

choreo | graphy : doctoral project summary

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Documented Artistic Research Project (Doctoral Thesis)

in Performative and Media-Based Practices with a Specialization in Choreography

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Abstract

The doctoral project *choreo | graphy* is an inquiry into the relationship between thinking through dance and thinking through written language, taking the notion of choreography literally as dancing-writing. Respecting that different media afford different thought processes, ideas, and concepts to be reached, this practice-based artistic research project has unfolded within artistic processes and experiments to explore and develop the relationship between dancing-thinking and writing-thinking. Investigating the media-specificity of thought in dancing together (*kboreia*) as it relates to the media-specificity of thought in writing (*graphia*), this project experiments with their relation in a way that serves both art forms and respects their differences, while challenging historical hierarchies between embodied sense-experience and the written word. Cycling through three areas of inquiry, the project asks 1. how dance thinks, 2. how dance writes, and 3. how a (re)considered relationship between dancing and writing might inform choreographic practice. Following these three areas of inquiry, the project's contributions to artistic research are summarized as follows: articulating what is particular to dance-thought (*how dance thinks*), practicing and devising procedures for dancing-writing (*how dance writes*), and pursuing forms of exposition which invite observers to think with and through dance by applying the aforementioned insights to artistic creation (*choreo | graphic outcomes*). The separation of the word choreography into *choreo | graphy* signals the project's intention to open space for consideration and reinvention of the poetics of choreographic practice and discourse.

In the following pages, I situate the artistic research project *choreo | graphy* in the fields from which it draws and to which it responds, gather and summarize the project's main insights, and direct the reader to instances of publication or exposition in which those insights are evidenced. As such, this text serves as an overarching guide to the documented artistic research project as a whole. Each product of the research reflects similar yet evolving themes and concerns, as the project's questions and methods are iterated throughout its various publications and expositions. The proliferation of oral, written, performed, and moving image works throughout this research are a result of the project's breadth of inquiry, and serve as a portrait of the entanglement of experimentation, exploration, and exposition in the ongoingness of a practice-based artistic research project in the performing arts. This summary of research questions, references, methods, and outcomes orients the reader within the project's myriad published media and documentation, which will be found in the project's [Research Catalogue](#) exposition.

Part 1: *How dance thinks*

Supported by theories of tactile-kinesthetic thought (Sheets-Johnstone, 2011), enactive thought (Noë, 2004, 2009), embodied thought (Grosz, 1994), situated thought (Gibson, 1979), aesthetic thought (Mersch, 2015), and phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), my research departs from the well-established grounds that thinking takes place in and through movement in relation to an environment in order to ask what is particular to dancing-thinking. As Sheets-Johnstone writes in *The Primacy of Movement*, partially quoting Husserl, “movement is the mother of all cognition” (XXII). From the developmental premise of touch and kinetics, to the active sensing and experiencing of the world through dynamic relationships, to linguistic metaphors of motion used to describe thought,¹ it could be said that movement is the proto-medium of thought.² Dancing-thinking builds from and reinforces the premise that movement *is* thought (Merritt, 2015) to offer heightened awareness, articulation, and aesthetic skill to moving-thinking.

Reflexivity, cognition, thought, reflection, rumination: there are different words with different nuances in different fields of expertise. I have chosen “thinking” in my research to wrest the word from centuries of somatophobia and logocentricity³ in western philosophy from Plato to Descartes and beyond (Grosz, 1994) that might not consider movement or aesthetic practice as thought. Over time in this research, I came to prefer “dancing-thinking” over “dance-thought,” because “dancing-thinking” favors the verb over the noun and thereby underlines the act rather than the thing, the iterative rather than the definitive, the process rather than the product.⁴

Cognitive scientists and philosophers agree that mind and body, action and perception, the outside and inside of a thinking subject are interdependent. Despite increasing interdisciplinary agreement about the relationships that make thought possible, the difficulty of thinking thought itself remains now as it has since the dawn of philosophy. As pointed out by Catherine Malabou in *What Should We Do With Our Brain?* (2008) we remain unable to explain what takes place between the event of neurons firing and the phenomenon of something recognizable as a thought emerging, or “the space and the cut that separate the neuronal and the mental, or the proto-self from the different forms of consciousness” (pp.62-63). There is no knowing precisely how thoughts occur, as there is no thought as such separated from the media-specific activity that brings about any particular thoughts. Thinking is a nature-culture entanglement in which a situated observer is shaped by what they do and experience. The medium of thought determines what sorts of thoughts are possible.⁵ In *The Origin of Language* (1982), Michel Serres writes:

All knowledge is bordered by that about which we have no information. It is no longer necessary to maintain the distinction between introspective knowledge, or “deep” knowledge, and objective knowledge. There is only one type of knowledge and it is always linked to an observer, an observer submerged in a system or in its proximity. And this observer is structured exactly like what he observes. His position changes only the relationship between noise and information, but he himself never effaces these two stable presences. (p.124)

¹ In the essay ‘Effing the Ineffable,’ I write, “Language already expresses movement and spatialization of thought, as it comes from humans with moving bodies.” (2018:2, p.6)

² In the essay ‘Effing the Ineffable,’ I write, “Thought always has *movement* and *relation*.” (2018:2, p.6)

³ In the introduction episode to *How Dance Thinks* podcast (2018, episode 0), I discuss this research as a critique of logocentricity. (6:20)

⁴ In *A lot of moving parts: book one*, I write, “where’s the thinking – it’s in the *ing*” (2018:1, p.17)

⁵ In *A lot of moving parts: book one*, I write, “never before have I spent so much time thinking about / what my body can teach me / I mean by way of asking my body.” (2018:1, p.16)

Every medium of thought has its own conditioning structures that afford the sorting of information from noise in unique ways. Following the structuralist tenet that language speaks through a speaker as much as a speaker uses language to express one's thoughts, a language (or any other medium of thought) itself conditions thinking to such an extent that the qualities and limitations of that medium are being expressed through each use. To underline the agency of a medium of thought in constituting a thinker, I have chosen "*how dance thinks*" as the question to ponder, rather than, for example, "*how dancers think*." In doing so, I wish to emphasize the activity of dancing itself in the conditioning and formation of thought, rather than the thinker, however mutually constitutive they are. In support of this emphasis on the medium itself, in *Epistemologies of Aesthetics*, Dieter Mersch writes about aesthetic reflexivity:

Reflexivity, however, does not mean 'reflecting on', the foundation of which would be intentional consciousness. Rather it is something that happens *through making art* and the concurrent processes of *Zer-zeizung*.⁶ We are thus confronted with inherent reflexivity a—literal—turning back on itself or mirroring; an inversion or conversion not only in relation to an object and its content, but also in relation to the form, the processes used, and the work's means, materiality, mediality, and much more. It is a *reflection in re*, a medial or performative self-reflexivity within the order and constellation of things. It is neither the artist nor the recipient who reflects. Rather reflexivity takes place as an event within constellations and their composition in order to, *through* them, draw something out that could not otherwise be elicited. (p.15)

To understand what may only be elicited through dancing, throughout my research I have sourced the experiences and insights of dance practitioners (including myself) in search of what might emerge as structurally or characteristically common in various practitioners' ways of thinking through dance. Luckily, self-observation is a skill that dancers hone in our work as movement researchers. Self-observation allows us to comprehend if we are doing what we believe we are doing—with or without a mirror—and enables us to notice what we are thinking *about* what we are doing. This heightened skill of self-observation also permits us to recognize what sorts of thoughts are made uniquely possible *through* our dancing, as has been asked by this research. Therefore, my question of "how dance thinks" proved indeed thinkable, despite the general opacity of thought. I conducted a series of interviews in Fall 2017 and Spring 2018 with studio guests, a selection of which was published as a podcast by the Institute of Dance at Stockholm University of the Arts under the title *How Dance Thinks*.⁷ I led an open course also called *How Dance Thinks* in the Fall of 2018, for which I invited several professionals from the dance field to lead sessions in theory and practice addressing how they consider dance as a medium of thought.⁸ Through all of this, and through one-on-one studio sessions and group creations with colleagues, I have accumulated some key features of dancing-thinking throughout my research, listed and elaborated below.

- Dancing-thinking is non-representational, in so far as dancing neither is nor relies upon a referential or metaphorical system of symbols (such as language or mathematics) as a surrogate in which thinking is carried out and communicated. Unique to other artistic media, dancing-thought has no external medium (such as pigment, pixels, or sound) in which the sense-making is

⁶ The term *Zer-zeizung*, meaning 'showing-asunder' refers to ways in which the methods and forms of showing are revealed in acts of exhibition or performance that are themselves methods and forms of showing. In a sense, aesthetic metacognition.

⁷ *How Dance Thinks* published podcast guests were Juliette Map, Cecilia Roos, Will Rawls, Michelle Boulé, Rasmus Ölme, and Peter Mills, interviewed by myself. The podcast's introductory mini-episode was hosted by Stockholm University of the Arts' Institute of Dance chair Anna Efraimsson and podcast editor Robin Jonsson, who together interviewed me. (Bauer, 2018)

⁸ Organized as an open course in the Fall of 2018 at the Institute of Dance at Stockholm University of the Arts, lecturers for *How Dance Thinks* were, in order: Manon Santkin, Rudi Laermans, Alice Chauchat, Gabriel Schenker, Frank Bock, Andros Zins-Browne, Juliette Mapp, Tere O'Connor, Eleanor Bauer, Chrysa Parkinson, and Jonathan Burrows.

processed and evidenced. Any reflexivity is immediate and folded into the act of dancing itself,⁹ demanding of the dancer a high level of sensuous attention and self-observation.

- Dancing-thinking provokes a nonlinear/acausal perception of time: memory and anticipation, trained patterns and their spontaneous recombination, actual and fantastical potentials collide in each moment of movement.¹⁰
- Dancing-thinking moves within an elastic and multi-registered perception of space, wherein detail and big picture, periphery and focus, proprioception, interoception, and exteroception are all simultaneous and mutually informative.¹¹
- Dancing-thinking involves the conflation of imagined or socially constructed space and actual or observed place, hence the term *splace*.¹² I coined this term to refer to the particular kind of world-making that choreography relies upon as dancers calibrate the imagined and the real¹³ in the execution of any choreography, rule-based or phrase-based. A shared imagination defined by the choreography shapes and informs performers' "real" observable actions. In improvisational dances, the imaginations conjured by dancing meet and meld with the room in which the dance is happening, even changing the experience of the room itself.¹⁴
- Dancing-thinking calibrates sensation, observation, and imagination. A dancer uses sensation, observation, and imagination to render choreographed and improvised forms sensible with and for others.¹⁵

⁹ In Maxine Sheets Johnstone's paper *Thinking in Movement*, she writes, "We will find that what is essential is the non-separation of thinking and doing, and that the very ground of this non-separation is the capacity, indeed the very experience of the dancer, to be thinking in movement." (p.30). In *An essay on dance, on its way*, the program text for the third iteration of the solo *A lot of moving parts*, at Kaaistudio's in Brussels (2019), I write, "as a medium, dancing is an activity that forges connections and conjures meanings that are not indexical, or rather, connect to so many possible points of inference that dance always generates surplus meanings and affects that exceed any possible intention for a single meaning. Dance moves beyond the outlines of any image, dance floods ideas with irreducible experience. In this way, dance thinks but it does not think *about*, it thinks *through*, in vectors, and usually many at once."

