From Model to Module
- a move towards generative choreography

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Akademisk avhandling som med tillstånd från Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan framlägges till offentlig granskning för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen tisdagen den 20 maj 2014 kl 10.00 i E1 Lindstedtvägen 3, Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan.
Acknowledgements

First I would like to thank retired professor Nils Elnlund and former vice chancellor Efva Lilja whose collaboration and pro-active mind set on artistic research enabled this doctoral project. I would like to thank the department CSC MID at KTH and specifically so professor Leif Handberg for his help with MODUL 2 in the reactor hall R1, and professor Kristina Höök for her scrutiny of this thesis. I would like to thank professor Leena Rouhiainen at the Helsinki Theatre Academy (TEAK) for her insightful reading and comments at the final seminar. Thanks also to all the staff at DOCH and Uniarts, and specifically the Dance Department at DOCH: Those who have followed the project from up close: professor Lena Hammargren, professor Cecilia Roos, and Camilla Damkjaer but also my other colleagues there: Jefta Van Dinther, Anna Efraimsson, Frédérique Gies, Kristine Slettevold and Josefine Wikström. Thanks as well to my fellow PhD’s at DOCH/ Uniarts: Annika Notér Hoshidar, Mette Ingvartsen, Malin Arnell, Paz Rojo, Mårten Spångberg (2008-2009) and Jonathan Priest, and to my previous supervisors Cristina Caprioli and Amanda Stegglér. Thank you all for having followed the MODUL project and for providing inspiration through your works and feedback for mine. Additionally I would like to thank all the students I have met during the years of research.

To all of the performers that have participated in the MODULs: the work would be nothing without you. For the more specific collaborations for MODUL 6, I’d like to thank the Prague based group ME-SA: Karolína Hejnová, Martina Hajdyla Lacová and Andrea Opavská. Also to Stephanie Maher at Ponderosa (Stolzenhagen, DE) and Carmen Mehnert at Hellerau (Dresden, DE) – thanks for having us over. Thanks also to Cullberg Ballet for collaboration and support. Specifically to the former artistic director and now colleague at DOCH: Anna Grip.

To Svärmen – Linda Adami, Ulrika Berg (f), Dan Johansson and Tilman O’Donnell – for having provided the MODUL project and me with talent, creativity, hard work, critical scrutiny and the funniest and most inspiring working periods in my career!

To my supervisors: Leif Dahlberg that has followed me throughout the entire project and whose stunning culture, critical sharpness, insisting thoroughness and supportive camaraderie have made this thesis work not only possible but pleasurable. Chrysa Parkinson – her insights in teaching, practice, dance and choreography have been absolutely crucial. But even more, her intricate and intriguing eloquence has continuously forced me to look closer, think further and press forward.

Finally, my gratitude goes to my parents Alf and Kerstin Ölme, my brothers Anders and Ola Ölme and their families. To my friends who support me both in and outside of work.
Abstract

The thesis engages in Choreography and Dance Technique by delineating the concepts and practices that the artistic research project MODUL has generated. A modular method of choreographing is articulated. The MODUL method of choreography starts by making a topographical movement analysis of the context that the work engages with. This analysis results in an identification of the different agencies at work within the context approached. They are considered as Choreographic Agents and as elements of the modular assemblage. The choreographic act then performed consists of a re-articulation of the relations between the different elements. The MODUL method links movement practice and art production as the topographical movement analysis is also applied to, and conceptualised through, the body. In terms of dance technique the MODUL method works with the same topographical movement analysis to explore bodily functionalities as Choreographic Agents. The technique is called Body-Self Attunement and aims at tuning the self, understood as the symbolic body, with the biological body. Body-Self Attunement does not try to unify the symbolic body and the biological body but affirms the gap as generative. The term Generative Choreography is coined in order to emphasise the performative aspect of choreography that is not defined by what it is, but what it does.
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INTRODUCTION

This introduction to the doctoral thesis describes the basis of the artistic research project. It does so by addressing the corner stones: research questions; artistic research; methods; materials; theoretical framework; and stating potential relevance that the work might have in the different fields that it engages with. The last part of the introduction describes briefly each chapter of the thesis.

The doctoral research project From Model to Module concerns my evolving approach to choreography in the field of contemporary dance. After a career as a dancer, I started, at the turn of the millennium, to make work on my own and to teach. Before doing so I had been involved in several more or less collective productions and the transition to assume responsibility for a project was quite smooth as the works I have continued doing ever since have, to different extents, been collaborative. For this reason I avoid calling myself choreographer since I oppose the distinction between dancer and choreographer. In my view, everyone engaged in the work, work with dance and choreography and my role is as initiator and leader of the project. I do not want to escape authority nor authorship, but that does not imply that it is I who decide the choreography and the dancers that dance it. The people I collaborate with are in this thesis called artists or performers and it should be noted that not all of them have an education in dance.

The practical research has been carried out through performance production and teaching situations in the form of classes, workshops, seminars and lectures. The first presentation of practical work within the doctoral project was called MODUL and it came to give the title to the entire series of presentations, stretching from MODUL 1 to MODUL 6. Even more, it evolved into a perspective to look at choreography and became the conceptual basis that formed the modular method of my research, which is the reason for the title of this thesis – From Model to Module.

With hindsight I believe that my first attempt at a modular format took place in 2007, the year before I began the PhD studies, with the production On Three. At the time, I was interested in the triptych as an expression of multiplicitous logic and of how a whole is constructed out of its parts. Posing this question led me to consider how the final product – the performance – related to its own process of production. To deconstruct the oneness of the object of a performance, I transposed the publishing format of the DVD to a performance format. On a DVD one finds, next to the actual film, the trailer, deleted scenes, interviews, director’s cut, making of and so on – a manifoldness representing different aspects of one thing.
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Poster from *On Three* by Lucas Racasse.

This work sparked my interest in modular structures, and led to the development of a modular working method based on multiplicity and assemblage. The modular method forms assemblages that can emerge as an entity without concealing its divisibility and the heterogeneity of the different units that forms the assemblage.

To think through modularity has presented me with a whole new perspective on choreography and has led me to the formulation of the modular method for choreographing that emerged through the 6 works.
I. Research Questions

The two questions that initiated the entire MODUL project were:

1. How should the relation between dance technique and choreography be conceived and described today? What terms should be used, what agents are involved, what institutional structures are determining the production, and in particular what are the conceptions of technique and choreography?
2. How are process and product in choreographic production related to each other, how does different agents navigate their way between the two?

These are the two broad questions that have been explored both through my artistic practice, together with collaborating artists, and in the critical reflection on this work. The questions do not have simple answers and have in turn served as generators of bodies of work, problems and sometimes more questions for further research. I understand artistic practice as a specific form of knowledge production and that artistic research engages in theory formation of such a knowledge production. This understanding is articulated throughout this thesis. The most substantial outcome of the research is the developed artistic practices. The term practice here signifies both dance technique and performance. The practices will be conceptualised throughout this thesis to address both researchers and practitioners in the field of dance and choreography and academic researchers from other fields.

The two research questions address one underlying presumption of linearity since in the Western staged dance tradition technique training precedes choreography as process does product. Questioning such linear development was what made me ask the questions in the first place. In the field of contemporary dance, usually the mode of production would be to find a venue for premier, and set a date. Apply for the funding and then schedule backwards from the premier date to set the process. To get the funding one needs an articulate idea of what one wants to do and even though one can try to relate loosely to it afterwards, once the creation starts, those words have been put on paper and they matter. The creative process runs the risk of being reduced to a manufacturing process. To enter academic research seemed to propose a different mode of production that would give space for other sorts of processes and writings, which were not produced to sell or promote the work in one way or another. In relation to the underlying problem of the two research questions, this other mode of production could entail a different understanding of the relation between technique and choreography, where technique is not just a means for an end. Art making can develop techniques, which means that one does not need to first learn the
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...technique. Or rather: the technique one needs to learn is how to proceed within one’s work. Now that the research is done I can see that the research context definitely has provided different procedures and modes of production from what I had worked in previously. These conditions have had great impact on my artistic practice. This change in practice was generated by the research context and should be regarded as a result of the research.

Since the second research question concerns the of relation process/product I avoid the term performance when discussing the MODULs and instead refer to them as works, studies, presentations or simply by name – MODUL.

II. Artistic Research

Artistic Research is a relatively new player within academic research, but by now well established and I will neither give an exhaustive description of the field nor justify its raison d’être. Nevertheless, as I started the PhD project I was preoccupied by trying to understand what it meant for me to engage in artistic research. I was wondering what was demanded of me and I was a bit worried about a potential academisation of my art practice, without knowing what such an academisation would consist in. During the project I have become more and more assured of the importance of artistic research without having come any closer to a definition. In my understanding artistic research is primarily procedural, in the sense that it is defined in and through its own procedures and methods. The role of method in artistic research has been quite thoroughly discussed and analyzed and I will, again, not account for all of it here, but roughly situate myself within the field.¹

In his article ”New Start: Artistic Research in the Finnish Theatre Academy”, Finnish professor Esa Kirkkopelto states that ”Artistic research is research carried out in an art institute (...)”.² To engage in artistic research one needs to engage with the institutions that enable it. No matter how research-like one’s artistic practice is, simply exercising that practice will not turn it into artistic research. This is not specific for artistic research since any research needs to be validated through some form of institution, which does not mean that institutions are the only places where knowledge is produced. In the case of this doctoral project, the institutions involved are University of Dance and Circus (DOCH) and Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), both in Stockholm. During my doctoral studies I have realized that my fear of academisation presupposed that the other institutions involved in art making, such as the art market or funding organizations, would not interfere with the art practice,

¹ For a good overview see: Hannula, Mika, Suoranta, Juha & Vadén, Tere, Artistic research: theories, methods and practices, Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, 2005.
which is not the case. I have not experienced more regulations – or institutional choreography – by academia than from the art field.

If we accept that the simple exercising of one’s art practice is not enough to turn it into artistic research and that it needs the formal framework of a research institution, one can even argue that the actual artwork is not the main goal of artistic research. Henk Borgdorff points this out by first identifying three forms of research from the Frascati Manual: basic research, applied research and experimental development and claiming that:

In the eyes of some, artistic research should have more to do with the experimental development of artefacts (works of art) than with research in the empathetic sense. This is a misunderstanding. Although artistic research certainly tries to enrich our world with new artefacts and new artistic practices, it additionally seeks to gain a fundamental understanding of our world and ourselves as embodied in those artworks and practices.

