracted by a
practice and vice versa

They don't get to keep their
material differentiation

So if you were drawing a
diagram

Once the light beam hits the
ball they would both transform
And then later, maybe,
differentiate again

Now we are both changing form
Residue of forms and pressure
Is it the response?

I'm not myself right now

[inaudible]

The tremors in my muscles
and structure are like the
The ease of light in the
diffraction with the body and the
practice

Work around each other
There's some kind of
turbulence there

Diffracting

Changing

Or interfering with the bodily structure

For what purpose?

What shifts while it changes?

I think this was conceived
as a way to increase the
possibilities of a dancing body

I mean how chained or
Is this prac---
How chained or connected is
this practice to the
The goal, let's say, of a
dance performance
Which values
Bodily transformation?

Change in the bodily sensation

Taking

Many little ripples going through

And I wonder if this is diffraction

Residue

Of the Manipulation

When they made this system
Were they
Did they end up staging
diffractive phenomena?

Aestheticising collisions?

Bodies are colliding with
language and action every
day
Nonetheless
[inaudible]

The precision of Joa's touch
There is no re-creation

Alteration of the body
And the re-creation of sensation is something else

Altering the experience
Altering the experiencing body

Is dislocation of thinking a goal?

I mean dislocation of habitual thinking patterns

Physical sensation entering the practice of
thinking

I remember once
When I was at dance school
Waking up in the middle of
the night
Or maybe

While I was falling asleep
Realizing that my thinking
Was being organized by a
memory of a movement pattern I
had done hundreds of times that
day

My thoughts went writing the
memory of the imprint of this
movement pattern

The warmth of the touch and the direction of the
pressures feel so

Crucial

And directly connected to the nervous system

Cellular system

Thinking

Brain

I always wonder why
sometimes my thumb and forefinger
are touching

And sometimes not

In this practice

[inaudible] the position of the body change

If the inner

A slightly shifting the inner organization

All the different bodily systems

So that the body is positioned differently after
each touch

Affected

Definitely affected

I am not sure if this is [inaudible] fraction from
diffracted

The outer shape of the body is

Somehow the same

The inner organization feels altered and shifted

Proposition Two: *Do Words with Things*

Knowing about the organization of my body

Knowing how to examine
The state that I find myself
in

Investigating different scales of effort
Coupled with muscle tension zero somewhere else
in the body

Knowing how to direct my own process

Knowing how to make
Small adjustments deep in my
psyche
Not disturbing the surface

Knowing how to read the perceptual coding of the body

Reading the code and hacking in the code

Undoing the code

Reading the memory of receiving
Forming with that [inaudible] recreation
Becoming more specific
Making adaptations
Variations

Knowing how to activate

The absent

Allowing for rigour

Knowing how to resist

Knowing how to relate to
objects

Myself as object

Knowing how to do things with words and words with things

Knowing how to be a
different *myself*

Noticing the similarities between different poles
as I investigate them solo

Knowing how to hold the
concept in the body

Knowing how to let the concept go

And allowing it to be there

Not holding it

Not fixing it

Minimal tension

[inaudible]

Knowing how to surf in the
relations

Honey-trap!

Becoming imprecise

Knowing form and knowing deviation

Sometimes deviating

Knowing after

[inaudible]

Combing

Combing the shifting
landscape with the body

With ideas

Knowing how to oscillate
between different modes of

Skipping

Going

Feeling thinking doing

It ain't no trap without the
honey

Knowing

And recognizing different sensations in my body

Like this small bubbly feeling or feeling small

bubbles

That I associate with the duet form of the

Manipulations

Have arisen after the shaking

From the shaking

Knowing how to
Interpret

Knowing about precision

Differentiation

Variation

Precision

Precision

Precision

Precision

Knowing how to auto-effect
with rigour

Falling

Directing

[inaudible]

Knowing how to relax the
brow and still think

Investigating the complexity

Of bodily forms and activities

Failing in my attempt to recreate

Beginning to feel the imprint of the duet form
into my solo practice

And also feeling a sense of training in the solo
practice

Having a sense of training

Knowing how to

Think with the breathing

To think through the breathing

I have forgotten all about the breathing

Knowing how to differentiate
the body

Knowing how to study the detail

Not wanting to stop

Knowing how to experience or
draw on

The embodiment of memory in
the sense of

The embeddedness or
physicality of experience

Memory or technique almost
as a

An organ of the body

Proposition Three: *Create Multiple Points of Entry*

De-coupling

I am also shifting from active to passive

Allowing for the contradiction of activity

And passive

Receiving

Repercussion of alteration

What is recreation?