¹⁰ In *A lot of moving parts: book one*, I write, in a session of writing while dancing, "my sensations don't work in the form of questions and answers / there is flood, there is soup, there is space, there is detail / event after event, all questions and answers infolded, one in the same / it's not dialectic, it's the whole that is the whole hole / including the inside and the outside of the whole" (2018:1, p.16) as well as, "I'm sitting in the one-at-a-time / thinking about the simultaneous" (2018: 1, p.28) and later, "What if every single articulation, every tissue, every part, every sheath of muscle and nerve were an accordion? / I played this accordion for at least five minutes, but it could have been a year. / Accordion time, stretch and contract, stretch and contract." (2018:1, p.37). Regarding nonlinear time in choreographic process, in the footnoted poem-essay 'Documentation / Examination,' I write in footnote 13, "I have the impression when things fall together in a creative process that my past and current selves have suddenly made new sense to each other. It makes me feel that time is not linear. It makes me think that maybe our past and future selves are always in conversation, and sometimes our present selves are let in on it." (2018:2, p.51)

¹¹ In *A lot of moving parts: book one*, it is written, "Detail has expanded and consumed everything / Explosive, radiant, supple / Contained within limits in order to spill over, expand within / Things you don't normally like turned into a chance to re-imagine your body / Recourse to the ecstatic, moving in opposites (2018: 1, p.35, written with participants of Tripspace London Workshop in 2017) and earlier, "hunger for feeling everything at once (...) arcane representations herald objects to resist / rotating on a crux of delicate nonsense / open to sides but moving front (...) the structure is dimensional (...) the pleasures of scale and detail / amplified in forms / emerging and receding" (2018:1, p.22).

¹² In the Reader's Introduction to *The Remything Edition*, I explain the term *splace* as follows: "splace = geographic, local, and specific place + constructed, social or imagined space" (Bauer et al., 2020, p.0). In the 'Translator's Note' of *Nora the Many: a choreo / graphic novel*, I elaborate on this principle further (Bauer et al., 2021, p.20).

¹³ In *A lot of moving parts: book one*, I write, "the direct and sticky relationship between senses and mental representations / seeing is always already imagining, doing is always already thinking / centuries of philosophical partitioning out the cold window" (2018:1, p.38).

¹⁴ In *A lot of moving parts: book one*, I write, "I notice the room in ways I never notice otherwise / The rooms within the room" (2018:1, 24) and later, "You don't really know a room until you dance in it." (2018:1, p.37)

¹⁵ On [Rebecca Berchtold's podcast 5689](#), I explain the calibration of sensation, imagination, and observation in dance training and performance (33:40-36:40). (Berchtold, 2021)

- Dancing-thinking is social and intersubjective.¹⁶ Dances are learned and passed on through mimesis¹⁷ and are created collaboratively. In the collective effort of co-creating any dance, the dance is defined and understood by each and all of the individual participants, in improvised forms¹⁸ as well as choreographed forms.¹⁹
- Dancing-thinking is iterative and ongoing.²⁰ While the primary purpose of choreography is to identify or prescribe the invariant properties which make a particular dance identifiable and repeatable, that dance must be done (again and again) in order to exist.²¹

In *She, Dancing*, (Coe, 2018) dancer Katy Coe describes the particular sentience of dancing in a rumination on the specificity of “voice” that dancing inhabits and conjures. It is a text to be spoken, not to be read in silence, so as you read this excerpt of *She Dancing*, I invite you to read it aloud:

When I dance, I can have a deeply felt connection with all of my self,
and dancing makes space way beyond that self
for a connection with other sentient beings.

And there is more.

There is a wildness and a potency in this dancing voice that is not to be
caught hold of or described or patronized.

It is to be invited into the fold and given space and opportunity for its transformative
quality to live.

To live in its own language and in its own way.

Then what can be offered by dancers is an alternative way of organizing
rather than old, tired and rational principles.

An other way of being alive in and in support of and in care of the world.

Dancers can express in performing dancing, an utter open-ness, an un-separatedness,
a heart-full ness and an unordered but deep kindness.

Dancing arrives in us a particular capacity for love and empathy
and what is evoked in dancing might (pause) does change the world
not from underneath, not from a scramble towards or a want to climb up
anything or oppose or resist,
but from the inside, outside, inside.

(pp.328-329)

¹⁶ In ‘Letting Our Speech Go,’ Juliette Mapp writes, “No one develops as a dancer alone. As dancers and choreographers, we need each other – and we need our history.” (Mapp, 2014, p.7)

¹⁷ I discuss this both in the introduction episode to the *How dance thinks* podcast (Bauer, 2018, ep.0), as well as in Episode 14 of the dance training podcast *5678* (Berchtold, 2021).

¹⁸ In the documentary film *Martha & Niki*, hip-hop dancer Niki “Awandee” Tsappos says, to her opponents in a battle at *Juste Debout*, “We need each other’s flavors. I need yours, you need mine.” (Mårtens, 2016)

¹⁹ In *Harmonica Vocoder Interpretation Lecture* (2018), I discuss how choreographies and dances are defined over time through repetition and iteration by several dancers (*interprets* in French) contributing to the understanding and identification of any dance form or choreography with each of their own interpretations.

²⁰ In ‘Letting Our Speech Go,’ Juliette Mapp writes, “Repetition is essential to learning and it is essential to development. The same principle applies in dance – the dancer repeats and repeats and repeats. But each repetition is also different. Nothing is ever completely the same in the body.” (Mapp, 2014, p.8)

²¹ See: *repetition, repetition, repetition / The Forming of a Form in A lot of moving parts: book one.* (Bauer, 2018:1, p.5)

Part 2: *How dance writes*

Despite the presence of movement in all thought, as “movement forms the I before the I that forms movement” (Sheets-Johnstone, 2011), the structural and behavioral difference between the “I” that dances and the “I” that writes is difference of relationship to my senses and environment. It is a difference of self-organization, sensemaking, and subjectivity brought about by what is thinkable through dancing or writing. While the specificity of dancing-thinking is described above, the comparative specificity of writing-thinking is explored further below to lay the ground for contemplation of “*How dance writes.*”

While dancing creates and develops connections, writing seems to engender separation. Writing is a typically solitary activity, requiring a focus usually facilitated by stillness, silence, and withdrawal from the world and interaction with others. In addition to being characterized by isolation, writing-thinking is also conditioned by the media of writing: the mark-making tools and surfaces, alphabet, and punctuation marks. In letters that make words that build phrases that string sentences that are grouped into paragraphs, writing affords and supports linear and analytic thought processes, as well as profound shifts in how subjects and individuals are constituted by the act of writing. In *Eros, the bittersweet* (1986), Anne Carson writes about the alphabetization of thought in writing as an accumulation of edges: separating the flow of speech by consonants that mark the beginnings and ends of phonemes, edges of letters carved with writing tools creating a symbolic space wholly separate from lived experience, and edges around the individual who in the concentration of writing or reading becomes delineated from others and their environment. Carson writes:

A (...) private revolution is set in process by the phenomenon of alphabetization. As the audio-tactile world of the oral culture is transformed into a world of words on paper where vision is the principal conveyor of information, a reorientation of perceptual abilities begins to take place within the individual. (...) Reading and writing require focusing the mental attention upon a text by means of the visual sense. As an individual reads and writes he gradually learns to close or inhibit the input of his senses, to inhibit or control the responses of his body, so as to train energy and thought upon the written words. He resists the environment outside him by distinguishing and controlling the one inside him. This constitutes at first a laborious and painful effort for the individual, psychologists and sociologists tell us. In making the effort he becomes aware of the interior self as an entity separable from the environment and its input, controllable by his own mental action. The recognition that such controlling action is possible, and perhaps necessary, marks an important stage in ontogenetic as in phylogenetic development, a stage at which the individual personality gathers itself to resist disintegration. (pp.68-69)

In *The complete Rolling Stone Interview* (Sontag & Cott, 1978), Susan Sontag talks about writing as a way of paying attention to the world (p.4) and yet describes a punishing neglect of her own body in intensive writing periods as an essential part of her writing practice (p.80). In *Carribean Discourse* (1989), Édouard Glissant writes:

The written requires nonmovement: the body does not move with the flow of what is said. The body must remain still; therefore the hand wielding the pen (or using the typewriter) does not reflect the movement of the body, but is linked to (an appendage of) the page. The oral, on the other hand, is inseparable from the movement of the body. (...) To move from the oral to the written is to immobilize the body (to possess it).” (pp.122-123)

In *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982), Walter Ong details the shifts in cognition, reasoning, and worldview brought about by writing, attributing the emergence of reflection, abstraction, and analysis to the development of writing (p.111). The advent of writing triggered an avalanche of changes in economic, legal, and social systems evidenced by the rise of accounting, law-making, and science in imperial and colonial modernity as means of defining and controlling property, people, and nature. As writing has been linked to power (by the accounting of wealth and property, the authoring of history and biography, and broader reach of communication), keeping people from writing has also been a means of disempowerment. Ong points to the moment of bifurcation between the varied dialects of “Vulgar Latin” and the unified grapholect conceived for Classical or “Proper” Latin, reserved for members of the clergy in the Holy Roman Empire. Centuries and empires later, Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* (Woolf, 1929) echoes the effects of this initial exclusion of women from writing in her portrayal of a woman’s struggle to enter the academy or be granted the necessary solitude for writing. From feudalism to slavery, fiefs and enslaved people were also typically barred from reading and writing, affecting cultural and economic inequality for generations. Today “worship of the written word” is identified as one of the characteristics of white supremacy culture, along with individualism and perfectionism (Okun, 2021), which are both reinforced by publishing and citation norms that favor accreditation of individual authors and in which several drafts and edits precede publication.

By contrast, the lifeworld of oral communication entangles speakers, listeners, gesture, language, and bodies in an interdependent and transindividual system of meaning-making supported by social interaction, the vibratory din of speech, and synesthesia of sound and referent. Glissant writes, “Noise is essential to speech. Din is discourse. This must be understood.” (p.123) As dancing-thinking coordinates kinetic, tactile, visual, audial, and social intelligences, it is understandable that dancing-thinking is often aligned with orality and languaged more comfortably in speech than in writing. Obvious challenges to the translation project of *choreo | graphy* lie in the stark difference between thinking through marks that stay put and accumulate beyond the thinker and an oral – or danced – kind of thinking which takes place in live, performed, social, immersive, and ephemeral practices. The separations afforded by writing-thinking mentioned above are counteractive to the synthetic and enactive characteristics of dancing-thinking. As described previously in Part 1: *How dance thinks*, reflexivity and self-observation are embedded within the direct experience and process of dancing-thinking, troubling separations between subject and object or thinker and medium of thought. A dancing *modybind*²² is both the subject and object of reflection. The historical coupling of writing with the dominance of rational and linear thought is also of no use for linguistically expressing the conflation of observation, imagination, and sensation and/or nonlinear experience of time described previously in *How dance thinks*. These translation challenges for *choreo | graphy* are not entirely resolved by recourse to oral speech. Language itself, whether written or spoken, also rests on the difference between a word that refers to a thing and the thing itself, which affords the conceptual separation of signifier and signified in linguistics, or the “plane of expression” and the “plane of content,” as described by co-founder of semiotics Ferdinand De Saussure (De Saussure, 1966). As elaborated in *An essay on dance, on its way* (Bauer, 2019), in dancing there is no such indexical or referential equivalent of a signifier when it comes to the slippery and connotative (rather than denotative) act of meaning-making. When a moving sensing feeling *modybind* is the medium of expression, the “plane of expression” and “plane of content” are mutually substantiated within the dance itself. While Sheets-Johnstone shows that language develops from movement, insisting that “rather than speak of the period before language as *pre-linguistic*, we should speak of the advent of language as the *post-kinetic*”

²² As noted in the ‘Translator’s Note’ of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel*, “The historical trouble of separating mind and body has been an obstacle in my work to consider aesthetic and embodied practices as media of thought. Rather than body-mind or mind-body, I coined the term “modybind” in 2019 and have been using it since to insist on their mutual entanglement.” (Bauer et al., 2021, p.9) Earlier in my research, I was using the word *bind*, as explained in *An essay on dance, on its way* (Bauer, 2019). During a residency at Bennington College in Vermont in March and April of 2019, I was influenced by conversations with student Adityajit Singh Kang and visiting teacher Miguel Gutierrez, who preferred *mody* because it has more of the word “body” in it and is only one word away from “moody.” Sometime in mid-2019, I landed on *modybind*.