Henk Borgdorff

Borgdorff delineates a separation between art production and artistic research by an additional goal. This additional goal is not outside the works (or practices) of art, but it places the artwork in a different context than in the art market.

Sharing Borgdorff’s epistemological concern, Kirkkopolto makes a note (in the aforementioned article) on how artistic research serves a different purpose than the development of the skills or art of the practitioner since artistic research has the goal of theory formation. This does not mean that there are no artworks resulting from the research, but that it is not its only goal. Kirkkopolto also points out a difference between art research (being research done on art) and artistic research (being done through art). By doing so he shows how scientific research on art looks at art through the supposition of an existing reality, whereas “Artistic research is the research of aisthesis by means of art, or the rearticulating and critique of our conceptions of reality by means of appealing to the practices and evidence of art.” The epistemological approach here differs from scientific research, as artistic research is not trying to prove its point through re-constructible methods and empirical

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3 The Frascati Manual is a document setting forth the methodology for collecting statistics about research and development. The Manual was prepared and published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2002.

4 Where are we today? The State of the Art in Artistic Research, paper presentation by Henk Borgdorff at DOCH 11th of March 2009.

5 Ibid.
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evidence. Nonetheless, artistic research articulates something as it generates questions towards reality and thus can generate new realities.

The lack of definite results is not a weakness but a strength, which means that the critique towards artistic research as not being able to produce solid results barks up the wrong tree, since that was never the intention. The strength lies instead in its potential for changes in reality by questioning reality’s solidity.

When it comes to the research field of choreography within artistic research it is still at such an early stage of its development and there is no current research field to address or position myself towards. It comes down to a handful of individuals that are active in the interface of the field of choreography and academia. There are adjacent research in fields such as Social Choreography, Dance Interpretation and Dance Education but the research is rarely done by an artist and with choreographic work as its result, though there are exceptions. The research that I have come across in Scandinavia has mostly been performed from the perspective of the performer. When choreography is addressed the research is not done by the choreographer but by someone researching on the work of one or several choreographers and the research does not result in choreographic work. What can be seen now is that the field is growing as there are more and more artists within the field of choreography that are getting involved in doctoral studies and I am sure that within five to ten years there will be a new, and larger field to address. There is also a quite large field within contemporary choreography that border to academic research by discursive practices and efforts to publish and present work through other media than performance. Examples of artists or groups of artists that have done so are: Eleanor Bauer (US/BE), Deuffert/Plischke (DE) Jonathan Burrows (UK), Jerome Bel (FR), Boris Charmatz (FR), Everybodyds (DE), Erin Manning (US), Vera Mantero (PT), My Choreography, Xavier Le Roy (FR/DE), Eszter Salamon (HR/DE), Christine De Smedt (BE), Mårten Spångberg (SE), Ana Vujanović (RS/DE). This list is a selection and could be

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6 The only choreographer in Sweden with Swedish doctoral degree is Åsa Unander-Scharin: 2008 Luleå University of Technology, Sweden.
7 Since my research does not engage specifically with these fields I will not present a cohesive account of the influential researchers in the respective fields and instead limit myself to mentioning the ones that I have come across: Social Choreography: Gabrielle Brandstetter (DE), Ana Vujanović (RS), Bojana Cvejić (RS), Michael Kliën (AT), Bojana Kunst (SI), Joe Kelleher (UK). In the other two fields, and here I will not separate them since many of them overlap and fuse but share the perspective of the practitioner: Leena Rouhiainen (FI), Jaana Parviainen (FI), Susanne Ravn (DK) and at my home institution DOCH: Cecilie Roos (SE) and Annika Notér Hoshidar (SE).
8 At DOCH/ Uniarts there are now four PhD candidates in choreography: Malin Arnell, Mette Ingvartsen, Jontathan Priest and Paz Rojo. Another two will start in autumn 2014.
9 Everybodyds was conceived during a meeting in December 2005 following the interest to implement Open Source as an artistic strategy in the performing arts. See www.everybodystoolbox.net. My
much longer. It does not aim to outline the field but to give readers, from other fields than choreography, a chance to investigate further.

III. Performative Research

In her book *The Transformative Power of Performance: a new aesthetics*, German theatre scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte analyses how the term *performative* has proposed a new aesthetics since it gives the event of the artwork the same importance as the actual object. Performance art, not having any other object than its own presentation, serves as example to describe the implications of such an aesthetic.

Fischer-Lichte points out how John L. Austin coined the neologism *performative* at the same time as the performative turn took place in the arts.\(^{10}\) Austin showed how performative utterances could not be proven as true or false, but instead make themselves matter by their own utterance. Such as: “I hereby sentence you to death”, as well as quotidian utterances such as: “See you tomorrow at ten”. Many times, to give substance to the more formal utterances, as in a court or a church, the utterance is accompanied by an action: hitting a club or giving a ring. Speech is given a performative power as it accomplishes a state of affairs in the world instead of merely describing it. Fischer-Lichte transposes, or shall I say brings back, the linguistic speech act into performance art.\(^{11}\)

Fischer-Lichte asks the question whether it is possible to judge a performative act as successful or not. In the church, as the words are uttered and the action performed the performative can be claimed as felicitous, but what about the performative in art? Fischer-Lichte writes: “Unlike the institutional conditions of marriage ceremony or baptism, the institutions of art simply do not provide any definitive criteria for reaching a confident verdict on the success or failure of a performance shaped by audience intervention.” (2008:26)

I will use Fischer-Lichte’s statement on art institution’s incapacity to produce indubitable conclusions as an example of how artistic research differs from the positivist tradition of scientific research, both quantitative and qualitative. It is also through this perspective that I understand what Brad Haseman calls Performative Research. In his article “A Manifesto for Performative Research”, Haseman proposes the term as “an alternative to the qualitative and quantitative paradigms, by insisting on different approaches to designing, conducting and reporting research.” (2006:98) Performative Research emphasises how

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*Choreography* was a group of MA students at DOCH under the direction of Mårten Spångberg. The artists are still active but not under that name.

\(^{10}\) In his lecture series “How to do Things with Words” held at Harvard University in 1955.

\(^{11}\) See also Hantdemann, Dorothea von. *How to do things with art: what performativity means in art*, JRP Ringier, Zürich, 2010.
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practice leads the research. The practice is not the subject of the research, but its method. Haseman says that many researchers within practice-led research “tend to ‘dive in’, to commence practice to see what emerges” and that they “acknowledge that what emerges is individualistic and idiosyncratic.” (2006:101) This should not be understood to imply that there is no interest in dissemination or that findings would only be of interest for the researcher. Instead it shows the necessity for a different understanding of how knowledge production can take place without “constraints of narrow problem setting and rigid methodological requirements at the outset of a project.” (2006:101)

Another characteristic of the new paradigm that Haseman proposes is that the outcome of the research is not necessarily presented in text. The changes the artistic practice goes through as it is affected by the context of artistic research, is a result of the research. In that sense the work of art that is produced through artistic research is an expression of the research as long as it let’s itself change in the process. I’m sympathetic to this notion, and my artistic practice has indeed been very affected by the research context. Since my own project passes through the scientific institution of KTH, what I will be examined on is this thesis. Therefore I want to stress the importance of how this thesis is not the only result of the research and how the artworks keep producing knowledge in various and undetermined ways, as we speak. I also believe that we are still in an early stage of seeing what Performative Research can bring as alternative to the written thesis, as form of report on its results.

Performance art is its own genre without any necessary connection to choreography, but the term performativity has grown increasingly important in the field of staged arts the last 10-15 years. Picking up influences from both the linguistic field and semiotics (with thinkers like Ferdinand de Saussure, Walter Benjamin, JL Austin, Roland Barthes and Judith Butler) and from anthropology and sociology (Michel de Certeau and Erving Goffman) it has been used to address identity politics and the theatrical act as such. In the work with MODUL I have considered the performative as a question of what the work does, instead of what it is. Throughout the descriptions of the different MODULs we will encounter several attempts of performative actions, sometimes unconsciously uttered, sometimes consciously muffled.

I want to emphasise that I am not opposing Performative Research to Scientific Research but as an alternative to representationalism and its rigid understanding of knowledge.12 The approach that I advocate exists within scientific research as well and representationalism is not avoided by simple adhesion to Performative Research, but the

12 In epistemology, representationalism signifies the belief that our consciousness, through perception, represents reality to us. In Fine arts it is the practice of depicting reality.
performative paradigm is still an attempt to present an alternative to representationalism. In her book *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Karen Barad explains how “Unlike representationalism, which positions us above or outside the world we allegedly merely reflect on, a performative account insists on understanding thinking, observing, and theorizing as practices of engagement with, and as part of, the world in which we have our being.” (2007:133) This approach can be found as well in more contemporary scientific research environments and the representationalist research paradigm that Barad critiques is the traditional scientific research that “believes that scientific knowledge accurately reflects physical reality” (2007:86).

The difference between representationalist and performative can be applied to staged arts as well, as Fischer-Lichte already showed us. Such a change of paradigm is however not an easy task. The representationalist view is deeply rooted in contemporary western thought in spite of many attempts to overcome it. Although the performative turn is dated to the middle of the 20th century, the struggle is on-going and we can truly question if the turn has so far only been articulated but not yet performed. André Lepecki describes well the force of representationalism:

(...) in order to think the relation between choreography, representation and subjectivity, one needs to understand representation not only as that which is specific to the mimetic (that is, to what is properly theatrical to theatre) but to consider it as an ontohistorical force, a power that in the West has entrapped subjectivity within a series of isomorphic equivalences.

Lepecki (2006:46)

We can see how the shift in paradigm can affect, and put at stake, the western definition of knowledge and subjectivity. Barad relates this worldview to anthropocentrism and in her book *Art Beyond Representation*, Barbara Bolt expresses this well as she describes representationalism as a “system of thought that fixes the world as an object and resource for human subjects. As Mode of thought that prescribes all that is known, it orders the world and predetermines what can be thought.” (2004:12-13)

Although my own efforts stay within art production, it is my humble wish to partake in such a re-articulation of the human subject, which is how the subtitle of this thesis – a move towards generative choreography – is to be understood.
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IV. Terminological Introduction

There are a few terms I would like to introduce at this early stage, since they frequently return, both explicitly and implicitly, throughout the thesis, but before doing so I want to clarify my use of we in the thesis. When describing the working processes of the MODULs the we is used to underline the collaborative working mode I have attempted to create. When referring to what is written in this thesis the we refers to the communication between author and reader and the two need not to agree.