What if I tense exactly where the moment
previously I let go?

A different beast

Alteration is vanishing

Recreating an impossibility

Allowing tension and enjoying tension

And then

Letting Go

Alteration can create a kind of longing

Liberating

I am very clearly doing this

Is the space changing?

How is the space changing?

Altering my experience with every
recreation

Becoming more detailed

Involuntary Movement

And

Voluntary Movement

Busy with precision

At the same time to breathe into the leg

Drifting

Recreating focus

Recovering focus

Back on safer territory

Procedures become familiar

Having come from

Having been birthed by

Doing without holding

Forgetting why I should need tension

Recognizing this form as its own

Recreate the form and
imagine my hands

Alteration is a gradual and continuously shifting
process

It's a concrete puzzle

An impossibility

Recreating an unknown Which sensation?

What's the connect---
How does

How does the Manipulation
connect to the rest of the body?

How am I connecting?

Do I need to?

Is that a false model?

Can I use the floor?

Can the floor give me a
series?

What role do the hands
play here?

How can the floor that
supports my arms

Stimulate my legs?

How the sensations
organized?

Does---

Are they framing each other?

Are they intermixing
chaotically?

Am I grounding through a
particular sensation?

Suddenly have a lot of
options

Because so much of my
body touches the floor

There's intimate space
between the body and the
floor

This membrane
Can give the
Manipulations

Can be the
Manipulations

Multiple points of
entry
Of leverage

The Manipulations are a
series of circles shaped by
the floor and bones

There is a clear logic
here

Circles on bones
Orbits

There is pleasure housed
within an imaginary
structure

All gestures are
Grounded in the floor

Which sensation do I lead
with here?

The honey-trap asks me the
question if the

The floor can pull me
into it

Do you ride the pleasure
Or is the pleasure housed?

Do I do it
Or does it?

In the end you only
have the ground to answer to

Practice as object

My body and the practice
speak to one another
Without going through me

How can more of the
floor give me this?

Am I doing this?

All attempts answer to
the floor

Then who is talking?

The floor holds me in
many ways

Self
Body
Practice

How much self do you put back into it?

It's like density
It's modulation of density

Our self is just a matter of densities

Density of self
Density of practice
Density of body

They loosen up a bit
They mesh together

Compression
Expansion
Res extensa

Quantum melding

I feel like I'm part of
the floor now

Every touch is a deflection
Is a joining

Where am I?

Weight

Direction

Precision

How much does it need?

Giving and receiving

Is it still the self that enacts perception?

Who is enacted?

What is enacted?

Who enacts the recreation?

Where to give less and where to give more?

To give over

When is the giving

Becoming perceived as something enforced?

Allowing the self to get in touch

'Honey trap' is everywhere

The trap of the self

See myself

Disowned

To give up

To give over

To give away

To give in

To surrender

Going with variation

The self is retreating

To the place of observation

It's there in the memory

And it's there in imagination

Do I do it or does it?

The self is recreating its own disappearance

The paradox is that the self is on retreat and at the same time it expands into the space

Back on safer territory

Dressed as the other

Where am I?

Verschiebung

Alteration is a gradual and continuously
shifting process

It's a concrete puzzle

No original practice

No original self

Then who is talking?

Proposition Four: *Articulate Difference*

What's changed?

Feels like

Changing

By different touches

Indeed different touch creates different

Is changing the

Body

Ontology altogether

Quality or texture

Receiving a different type of touch changes the way I think

And create thought

How am I conditioned in terms of generating thought?

What's the difference between reflecting on

The condition prevailing

And the abstract?

Thing-lifying

Thing-lification

Playful

What if I refuse?

What if I refuse

Can I call my elbows

To harness my thoughts?

Knees?

And my knees my elbows?

What's the difference?

Yes I can!

Can this lead to a way of thinking

Or is it exercising me away from

Ongoing relationship

Cutting

Have I become an object?

I've always been an object

Tactic

Am I a collection of different objects?

Am I

Is it still a vain practice?

In between

What's the same?