(2001, XXXI), language develops along lines of syntactical and grammatic contingency that often diverge from the synthetic and nonlinear properties of dancing-thinking. So even when working with oral speech in relation to dancing – as I have by conducting oral interviews for my research and experimenting with studio exercises that couple dancing and talking – frictions and irreconcilable differences remain between the logics of language-thought and dancing-thought, even within speech.²³

In *Letting Our Speech Go* (Mapp, 2014), Juliette Mapp writes about the complexity and richness of meaning created by a dancer in silence, as well as the need for language to process that experience:

A dancer can live in a world of passing images, sensations, landscapes, relationships, and constructs without necessarily attaching herself to the specificity that language often creates. The *not naming* that defines much of a dancer's experience in movement allows for more fluidity and openness. The singular moments of composition that dancers are experts at creating are quickly destroyed by the force of time upon them. The pushing into existence and dissolving out of it that is the dancer's daily work necessitates a language that is the material we use to weave meaning backwards through our movements and forward into our lives. (p.6)

(...) Reflecting back through language can re-engage us with our history and move us forward into community. A dynamic oscillation between language and movement allows us to express more of our creative physical selves. The tension of *letting go* of our speech or *letting our speech go* so that language can belong to our movement and our movement to language is where we, as dancers, may discover unforeseen possibilities. (p.9)

Rather than abandon language or writing, in this research project, I have pursued writing which – in form, content, and style – aims to express the felt sense that dancing makes (and evades). Inspired and galvanized by challenges to logocentricity and phallogocentricity that have taken shape in writing itself, I have been conceptually, formally, and stylistically supported by a lineage of feminist and decolonial writers that, within writing, manage to challenge those Eurocentric assumptions which posit written language above all other media of thought or favor linear, analytic, and rational thought as superior to all other qualities, structures, and modes of thought (Garoutte, 2006 and Mignolo, 2009). In both style and content, the work of Hélène Cixous and Clarice Lispector, namely in *Le Rire de la Méduse* (Cixous, 1975) and *Água Viva* (Lispector, 1973), were inspirations that I brought with me into the research, as I admired the liberties they took with writing to capture the felt-sense they needed to convey. In one continuous journey without marked sections or chapters, the careening passages in *Água Viva* move fluidly between dreams and reality, fantasy and observation, nature and culture, her personal life, inner life, and artistic practice. Lispector twisted punctuation and grammar rules in her writing to breathe her own life into the written word. “My punctuation is my breath,” she said, insisting that editors not disturb “so much as a comma.” (Moser, 2019). Hélène Cixous' *Le Rire de la Méduse* is a manifesto of sorts for what later came to be known as the literary movement of *Écriture Féminine*, centered writing in women's bodies, perspectives, experiences, and desires, throughout diverse genres. In the opening passage of *Laugh of the Medusa*, as translated to English by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen (1976), Cixous writes:

²³ In episode 4 of *How dance thinks* podcast, Rasmus Ölme talks about our attempts in the studio to dance and simultaneously language the aspects of dancing-thinking that are possible to articulate. He notes the way that language “saturates” cognition when it arises, driving attention and awareness away from kinesthesia and sensation, as well as how once language-thinking is engaged, it begets further language-thinking, carrying out its own logics and quickly departing from dancing-thinking. (Bauer, 2018, ep.4)

Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies—for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text—as into the world and into history—by her own movement. (p.875)

As the text surges forth in a rallying cry for a writing born out of feminine sensuality, eros, and perspectives, the writing performs what it calls for in both tone and content. The final words read:

I am for you what you want me to be at the moment you look at me in a way you've never seen me before: at every instant. When I write, it's everything that we don't know we can be that is written out of me, without exclusions, without stipulation, and everything we will be calls us to the unflagging, intoxicating, unappeasable search for love. In one another we will never be lacking. (p.893)

In *Poetry Is Not a Luxury* (1984), another manifesto-like beacon of inspiration that first set my dancing-writing journey in motion, Audre Lorde writes:

I speak here of poetry as the revelation or distillation of experience, not the sterile word play that, too often, the white fathers distorted the word poetry to mean – in order to cover their desperate wish for imagination without insight. (...) Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought. (...) This is not idle fantasy, but the true meaning of “it feels right to me.” (pp.36-39)

Lorde's urgent pursuit of language that distills experience as a way of living that experience more richly, along with the idea of giving name to the nameless, gave me purpose in sticking with writing-thinking as I wrestled with its various incongruences with dancing-thinking. In *Caribbean Discourse* (1989), Édouard Glissant introduces the concept of 'forced poetics' or 'counterpoetics,' whereby a culture or people that do not find adequate expression in a given language or grammar (such adequate expression he calls *natural poetics*) exert force back upon the dominant discourse in a way that produces new forms of expression (pp.128-129). The notion of 'forced poetics' points to a potentially productive friction between dancing-thinking and writing-thinking, offering me a concept with which to approach *How dance writes*.

I spent a share of my early research contemplating various types and uses of notation (as a mnemonic device, mediator, generator, dynamic model, artwork in itself, or ephemera) and elaborating upon the difference between allographic and autographic artworks (Goodman, 1968) as it pertains to authorship in dance and choreography. I also pondered different methods of choreography (mimetic, rule-based, score-based, phrase-based, music-based, generative, narrative, social) in considering the relationships between dancing and writing that already exist in choreographic practices. In my own choreography, I was searching for “the simplest containers in which the complexity of dance may thrive”²⁴ as it pertained to rules, structures, and scores for dancing. I was pursuing a certain “poetic efficiency” that might allow the untranslatable to remain untranslated (or the ineffable un-effed) and yet produce the right amount of friction or desire for transfer of experience between the language of the choreography and the dancing of the choreography. Whether or not a choreography is primarily defined in language or ever engages writing as mark-making, choreography can still be considered the “writing” of the dance, as the prescribed or emergent invariant which

²⁴ See 'Author's Hand / Epitaph' in *A lot of moving parts: book two* (Bauer, 2018, p.53) for rumination on simple containers. In the 'Translator's Note' of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel*, I write, “I was interested in how poetic efficiency and precision in choreographic language may support both the complexity of dancing and the interpretive role of the dancer. I asked myself “what kind of less is more?” as I considered what forms of writing offer themselves to scoring. Working with the idea of containership and crafting containers in which dancing may thrive, I collected various poetic instructions and scores from dancing-writing in this first period of research from 2017-2019.” (Bauer et al., 2021, p.13),

defines and stabilizes the identity of a dance. Thinking about the tension between the drive towards preservation in choreography and the live, iterative process-orientation of dancing and how that mirrors the tension between writing and orality, I became interested in forms of writing that retain attributes of the oral: poetry,²⁵ oral transcripts,²⁶ and later on, collective writing methods.²⁷

Poetry occurred to me as offering structurally adequate forms for documenting dancing-thinking in writing, as it historically bridges the oral and written and affords the expression of many of the previously detailed characteristics of dancing-thinking.²⁸ In ‘Letting Our Speech Go,’ (2014) Mapp observes, “People sometimes compare dance to poetry in that it is often non-linear, open to interpretation, and without a fixed meaning. Dance and poetry are both fluid and the watcher or reader must embrace ambiguity or else fail to address the work on its own terms.” (p.7). Oral transcripts and documents, such as those in the *Dancer As Agent* Collection (Parkinson & Peeters, 2015) have also provided fodder for contemplation of the myriad ways to document and share the specificity of dancing-thinking in written and published formats that retain a trace of the oral. As I became more interested in collective writing methods, I also found myself shifting away from forms of documenting dance-thought (such as poetry or oral transcripts) and moving towards an interest in methods of dancing-writing that would dwell in the *ing* – the means rather than ends – of dancing-thinking and writing-thinking. My research became more focused on the *methods* of translation than the products of translation. By generating and devising situations of dancing together that would inform processes of writing together, our writing becomes a more autonomous by-product of the dancing-thinking, a portrait of a way of thinking within dancing that did not need to be representational of the dance or its creators. Transposing a *way* of thinking from dancing to writing that retained structural and conditional elements of dancing-thinking allowed me to contribute to the development of creative practices that might serve both writing and dancing. The research evolved toward a more complex and dimensional understanding of dancing-thinking through dancing-writing methods, rather than considering either medium of thought as a captor, representative, or servant of the other. In this way, the writing also increasingly blurred the lines between documentation and exposition, to borrow the terms of academic artistic research.

The work of CACConrad provided an example of ways that dancing-thinking may condition writing-thinking, with their somatic exercises and rituals which create experiential situations as prompts for writing. In *A Beautiful Marsupial Afternoon: New (Soma)tics* (2012), CACConrad selects 27 instructions created from 2005 onwards as recipes for embodied experiences to condition writing, published alongside their own poems written from those exercises. Chrysa Parkinson’s *Practice As Ecosystem Questionnaire*, which I had first completed in 2008, is comprised of a series of questions that address an artistic practitioner’s use of their senses in navigating and shaping their practice and mapping the flows of their practice as an ecosystem (resources,

²⁵ A selection of dancing-writing poetry appears in *A lot of moving parts: book one* (Bauer, 2018:1) as well as in italicized sections of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021).

²⁶ In *A lot of moving parts: book two*, a conversation with myself and Ellen Söderhult is transcribed and published under the title ‘No Time for Judgement / More Time for Judgement.’ (Bauer, 2018:2, pp.23-43)

²⁷ The latter half of my research was dominated by collective writing and editing procedures conducted with dancers, published in *News from the Proto-Splac* (Bauer et al., 2018), *The Remything Edition* (Bauer et al., 2021), and *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021).

²⁸ In the ‘Translator’s Note’ of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel*, I write, “I have long considered dance-thought to be nonlinear in its logic, for example in the way that memory and anticipation conflate in the act of executing a single dance movement, or the way that moving can conjure images and associations that don’t have any sequential relation to each other outside of the ordering of dance movements that call those images to mind. Because of this, poetry had captured my attention early on in my artistic research project, for its potential to create ruptures in linear time through gestures of grammar, syntax, imagery, rhythm, rhyme and word placement on the page. / Poetry historically and to this day also straddles the oral and written word, which to me is useful as a reflection of the paradoxes that choreography proposes in its emphasis on formal permanence in the ongoingness of the live, body-to-body, and reiterative process of dancing a dance. The negotiation of orality and literacy is evidenced in poems that retain traces of oral language patterns such as musicality and embellished description or mnemonic devices like rhyme and alliteration in combination with technological effects of writing such as condensation of expression, punctuation, line breaks, and the articulated breakdown of a vibratory stream of sound into phonemes and characters by alphabetization.” (Bauer et al., 2021, p.12-13)

products, by-products, waste). The questionnaire ends with a handful of questions that lead to describing how the practitioner's senses create and might reimagine their environment and body. Parts of this questionnaire have been re-used and developed in my research to tease out the way that sensations produce imagination in writing, namely in regards to the notion of *splace* as a conflation of immediate place and constructed space.²⁹ Another influence that I brought with me into the development of dancing-writing practices is *The Oracle Dance*, a method of reading improvised dances as answers to questions.³⁰ The dancers do not hear the questions or the answers and their score is simply "the oracle knows everything and is always right." *The Oracle Dance* plays with the legibility and interpretation of movement as well as the absurdity of literal translations from dance to language, bringing forth the sense that there are always many ways to "read" any dance, as it contains multiple layers of information to be interpreted, extracted, understood, caught, or missed. *The Oracle Dance* reminds me that any writing that comes from dancing will only ever reflect one approach, one desired path through the complex terrain of potential meanings and constitutive forces, and yet braving the journey of languaging a dance brings something to light that wouldn't have emerged otherwise, however contrived the translation effort may necessarily be. Karinne Keithley Syers, a writer and teacher whose work spans plays, songs, sound, dance, animation, video, bookmaking, and essays, has developed a series of online writing workshops under the name *The Pelagic School*, which offers writing prompts as well as process-based workshops and writing groups. I became interested in her exercises and processes for writing that draws upon her early education and professional experience in dance, performance and choreography.³¹ Influences from ideokineses, experiential anatomy, somatics, and dance composition are evident in her exercises which use bodily sensations and images to set writing in motion, and approach the composition of writing in a modular, mobile, or spatial way.³² Through her workshops, I found procedures and inspirations for going from dancing to the writing of narrative fiction.