The first two terms I want to introduce are: Verfremdung, Diffraction, and Intra-Action. Verfremdung is the German term that Bertolt Brecht used to describe his dramatic method. In English it can be translated to alienation, enstrangement or defamiliarization. The Russian literary critic Viktor Shklovsky, who coined the term, describes the activity of enstranging as the over-ruling purpose of all art. Shklovsky describes how perceptions become habitual and automatic and how such an automatization turns objects into symbols: “We do not see them, we merely recognize them by their primary characteristics” (1990:5). It is to reverse this falling in oblivion of the real that Shklovsky argues for enstrangement.

And so, in order to return sensation to our limbs, in order to make us feel objects, to make a stone feel stony, man has been given the tool of art. The purpose of art, then, is to lead us to knowledge of a thing through the organ of sight instead of recognition. By “enstranging” objects and complicating form, the device of art makes perception long and “laborious”. The perceptual process in art has a purpose all its own and ought to be extended to the fullest. Art is a mean of experiencing the process of creativity. The artifact itself is quite unimportant. Shklovsky (1990:6)

This form of ungrounding definition has been crucial throughout the entire doctoral research and I trust artistic research to be able to contribute extensively in the development of a formation of an epistemology based on such an approach. It is an approach similar to divergent thinking that, unlike convergent thinking, does not aim to answer a question with one single, supposedly correct, answer, but strives to suspend judgement and accept multiple answers. As Shklovsky describes the form of thinking that art can provide as enstrangement he speaks of thinking in image, which, later on in the thesis, I will call Visual Thinking.13

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13 Not related to Rudolf Arnheim’s articulations and published book with that same name.
Diffraction and Intra-Action are related. Diffraction is a term from physics and describes what happens to a wave as it runs through a vent or into an obstacle. Donna Haraway has put it to use as a critical device to replace reflection.

Diffraction does not produce "the same" displaced, as reflection and refraction do. Diffraction is a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection, or reproduction. Diffraction pattern does not map where differences appear, but rather maps where the effects of difference appear. Haraway (2004:70)

In the research I have used Diffraction as a knowledge-producing concept that shows affinity with the aforementioned notion of divergent thinking – Diffraction generates diversity. Karen Barad has made great use of Haraway's notion of Diffraction, and for her it is a way to question the difference of subject and object that brings her to introduce the neologism Intra-Action that "signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies" (2007:33). Barad differentiates Intra-Action from interaction that presupposes the existence of separate agencies that then interact with each other. Barad's concept of Intra-Action "recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through, their intra-action."(Ibid) We can see how the concept of Intra-Action questions causality and Barad herself states that it calls for the "reconceptualization of other core philosophical elements such as space, time, matter, dynamics, agency structure, subjectivity, objectivity, knowing, intentionality (...)" (ibid) 

The three terms Verfremdung, Diffraction and Intra-Action serve as key concepts throughout the thesis, as they have shown themselves beneficial to describe the artistic methods that have been put to use in the practical work with the MODULs. In some cases they have not just been discursive but also even been instrumental in content development of the work.

There are two more terms that need introduction. The first is dispositif. It is a French and Italian term that translates to English as apparatus, but in the contemporary choreographic discourse it is the French word that is often used. In his essay "What is an Apparatus?" Giorgio Agamben gives a word book definition of the term: "A technological meaning: The way in which the parts of a machine or of a mechanism and, by extension, the mechanism itself are arranged" or "The set of means arranged in conformity with a plan."
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(2009:7) Agamben refers to Michel Foucault’s development of the term. The term entered the field of contemporary choreography in the 90s and is mostly referred to as a way to describe the choreographic agency of a context, and specifically so, that of a conventional theatre setting. Such a setting can refer to the architectural design of both a traditional proscenium stage as we see it in older theatres, and the more contemporary stage room – the black box – that contains both performance space and seats within its four black walls. But it also refers to discursive elements at work around the theatre setting.

In this thesis the term should be understood as the media through which choreography communicates in a performance situation. It is not the only media and in dance we can of course consider the body as media, but since the body is partly the media in any human activity I would like to be more precise. In this thesis the term choreography does not restrain itself to making dance but instead it is the setting forth of a dispositif. What the two research questions address is how to develop techniques to engage with that media. Also Gilles Deleuze has written an essay called "What is a dispositif?" (Deleuze 1992) and in Deleuze’s work dispositif relates to the institution and in continuation to the idea of assemblage. It is this relation that the MODular approach explores both in relation to the body and to the theatre dispositif.

This relation between body and institution brings me to the last term to introduce: subjectivation. It refers to the Intra-Action of human and apparatus as a subjectivation process. We can describe it first in the very basic way of how a person is subjectified by different apparatuses and the most obvious example that Agamben (2009:16) uses is how the mobile phone forms our behaviour. On a more abstract level Deleuze notes how the Self is “a process of individuation” (1992: 161) through “lines of subjectification” (ibid) and that the forces that form such lines do not need not be as material as in Agamben’s example. When Deleuze describes his understanding of Foucault’s use of the term he notes on how the social apparatus of subjectivation starts in the Athenian city as the first place “that invented the line of force, which runs through the rivalry of free men” and how the “man who commands free men has to be seen as a master of himself.” (1992:161) This can allow us to understand subjectivation as something taking place within a person, which is in line with what the Italian philosopher Roberto Esposito develops, in an article with the same name: “The Dispositive of the Person.” (Esposito 2012) Esposito states that today’s definition of

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14 Agamben describes in “What is an Apparatus? ” how Foucault used the term in the 1970s while developing his theories on governmentality. He says that the term appeared with Foucault in the 60s as positivité borrowed from Hyppolite who in turn used it from Hegel. (Agamben 2009:1-6)
person is that becomes a person "if and only if he masters the more properly animal part of his nature."(2012:22) Esposito is not in favour of this definition, nor am I, and we shall see the profound implications that this understanding of the relation between dispositif and subjectivation have throughout the thesis as I advocate an affirmation of animality rather than its subordination and to insert such a body image into the theatre dispositif through Becoming instead of representation.

V. Method

In the aforementioned article, Haseman makes an attempt to characterise the key differences between quantitative, qualitative and performative research by assigning them different forms of method: quantitative research works with scientific method, qualitative research works with multi-method and performative research works with multi-method led by practice (2006:8).\footnote{Haseman does not elaborate further what he means by “scientific method” but quotes Thomas Schwandt describing scientific method as "the activity or operation of expressing something as a quantity or amount (...)".\textsuperscript{15} Schwandt, Thomas, A. Dictionary of Qualitative Research, Sage, Thousand Oaks, California 2001. (p.215)} In the case of the MODUL project this description fits very well. The MODUL method came about through a choreographic idea and throughout the entire project modularity has meant both method and material. Within the MODULs several methods of practicing and creating choreography have been used and they will be teased out in the following descriptions of each work.

The working procedure in the MODUL research has a resemblance to the feedback loop of Action Research: planning – acting – observing – reflecting. However, since each MODUL had its specific context it is never possible to continue within the same loop. When, after a period of reflecting on a previous MODUL, I planned for a new one, I could not apply a revised plan to the new context since it presented itself in a whole new topography. Each MODUL formed singular procedures, so even if some methods were used in more than one MODUL they always evolved differently since it developed in close relation to the context and the contexts changed. In this sense, each occasion requested its singular methods, which makes it difficult to give a linear description of their developments. The MODUL method that links the six works together consisted in making method, content and context fuse.

Throughout the descriptions of the six MODULs in the following chapter we will look closer at how the method evolved but I will already here give a brief introduction. A module is an assemblage of units that can be re-articulated to form new wholes. There is a limited input with an indefinite amount of outputs. The modular method of choreography that the research
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has produced starts by defining the units involved in the *dispositif* through a topographical movement analysis. To be able to engage with the *dispositif* I need to understand how it works. What units exist in the module and what forces guide their movement? The choreographic work is then a re-articulation of the relations of the involved units. In this thesis I relate to those units as Choreographic Items or Choreographic Agents. Throughout the MODULs I have tried to make the modular method work on many different levels, as a fractal where a system repeats itself no matter the scale. This means that in the process, the work on a detail of a specific bodily movement was approached with the same methodological principals as when larger productions matters were dealt with, as for example choosing where to perform and with whom. In both cases and regardless of the size of the system, be it institutional or molecular, it was approached through a topographical movement analysis. To apply the modular method in such a way meant a possible articulation of the relation between technique and choreography and a way to navigate between process and product, as the two research questions called for. The movement analysis gave a topographical view of the context and allowed me to make an informed decision of which aspects of that context I wanted to engage with. In this sense the MODUL method has shown itself helpful in dealing with the original research questions. It shows how dance technique, in the form of movement analysis and kinaesthetic awareness, can be applied to a choreographic whole and by the same token how a working process can be seen as its own product.

Through the MODUL method several choreographic sub-methods and techniques emerged. Just as the modular method, they will be described in detail throughout the thesis but are shortly introduced here. In MODUL 1 the Inclusive Method appeared, which meant that different existing materials from previous works of others and my own were absorbed into the work and re-articulated through it. Using the terminology of the MODUL method just described, it meant that we included previous works as Choreographic Items of the current MODUL. In the following MODULs the Inclusive Method continued as a curatorial aspect in the casting process, since by inviting someone to work with me I would also invite previous or on-going works of theirs (with the exception of MODUL 4 and MODUL 5 that were commissions where I did not chose the cast).

The second method that emerged in MODUL 1 and that evolved throughout the following MODULs was Visual Thinking that I introduced above in relation to *Verfremdung*. Visual Thinking came about through two courses I was attending while working with MODUL 1 and as mentioned above it was used in relation to Diffraction as generator of difference. I will return to explain this in detail in the description of MODUL 1. I used Visual Thinking to explore a different form of communication between spectator and performer than the one I
had myself used until then and that I mostly see in dance performances. It is a question of using the communication between performer and spectator as a generative source rather than regarding it as transmission of information. This form of communication will be referred to as Diffracted Communication. The method Visual Thinking was used in MODUL 1 and MODUL 2 and developed in MODUL 3, MODUL 4 and MODUL 6 under the name Score Method.

To construct the Diffracted Communication, two performing techniques were developed: Diffraction and Becoming Animal. I call them techniques of De-Subjectivation and they concern a specific performing skill in which the performer tries to unground his or her definition of what is performed. To escape representation and communication based on transmission of existing information, the performer avoids identification with his or her own actions.