Things with things and fluids made out of things

Particles

Molecular structures

Fingerprints

Can things have empathy?

Can thing be thinking?

Can things feel?

Is feeling a thing?

Can an object body transcend duality?

What's the difference?

Having someone's touch really enforces my limitation of my knowledge

A certain practice

And indeed this is a meeting of two different habits

Of

What?

Habitat?

What shall I call it?

Anyway it's a mutual exchange

Exchange in real-time

My body condition is different

What's the difference if this is 'rain' and not 'Manipulations'?

It's changing my way of thinking

Can I

Can I get this much efficiency of developing my way of

Different way of thinking when I do with my own research score?

And what's the difference between duo and solo?

Can I really imagine so appropriate

Or appropriated way

The other body?

This touch of Josh

[inaudible]

Is not my imagination

Does that mean I can't imagine this touch?

Is it completely impossible to imagine the other?

I usually can't get this much of thought

Huge

Is it happening just because it's Josh who is manipulating?

So if I'm being manipulated

Is it still me talking?

It must have a certain effect who is touching

Is it

We

Are we talking?

Are we the manipulated being talking

Are we couples

Talking

Are we all talking

Or am I God talking?

Josh talking through us?

I tried

Academia?

to fit in my recreation on top of this tactile manipulation and I get

My recreation got nearly almost lost

It's so weak

It's weak

What's the difference between what I imagine and what is?

Oh God

Oh Jesus Christ

It'll be different this time

Touching or moving through the in-between

It's just

It's become so
Complicated

Is it really Tashi and Josh
doing the Manipulations?
Or is it something that the
name doesn't capture?
Whatever this is
We're both doing it

Or are we doing different
things?

Are Tashi and I really
touching right now?

Are we just hacking a
survival mechanism that
privileges being together?

Are we just playing out a
recombination of mammalian
potentials?

Is a body populated by more intensities more differentiated?

One key is in the form

Or is differentiation a necessary condition for intensities to inhabit the body?

Is the research score a sub-
species or its own animal?

Is it reproductively
isolated from the
Manipulations?

Is it different enough?

Your voice enters my system

Your blood does not

Your flesh is different from my flesh

What if we got blood
transfusions from each other
and *then* did the research
score?

I feel

Human intentionality behind the touch

Can I shift my perception?

Does a reflexive practice
like the research score have
a chance of transmission
Or does its self-awareness
Preclude that?

Does the artistic research
environment render practices
barren
In terms of
Not reproductive?

The difference of touch

Differentiation of skin

Granulation

In a totally different state of being

Available

Arrived

Present

What's the relationship
between confidence and
embodiment?

Here-ness and embodiment?

Faithful and betrayal

Intricately interwoven

Proposition Five: *Repeat*

What is the body that's
That becomes
Through this practice?
Or whose body?
Dancer's body?

If my body is articulated in a particular way, it's not articulated in a different way
So it's a matter of exclusion also, maybe, is it?
Differentiations

Manipulations separating my body parts
Differentiating them from each other
Parsing

My body or experience
comes into being in
relationship. It doesn't exist
on its own terms

Becoming for
Becoming for something

Differentiation allows for this joy of movement
to emerge
Somewhere between the cracks

Spaces in between

Movement can enter and movement can exit

Bundles of relations

Fibres

This is not this is not that

Not that

It's not that we pass the torch from one person to the next, but rather that one person lights their torch off someone else's

I never had thought, I never had this thought before that how many bodies are here and how are they doing differently the research score?

Different bodies come available through different practices

How many bodies can I become?

The generosity of multitude

The generosity of differentiation enabling new combinations

Multiple variations

Ligaments

Muscles

Fluids

Bones

What are the politics of this body that becomes articulated through these relations and these practices?

Angles

More embodied or differently embodied?

Homes

Politics of proliferation

Inclusion

Shifting

Difference of touch resonates

Variations

Politics of ability

Politics of negotiation

Different

Different abilities

On a different track

Existing simultaneously

Being assisted in differentiation

The other

What does the inclusion exclude?

What kind of bodies are inhabiting this space or dialogue?

Neck

Reacting

What kind of bodies could inhabit and take part in this dialogue?

The depth of a joint

The differences of the thirty-somethings

Politics of transmission
or example setting or
contemplation

Politics of knowledge

The power structures of knowledge and more knowledge

Group contemplation

Sensing tension in the joint

Limits

The limits of differentiation

Possibility

Ability

How does my thought differ when I talk or when I don't?