In the latter half of my *choreo | graphy* research, fiction took a more central role in my artistic practice, as a genre of writing that might help communicate *how dance thinks* through a conflation of sensation, imagination, and observation. Just as poetry had served as a structural representation in writing of *how dance thinks* regarding spatialization and a nonlinear concatenation of imagery, I began to work with fictional genres (magical realism, science fiction, or speculative fiction) as a surrogate for expressing how dancing is a kind of world-making that both relies on and generates imagination in relation to the "real" observable and sensible experience of dancing. In a choreography (taken as the invariant of a dance), shared imagination informs and structures the dancing. In an improvisation (taken as spontaneous response-ability to the conditions), movement creates and informs imagination. Since there is an amount of spontaneous response-ability even in the most strictly repeatable choreographies, and there are choreographic forces at work even in the most spontaneous improvisations, there is a vast spectrum of organizing principles and practices that entangle so-called "choreography" and "improvisation."

Similarly, imagination is bilaterally generative-of and generated-by dancing, regardless of where a dance falls on the spectrum of choreography and improvisation. This mutual causality in dancing-thinking whereby the imagined constitutes the real and the real constitutes the imagined reminded me of how fiction thrives in conversation with reality. Thence fiction became a way to document and expose *how dance thinks*,

²⁹ In the 'Translator's Note' of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel*, I describe how the *Practice as Ecosystem Questionnaire* was used with Coven Press leading to *News from the Proto Splace*. (Bauer et al., 2021, p.20)

³⁰ The Oracle dance was developed in the TTT (Teachers Teaching Teachers) sessions at ImPulsTanz festival in Vienna in 2014 with and by Jennifer Lacey, Alice Chauchat, Valentina Desideri, Alizx Eyunaudi, Keith Hennessey, Anne Juren, Mark Lorimer, Raimundas Malašauskas, Philippe Riéra and Mårten Spångberg. I have further described my use of it in the 'Translator's Note' of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel*. (Bauer et al., 2021, p.17)

³¹ In the 'Translator's Note' of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel*, I detail how *The Pop-Up Remote Playwriting Workshop* offered by Keithley Syers initiated the process of writing *Nora the Many*. (Bauer et al., 2021, p.19)

³² In episode 3 of the podcast *Sleeping Giant Dreams*, I speak with Karinne Keithley Syers about her writing practice and its relationship to her dancing experience. (Bauer, 2020, ep.3)

not through allegorical or representational stories *about* dance, but in processes of dancing-writing that harnesses the calibration of sensation, imagination, and observation. With fiction as an alibi, I found it possible to write autonomous texts *through* and *from* dancing rather than *about* it. With the collective Nora and different ensembles gathered under the alias Coven Press, my research pursued collective dancing-writing of fiction, which we eventually called *Sensual Journalism* (instead of science fiction), to underline its role as documentation of sense experience.³³

The *How dance writes* area of the project *choreo | graphy* asks how language and writing can yield to, move with, and better express the specificity of dancing-thinking in order to find more adequate discourse *from* and *through* dancing, rather than *about* it.³⁴ In doing so I have stumbled upon new genres of writing (such as the annotated poem-essays³⁵ or *Sensual Journalism*), and some word-concepts that came from the specificity of dance-thought (*modybind*, *subject*, *splace*).³⁶ Working in one-on-one studio sessions in 2017-2018,³⁷ and in group sessions under the alias *Coven Press* in 2019³⁸ and 2020,³⁹ the contribution of my research toward *How dance thinks* consists of devised methods for dancing-writing, below.

- *Open Dancing – Open Writing* is the base and most basic of my dancing-writing explorations. In a set of instructions that prime the senses to attend to non-separation, “open” pertains to the experience of boundaries as thresholds for interrelation rather than separation (for example, between inside and outside with open skin, detail and big picture with open ears, imagination and observation with open eyes, affect and emotion with open heart, and between the different senses and sensibilities with open mind).⁴⁰ The guided “attentive warmup” leads to a session of Open Dancing wherein “movement follows attention, attention follows movement” is the only generator for moving. A timed session of Open Dancing is followed by Open Writing, in which the writer’s aim is to try to adhere to the way that thinking and sensemaking have unfolded in the experience of dancing, as well as to simply allow the dancing-thinking to find its way into writing by any means that appear.⁴¹ In this sense “open” means intuitive, not limited in procedure or approach, and experimentally synesthetic. This practice has functioned as a daily warmup in every group research period and creation processes within my research. In this way, it offers a space for continual experimentation, exploration, and beginning again.

³³ In a search for writing forms that might express the way dance thinks, I considered science fiction as apt metaphor for the world-making of dancing-thinking, as imagination, sensation, and observation are calibrated in science fiction and speculative fiction. Studio conversations in 2018 with colleague Alice MacKenzie strengthened this position (I spoke with her about this for the *How Dance Thinks* podcast series but forgot to press record so all that remains is partial memory.) At some point during the *Coven Press* collective dancing-writing sessions in October 2019, participant Zoë Poluch pointed out that what we are writing is not science fiction, because it’s based in dancing rather than science and shouldn’t be called fiction because it is a way of articulating real lived experience. After some discussion we coined the term *Sensual Journalism*. This is also mentioned in the ‘Translator’s Note’ of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel*. (Bauer et al., 2021, p.21)

³⁴ In the essay ‘Effing the Ineffable’ (Bauer, 2018:2, p.6-21) and the ‘Translator’s Note’ of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021, 9-26), I further detail the paradoxes and challenges of this endeavor.

³⁵ See ‘Documentation/Examination’ in *A lot of moving parts: book two* (Bauer, 2018:2, pp.45-51)

³⁶ On *modybind*, see footnote 22. On *splace*, see footnote 12. On *subject*, see *An essay on dance, on its way* (Bauer, 2019).

³⁷ With, in order: Halla Ólafsdóttir, Rasmus Ölme, Ellen Söderhult, Pavle Heidler, Chrysa Parkinson, Rasmus Ölme, Michelle Boulé, Zoë Poluch, Alice Chauchat, Gabriel Schenker.

³⁸ Coven Press participants Fall 2019, Stockholm: Eleanor Bauer, Kai Evans, Alice MacKenzie, Stina Nyberg, Tilman O’Donnell, Halla Ólafsdóttir, Zoë Poluch, Adam Seid Tahir, Alexander Talts, Juliette Uzor.

³⁹ Coven Press participants Spring 2020, on Zoom: Eleanor Bauer, Season Butler, Alice MacKenzie, Stephanie McMann, Peter Mills, Stina Nyberg, Tilman O’Donnell, Zoë Poluch, Adam Seid Tahir, Eleanor Sikorski, Alexander Talts, and Flora Wellesley Wesley.

⁴⁰ For a complete transcript of this attentive warmup, see the *NEAR* performance score on the [choreo | graphy artistic research project documentation](#) page in the Research Catalogue.

⁴¹ In *A lot of moving parts: book one* (Bauer, 2018:1) the writings on pages 23, 24, 28, 34, 38-39, 40, and 41 are examples of my own *Open Dancing – Open Writing*. In *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021), italicized writings on pages 42, 88, and 97 are examples of others’ *Open Dancing – Open Writing*, attributed there in footnotes 46, 64, and 71.

- *Open Dancing – Open Writing – Score Extraction* is a procedure in which prompts or instructions for dancing are gleaned from open writing by selecting and combining words or phrases that support dancing.⁴²
- *Derivative Score Daisy Chain* is a process for generating improvisation scores. A dancer performs a dance (perhaps performing a score from *Open Dancing - Open Writing - Score Extraction*) for a watcher without revealing what they are dancing. A viewer, who does not know the score for the dance they are watching, writes a score based on “reading” the dance, assembling observable features of the dance into a new score, or trying to guess the score behind the dance. The observer then dances that score for the first dancer or another observer, and the process continues. It can be arranged that people always dance scores they have never seen performed by passing the “derivative scores” (written from observing dances) on to other dancers. Whether in a pair or groups of pairs, each person has an “original” input, so alternation between doing and watching has also to keep track of which step of the original stem they are on (the skipping and alternation between stems is what lead to the *Daisy Chain* part of the title).⁴³
- *Dancing, not the Dancer – Three Images for Now* is a dancing score and writing prompt pairing developed with Coven Press in 2019. I have been working with the dancing score *Dancing, not the Dancer* since 2013, which I developed to have an improvisational score for dancing that would activate as broad a range of my training and skill as possible. It is made up of three rules: 1. *Say yes to the movement before you can recognize it*, 2. *Complete it with your everything*, and 3. *You are the observer*.⁴⁴ In this way, the dancer puts all of her skills and capacities towards high-performance service of a yet-unknown dance, while assuming the role of the observer. *Dancing, not the Dancer* is a way of letting the dancer be danced, or letting the dancing be expressed through the dancer rather than the inverse.⁴⁵ The writing practice that follows *Dancing, not the Dancer*, comes from dancer Kai Evans and is called *Three Images for Now*.⁴⁶ The instructions are to write three images in a row, each formed as a single sentence without use of the words “I” or “me.” The aim is to let the writing precede visual imagination so that the image completes itself in language-thought. As a writing equivalent to *Dancing, not the Dancer* in which recognition and planning are delayed by the rule “say yes to the movement before you can recognize it,” in *Three Images for Now*, the writer attempts to let language run out ahead of the imagined completion of the image. One might consider *Three Images for Now* as a sort of *Writing, not the Writer*.⁴⁷
- *Predictive Duets* is a dancing-writing procedure in which a pair of dancers choose their movements based on anticipation and completion of the other person’s movement. The point is

⁴² In *A lot of moving parts: book one* (Bauer, 2018:1), examples of *Open Dancing – Open Writing – Score Extraction* can be found on pages 15, 27, and 40.

⁴³ Derivative Score Daisy Chain was developed in my one-on-one studio sessions in early 2018 with Michelle Boulé and Zoë Poluch. The score *Hypersensitive Surfaces Find Crystalline Forms* came from a session of *Derivative Score Daisy Chain* with Zoë Poluch and was included in solo versions of *A lot of moving parts* (I, II, and V) as well as in the group piece *NEAR*, created with the Cullberg dance company in 2018. I also used a version of the *Derivative Score Daisy Chain* procedure in the first section of *NEAR*: the dancers enter performing solo scores extracted from their own *Open Dancing – Open Writing* prior to each performance. Once entered, they begin to observe one another, reading new scores from watching each other’s dances. Via text message or by talking, they pass the scores they have read/interpreted from watching on to other dancers.

⁴⁴ References and inspirations behind these three rules are footnoted in the *NEAR* performance score, on the [choreo / graphy artistic research project documentation](#) page in the Research Catalogue.

⁴⁵ *Dancing, not the Dancer* appears in all solo versions of *A lot of moving parts* and briefly as well in *NEAR*.

⁴⁶ Kai Evans developed *Three Images for Now* after a workshop with Billie Hanne and shared it with me in a Nobody’s Dance practice exchange in Berlin in 2018. *Nobody’s Dance* (the dance-specific part of Nobody’s Business) is an open-source format for exchange of practices developed by Ellen Söderhult, Alice Chauchat, and myself in 2015.