I want to emphasise how the mentioned methods and techniques did not develop linearly. Practice is mostly messier than it appears in the textual aftermath. While working the methods and techniques overlapped, changed place and were mistaken for each other. To assure the epistemological development and theory formation, there have continuously been oral and written presentations of the research in different fora such as conferences, academic seminars and lectures.\textsuperscript{16} Additionally, the different teaching situations have provided both laboratory situations to develop the work and the need to articulate the ideas in a graspable way for the students. The most important output is the presentations of the six MODULs. In terms of dissemination this means that the work has already been spread in numerous ways: 42 different performers have been involved in one or several MODULs; there have been 14 presentations with a total of about 1 000 spectators and the teaching situations during the 6 years of the studies have involved around 500 students.

\textbf{VI. Material}

The materials used in the research are performances, workshops, literature, video lectures, articles and a few interviews.\textsuperscript{17} Additionally I have followed courses in methodology, performativity, dramaturgy, social choreography, visual culture, technology and


\textsuperscript{17} To deepen my understanding of the development of Release Technique in New York I have interviewed Chrysa Parkinson and Irene Hultman in the fall of 2013. In the winter 2008 I had a conversation with Steve Paxton that is not specifically quoted in the thesis but still served my insights in his technical work as it is described in chapter 2: \textit{Dance Technique}. 

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phenomenology, and contemporary dance history. All of the above served as filters in my reflections on the artistic work, regardless of its form. The six MODULs are material for this written thesis. For the practical research they were results and expressions of the research but not its material. The making of the work is entwined with the reflection on it, to a point where a reflection on the work is already a new work. Therefore I cannot say that I have studied my own work, but the works are studies in themselves. The research is done through the work and not on it. The documentation I have from the different works has been done for the purpose of using it in this thesis. To some extent I am self-critical for not having studied further the documentations of the MODULs but it has simply not been a productive way for me to proceed. I want to keep a certain distance to the work to not have too much of a preconceived idea of what it is supposed to be. To not become too specific in my intentions of what the work should propose, but still being precise about my own reasons for doing the work in the way that I am. This deliberate impreciseness can be described by an expression that American choreographer Deborah Hay uses, where she turns around the firing command Ready – Aim – Fire and instead proposes Ready – Fire – Aim. I realise that this approach can be questioned in an academic research context, but my belief is that such an approach can be generative and seen as a strength and contribution from artistic research to research in the larger sense.

VII. Role of Theory
Next to the art practice there has been a reading and writing practice. The theoretical concepts that I have chosen to engage with have worked on two levels. At times they have provided me with a vocabulary to express something I was already involved in. At other times they have sparked specific interests and pointed out new directions for the on-going work of practical research. Theoretical concepts have generated practices and practices have been theoretically conceptualised. Practice and theory have been entangled and the shared interest of their mutual wrestling is change. Concepts that stayed with me did not merely provide terminology to explain the artistic practices, but also changed them. Similarly, I expect that what I do with these theories does something to them. In this sense I’m not applying them in the practical work, or in this thesis, as symbols to express something already known. I make use of the concepts for my own purpose in the artistic work without claiming a proper usage.

This form of amateurism is something I practice not only in relation to theory but also to my own work, as we could see in how I avoided studying documentations of previous MODULs before making a new one. Some of the movement techniques that I will address further on have sparked my interest but I have never been a loyal practitioner. Since
my main goal is to forward my own work I have many times kept a curious distance that will allow me to get inspired by someone’s work without ever coming close its “real” definition. Instead of excelling in an existing knowledge I venture into an unknown, allowing new knowledge to appear. This method clearly has its drawbacks, running the risk of re-inventing the wheel, as the saying goes, or of projecting too much of my own purposes onto a concept making me miss the point. It can be described through techniques that was developed in MODUL 6. It came about while working on the difference between Mirror – Reflection – Diffraction, and it will be explained further below. Working on picking up movement between us while, at the same time avoiding the trap of simply copying, we would keep the object of observation – a co-performer’s movement – in peripheral view, making sure we were never quite sure of what it was we were deciphering. My trust in this approach is not based on the belief of my individual capacity to ”make difference”, but instead in how the inclusion of chance operation in the work can make things appear that I would never have been able to think of in advance.

Concepts from different traditions have been used without any specific link between them. They have been chosen on the basis of me noticing that something happens with my work as I use them. We can see a modular approach also in the theoretical framework where different items are picked out of their context to form a new context. My choreographic task in writing this thesis consists of trying to lay bare the new context that came about and to subtend my artistic practice in text, which is not an innocent procedure and the reflective writing involved in the artistic research is one of the practices that has affected my art making in the process. In her lecture “A Materialist Concept of Plasticity”, French philosopher Catherine Malabou encourages the students to apply an affirmative method in their theoretical endeavours by saying: ”Whatever doctrine that opens a path, follow it!”18 This is the way that I have approached the various sources: following the movement.

The theoretical and philosophical texts that I have turned to are all within continental philosophy and more specifically within phenomenology and post-structuralism. The phenomenological line stretches from Heidegger’s work on the term techne to Maxine Sheets-Johnstone’s dealing with Constructive Phenomenology in her effort to give place for self-movement in philosophy. It was a course at the Media Technology department at CSC –

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18 Public open lecture for the students and faculty of the European Graduate School EGS Media and Communication Studies department program Saas-Fee Switzerland Europe. 2012. The quote is from 1’ 01’” and the lecture is found on-line at www.egs.edu.
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that has housed this doctoral project – in Phenomenology and Technology that pointed me in Heidegger's direction – a direction that turned out to be of great importance in the articulation of a performative approach to dance technique. My reading of the phenomenological tradition has included other philosophers as well – especially Maurice Merleau-Ponty – but they are rarely referred to in this thesis, and have instead worked more in the background. This also concerns American pragmatism, with thinkers like William James, John Dewey and Albert Whitehead. They would all have a lot to add to the topic but are not discussed in this thesis. The post-structuralism platform has been provided by some of its key figures such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. The contemporary philosophers in that tradition are – without assigning them any specific ism – Giorgio Agamben, Donna Haraway, Judith Butler, Catherine Malabou, Elizabeth Grosz and Karen Barad. When it comes to performance studies I have mostly moved within the American tradition with known scholars such as Susan Leigh Foster, Sally Banas, Peggy Phelan and more recently André Lepecki, but also German performance theorists Erika Fischer-Lichte and Gerald Siegmund. In cognitive science I have read Antonio Damasio, Rodolfo Llinas and Daniel Stern.

In terms of relevance towards these two theoretical fields of cognitive science and philosophy, I’m not addressing specifically practitioners of those fields, just as the mentioned authors did not specifically address practitioners of choreography. I can only hope that my writings can be useful for them as theirs were for me.

VIII. Relevance and Implications of this Thesis

I believe that this thesis, and the artistic practice it is based on, has relevance for several different fields although the main target is artistic research through contemporary choreography where the thesis can bring new insights by proposing a generative perspective on choreography. Such an approach to choreography is already active among some practitioners. In her doctoral thesis, German choreographer Petra Sabisch proposes to rather than "de-limiting the field of choreography to a definition of what choreography is – definition which then functions as prescriptive exclusion of that which choreography can also be (...)" one can instead "stretch ontology to the capacity of choreography, which is expressed in the practical question: what can choreography do?" (2011:8). This question of what a work does rather than what it is means to think of the artwork as something that constitutes reality instead of merely depicting it, thus being performative rather than representational. This is specifically addressed by proposing other perspectives on the relation between process and product, which carry implications for our understanding of what a work of art is within the
field of performing arts and especially contemporary dance.

For the research field of Media Technology the thesis proposes the theatre dispositif as media for choreography and techniques of engaging with that media to enable a performative turn, or at least persist in the possibility of a future turn. Further, in engaging with the philosophical concept techne (in Heidegger) the thesis challenges the unreflected use of technology in media technology. Likewise, in exploring the body as media, the thesis investigates the first communication media known to man.

In relation to dance education the thesis can offer new insights into what technique can mean. To bring in technique’s relation to choreography and performance skills can further the development of undoing the hierarchical binary structures between choreographer/dancer, teacher/student and performer/spectator.

To the field of dance and performance studies I the thesis provides an example of theorizing from inside.

IX. Disposition
The first chapter presents descriptions of the six MODULs. Apart from describing the specificity of each MODUL, I will show how concepts, techniques and methods have developed throughout the different works. Accompanying the textual descriptions there are video documentations of each MODUL in the attached DVD.

The second chapter presents a historical background of dance technique, starting with the experiences I had in my own education in the early 90s. This personal history is then put in relation to a performative approach to dance technique, drawing upon the emergence of the so-called post modern dance in New York City in the 60s. By relating to techniques that emerged during – or in the tradition of – that era I will single out a few elements that have led me to my articulation of dance technique through what I call Body-Self Attunement. The technical activity of Body-Self Attunement is an alternative to the Body-Mind Split and shows how the body can generate knowledge by tuning different inherent capacities.

The third chapter, Rasmus Technique, explicates the technological development in my own work, both while teaching and making work. I present some class descriptions from the last 7 years and analyse how they relate to the technical elements that were singled out in chapter two. I then describe a few movement meditations to show how my understanding of movement can generate dance technique. Together with the movement meditations I propose three exercises as they appear in my teaching today. The textual descriptions of these exercises are accompanied by video documentation on the attached DVD.
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The fourth chapter, *Functionality Without Function*, extends on my influences from Chinese Martial Arts and show how they have generated movement concepts by proposing functional movement and the usage of the body as weapon. These movement concepts are then collided with a representationalist understanding of the human body. This section is entitled *Smoothing the Vitruvian Man* and elaborates further my deconstruction of Leonardo Da Vinci’s drawing *Vitruvian Man* that was carried out in *MODUL 1* and then pursued in several ways throughout the following *MODULs*. *Smoothing the Vitruvian Man* and the aforementioned Body-Self Attunement share the aim of generating a different understanding of the dancing body than what the representationalist tradition has been able to provide.

In chapter five I dig deeper in the philosophical and theoretical elements of my research. It starts out by presenting different perspectives on the Self in order to show the technical aspect in Body-Self Attunement. To understand how the Self can be seen as an inherent technical aspect in the human ontology I turn to Heidegger’s concept of *techne*. The chapter concludes on a more contemporary technological perspective through French philosopher Catherine Malabou’s concept of *plasticity*.