Space of independence or
collective individuation

How does my thought change in a body that is warm and supple
Able and warmed up for movement?

Diagonal interconnections

Guilt

Tangents

Tangential sensing-feeling

Articulating

Privilege

Adaptation

The right to do

Is it discipline or
desire?

Cosy incommensurability

If somebody doesn't want to
Be embodied
Should we then democratically all stop being embodied?

Could somebody please take me apart?

Please

Thank you

What is this 'my' body?

We share energy
We share temperature
We adjust to each other, but we don't share blood
We don't share fluids

We don't share strategies
for recreation

We don't share viewpoints from with inside my eyes
Or my hips
Or my toes
But we share osmosis
Cells
Magnetic field of the heart
That alternates how---that alters how I think, I think
I think, I think

I think, I think

Are we sharing the same time?

Can I copy you?

Can I start thinking like you, if I copy you?

Thinking as if

My pelvic bones speak to me right now, quite loudly

My legs are singing

Together with my arms

A choir

My body is dreaming

The torso

Remains sitting in the corner with me

How could you do this?

I imagine that my cells are in a quantum state

Both vibrating and still

Remembering

If I imagine movement and
articulation, I'm free of

constraints

I remember

I imagine

I re-imagine

You

You remember me

Remember me differently

Proposition Six: *Extend the Repertoire of Habits*

I allow for my mind to be blank

The hissing breathing is immediately taking my body to a state of relaxation

Feeling the cells

Tingling everywhere in my body

The heavy weight

Attention constantly moves

I move as if being moved

Elongating my body [inaudible]

There's a clear
relationality

Directions

Minimal effort

Reducing muscle tension

Detailed physical...
[inaudible]

Memory and imagination

Something has happened
before and I am reliving it

I feel the coldness of the floor on my skin

And there is an impossibility to relive that exactly as before

Stretch

A predefined form from within to work... do I need it?

Partially stretching

Partially releasing

It's repeatable

Effort

Opening my lungs and upper torso

Dealing with breath

Fear of

How much can I breathe opening up the joints

My attention is with
sensation especially on the
outbreath

Surrendering

What's the relationship between particular repeatability and singularity?

Attending also to words forming with meaning

Certain sensory systems are put at rest like

Sense of balance

If you have your eyes closed vision

And other sensory systems are activated

Fore-grounded

Lifting and compressing

The breath again pacing words...

Attention

Pacing Movement

Skin

Joints

Hip joint

Structure

Pressure

Ear

Physical passivity in a
sense

In a muscular sense

Well

Active release

Imagining weight

Facing fear and claustrophobia

From a specific manipulation

Resting bones

Replacing weight with tension or with effort

Replacing weight with effort

Memory of touch connected to imagined touch

Rhythm and regularity

Keeping track

But also always slightly losing track

Talk

Rhythm

Something is happening to me

Something is being done to me

Something is allowed to happen

I am doing something

Being taken to certain limit points

Reverberation

Of movement activity from the feet to my head

Predictability

[inaudible]

Of difference

Simplicity and sense

Slightly boring state of mind

Fragments of attention

Tough dream

Preparatory practice

The question of alteration

And

Why are things done?

A means of patterning to change the habitual patterns

Scanning through the body from top to bottom

With a feeling of knowledge and wisdom behind why this movement and where that may lead

Replacing habits with other habits

Extending the repertoire of habits

Producing angles with my body

Realigning sensing, perceiving and reflecting

Lifting the weight of my legs from the floor

Trying to imagine another
body

Facing the nodes of tension in my body

Making quite small

Compact form

Working diagonally

Working with parts of my body and now shaking the whole body

The mass and the weight of the internal organs

Very different from the rest

What's gonna be taking part?

What's gonna be left behind?

[inaudible]

I cannot press my knees down like another person does

Small shifts

Twisting

The whole spine

Playing with the weight of the planet

Remembering the floor

[inaudible] Even with my sore lungs [inaudible]

Thinking from the awareness of being touched

How not to force

Remembering the future

Open torso

Inviting touch

Shift of mind changes the shift of the weight

And the shift of the focus shifts the weight

Will and

Thinking are put at a distance from each other

It feels we are accessing the deep nervous system

Both of the nervous systems

But on a deep level

Moving not moving

Vibrating entirely

Teaching the sensory receptors not to panic

But to stay calm

What is the logic carried in going from one position to another?