⁴⁷ Examples of others’ *Three Images for Now* writing after *Dancing, not the Dancer* can be found in *Nora the Many: a choreo / graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021) on pages 42 and 88, attributed there in footnotes 44, 45, and 65.

not to guess correctly or to be in unison, but to be ahead of the other, continually departing from visual “snapshots” of the other person’s body. Following a timed session of “predictive dancing,” the duo writes “predictive texts,” seated side by side to be able read each other’s writing and writing each’s own text as a completion of the other’s words or phrases, always glancing at and departing from the last thing the other has written.⁴⁸

- *Phonetic Poetry Generator* is a procedure that moves from oral to written utterance, sourcing the feeling and shape of movement for matching sound and phonetic form, one word at a time. Each dancer in a group of dancers, working simultaneously, chooses one short movement at a time to repeat until they have found the sound that matches it in rhythm, shape, and dynamic. The dancer continues to repeat the movement and sound until they arrive at a known word. When the word that has been massaged out of the movement has been found, it is said aloud. An external observer (or “scribe”) transcribes what is said, resulting in a string of unrelated words created by the *Phonetic Poetry Generator*. More challenging variations include the group of dancers trying to listen to one another to try to make syntactical or grammatic sense, as well as selecting a topic or genre to help guide the overall sense-making.⁴⁹
- *If the dance could talk, what would it say?* is an exercise in which *Open Dancing, Dancing not the Dancer*, (or any score or choreography for that matter) is paired with vocalization, including phonemes, sounds, music, singing, non-linguistic expression and language, in an attempt to quite literally “give voice” to the dance. The aim is for the vocalization to come from the felt-sense of the movement, rather than letting the vocalization conduct the dance. Speaking as a commentator on the dance (speaking *about* the dance) is discouraged in favor of speaking from the place of the dance itself – *as* the dance or *through* the dance – giving sound to the heard, felt, or imagined voice of the dance.⁵⁰
- *Manual Lucidity* involves a person being moved by another, in a duet in which the active person provides the receptive person with tactile-kinesthetic experience. With eyes closed, the receiving dancer may use more or less muscle tension to follow, complete, or resist the impulses received from the mover. The mover’s touch may be delicate or firm, the movements large or small. The active mover is encouraged to involve more than just their hands in providing movement and sensorial experience for the receiving dancer, and to think of “listening touch” and curiosity toward what the receiving body can do, avoiding overt manipulation. This is the “manual” half of *Manual Lucidity*. The person being moved with their eyes closed then attempts with as little

⁴⁸ An example of *Predictive Duet* writing can be found in *Nora the Many: a choreo / graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021) on page 89, attributed there in footnote 66.

⁴⁹ This procedure was developed with and by the Bachelors of Dance students at Stockholm University of the Arts in Spring 2017, in a workshop and creation framed by my *choreo / graphy* research. In a breakout group, Miranda Wallmon, Klara Utke Acs, Molly Engblom, and Sonja-Ritta Laine came up with the procedure of looping a simple movement to study its form and find a vocal sound that matched the movement in shape and dynamic. With the whole group we developed the ensemble version described above, with one person assuming the role of the scribe, and included this task in the performance we made together in May 2017 called *OUROBORACULAR* (Created with and performed by Shiraz Amar, Eza Amin, Aurore d’Audiffret, Jennie Bergsli, Inez Borgenback, Molly Engblom, Anna-Maria Ertl, Sonja-Riitta Laine, Corinne Mustonen, Danilo Cesar Nascimento Alexandre, Morgane Nicol, Julia Nylander, Klara Sjöblom, Anna Skorpen, Alexander Talts, Klara Utke Acs, and Miranda Wallmon).

⁵⁰ Working with the Bachelor of Dance students at the Danish National School of Performing Arts in Copenhagen February-March 2017 (Ágnes Grelinger, Amalie Bergstein Nielsen, Andreas Haglund, Evita Tsakalaki, Irma von Platen, Jon Andreas Hoff, Kalliopi Siganoú, Paolo Gile, Sara Grotenfelt, Tilda le Grand, Tobias Skjöld, Vivian Pöldoja and Onur Agbaba), we developed a way of exercising and “tuning” to the different possible voices of the dance, as if by turning the dial on different radio frequencies, deliberately focusing on one method of translation at a time (musicality and music/the “soundtrack,” phonetic and onomatopoeic sounds, naming the images that come to mind/imagination produced by movement, naming the sensations and observations/internal sports commentator, breath and utterances physically produced by the movement). Each also with a volume dial.

filter as possible to verbalize all of the images and impressions that arise from the touch and movement. This is the “lucidity” half of *Manual Lucidity*. Variations include recording or having a third person transcribe and/or interview the receptive/speaking person.⁵¹

- *Pleasured Splace* begins with dancing together for 20-30 minutes with and without music in open-ended pursuit of pleasure in movement. On an open-source dance floor using the others for inspiration and support, one may be carried by the pleasure of unison, diverge from unison in developing movement to increase the joy it brings, or spontaneously introduce new or known movements. All senses, sensibilities, techniques, movement vocabularies or styles are mobilized towards the augmentation of kinetic pleasure. Afterward, the dancers write descriptions of their own bodies as environments, scanning the sensations and affects as the basis for geographic and atmospheric descriptions.⁵²
- *Character Description* involves a soloist dancing an undisclosed score (possibly gleaned from *Open Dancing*) for an observer or group of observers who write a biography or character profile based on the dance. If working with a group of observers, they may write simultaneously within the same shared document (by working online), and if working on a particular writing project or story, the solos may be used to develop characters.⁵³

⁵¹ *Manual Lucidity* was developed with Nora (Stephanie McMann, Eleanor Sikorski, Flora Wellesley Wesley) in August of 2019 and used with Coven Press later that year, as detailed in the Translator’s Note of *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021, pp.18-20). Examples of text from *Manual Lucidity* can be found in *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* on pages 47, 50, and 99-100, attributed there in footnotes 48, 49, and 72. In the mockumentary film *Nora the Many* (Bauer et al., 2022), a scene wherein the character of Divina performs a poem is intercut with a prior session of *Manual Lucidity* in the studio with Stephanie McMann (speaking and being moved) and Eleanor Bauer (moving McMann), revealing the original source of the performed text. Excerpts of text from *Manual Lucidity* are littered throughout *News from the Proto-Splace* (Bauer et al., 2019) as well as throughout the performed text of *A lot of moving parts VI* (2019).

⁵² Examples of *Pleasured Splace* writing can be found in *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021, p.85) and in *News from the Proto Splace* (Bauer et al., 2019) on page 8 (‘Poetry’), 9 (‘Horny Horrors’), 11-12 (‘Sensual Journalism: A Common Splace’) and elsewhere, as well as in the performed text of *A lot of moving parts VI* (2019).

⁵³ The ‘Coven Press Staff Bios / A Peek Under the Hood’ in *News from the Proto Splace* (Bauer et al., 2019, pp.18-22) were written by this method, watching each other dance solos and collectively writing biographies in a shared Google Doc, later collectively edited. Many of the characters described in the ‘Coven Press Staff Bios’ also appear as Coven Press characters in *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* (Bauer et al., 2021)

Part 3: *choreo | graphic outcomes*

The separation of the word choreography into *choreo | graphy* signals the project's intention to open space for consideration and reinvention of the poetics of choreographic practice and discourse. This section concerns the project's contributions to choreographic practice. The processes and forms of artistic production I have created and co-created under the umbrella of this research constitute a methodology that integrates the observations from *how dance thinks* and *how dance writes*. By underlining the tactile, kinetic, and acoustic senses over the visual; emphasizing the audience's partial view and subjective perspective; using text and speech to provide insight to the imaginative world of the dancer(s); crafting choreographic structures that foster the ongoingness, liveness, and complexity of dancing-thinking; and working with printed matter and film to escape the linear timeframe of live performance,⁵⁴ I have searched for forms of exhibition and publication which may transmit the felt sense or structure of dancing-thinking to audiences which may not share that first-hand experience. The methods developed in the research for *how dance writes* have determined the artistic procedures of many of the creations, leading to dance performance scores, scripts, and published texts born out of the quest for adequate relation between dancing and writing.

As the path of inquiry in *choreo | graphy* produced various traces, insights, and artefacts; I looked for ways in which the ephemeral, oral, and practice-oriented aspects of dancing-thinking could be as valued for their knowledge-producing power as the permanent and preservation-oriented aspects of writing-thinking. I used the umbrella title *A lot of moving parts* for the creations produced by my research, first as a solo practice but later including group collaborations. Continually (re)assembling, (re)composing, and (re)performing the questions and findings of my documented artistic research practice, *A lot of moving parts* is a constantly evolving piece as performance as process. The title is literal, as the compositional approach in *A lot of moving parts* is to convey dynamic and mobile relations between ideas, emphasizing the movement of thinking as a process. During my research, commissioned works such as *NEAR* with Cullberg, *Sensuality Happens* with Corpus,⁵⁵ and *Nora the Many* with Nora, served as opportunities to explore *choreo | graphic* methods within various collaborative conditions. Below is a list of performance pieces, publications, and moving image works resulting from my *choreo | graphy* research. Everything listed below can be found on the [choreo | graphic artistic research project documentation page](#) in the Research Catalogue:

- In *NEAR* (2018), a “dance concert” created with Cullberg and Yung Lean,⁵⁶ *Open Dancing – Open Writing – Score Extraction* served as a foundational daily practice throughout the creative

⁵⁴ In the Translator's Note of *Nora the Many*, I explain: “In a text entitled *Plays* by Gertrude Stein, Stein asserts that the performer and audience are always in “syncopated time” with one another in a play, with the audience always emotionally ahead of or behind the action onstage. She attributes this to the nature of conventional narrative drama wherein the tension of the story is a function of built expectations being met or not. While dance is not necessarily concerned with storytelling, I have observed similarly that the shared time and fixed frame of the typically representational theater apparatus can be obstacles to an audience's appreciation of the sense dance makes. The objective distance of the visual creates a kind of antipathy towards the logic of dance as a social and three-dimensional construct.” (Bauer et al., 2021, p.25) (Stein, 1935/1985)

⁵⁵ *Sensuality Happens*, co-commissioned by Corpus dance company of the Royal Danish Theatre in Copenhagen and Denmark's Roskilde music festival, was choreographed by Eleanor Bauer with Corpus dancers Alexander Stæger, Hazuki Kojima, Marco Herlev Høst, Louella May Hogan, and Alma Toaspern. Musical collaboration by Jenny Rossander aka LYDMOR. Performed by Corpus and LYDMOR. Costumes by Mark Kenley Domin Tan, lighting by Jonatan Winbo, scenography by Kasper Riisberg. Premieres at A-Salen at the Royal Danish Theatre in March 2020 and at Roskilde festival in July 2020 were both canceled due to COVID-19. No documentation exists of the performance, as the theater was evacuated the day before the planned dress rehearsal for archival filming and photography.

⁵⁶ *NEAR*, co-commissioned by Cullberg dance company in Stockholm and Way Out West music festival in Gothenburg, was choreographed by myself in collaboration with Cullberg dancers Adam Schütt, Camille Prieux, Daniel Sjökvist, Eleanor Campbell, Eliot Marmouset, Gesine Moog, Georges Hann, Giacomo Citton. Katie Jacobson, Mohamed Y. Shika, Suelem de Oliviera da Silva, Syvie Gehin Karlsson, and Unn Faleide, with the assistance of rehearsal director Lisa Drake, Cullberg dancers Nuria Guiu Sagarra, Vincent van der Plas, Anand Bolder, and Cullberg apprentices Heather Birley and Yulia Kalinchenko. Music by Jonatan Leandroer Håstad aka Yung Lean in collaboration with multiinstrumentalist Frederik Valentin.

process. The first section of the performance is a game in which the dancers perform, derive from watching, and pass scores to each other (via text message or orally), beginning with each person performing a score culled that day from their own *Open Dancing – Open Writing – Score Extraction* practice to provide new inputs for a live and open group session of *Derivative Score Daisy Chain* (see Footnote 43). The performers also select favorite excerpts from during this live session of reading and writing dances and forward them to one performer who live-edits and recites it as a poem. The set choreography and scores in the latter half of the piece are culled from the dancer’s own dancing-writing during the creation, as well as from other procedures during my *choreo | graphy* research project, as detailed in the footnotes of the *NEAR* performance score where the sources for the choreography of each section are also cited. In this performance, I was working specifically with the aforementioned aim of poetic efficiency in scoring, using language as a simple container to support the complexity of dancing. Brief and memorable phrases culled from dancing-writing to affect embodied sensation and imagination were set in an order quite early in the creation process so that the dancer’s ongoing interpretation and reinterpretation of the choreographic language could be a site of continued exploration. Meanwhile, the footnotes of the score document the anecdotes and influences behind the choreographic language, to honor the oft-forgotten stories and multiple authors behind what comes to be the recognized and repeated as the choreography. In this way the score both offers citational history/lineage and acts as a performable text for continual reinterpretation.