*Spectating* is the title of the sixth chapter in which I speak of the relation the *MODULs* have had towards the spectator and show what performing techniques developed out of that relation together with the concepts of *Verfremdung*, Diffraction and Becoming Animal. The chapter presents what sort of perspective on the theatre *dispositif* that those concepts can generate.

The concluding chapter starts by describing in detail each scene of the last practical work *MODUL 6* and then terminates the thesis by summarizing the previous chapters and the presented concepts, methods and techniques that have developed.
1. MODUL

1.1 MODUL 1 – Using what is at Hand

Presentation: 7-9th of May 2009
Venue: Moderna Dansteatern c/o Färgfabriken.
Duration: 3h
Participants: Ulrika Berg, Marcus Doverud, Jean-Louis Huhta (music), André Kaliff, Malin Stattin and Rasmus Ölme.

![Images of people throwing papers in the air.](image)


What I first set out to do was a clean choreographic exercise consisting in creating a modular system of set movement material (i.e. choreography in its traditional meaning) to be combined in an improvisational structure. My aim was to propose a flex stable relation between choreography and improvisation; two terms often misinterpreted as each other's opposite. In this first work the module was defined as follows: A finite number of units of input, reconfigured into a potentially
infinite number of output. Later on, different understandings of what a module can be, and how it can be applied as method, revealed themselves through the work.

1.1.2 Three Courses and Visual Thinking
While researching for a fitting modular structure to use, I was following a course in visual culture, which led me to look for visual representations of such structures. A few conference stickers randomly attached to my notebook (See picture. Photo: Rasmus Ölme) caught my eye and I decided to use it as choreographic structure. Decoding how the stickers would translate into a choreographic system I realized that it was already way too complex for me to move freely within. Each sticker symbolized a movement phrase, and the intersections between stickers were the places where I could shift from one phrase to another. Two of the stickers have the same size, but different colours and version of the text. Then there are the smaller black ones, which in the picture are quite symmetrically placed, but since there is one both at the top and at the bottom they create a sort of double mirroring. On one hand we can imagine a mirror between the two red stickers, but that should have put the second black on top as well. If the mirror would instead cut through the entire shape, the black ones are still not mirroring each other. To create movement phrases that correspond to this structure I would need to be able to do them backwards, and the mirror side. The structure, no matter how randomly it had been put together, was too complex to serve as improvisational structure. In terms of modularity there was too much input to generate an abundance of output. Having had the idea of departing from an image I turned to other images that I had been looking at during the course.

One of the images I had been working on was Leonardo Da Vinci’s drawing *Vitruvian Man*. It appeared as a reference to me since the two positions depicted kept showing up in my movement material. What first appeared to me as a mere coincidence has later shown to be of great importance in the research.
The two positions in the image create each one a figure: a circle and a square. Looking at it I thought that the triangle, as basic shape, was missing which brought to mind a rule in the Japanese poetry form Haiku. Next to the amount of syllables in each strophe, a well-conceived Haiku should mention, or rather insinuate, the shapes of a square, a triangle and a circle. This led me to Gibon Sengai’s painting *Universe* showing those three shapes.\(^3\)

I decided to use Sengai’s painting as modular structure and to combine each form with the corresponding bodily shape from Da Vinci’s drawing. I thus had two postures given by the Vitruvian Man to depart from while creating the movement material. Since Da Vinci’s drawing had no triangle I decided to let the body itself in the picture, regardless of shape, represent the triangle and a more complex image of the body. In Sengai’s picture the circle represents infinity, which in

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1. Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519), Italian polymath.
3. In his book *Sengai: The Zen of Ink and Paper* (Shambhala Publications, Incorporated, 1971) Daisetz Teitarō makes a similar remark (p.36-37): “The circle represents the infinite, and the infinite is at the basis of all beings. But the infinite in itself is formless. We humans endowed with senses and intellect demand tangible forms. Hence a triangle.”
western culture mostly is represented through the symbol ∞ that I found more useful to represent the sort of movement I was working on. Yet, its two-dimensionality was unsatisfactory and made me turn to the more complex three-dimensional figures of the Klein bottle and the Möbius Strip.


This movement from the circle to a figure that has depth and turns itself outside in can serve as a first example of my critique towards the idealised image of the body that the Vitruvian Man represents. Da Vinci’s image shows no movement, but instead positions. It refers to geometrical shapes and proportions that squares the multifaceted biological body and turns it into a symbol. I wanted to deconstruct the (normative) image of man framed inside perfect geometrical shapes and contrast it with my own moving body. It was a first step in what has become a theme throughout the entire PhD project: to advocate and stage a less representational body. As a colleague of mine, Sebastian Lingserus said: “To turn the body into a tool of production instead of a tool for representation.”

We will return to the role that the deconstruction of Da Vinci’s drawing plays in chapter 4 Functionality Without Function.

The second course that played an important role in my work with these images was a course in research methods at the KTH School of Architecture. We were asked to present our work in a portfolio format that led me to create a form of live performed Power Point presentation. This presentation later found its way into the performance itself, as a sort of bonus material. I considered it as a live performed document of my process. A performative format that is both a document of the performance and a performance in itself. To perform a documentation of a process,

4 Panel discussion “DansKonceptDans” at the studio/stage WELD in Stockholm on the 9th of March 2013.
as a part of the performance itself fitted perfectly my research question on the relation between process and product. What I did was to use some of the pictures above together with others, and draw upon them as a way to explicate how these images were related to each other, to the movements performed and to the modular method. I performed the interaction with the images live, sitting at a desk with a camera mounted above my head and the video was projected on a screen in front of me as you can see in the picture below. The title I gave the scene – *From A4 to Human Scale* – indicates my concerns regarding the actual moving three-dimensional body and its possible representation. To use this form of presentation relates to how I understand the “thinking in images” as referred to in *Introduction* through Viktor Shklovsky and called Visual Thinking. In the descriptions of the following MODULs we shall see how it develops further and transforms to adjacent methods. At this moment I would like to invite you to watch the video documentation of MODUL 1. The section *From A4 to Human Scale* is found at 25’55” in the video documentation of MODUL 1 and goes on until 43’.

![Picture of a performance](image)

Presentation at Färgfabriken 2009-05-08. The live version of *From A4 to Human Scale* performed, as the risotto is prepared. Photo: Håkan Larsson

The third course was an individual course in contemporary dance history, focusing on the emergence of the post modern dance in New York in the 60s. I felt a clear influence from that tradition but a lack of knowledge in both the actual works and the development of the surrounding art forms, especially music and visual art. Reading about the Judson Church movement, minimalism, fluxus, conceptual art and happenings influenced a lot the setting forth of MODUL 1. It also led me to include a pedestrian score that became the opening section of the whole evening. The score was published in the first issue of Swedish Dance History under the title *Score to a Pedestrian Lecture.*
1.1.3 Score to a Pedestrian Lecture

Measure the space in steps without manipulating the steps from an ordinary walking step. Time the travel. Divide the time with the amount of steps to find a bpm (beats per minute) that will pace the dance (with music or not). Choose a movement phrase you know, preferably something you have learnt in class. If not, use repertory known to you (found movements). Perform the phrase in one straight line, wall to wall, (this might demand some manipulation to the material both in directions and length) the same line you just walked across the room, then walk back. Repeat the phrase, but this time advance your starting point a few steps into the space. You choose yourself the number of steps you want to push your starting line, depending of the size of the space and what you find suiting. The phrase will now reach beyond the other wall and force you to turn it back and continue until completion of the phrase. The end of the phrase should then appear with the same distance from the other wall as the number of steps you chose to push your starting line. Once again walk back and next time push your starting line again with the same number of steps. Continue this operation until you completed the travel through the space, i.e. until you’re walking the distance you first “danced” and vice versa. Parallel to this operation you will do another. Instead of repeating the phrase exactly the number of times it will take you to perform the first assignment I score you to little by little dissolve the phrase and the borders between dancing and walking. For this, use walking on all four and crawling (stomach on the floor). This second task, the dissolution, will culminate half way through the first task, i.e. when your starting point corresponds with the centre of the space (or as central as it gets). At this point the difference between the walking and the “dancing” should be invisible. Only the performer her/himself needs to keep account of it to be able to pursue the first task without loosing track. After this culmination the second task fades out so that the last performed phrase is completely entire/undissolved and shows clearly the shift in space that has been performed. From first starting to dance towards the second wall and walk back, it shifts into walking to the second wall and dancing back.

This section is found in the video documentation of MODUL 1 at about 3’40” and it finishes at 17’.
1.1.4 Inclusive Method

During the process of making MODUL 1 a few practical matters and a couple of coincidences led to insights that radically changed my approach to making work. Changes that led to an expanded understanding of what it could mean to work in a modular format and that made me give the title MODUL to all the presentations of the practical research. The beginning of May, as spring finally arrives in Stockholm, is a difficult time to get people indoors. Keeping this in mind while trying to think of alternative ways of visiting and viewing a dance performance, the organiser (Modern Dance Theatre, today MDT) and I, decided to turn the performance into a more durational event. We would prepare and serve dinner to the audience in the performance space and to conceptualize and perform this culinary part Marcus Doverud joined the project. Marcus was the first one to join the original cast that consisted of the composer Jean- Louis Huhta and myself. Then Ulrika Berg and Malin Stattin asked me to assist them in their work with the short film VERT and we decided to make a work exchange: I would work with them on VERT and they would participate in MODUL 1 as performers. VERT was also presented in the MODUL 1 evening. Then André Kaliff, mime student at Stockholm Academy of Dramatic Arts asked to do an internship and was included into the group as well and we were now five performers instead of one. This including process also expanded into including materials that we already shared as content for this work. Malin Stattin, Ulrika Berg and

Presentation at Färgfabriken 2009-05-08. Ulrika Berg and Malin Stattin filtering movement material from classes through the two positions of the Vitruvian Man. Photo Håkan Larsson.
MODUL 1

André Kaliff had all taken classes with me and remembered some movement material from them. Using Ulrika Berg and Malin Stattin’s memories of existing material we constructed a movement phrase. I then assigned each one of them one of the positions from the Vitruvian Man as a form of filter to improvise the movement phrase through. Since the two shapes had shown up frequently in my movement material I wanted to see how the movement material that was not specifically put together in relation to the two shapes would reshape itself as it was approached through those shapes.

André Kaliff was still a student and partaking as an intern and we decided to perform our teacher/student relation. Each performance I would make a movement phrase by recombining movements he already knew and teach it to him as a part of the performance. This transfer of movement material was done without talking to each other.