What is the combined effect of those?

Which part of the brain has now a lower activity?

Distributing tension

Immediating sensing and thinking

Taking time to feel the
global effect of local actions

Proposition Seven: *Translate*

We are translating the
research score into a recording
studio

Same but different

What is important?

The memory of the weight going through
Pressing my hand
Feeling the intense sensation of the floor
I can remember that

Weight through the body

Articulated by the presence
of others

Trans

Across

What moves across?

Trans-iteration

How does touch come to me

Or how does it become legible?

What resists?

What are the conditions?

Negotiating hands amongst other hands when there normally is no hands

Tangential touch

I'm translating the research
score into my bodymind

My body is translating the memory of touch into

Sensation of the movement

Representation

Recreation

What's the difference between

Translation and articulation?

Or translation and re-articulation?

I don't even know what I'm asking

I am constantly translating unformed thoughts
into language

What remains un-translatable?

Ineffable?

What happens when that which is intelligible

Becomes or moves over to become legible?

Or is it that that moves---

Reduction

Or something else that moves?

The context moves?

Translations can result in something completely
different

It creates completely new liberties
Maybe not completely new
But liberties

So if my body is an object
A thing
How can it translate?

If this is a translation,
where is the original?

Does a translation imply an original?

That was my question

Different materialities
Different
Difference
Difference

Von den Füßen in den Kopf
Vom Kopf in den Mund

Translating imagination into
sensation and movement

Translating mind into body

Is translation possible without dualism and dichotomy?

Where is the boundaries drawn?
What's excluded?

What becomes excessive?

Are you responsible for how you are translated?

And if so
To whom?

Are you not responsible?

What happens when I allow myself to do this wrong?

Am I doing it halfway through or am I creating a yet new?

Is it me
Or a memory of me?

How important is the form of practice
Having the body change?

Can we open up the practice?

Without losing it
Or
Breaking it

Finding a way
When do I feel faithful and
when do I feel divergent?

Little production machines

Can I free myself from the grid?

Faithfulness

Can even the gap in-between be capitalized upon?

Can promiscuity become a research tactic?

Curiosity overtakes form

The possibilities of the body

In movement

In space

Translating signals

Minimal signals

Touch

Touch into movement

Can we create something original nowadays?

Is it really possible to create something truly original?

What is original?

There's no outside of text

Context!

Context and translation

Translating impulse into movement

Our bodies are still shaping
each other

So I am translating
Translation in action
Adaptation
Giving up the original
Accepting change

When does it cease being a translation
And it becomes something else entirely?
How much does it have to touch tangentially?

What's the difference between translation and appropriation?
Is there a difference?

Translation and agency
But what is that gap?
What's that gap between

Translation is a complex undertaking

I feel my body is interfering with my head making translation

Towards unknown

Translation is never
complete
It's an oscillation

Partiality

Who is the author?

Circumstances

Authored by circumstance

Impulse into action

Impositions

Reflex

Into reflection

Providing space to thinking

Suddenly my body becomes strange to me
And I don't know if there is tension in my leg or not
I can't tell without shaking it

Breath turning into attention
Into movement
Into an opening and a closure
Something opens
Something closes

Becoming transparent

Touching in-between

Touching touch

What other kind of touches are there than the tangential touch?

It's like

What's the translation that gropes demandingly?

Careful?

Penetrates?

Does translation penetrate the original?

Could it?

Is the relationship only linear?

Yeahhh, true

The original is touching back

So-called original

When does it stop being translation?

A translation is an
imagination of the original

The original of imagination of a translation

But there is the gap

It's not the same

There is the void

Or is it just a fold?

Yeaahhh

It's just a fold!

Fold

Fold

Fold

Mind the gap!

The evolution

The growing knowledge

Changing

As a bastard of the old and the new cross-breathing

Breeding

Somewhere in translating or translation

Is the desire to meet

Or to be met

Or to find

Or to feel

Touch

Am I losing me?

Différance

I think it's touching

But how?

In its coming about

Do others than humans translate?

Bird song translating traffic sounds?

Or imitating

Imitating

What's the difference?

It's still a different materiality?

A different medium?

Or human language translating birds: Cuckoo!

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