- *A lot of moving parts: book one* and *A lot of moving parts: book two* (2018) are an exposition of research as process as well as documents of my studio practice, especially in *book one*, which consists almost entirely of writings from during and after dancing practice. I was interested in exposing the research in its nascent form, including note-like thoughts, ruminations, doubts, and unresolved questions. Printed in the same size and proportions as the small moleskine notebooks I was using throughout my research, with entries numbered by the date they were originally authored, the *A lot of moving parts* booklets contain momentary captures of time within an ongoing practice. *A lot of moving parts: book one* contains a selection of dancing-writing poems and texts from various dancing-writing studio practices. *A lot of moving parts: book two* includes more explicit reflection on the research in formats that confront academic writing traditions: an essay commissioned by Movement Research Performance Journal, a transcribed interview, an annotated poem-essay, and a rumination on choreography as the crafting of containers for dance.
- *A lot of moving parts I* (2018) was the first solo performance within my research. I was mostly occupied with crafting simple choreographic containers to support the complexity of dancing. The inverse proportionality of simplicity of rules to complexity of outcomes is an organizational and algorithmic rule of thumb that I have been working with for several years before starting this research, and which became more prominent in relation to ideas of poetic efficiency and scoring when dealing with the relationship between dancing and writing. For these reasons I also invited WATT⁵⁷ clarinet quartet to perform with me. I first encountered their music in May 2018 at a live concert in the Skogskapellet at Skogskyrkogården in Stockholm. In a wash of acoustic and harmonic impressions produced by microtonal differences in pitch, four clarinets sometimes sounded like twelve, and at other times like one, while playing single pitches extended over long durations by circular breathing. Appreciating the simplicity of their compositional rules in service

Scenography by Josefin Hinders, lighting by Jonatan Winbo, costumes by Pontus Pettersson. Premiered 10 August at Way Out West festival in Gothenburg and 13-14 September at Dramaten in Stockholm.

⁵⁷ WATT is Julien Pontvianne, Antonin-Tri Hoang, Jean-Brice Godet, and Jean Dousteysier.

of revealing a great complexity in sound,⁵⁸ I invited them to perform with me for my first solo iteration of *A lot of moving parts* at Lafayette Anticipations – Fondation d’entreprise Galeries Lafayette in Paris. I added to their performance score a spatial element: starting in a circle facing inwards as they usually do, when they would pause for a breath, they would change positions in space and begin their new note in a new place, working with the acoustics of the building to create different resonances. Eventually the musicians leave the central performance area, playing to the columns and corners, then in the hallways and stairwells, and eventually finish together on the balcony over the performance space. The heightened awareness of sound provided by WATT’s live performance and their site-specific animation of the space’s acoustics was one way in which I worked to bring the public away from the visual object of a dance performance and closer to their own bodies and subjective sense-experience. I worked with the building itself to underline the partiality of each spectator’s perspective.⁵⁹ Refurbished from an old textile factory by the architectural firm OMA, the building consists of a central exhibition tower inserted into the original courtyard of the building, with two sets of mobile floors positioned at different levels for each exhibition or performance. The large original walls and windows create different openings and enclosures around the central performance space, including obstructions of view and local differences in acoustics. I placed the audience all around and behind these obstructions and danced in and out of the central atrium to underline the subjective and partial view of each audience member, decentering and multiplying the traditional front or center of a proscenium stage. I also worked to deprioritize the visual sense and emphasize the tactile with memory foam sculptures I created in collaboration with Sofie Durnez, whom I also worked with on costume design. The color palette of the sculptures and costume are based on the colors in a photograph of the palm of my hand, as a reference to the palm of the hand as the “simplest container.”⁶⁰ Pulling out the blue, purple, brown, pink, and yellow tones of the palm, the sculptures and costume are a range of fleshy and tones muddled with paint splotches, creases, and dyes in reference to my adage of the body as a “dirty container.”⁶¹ Arranged throughout the space including the audience areas, the memory foam sculptures deform and spring back from pressure to echo the impressionability and resilience of flesh – what it remembers, what it forgets – and above all, to bring the sensuality of touch to the spectators’ awareness. Also distributed throughout the space are traces of writing in the form of light: five different colored light tubes created in collaboration with lighting designer Jonatan Winbo are twisted into cursive forms suggesting the words “a lot of moving parts.” I perform a score of memorable short language prompts for dancing guided by lighting cues that tell me when to move on to the next section. I used this modular way of choreographing scored sections by marking time with Winbo’s light cues throughout all *A lot of moving parts* solos.

- *A lot of moving parts II* (2018) was created for Danspace Project at St.Mark’s Church in-the-Bowery in New York. Approaching composition as an ongoing practice, I developed and rearrange scores from *A lot of moving parts I*, adding a few, taking away others, and most notably

⁵⁸ Approaching WATT after the concert I learned that the score they follow is a simple verbal agreement to start on the same pitch and with circular breathing, follow the drifts in frequency due to the imperfections and impossibilities of maintaining one note indefinitely. When unable to continue circular breathing, the players pause for breath, listen, and begin again on a new pitch according to the arrangement of pitches already in play. At the end of a predetermined duration, they finish on the same note again, but a different undetermined pitch than they start with. Because of the proximity in timbre of the clarinet to a pure sine wave, overtones and pulsations created by harmonics, clusters, and microtonal differences are audible.

⁵⁹ In the ‘Effing the Ineffable’ essay in *A lot of moving parts: book two*, I write, “Any embodied perspective will always and necessarily be a partial view (Bauer, 2018:2, p.21)

⁶⁰ See ‘Author’s Hand/Epitaph’ in *A lot of moving parts: book two* (Bauer, 2018:2, pp.53-55)

⁶¹ In the ‘Effing the Ineffable’ essay in *A lot of moving parts: book two*, I write, “Our intelligent bodies are dirty containers (...) Everything that passes through and over us leaves its trace.” (Bauer, 2018:2, p.16)

adding spoken text to the performance. In *A lot of moving parts I*, I separated the dancing and language into live performance and printed booklets to respect and underline the media-specific separation of *khoreia* and *graphia*. *A lot of moving parts I* was thereby the first dance that I choreographed in my professional career *without* the use of any language either spoken or sung. With *A lot of moving parts II*, I reintroduced speech in consideration of the affinity between dancing-thinking and orality. The inclusion of spoken language here for me was partly a choice related to performing in the United States where direct address to the audience in a shared first language felt appropriate, a familiar remnant of a performance culture I once inhabited and therefore another way of being site-responsive by adapting the solo to the locale. The use of language herein is anecdotal, not explaining what I am doing, but telling stories that add a layer of history, reference, or context to the dance I am performing at any given moment. The anecdote is a powerful form in oral cultures of knowledge production wherein through parables or fables, storytellers deliver messages in memorable ways.⁶² The figure of the storyteller was also an influence in my thinking about the relation between oral and written word. As a custodian of news, culture, and history in a time before print, the storyteller's ability to hold attention and keep it was a necessity for the spread of knowledge. Before great books, great performers embodied, preserved, and spread words. At the end of the performance, I materialize the writing of the dance – the choreographic score of the performance – in printed pages that fall from the balcony into the performance space. The score is enlarged in print layout so that any given page only contains a letter, word, phrase, or section of the score. The lightness of the individual falling leaves of paper and the partiality of the score on each of them counter the usual weight and coherence affiliated with printed matter.

- *Polyphonic Flood/Erasure* (2018) is a video piece that begins with a dense block of text that I wrote by transcribing all of my research notes from after the publication of *A lot of moving parts: book one* and *book two*, primarily including notes from the *How Dance Thinks* course I curated and lead in the Fall of 2018. Over several hours spread over several days, I screen-recorded my own deletion and re-composition of the notes until there was nothing left. The video shows this process fast-forwarded into a total duration of twenty minutes. The idea of screen-recording writing was introduced to me by Pavle Heidler during our one-on-one studio sessions in November 2017.⁶³ By showing the edits, pauses for thought (or dancing), and changes that a text undergoes before completion, screen-recording exposes the liveness of thinking behind the written trace. With the blinking cursor and mouse arrow navigating the text, I reference the notion of cursoriness as running in writing, introduced to me by Will Rawls.⁶⁴ I also recorded myself whispering and singing through all of the dancing-writing texts I had written prior to the start of the PhD, created in workshops and projects that I lead from 2013 to 2017. The density of this choir gives voice to the sedimentation of dancing-writing research that preceded the official start of this PhD research project. In three layers of voice, slowly sliding through different pitches, I create happenstance harmonies and dissonances with myself. Panning the three voices in stereo between right, left, and center, I braid the voices through the space of the listener's ears, choreographing the movement of this *khoreia-graphia* mini choir. With effort it is possible to catch certain phrases or focus in one voice at a time, but the surplus of words coming in through three aural channels and one visual creates a wash of movement, tone, and texture in language that overrides the will to

⁶² In 'The Storyteller' Walter Benjamin writes, "There is nothing that commends a story to memory more effectively than that chaste compactness which precludes psychological analysis." (Benjamin, 1969, p.91)

⁶³ In *A lot of moving parts: book one*, the writing that has been screen recorded with Pavle Heidler appears in final form (Bauer, 2018:1, pp.16-18)

⁶⁴ In episode 2 of *How dance thinks* podcast, Will Rawls explains his interest in the cursor in writing and the latin root of the word *curs-* as 'runner.' (Bauer, 2018, ep.2)

“get” the meaning from the words alone. Overall, my interest in this video piece was to reflect a number of tensions between excess and loss: between the flood of meaning that spills forth from dancing and its consolidation into the “writing” of choreography, between the ephemeral density of what is felt and the relative scarcity of what can be named, and between the hoarding and shedding of experience that come with processes of documentation and editing in a documented artistic research project.⁶⁵

- *Harmonica Vocoder Interpretation Lecture* (2018) in form and content concerns the tension between the extra-lingual din of speech and the permanence of authorship in writing, as explored through the lens of the role of the dancer in the definition of any choreography. By speaking into a harmonica,⁶⁶ I place a handicap on linguistic comprehension and exaggerate the extra-lingual communication (musicality, facial expression, performance, gesture). In the improvised lecture I unpack a genuine contemplation of my current questions around choreography as an emergent and iterative process which relies on many people, namely dancers (*interprets* in French) who, through many interpretations and interpolations over time, make possible the understanding of what any particular dance is as distinguished from any others. With the addition of music (*The Rite of Spring* by Stravinsky, appearing when mentioned in the lecture) and subtitles that disappear when the dynamic music overpowers the speech, I create further obstacles for language to carry the meaning seamlessly. The emphasis on performance, humor, noise, and spontaneous inclusion of what is outside the window are ways in which the form of exposition reflects the lecture’s content regarding the often-invisible forces, fleeting experiences, and multiple vectors of influence that contribute to the emergent form of any given choreography over time.
- Performed at Dansens Hus in Stockholm in May 2019 as a part of the research seminar marking the halfway point of my doctoral project, *A lot of moving parts V* is a culmination of the research until that point, applying the aforementioned choreographic tactics for emphasizing the tactile, acoustic, and subjective experience of each audience member. The speaker placement in this performance was of particular importance for every audience member seated on three sides of the performance area to hear a slightly different version of the panning movement of voices in *Polyphonic Flood/Erasure*. The layering of dancing, speech, image, written text, and sound contribute to a non-binary relation between dancing-thinking and writing-thinking that captures the toggling between modes of sense-making that dominated my studio practice. *A lot of moving parts V* was preceded by *A lot of moving parts III* at Kaaistudio’s in Brussels in January 2019 and *A lot of moving parts IV* at Bennington College in Vermont in March 2019. Save for an essay published in the program for the performance in Brussels entitled *An essay on dance, on its way* (Bauer, 2019) those two iterations of *A lot of moving parts* are not included in the selection of documentation and expositions for *choreo | graphy*, because the main developments of those versions are incorporated here in *A lot of moving parts V*. Those novel developments include, from version three, the projection of *Polyphonic Flood/Erasure* on the rear wall and the use of

⁶⁵ On these tensions, in *A lot of moving parts: book one*, I write, “Finding the simplest containers to support the complexity of what dance can be sometimes means not trying to hold onto all of that complexity at once, but letting some things die in order for the emergent complexity to thrive.” (Bauer, 2018:1, p.56). The ‘Documentation/Examination’ poem-essay in *A lot of moving parts: book two*, also deals with these tensions in documentation. Near the end I write, “The question remains / What will remain / What sticks / What bounces / What’s worth the storage space / What’s worth repeating / For the children / For the futures / Maybe / it’s less / than / we / or I / think.” (Bauer, 2018:2, p.49).