Presentation at Färgfabriken 2009-05-08. André Kaliff performing the just learned movement phrase in front of Rasmus Ölme and spectators. Photo Håkan Larsson

Marcus Doverud and I had collaborated in a theatre production in which we learned wrestling so he and I performed a wrestling competition. This reformulation of existing material can be understood in relation to the original idea of using a modular system as a way to recombine existing elements into a new resulting assemblage. We recycled existing materials and bastardised them in relation to
their original function, as for example the wrestling training from a theatre play became a performance in itself or the portfolio assignment of a course became a performance within the performance it was describing. This including and recycling method shifted my perspectives on what it means to choreograph and to produce work, as the modular method went from being a choreographic exercise to an approach towards the entire production process.

1.1.5 Choreographic Agents

Next to the actual movement material there are a lot of different materials – though sometimes immaterial, just like movement material – involved. These materials that have agency in the entire ecology of setting forth a dispositif are what I refer to as Choreographic Agents or Items of the modular structure. The choreographic work re-articulates the relations between the Items. In MODUL 1 the modular Items whose agency was recognized were: Färgfabriken, the Modern Dance Theatre, spring weather, the casting of collaborators involving our previous common projects, Vitruvian Man, three course dinner and the PhD courses in method, postmodern dance and visual culture. Some of the Items were already given as for example spring weather and the renovations of
MODUL 1

Moderna Dansteatern that led them to have a C/o season. Other items such as the dinner, the
collaborators and the Vitruvian Man were selected items that could have been left out. A context is
insatiable and there are innumerable potential items: the history of the site, the social context of the
neighbourhood and so on. The first choreographic act is thus to choose which items to engage with.
The second choreographic act is how to arrange them in relation to each other, forming a new
assemblage than the one they were singled out from.

We combined the small systems that each of the above mentioned items contain, into
the large system of our evening. The choreographic structure I started through my explanation of
my ideas on walking before performing the pedestrian score. We would then move through the
entire procedure as it was laid out in From A4 to Human Scale. Inside that step-by-step development
we inserted the three dishes of the dinner and our recycled materials such as the wrestling scene
and VERT. In this sense the performance score was quite linear, following both a form a pedagogical
development and the beginning middle end structure of a three-course dinner, except for the fact
that there was no dessert. The ending scene was all of us, performers and spectators, having dinner
together.

Presentation at Färgfabriken 2009-05-08. The last dish, served straight on the table that earlier in the evening
served as projection screen for VERT and From A4 to Human Scale. Photo: Håkan Larsson.
1.2 MODUL 2 – a Curatorial Aspect of Choreography

Presentation: 26-27th of February 2010
Venue: R1
Duration: 1h 40
Participants: Linda Adami, Max Cuccaro, Magnus Dovärn, Mattias Fransson, Ludde Hagberg, Jean-Louis Huhta (music), Linnéa Martinsson (music), Mathias Wiik, Krööt Juraak, Märten Spångberg, Kajsa Sandström, Goro Tronsmo, Kristiina Viiala, Rasmus Ölme

From MODUL 2 handout program:

Art becomes art when you call it art. Good art redefines what art is. Good art has a researching element in it. Art with a researching element in it becomes artistic research when performed in a research environment. Good artistic research redefines what artistic research is.

Process documentation: Replicants of Rasmus Olme in papier maché. Photo: Rasmus Olme
MODUL 2

MODUL 2 was a grappling with the question: what is artistic research? To describe the topic and mark my position, at the time, towards artistic research I re-iterated statements on art and artistic research into the manifesto above.¹ The topic was approached with the newfound methodological insights on modularity from MODUL 1.

Two units that had showed up in MODUL 1 – the space and the casting – were conceptually developed in MODUL 2. In MODUL 1 there was an interest to present the work in another space than a theatre, and performing in an exposition hall for contemporary art did suite my purposes but in MODUL 2 the space was specifically chosen for its relation to the topic of research. The including casting method from MODUL 1 was also conceptually developed since it was specific practices that were included into MODUL 2 due to their research-like character.

A third concept that was picked up from the previous MODUL was the work with Visual Thinking.

1.2.1 Space and Cast

The space chosen for MODUL 2 was R1, an old and since long disused reactor hall situated 25 meter below ground and located between KTH and DOCH, whose collaboration made my PhD studies possible.² Through its cliché-like image of a research environment and its geographical position in between the schools, R1 presented itself as a perfect site to address artistic research (in a slightly ironic way). In order to understand what this new context of artistic research meant for my work I started to look around me for colleagues that, in my opinion, were involved in research, but outside academia, and wondered in what ways their work was now different from mine. Following the manifesto above, they were not legitimate artistic researchers. Could the placing of their work in the cliché-like research environment and inside a PhD project be a performative act that would legitimise their work as artistic research? Clearly, I do not have the mandate to perform such a legitimisation formally, but performatively yes. To illustrate this I handed them the most stereotypical representation of the scientist – a white lab coat. The performative statement would be something like this: "I hereby pronounce your work as artistic research!" Even though the participants were not asking to get an academic approval or to have their work stamped as legitimate research, I had chosen all the artists for the investigatory and experimental direction their work showed. I am not going into the reasons why each participant was chosen but what was different this time from MODUL 1, in which the participants found their way into the project by chance, the

¹ Using among others the artist Donald Judd’s statement “It is art cause I say it is.” and Finnish Professor Esa Karkkoppelo’s definition artistic research as expressed in his article already quoted.
² Virtual visit here: www.viewat.org/?i=en&sec=ppn&id_pn=1734&rc=1
cast of MODUL 2, was carefully curated. The reason that I think of the casting process as curatorial is because I did not engage with the different practices that the participants proposed. I did not invite the artists to perform my work. I had chosen them for specific reasons but did not interfere with how they wanted to present their work. I will not describe all the different contributions from the invited artists here and refer instead to the video documentation.

1.2.3 Visual Thinking Developed

Next to the curatorial aspect that was the greater part of my own contribution to MODUL 2, I did propose some content myself and participated as performer. As a continuation of the work with Visual Thinking, Max Cuccaro and I wanted to look closer at how images could form multifaceted communication. In From A4 to Human Scale I had investigated a form of mediation of the work that was not the work itself and not a verbal or textual explanation. This time we wanted to present symbolically charged images without dealing responsibly with their meaning in a narrative or dramaturgical sense. This idea also came as an inspiration from the space itself since it is visually very striking.

For example, one of the actions we performed was that Cuccaro painted me black in front of a white sheet. The sheet was then turned black, and I washed the paint off. Our interest in that action was to transfer from white-white, black-white, black-black and finally white-black, as a visual interest in foreground and background. Obviously the action of painting someone black is full of different connotations but we decided not to take that into consideration but to view it as an abstract action. To work irresponsibly with imagery was liberating and proposed a form communication with the spectator that is not based on transmitting a message. To leave representationalism, the first step is for me, both as author and performer, to let go of representation. Surely, representation is always taking place but as medium of that representation I can relate to it in different ways. In this sense, it should be emphasised that the Diffracted Communication is not just taking place between performer and spectator, but within both of them as a way of engaging with the work. I recall having touched on this topic already in MODUL 1 in the wrestling scene with Marcus Doverud. We were both uncomfortable with the sort of macho representation the wrestling produced but we decided to not base our judgement on that representation and instead consider it as a way

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3 The exceptions to the rule were Magnus Dovårn who came as internship, just like André Kaliff had done in MODUL 1 and Goro Tronsmo and Mathias Wili who came in through their collaboration with to of the invited artists Linda Adami and Ludde Hagberg.
to stay consequent with our principle of recycling existing materials. For Max Cuccaro and me, there were reasons why we chose one image and not another but we did not worry about

![Image](image.jpg)

Presentation at R1 2010-02-26. Rasmus Ölme in Foreground/Background experiment. Photo: Amanda Stegler

communicating them and to assess the quality of the action by means of transmission as in the typical “Can you read me?” or “Do you copy?” That communication works by interpretations and thus involves generative misunderstandings that form new originals instead of bad copies may be nothing new within critical theory and contemporary art, but unfortunately it still needs to be addressed and developed in staged arts in general, where the narrative of communicated meanings still prevails. In such staged versions of dance in its western
representationalist tradition – movement is either viewed as abstract and “pure” or as vehicle of meaning rather than a performative action in itself.

This form of communication became increasingly important in the following MODULs. To propose such a mode of communication in relation to the subject of artistic research that I was wrestling with in MODUL 2 made sense to me. It implies a form of knowledge production that differs from the positivist tradition as it proposes the form of thinking in images that I relate to verfremdung and divergent thinking as described in Introduction. Artistic research cannot empirically prove facts using certified methods and verifiable evidence. Instead of creating knowledge that is supposed to present a shared objective and general platform, an artistic performative approach produces singular experiences. To aim at general objective knowledge in an artwork is, in my eyes, a waste of both aesthetic and financial resources.

1.2.3 Dissolving Body
To continue my exploration of alternative representations of the body, Max Cuccaro and I made a full body cast of me and then constructed replicants of me in papier maché. There was a lot of handiwork involved. During all the practical craftwork we discussed our ideas on what to do with the sculptures once they were done. In this sense there were no rehearsals, only preparations.

Process documentation. Max Cuccaro and replicant of Rasmus Olme. Photo Rasmus Olme
One of the image-actions that Max and I performed was a continuation of the deconstruction of the *Vitruvian Man* that I had worked on in *MODUL 1*. Max is a painter and very familiar with the proportions of the body that Da Vinci is figuring out and representing in his drawing. We started out with Max marking, on me (on the white protective jumpsuit I was wearing) proportional lines that one uses in drawing. I then started to move on the floor and Max would continue marking geometrical representations of my movement, on me and on the floor. I moved towards a table where one of the papier maché sculptures were placed and Max continued to mark proportions on it. We then suited up in costumes that looked like a mix of surgeons and butchers and started to cut up the body using all sorts of tools. We had filled the body with small plastic bags containing liquids resembling body liquids. As we pierced the bags with the tools and kept cleaning the body with wet rags the liquids dissolved the papier maché and the body we tried to investigate disintegrated in front of our eyes, as well as the spectators'. I wanted to point to the discrepancy of visual representations of the body and the biological (ordered) chaos that one meets as one opens the body up.

We have all seen – at least those of us who could bear to watch – the difference of the clean images used of bodies in anatomy class and how little they resemble images of actual surgery. While working with the images of Sengai and Da Vinci in *MODUL 1* I had replaced the circle with the image of the Möbius strip and the Klein bottle and the moving body in space deconstructed its two-dimensional geometric representation. In this image-action we went from the moving body represented in spatial directions into the insides of the body as a way to dissolve bodily representation. The two-dimensional paper representation was chewed into a body (*papier maché* is French for chewed paper) that dissolved in the effort of trying to analyse it.

I invite you to watch the video documentation *Dissolving Body*.

**1.2.4 Kaleidoscopic Visuals**

We had R1 at our disposal for two weeks and the participants came and went as they pleased. The day before the first performance we all met up to agree on a structure for the performance. We decided on splitting up the audience in eight groups and to place each group in different areas in the space. Linda Adami who performed a hostess would shift the groups around so that they visited the different spots, allowing them to witness different actions all the time. Some of the performers had chosen to do a loop, which meant that all the different groups saw the same thing. Others presented a linear *A-Z* performance that meant that no one
in the audience saw it in its entire form. Since all the groups started out in different places, the
spectators all witnessed different actions and at different moments. This form of scattered
structure meant that there was no real unity in the presentation. The kaleidoscopic
differentiation of each spectator’s experience was built into the work and in that sense the
Diffracted Communication that I refer to as Visual Thinking was also at work in the overall
structure. The only things that united the different actions were the white lab-coats, my
curatorial intentions and the shared space and time of the event.
1.3 MODUL 3 – Choreography and Score

Presentation: 19th of August 2010
Venue: KulturhusTaket
Duration: 3h
Participants: Ulrika Berg, Francois Brice, Karin Bähler Lavér (music) Marcus Doverud (music), Magnus Dovärn, Jannike Grut, Lea Grut- Meiling, Ludde Hagberg, Martin Hagrot (music), Jean-Louis Huhta (music), Linnéa Martinsson, Julian Murray (music), Toumas Oujala (music), Olle Strandberg, Goro Tronsmo, Niklas Valenti, Nils Pyk (music), Rasmus Ölme

MODUL 3 continued the work with the two modular units of space and casting/curating. The development of the Visual Thinking as form of communication continued too, as the use of score from MODUL 1 was methodologically developed.
1.3.1 Casting/Curating

In MODUL 3 the casting procedure took another step away from my intentions as author. In MODUL 1 it was the Inclusive Method that brought the cast together. In MODUL 2 specific practices had been curated into the work as the participants were chosen in relation to their current interests. In MODUL 3 I was proposing the material, in form of the scoring task, and in order to counterbalance this determined input with a less determined casting procedure I invited everyone who had participated in the previous two works. If someone could not participate, or did not want to, they could choose someone to replace them.¹ In MODUL 1 we had recovered existing materials and re-arranged them into a new context. In MODUL 2 it was not existing material, but material in the making; on-going processes by different artists and the different materials were not rearranged to compose a coherent evening. All the proposals co-existed simultaneously without dramaturgical or compositional relations. In MODUL 3 the creation of material was again different. Similarly to MODUL 1 it was a form of recycling since the performers were using existing songs as a base for their work (see below section The Task), but this time I had given a protocol of how to engage with that existing material, which I had not done in MODUL 2. Next to my intervention of providing the protocol (which is a score of some sort as well) I did not interfere at all with the participants work. Everyone worked on their own and showed up on the evening of the presentation.

1.3.2 Space

The rooftop terrace of Kulturhuset in Stockholm is where MODUL 3 took place. The big glass building, the square in front of it, the round-about with the glass obelisk and the five skyscrapers across the square is an emblematic scenery, and as close to an urban site one can come in Stockholm. Kulturhuset was opened between 1971-74 and was built to link the national bank and the city theatre. A decision that in today’s culture politics looks almost like a prediction. The city wanted to make an effort to fend off the commercial forces ruling the city centre, but today it houses life style shops. My first associations to the rooftop terrace were concert and club nights with an urban skyline. These associations led to a few decisions on the conceptual part of the production. I wanted to have live music and a relation to pop/rock music.

¹ Just as the other times there were exceptions to the rule. François Brice was invited through the inclusive method of work exchange since he proposed me to assist him in his work. Then there was Jannike Grut and her daughter Lea Grut- Melling. They had visited MODUL 1 and then contacted me to say that they would gladly participate in the work if there was a chance. They went from spectators to performers.
1.3.3 Score

I had several reasons to develop the scoring method that I had touched upon in the pedestrian score of MODUL 1. I understood it as a continuation of the Visual Thinking of thinking in images but also as a modular structure in itself: a set of specific input that produced multiple outputs; a material that generates new material. I also had a performative intention with the score. In MODUL 1 the performative question regarded the use of a choreographic idea transposed to a production format and the recycling of existing materials into a new context. MODUL 2 asked the question "What is artistic research?" The question of MODUL 3 was: "Can choreography and dance be separated (without avoiding dance)?" As I had started to acknowledge different items with choreographic agency entangled with my own intentions, I had left the idea of choreography being the skill of making movements and composing them into a piece. Instead I was considering a larger context of the entire production process. As my definition of choreography expanded, it simultaneously became more vague. Choreography can engage in curating, production design, dramaturgy and image making and is divorced from dancing by simply not dancing. But how could choreography be reformulated and made visible within dancing? Could I set up a procedure that revealed choreography in dance without it disappearing into dance?

If we think about choreography as structure, the most obvious way to make it visible is to show clear lines in space through movements performed in unison, or other readable structure such as canon or counterpoint strategies. This was not what I was looking for. If the score is regarded as a choreographic material that generates material, choreography is not a structure but a set of ideas that produce new materials. But what does choreography look like then? It is not the score since the purpose of score is to generate choreographies and not to depict one. To lure choreography out from its hiding place and get a glimpse of it I set up an empirical metaphor. I was going to collide dance with music in order to see if choreography would appear in its rubble.

In an interview, Arno – the by now legendary Belgian rock star – says he always composes his music in the conventional rock-12 structure (8 bars verse, 4 bars refrain). I was intrigued by the fact that such a simple structure still presents an infinite number of expressions and saw a similarity to the modular method in relation to input and output. The simplicity of the rock-12-structure is recognisable to everyone who has grown up listening to

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2 As I say that the works asked the mentioned questions, I should remark that this does not mean that the questions were expressed as such in the work or communicated to the spectators. Even more, it is possible that it wasn’t clear to me at the time.

3 I heard Arno saying this in an interview on Belgian TV.
western pop/rock. Since I had my memories of pop/rock concerts from the roof terrace, the space and the score task was now aligned, as I asked the participants to use a pop/rock song of their choice and turn it into choreography.

1.3.4 The Task

Here is the task as it was presented to the participants:

1. **Chose a pop/rock song that you like. Maximum length 4 minutes.**
2. **Consider its composition (intro, verse, refrain, bridge, outro, tempo).**
3. **Consider its tune and melody. Minor or major.**
4. **Consider the lyrics. What meaning does it carry? What is it about and in what kind of language is it written.**
5. **Translate all the above to movement.**

Your choreography will be performed on stage in front of the band playing another music than the one you created your choreography from. If you want/need to hear your own music you can
use headphones and MP3 player, but I prefer you do not. There will be a clock to watch to have an idea of duration. The choreography does not travel in space. Imagine that the place you have at your disposition is like the place a singer has in front of a group, approximately one square meter. I want you to move on the parts were there are lyrics. You do not have to stand still in the instrumental parts, but focus on the lyrics. It is the lyrics in the song that become your dance/your score. The text is replaced by dance. I will answer any questions you may have, but yes, this is your assignment.

As you can see, the task description does not use the term score but instead uses the term choreography. There were several choreographic items at work at the same time within the song: the compositional structure; the affective tune and the form of language it is expressed through; and the lyrics in form of text. It was a way to pick the modular format of a song and consider the inherent choreographic units. To use the spot usually dedicated to the singer of a band was intended to allude both to the concert dispositif and to the textual side of choreography as danced language.

1.3.5 Choreographic Structures – a Different Collision

Next to the score, the cast and the space there were the other units to choreograph. One of them was the music. Jean-Louis Huhta invited the band Munnen to play and re-mixed them live. Even though the (dancing) performer took the place of the singer, the conventional disposition of a band playing in front of an audience was not completely respected. This was not something I had planned beforehand, but as the band set up they instinctively faced a diagonal front, as if they were also performing for Jean-Louis who was mixing live from the side of the stage. Since the band knew there would be performers in front of them, I suppose they redirected to leave space for the performer to be the one facing the audience. Similar to MODUL 1, we wanted to create an event that was not just about the performed material but to create a larger context. We made an arrangement with the restaurant at the terrace to have a meal included in the price of the ticket. We were nine performers and Marcus Doverud, who this time proposed a Support Act with Toumas Oujala. We arranged it all into three sets where Marcus and Toumas would start each set with their Support Act that consisted of musical interventions with the purpose to support the evening. As the performance was about to start I learned something new about the MODUL method.

Working with the MODUL method I had gained insights on the choreographic perspective of modes of production and in MODUL 1 and MODUL 2 I had been working with very flexible production conditions that could easily and swiftly adjust in relation to the artistic process. In MODUL 1 Färgfabriken showed great trust in our self-organisation. The organiser, Moderna Dansteatern, was at the time doing a c/o season, relocating their productions around the city, as their venue at Skeppsholmen was being renovated. They had developed a very mobile and dynamic mode of production. In MODUL 2, we had the possibility to occupy R1 day and night for more than two full weeks. But in MODUL 3, at Kulturhuset, the institutional framework presented an obstacle and we only managed to negotiate two half days of work on site.