⁶⁶ “Harmonica vocoder speech” is a by-product of the creation *Tentative Assembly (the tent piece)* which I co-created in 2012 with performers Cecilia Lisa Eliceche, Magali Caillet-Gajan, Michael Helland, Liz Kinoshita, Michiel Reynaert, Manon Santkin, Gabriel Schenker, Adam Weig, dramaturg Pierre Rubio and composer Chris Peck. After rehearsal one day, Cecilia Lisa Eliceche, Manon Santkin, and Michael Helland hung around talking to each other through harmonicas. “Harmonica vocoder speech” also appears in a “soliloquy” by Manon Santkin during *Tentative Assembly (the tent piece)*.

liminal darkness in the beginning of the piece to emphasize listening and feeling over seeing, and from version four, the projection of *Harmonica Vocoder Interpretation Lecture* and conversation with the audience through a harmonica. Encouraged by conversation with the 50% seminar opponent Fiona Templeton, I found myself eager to explore the social and collective nature of dancing-thinking in my research. Therefore, *A lot of moving parts V* marks the end of my solo research performance practice.⁶⁷

- *And then what? A collection of remembered, misremembered, heard, misheard & cherished Anna Grip quotes* (2019) is a small booklet created to honor the oral legacy of a dance teacher whose contribution to the Institute of Dance at Stockholm University of the Arts (formerly known as DOCH/Dance och Circus Högskolan) has profoundly influenced several generations of graduates. Often, a dance teacher's legacy is purely oral, as their work lives on only in the bodies, practices, and stories of those they taught, especially if they do not author books or performances. To honor this social distribution of knowledge as well as the partial, oral, and iterative way in which dancing lives on in words, *And then what?...* is a minigraph authored by a community rather than a monograph written by an individual. When I noticed how frequently Anna Grip was quoted by dancers in Stockholm, with catchphrases and taglines that circulated like koans in studio practice, I decided to crowd-source and document this language. Through an open call distributed by social media and emails, I gathered quotes from DOCH students, teachers, alumni and other members of the dance community who have partaken in Grip's classes or worked with her otherwise. In collaboration with graphic designer Alexey Layfurov, we set the quotes to the page in a way that aims to illustrate the movement of dancing-thinking in the words. The tiny booklets, about the size of a smartphone, slide easily into a pocket. I thought this might become a series, with different dance teachers in focus, but my research took me elsewhere. Nonetheless, I include it among the thesis materials as an example of one of the many forms and formats explored in this research on the relation between dancing-thinking and writing-thinking, and between practice-based discourse and publishing.
- *A lot of moving parts VI* (2019) is the first performance in my research created through collective writing and editing procedures. While I had worked with groups (as in *NEAR* or with students), where the dancing and choreography were collaborative, the writing half of the dancing-writing practices mostly remained solitary. Gathering a group of dancers and choreographers who had shown interest in or connection to my research and working under the alias "Coven Press,"⁶⁸ we practiced and invented several collective dancing-writing procedures, including but not limited to those mentioned above in *How dance writes* (*Predictive Duets*, *Manual Lucidity*, *Pleasured Splace*, *Character Description*, and the *Practice as Ecosystem Questionnaire*) as well as more complicated experiments with larger group versions of manual lucidity, where several people are talking and being moved by several others with and without incorporating each other's words in their own speaking. We experimented with dancing-writing in first, second, and third person, and as the space itself (in *splace* writings). We culled each other's texts for editing prompts, borrowing one person's language for instruction on how to approach editing another person's text, constantly borrowing each other's words and passing our writing through several hands. After

⁶⁷ Further explanation of the other ideas, experiences, and influences contributing to this turn in the research toward exploring the social and collective aspects of dancing-thinking can be found in the 'Translator's Note' of *Nora the many: a choreo / graphic novel*. (Bauer et al., 2021, pp.9-26)

⁶⁸ Coven Press in 2019 included Kai Evans, Alice MacKenzie, Stina Nyberg, Halla Ólafsdóttir, Tilman O'Donnell, Zoë Poluch, Adam Seid Tahir, Alexander Talts, Juliette Uzor and myself working together at Stockholm University of the Arts, 30 September – 18 October 2019. The name "Coven Press" came out of my fabulations with the collective Nora (Stephanie McMann, Eleanor Sikorski, and Flora Wellesley Wesley) during our research and development weeks in August of 2019.

just over two weeks of dancing-writing and editing explorations, we spent a few days sorting the accumulated texts into three categories: those suitable for dancing (as a score), suitable for print (as a newspaper we would publish along with the performance), and suitable for reading aloud (in the performance). We would change groups throughout the sorting and editing, opting into whichever category of text interested us each day. Working in Google Docs, several hands would be editing any text simultaneously, sometimes by voting a piece of text up (cumulatively emphasizing with italics, underline, bold, and increased font size) or down (removing emphases, adding strike-through, making lighter, and decreasing font size), and sometimes through simultaneous cutting, pasting, and writing-through. Each person's own writing (even if written as a scribe of another person's speaking) remained in its original form in a folder labeled with the dancing-writer's name, so that it could always be sourced for different purposes, versions, and edits. This accounts for the repetitions between the three texts (performance score, newspaper/zine, and performance text), as anyone could cull any text for use in any publishing category. In the last day of our three-week workshop, we arranged and rehearsed the dancing scores in combination with the sections of text for reading aloud, settling into a final structure for performance.⁶⁹ In the live performance, I was interested in the dissensus and accord between the scores for dancing and the spoken texts. There are no cases where the language spoken aloud is the same as the language of the performed dancing score (as one can see by comparing the performance texts to the dancing scores, both available in the [Research Catalogue](#) along with the video of the performance and the zine given to the audience). Yet the strength of willingness of an observer to make composite sense out of what is seen and heard may result in the perception that the dance and the spoken language are illustrative of one another.

- *News from the Proto Splace* (2019) is the self-published newspaper⁷⁰ penned by Coven Press in the above-mentioned collective dancing-writing and editing sessions. Leaning into the speculative fiction aspects of *Sensual Journalism*, the newspaper carries the same date and place of the live performance it accompanied (2 November 2019, Helsinki) with content suggesting a parallel imagined universe, or *splace*. Opting to publish anonymously due to the open-source writing process, the only author attributions are in the 'Coven Press Staff Bios/A Peek Under the Hood,' which were created by the *Character Description* process, described above in Part 2. The actual names of all of the zine's co-authors, as they are the same as the performance's co-authors, appear in the evening program and online credits for the performance. We gave this surrealistic newspaper by a fantasy publisher and fictionalized authors to audiences of *A lot of moving parts VI* and *VII*, adding a layer of imaginary space to the local place of the performances.
- *The Remything Edition* (2020) is the culmination of *Coven Press' Covidian Compositional Writing Sessions*,⁷¹ a series of dancing-writing meetings taking place on Zoom bi-weekly from 6 May 2020 to 1 July 2020, with three wrap-up/editing sessions in September 2020, established as a way for me to continue collaborative forms of dancing-writing research during the pandemic. The meetings quickly took a routine format, both for anchorage in a time of uncertainty and due to the difficulty on Zoom of sustaining the messy, spontaneous, polyphonic and lengthy

⁶⁹ *A lot of moving parts VI* was performed by Kai Evans, Alice MacKenzie, Stina Nyberg, Adam Seid Tahir, Alexander Talts, Juliette Uzor and myself accompanied by the recorded music of WATT (Julien Pontvianne, Antonin-Tri Hoang, Jean-Brice Godet, and Jean Dousteysier) and lighting design by Jonatan Winbo, at Moving in November festival in Helsinki, 2-3 November 2019.

⁷⁰ Layout and graphics created by Adam Seid Tahir, Alice MacKenzie, and myself, in the days between the October dancing-writing session and the November performances.

⁷¹ *Coven Press' Covidian Compositional Writing Sessions* participants in 2020 were Season Butler, Peter Mills, Alice MacKenzie, Stephanie McMann, Stina Nyberg, Tilman O'Donnell, Zoë Poluch, Adam Seid Tahir, Eleanor Sikorski, Alexander Talts, Flora Wellesley Wesley, and myself. Graphic design of *The Remything Edition* by CJ Dunn.

brainstorms or riffs that might characterize in-person studio time. We would begin each meeting introducing ourselves by where we are in *splace* (the place we are located plus the imagined or constructed space we inhabit as determined by our current mood and sensations). We would “scribe” note-worthy, remarkable, poetic, or humorous things people said during these introductions and in later discussions into the saved chat. We would then share an *Open Dancing – Open Writing* warmup, typing our Open Writing into the saved chat. We would conclude each meeting with a solid session of *Remything*. *Remything* is a procedure for collective oral storytelling and individual writing from memory of the collectively spun story, created by dancer Eva Mohn.⁷² A full explanation of the Remything procedure as well as its relevance to my research is detailed in ‘A reader’s introduction’ to *The Remything Edition* (Bauer et al., 2020, pp.0-1), signed by Dr. Zinkenstein McPherson with additional editing and proofreading by Don Conley (my and Tilman O’Donnell’s respective Coven Press aliases, created via *Character Description* in the 2019 Coven Press dancing-writing sessions). *The Remything Edition* consists of all of the *Remything* sessions from our meetings. It shows how fiction became an alibi in the research not only for keeping dancing-thinking alive in isolation, but for portraying the increased importance of imagination and the capacity to re-imagine the givens in a time when a lot of day-to-day norms and routines were held in suspense and put into question. As dancing together in the same place was impossible in *Coven Press’ Covidian Composititional Writing Sessions*, the collective imagining and world-making that dancing-thinking and choreography nurture remained.

- *A lot of moving parts VII: Sleeping Giant Dreams* (2020) was the largest group performance created during my research, also within the shortest rehearsal time. Emphasizing the simplicity of choreographic containers to support the complexity of outcomes, I gathered a diversely trained group of seventeen performers.⁷³ Stockholm-based participants of Coven Press were joined by skilled improvisors from various parts of the Stockholm dance community, including many with experience in street dance idioms and other Afrological dance forms that underline the social and the collective. We were unsure how many audience members would be permitted or if the performance would be canceled entirely due to COVID-19, so it was important to me that the performance was for the performers as much as for the audience. With an overall ethos of underlining the pleasure and joy of dancing together, the choreography was driven by simple rules and scores for responding to one another, for example, in three “soul train” crossings dominated by one sense at a time: first creating unison of rhythm or groove (musical sense), then unison of form (visual sense), and then unison of feeling (emotional sense), and other such parameters that cut across different idioms and dance backgrounds to bring people together. In the short rehearsal process we seized several mutually valuable learning opportunities in discussions of what different terms mean in our various contexts, including “groove,” “form,” or “expression,” as well as different uses of the eyes and gaze. In the choreographic scoring I included several phrases or cues culled from *Coven Press’ Covidian Composititional Writing Sessions*. In our wrap-up sessions in September, the 2020 Coven Press members parsed our summer writings into three publishing categories, following the same three categories as with Coven Press in 2019: writing that offers itself to performance scores, to printed text, and to reading aloud. I chose this time to omit the

⁷² as part of her master’s degree project in the New Performative Practices program at the Stockholm University of the Arts Institute of Dance, in which I had the privilege of being a mentor and early gunnea-pig in the development of *Remything*.

⁷³ *A lot of moving parts VII: Sleeping Giant Dreams* was performed by Ingrid Corradini, Sunniva Vikør Egenes, Marvil Iglesias, Alice MacKenzie, Peter Mills, Tilman O’Donnell, Víctor Pérez Armero, Zoë Poluch, Susannah Rickman, Amelis Riquelme Nicoletti, Robin Sabazade, David Schwieler, Hugo Sivermalm, Ellen Söderhult, Adam Seid Tahir, Alexander Talts and myself, with live percussion by Robert Mehmet Ikiz and lighting design by Jonatan Winbo at Dansens Hus in Stockholm, 1-3 October 2020. Further explanation of the casting can be found in the ‘Translator’s Note’ of *Nora the many: a choreo / graphic novel*. (Bauer, 2021, pp.9-26)

potential for redundancy in the sorting of writings between categories. We decided that the *Open Dancing-Open Writing* would be best suited for a listening experience. The scribed *splace* introductions and other fodder in the chat would be culled and voted up/down for use as dance performance scores, and the *Remything* would be printed. The *Open Dancing-Open Writing* was recorded in our last wrap-up session in September, constituting a script for a surreal and disjunct group discussion played at the end of the performance as a voice-over accompanying the live performers' exploration of the "ghosting" score, in which each performer dances with and as the companions and influences that populate their own unique world of embodied references, memories, teachers and ancestors. *The Remything Edition* zine was given to audience members at *A lot of moving parts VII*, along with *News From the Proto Splace* and *A lot of moving parts: book one* and *book two*. Presented in conjunction with my 80% seminar, *A lot of moving parts VII: Sleeping Giant Dreams* was an exposition of my appreciation for the social effects of dancing-together (which could no longer be taken for granted in the isolating conditions of the pandemic) as well as the profoundly collective processes of knowledge production and world-making that take place in dance and choreography.

- *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* (2021) is the most ambitious and developed print exposition of *Sensual Journalism* in my research. It is a culmination of the collective dancing-writing procedures and outcomes from the second half of my research project.⁷⁴ Initiated by a commission from the London-based dance collective called Nora (Stephanie McMann, Eleanor Sikorski, and Flora Wellesley Wesley) that began in August of 2019 and continued over Zoom through 2020 and 2021, expanding to include writings from both *Coven Press* sessions and selected writing from other collaborations in the research (one text from the never-premiered Corpus project *Sensuality Happens* appears in the 'Epitaph' for example, pp.99-100), *Nora the Many* is focused almost entirely on the world-making of dancing together, and the imaginations conjured through ideokinetic and dancing-writing practices. First set in motion by a number of Karinne Keithley Syers' prompts for writing based on bodily images and sensations, the story takes place in and on a giant named Tworden's body in a mythical world of electric children, daydreaming barmaids, cat-narrators, and drive-thru oracles. *Nora the Many* depicts a universe that obeys the laws of dancing-thinking, with an elastic and undetermined perception of scale from micro to macro. Tworden the Giant's emotional states determine the weather and near the end of the book, through a medical examination of Tworden by Dr.Dance as accompanied by an anaesthesia-induced reverie, it is revealed that all of the locations in the story are parts of Tworden's body. Coven Press appears in the novel as a collective *Sensual Journalism* publishing house with rigorous cooperative protocols, nodding to collective forms of ideation and ideal(istic) forms of collaboration. Unfolding in nonlinear spacetime, the story jumps through basement portals to parallel *splaces* where future oracles live in abandoned MacDonald's drive-throughs. In constant calibration of sensation and imagination, characters and scenes born from dancing-writing exercises were developed through emphasis on different felt-senses that factor in dance and choreography: the tactile, the kinetic, the visual, the acoustic, the lighting, the dynamics of speed and timing. Reflecting a distribution of roles typical of the "semi-directive mode of participatory collaboration,"⁷⁵ after two years of co-creating the *Nora the Many* universe, Nora

⁷⁴ *Nora the Many*, commissioned by *Nora* dance company in London, was created by Eleanor Bauer, Stephanie McMann, Eleanor Sikorski, and Flora Wellesley Wesley, culminating in *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* including selected writings from the *Coven Press* dancing-writing sessions of 2019 (participants listed in footnote 68), and *Coven Press' Covidian Composititional Writing Sessions* of Summer 2020 (participants listed in footnote 71), edited by Eleanor Bauer in 2021 and published by Stockholm University of the Arts in the X-Position series.

⁷⁵ This term is coined by sociologist Rudi Laermans in *Moving Together: Theorizing and Making Contemporary Dance*, in the chapter/section 'Co-Creating Contemporary Dance: Paradoxes of the Semi-Directive Mode of Participatory

turned the material over to me to edit and finalize into the narrative form found in the novel. A complete explanation on the writing and editing processes that lead to *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel* can be found in its ‘Translator’s Note.’

- *Nora the Many* (2022) is a film based on *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic novel*.⁷⁶ Originally intended as a screenplay, our dancing-writing collaboration culminated first in a novel as a response to the uncertainty and obstacles of gathering to film together under the continued travel and restrictions and limitations on gathering during the pandemic. Once we completed the novel, Stephanie McMann, Eleanor Sikirski and Flora Wellesley Wesley selected a handful of characters to focus on in a mockumentary-style film where the three performers play several roles. The ‘talking heads’ mode of speaking candidly to the camera and telling stories about the characters are a nod to the oral traditions in which dance histories thrive: in rumors, myths, and legends. The film brought back parts of the writing process (such as character descriptions) that did not make it into the novel. The performers (Stephanie McMann, Eleanor Sikirski and Flora Wellesley Wesley) invented new anecdotes about the by-now-familiar characters in improvised discussions. The relation of the film to the novel constitutes a meta-portrait of how choreography emerges over time in a reiterative, evolving, and dynamic fashion. In this and other ways, the film is like a form of fan fiction of the novel. Nodding to the iterative and reiterative nature of choreographic process, it investigates how the dancing translates to writing (in the novel), back to dancing and performing (in a film) back to writing (in the selection of what to record in voice-over) to the choreographic (in the composition and editing of the film) and then in music with the soundtrack of Zeena Parkins. Parkins worked with different instruments to follow different characters, as well as a mixture of rhythms in phrasing and punctuation to “converse” with the spoken word in the film, as the film is densely populated with speech both on camera and in voice-over. Influenced very much by the tone and dynamics of the dancing footage, the music is a kind of writing from dancing, whereby Parkins instructed certain musicians to record passages based on following a specific dancers’ movement or the rhythm of their speech. These were layered and arranged into sections throughout the film that did not necessarily adhere to the image of the danced or spoken source of the music. In this way, the rhythm of dancing-thinking carries throughout the entire film in sound, even where there is no dancing, and the rhythm of speech may color a dancing section through the music where there is no language. Cycling through different artistic media of thought, *Nora the Many* is a culmination of many insights from *How dance thinks* and procedures from *How dance writes*. It is composed in an effort to create a universe of logics, relations, and ways of storytelling and world-making that carry dancing-thinking and choreographic thinking into media of exposition that may leave a scent, a vibe, a felt-sense of dancing-thinking hanging in the modybinds of the film’s spectators without ever having explicitly to be *about* dance itself.

Collaboration’ (Laermans, 2015, pp.285-309), and refers to typical processes in European contemporary dance companies whereby dancers create material guided by prompts and procedures from a choreographer who then edits and structures it.

⁷⁶ The *Nora the Many* collaborative commission produced *Nora the Many: a choreo | graphic* film; directed, filmed, and performed by Nora members Stephanie McMann, Eleanor Sikorski, and Flora Wellesley Wesley; sound editing and recording by Michael Picknett; film editing by Eleanor Bauer; music by Zeena Parkins.

Inconclusion

Although the above *choreo | graphic outcomes* come last, they are not the end-product of the research. They are a by-product of the research, examples of artworks I have created and co-created by working within the circumscribed concerns and described methodologies. The products of this research as a process of epistemic investigation lie equally in the insights of Part 1: *how dance thinks* and the procedures of translation under Part 2: *How dance writes*, as much as in any of the *choreo | graphic outcomes*. The wider contribution of this research project isn't necessarily either in any finite list of *dancing-thinking* attributes or *dancing-writing* procedures, as they are themselves particular ways of answering the questions of *how dance thinks* and *how dance writes*. I hope for many more qualities of dancing-thinking and processes of dancing-writing to be found by others. I could have chosen to emphasize and deepen different ones or explained these ones differently, as my findings are informed and limited by my own experiences and by my constellation of colleagues. My reflections on these questions will undoubtedly continue to evolve with time. I hope to convey above all the importance of *asking* such questions that prod at the dominant paradigms and assumptions of what thinking is, where and when it happens, and how it is or ought to be made sensible to others.

My offering to the field of artistic research with this project is an invitation for others to continue working with practices that may destabilize the role of written language in relation to aesthetic and embodied experience. The emphasis on practice-based research at my university has afforded me with sustained opportunity and encouragement to dwell in the artistic experiments and practice-based investigations of the questions at stake in my project *choreo | graphy*. Yet, whatever else I have created or published, the fact remains that explaining my way into the academy and explaining my way out of it—in non-fiction writing—is the most widely accepted way to point to where the knowledge lies and to secure its validity as I share the research inquiry and its findings with others. This is a grave and vestigial yet persistent and pervasive norm in the broader academic research field that excludes many inquisitive and serious artists from being considered serious thinkers. The fact that verbal and written articulation in rationally organized and linear arguments is still the most secure way to validate one's research, and that I am encouraged to provide it where it is absent despite the hours of dancing and choreographing that lay hidden in such words, is a problem that I hope some of this work's insights and outcomes can in some way provoke. By choosing to proliferate and publish many texts that don't explain away the research – save perhaps this one – and by publishing no strictly philosophical or scientific papers (though I did start down that path around the halfway-point of my PhD research and chose not to pursue it further), I have instead put the lion's share of my languaging-efforts towards the “other” voice that dancing inhabits, as Katye Coe refers to in *She Dancing*:

(...) the other⁷⁷ that is present in us all, not a separatist voice or an elite one,
or one borne of a class or a race or an order,
but it is still an other voice,
it is a radical feminist voice,
it is an animal and an ancient voice
and this voice gets quieted by monetary power, by capital,
by possessions and by the possessive
by fear and by the corporation

(p.327)

⁷⁷ As footnoted in original text by Katye Coe:

Karen Barad refers to otherness as: “En-tanglements are relations of obligation – being bound to the other – enfolded traces of othering. Othering, the constitution of an ‘Other’, entails an indebtedness to the ‘Other’, who is irreducibly and materially bound to, threaded through, the ‘self’ – a diffraction/dispersion of identity. ‘Other-ness’ is an entangled relation of difference.” 2012, 48.

By dwelling in procedures and publications of dancing-writing and choreography that are sensuous, playful, vulnerable, poetic, fictitious, ecstatic, imaginative, collectively authored, risky, experimental, absurd, humorous, and perhaps even naïve (while well aware of my contexts), I hope the main contribution of this research may be an invitation for all and anyone to continue prodding at the expectations and norms of academic discourse, artistic discourse, and ultimately, the ways that thought and knowledge are recognized. It is essential to me that dancing is understood as a crucial and vital way of making sense of the world, even when it finds no adequate speech or writing. By asking what sorts of language might satisfy the sense dancing makes and looking for ways to invite those who might not already consider themselves dance-literate to think along with and through dancing, I hope to offer the wider world a deeper appreciation for dancing-thinking. As I turn my attention toward future inquiries, I am impassioned to consider how broader understanding of and concern for *how dance thinks* can contribute to more inclusive approaches to general education and social organization that currently favor silence and stillness as conditions for learning, working, or living together. I conclude not by seeking closure or gratification that I have succeeded in the tasks I have set out to do, but with a wish for more rigorous rebellion, more sensual journalism, more synesthetic sympathy, or whatever other notions, potions, translation efforts, and tender arguments may help not only dancing have her way with words, but help dancing itself, dancing-together, and the making of dances together be recognized as a form of understanding that is rich and irreplaceable in its uniquely powerful synthesis of intelligences, senses, and sensibilities.

Eleanor Bauer, 2022

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