Kulturhuset is an organisational labyrinth with several separate departments. We were working with the event department, but also had to deal with the restaurant on the terrace, the ticket sales, the technical department and the security department. The different departments did not form a whole, except for the fact that they share physical space. As the saying goes: the left hand did not know what the right hand was doing. The form and function of the different parts were not clear to me, and accordingly, trying to modulate them was
impossible. How can one shape a new whole out of the parts, as the modular method strived for, when the parts are unknown? I was not aware of how different choreographic units within the institution were operating and even the original construction that I walked into seemed not to know the limits of its own reach nor the context in which it existed. We did not have time to meet everyone involved to coordinate and there were a lot of confusions that clearly showed that the MODUL method is one of process rather than fast delivery. Continuing the bodily metaphors one could say that the MODUL should be carried out in human scale. The monumental choreography of a large institution demands that what is proposed fits into the existing mode of production. Trying to fit a different sort of piece into the machinery was maybe not a failure since things happened anyway but it was clear that to be able to mobilise an entire structure and to align all the different systems engaged in one action, one needs time and partners that are on board. In that sense the contextual choreography of MODUL 3 failed completely. On the other hand it showed a perfect example of how a collision could make choreography reveal itself. The clash between the different interests revealed both the specificity of the sort of choreography that MODUL was articulating and the inherent choreographic structure of the institution. The performative act of MODUL 3 did make choreography show its face, but not in the place where I had planned to. This shows a good example of that choreography can do in two ways. On one hand what the institutional choreography did to MODUL 3 and on the other hand how MODUL 3 made that same institutional choreography visible.

Back to what happened as the performance was about to start. Since alcohol was served at the bar, the security department started checking IDs of the younger spectators. On top of that everyone needed a stamp on their arm and a food ticket. All of a sudden the spectators were primed to our performance in a way that looked more as if we were going to incarcerate them. I wanted to have a self-organising system that allowed people to roam around and pay attention in the way they wanted to, but the control mechanism at the entrance did not align with my intentions. I felt an urge to gather everyone and give a warmer welcome and explain how the evening was going to unfold as a form of comforting act, but I managed to restrain myself from doing so and the result was interesting. The beginning of the event was quite chaotic. People didn’t know when or where the performing was going to take place and there was unease in the air. However as the evening went on the crowd seemed to enjoy the lack of structure and to master their own experience in a different way than is usually the case, in my experience. The same sort of withdrawal from responsibility of intentions, described above in relation to the Visual Thinking of imagery, now took place not
just in terms of interpretation of content, but also in the way the spectator chose to move through the infrastructure of the event.

1.3.6 Wild Card Performer

![Wild Card Performer](image)


In one of the breaks one of the band members told me that a friend of theirs had been on her way up on stage to perform a solo as well, but had been stopped by her friend who told her that it was not open for others and that the performers were professionals. This did not put her off, and the band member asked me if she could participate. So once we all had done our versions she stepped up. The spectators did not know she was not an invited performer and that she knew nothing about the task. On the other hand she had had the entire evening to study the others.

I will try to say something about my question if dance and choreography could be separated through her performance. As one dances to the music it is as if the music becomes the choreography. One follows the beat and relate physically to the tone of the song. The music, as choreographic agent, makes the movement disappear into dance in form of musical illustration. Since in MODUL 3 the performers had departed from a different music
than the one they danced to, there was a collision. I had the impression that when the performer was able to maintain integrity towards the score she/he had made, there was a dissonance or rupture between the movement and the music and that in this rupture, choreography showed its face. Something else than dance was seen but it was not structure in the blunt sense, even though that was seen as well since the pop/rock structure carries its simplicity of composition, as for example the refrain keeps coming back. As our new guest performer entered the stage, she had no score, but was choreographed by the impressions she had from the previous performers, whose performances varied greatly in looks, topics and style. Before stepping on to the stage she took off her shoes, as if marking some sort of ritual. She then danced around for a while on the spot where the other performers had been performing before she started crawling around on all four among the band members. She returned to the spot and danced around, jumped up and down, head banging. Without having any time limit as we did she still stayed within the maximum 4 minutes.

There are no substantial conclusions to draw from this in relation to my question on dance and choreography. Nevertheless I would say that I was not completely wrong in my hypothesis that choreography would somehow appear in the collision that was set up. There were moments during the evening where I had the impression of seeing something other than dance appear and clearly, the last performer, lacking a score, instead performed (and performed well) a different work in front of the audience: going crazy to the music. I was not that satisfied with the result of the colliding method in MODUL 3. The score task proposed was too broad. In terms of the MODUL method the input was not precise enough, which made the output not just indefinite in number but vague in relation to my specific interests. I was after something more precise than what this experiment had been able to produce, which led me to keep this score method for further exploration in MODUL 4.

The bridge that the score makes between the two works also symbolises a connection between two different segments of the entire 6 works. The three first works were site specific and the following three were performed on stages. The three first ones thus worked very much on the entire dispositif of the presentation by aligning content with the performance space where it was presented. In that sense I would say that the three first MODULs approached the research question regarding the relation of process and product by arranging the product in a very procedural manner. There was not a lot of process since they all were very unrehearsed. There was no real practice that led up to the presentations and many of the scenes happened for the first time as they were performed. The two following works, MODUL 4 and MODUL 5, worked more explicitly on the other question of the relation between technique and choreography. Although the three first MODULs all included students
of mine and MODUL 1 even staged a teaching moment, the three later works also have a more explicit relation to education and teaching technique. Where the three first MODULs were very much about experimenting, the three later ones were more concerned with articulating and consciously applying the knowledge that had appeared in those laboratorial works. MODUL 4 – MODUL 6 sum up and try to find practical, more consciously chosen and precise applications of the choreographic items in the surrounding context.
1.4 MODUL 4 – from Scoring Choreography to Choreographing Scores

Presentation: 19th of November 2010
Venue: Haninge Kulturhus
Duration: 21 minutes
Participants: Magnus Dovärn, Erika Pekula-Petterson, Erika Thalinsson-Ranhagen, Elvira Roos, Emelie Wahlman, and Marie Wärell-Öhman.

Scan from Rasmus Ölme’s score that was given to the performers.
There are three major differences between *MODUL 4* and its three precedents: 1. It was commissioned; 2 It took place on stage, in the typical contemporary performance space – the black box; 3. It was done with students and developed in a teaching situation.

The commission came from a one-day performance festival called Haninge Happening who asked me to present 21 minutes long piece in the black box stage that the organizer called the “R-rated experimental stage”. The date coincided with the last day of a three-week workshop with the students of the third year of the BA program in dance at DOCH, so I proposed to present something with them and to continue working on the score method. These circumstances meant that the choreographic units of cast and space that I had been able to choose myself previously, were now given, as was the duration of the work. I had chosen to propose to work with the students but this was more of an act of inclusion, joining the teaching period with the festival proposal, and I had not chosen which students to work with since they chose which project to participate in.

One more difference with the previous *MODULs* was that I decided to continue the work I had done in *MODUL 3*. I revised the score task from *MODUL 3* and applied it in a context of the interface between teaching and producing work. This implied a different working procedure since in *MODUL 3* I never rehearsed with the participants. The fact of staying with one topic from one *MODUL* to another did allow me to explore further the scoring method, but since the format of presentation differed largely between the two *MODULs* I cannot really account for how this affected the results.

### 1.4.1 Revised Score

Scoring was still a pretty loose concept to me, but *MODUL 3* had helped me to close in on the subject. Since I was looking for something more specific than what *MODUL 3* had produced, before letting the students engage in the task, I started by explaining to them how I had proceeded in my own interpretation of the score task in *MODUL 3*. I also added one thing to the task from *MODUL 3*, namely to extract, from the lyrics, words that indicate movement, spatial direction or a body part. Using generic pop/rock songs one mostly finds words like “turn around”, “reach out”, “take my hand”, or “heartache”. In contrast to *MODUL 3* we also decided to make actual scores, notations. I first gave them my score and everyone made an interpretation. Then they made their own scores, including their own interpretation of it, and finally they exchanged scores with a peer and each of them made an interpretation of the score received. This meant that everybody knew 3 scores: their own (that one more person would know), the one from a colleague and my version which they all knew. I scored these scores into a 21 minute long piece (see picture below). The final score intervention was that I
gave each of the performers a note with two written phrases, just before they went on stage. On the note there was one concrete task, such as when X does Y you do Z, and one more abstract, such as perform as if you were 10 years older than you are.

The proposal from Haninge Happening gave me an opportunity to make a first attempt in blending teaching with performance production. Here was a chance to very concretely relate to my initial research questions regarding the relation between technique and choreography and process with product. We were developing a technique that was new to me, which meant that its discovery and development was happening between the students and me. This technique was in itself the actual performance and in this sense there was no difference in training it and performing it, except regarding the reactions of one's nervous system as one is placed in front of the spectator's gaze. This meant a shift within the hierarchy of the student/teacher relation but also in the training/performing relation. The technique that was developed was already in relation to the performing of its result. We did not train the scoring technique to be able to work with scores choreographically. We started working on the scores and on the way we developed specific techniques in relation to what the scores produced. There was not a technique existing previous to the material. It was developed through the material. The scoring method was both technique and material.

Scan from the score of all the scores.
1.4.2 Affirmation and Alignment

In the earlier MODULs I had distanced myself from certain conventional corner stones of the theatre dispositif, I was now presented a typical version of such a dispositif with clear parameters of time (duration) and space (seated audience and black box measurements). For the first time in three years I was back inside the typical dance performance production including studio rehearsals and black box performance. I wanted to challenge my way of working this traditional setting. In MODUL 3 we collided music and dance with the hope to make choreography reveal itself, but we also collided with the institutional choreography. In MODUL 4 we instead choose to affirm and align.

The festival organisers called it an experimental stage so I shaped the work with the idea of making an experiment by using the score as a verfremdung-method to escape a conventional understanding of dance. In this sense the score functioned as a tool for the irresponsible mode of communication I had started through what I called Visual Thinking. Now the Diffracted Communication was not just a form of presentation but also the actual content of the work. This form of intentional obscuring should not be understood as ignoring one’s audience, as the typical critique towards any attempt to challenge the conventional performer/spectator address, may have it. On the contrary it is an affirmation of an interest in how the communication between performer and spectator is set up, and an affirmation of the spectator as a person perfectly capable to draw her/his own conclusions from what is going on. This may seem obvious, but after the performance a couple of people mentioned how it would have been nice to know what the performers where "actually" doing. As if there was an answer at the back. There is of course an explanation to why a performer does what she does, but as spectator one gains nothing by finding out what that is since that meaning is not there to be communicated. One shouldn't underestimate nor disrespect the spectator’s urge to understand what is going on. Instead it is about being able to install the spectator in a mode of attention that allows her to relinquish that urge and to empower her to make up her own image of what is taking place without worrying whether it is the "right" image.

There were a few more choreographic items that were affirmed. There were black side wings in the space so we made entrances and exits and we decided to use all the lights that were at hand. For music we built a playlist. First we included all the songs that the participants had used for their score. Then each participant chose a textual phrase from their score and the rest of us freely associated to the phrase to find a pop/rock song we related to it. This left us with a huge playlist that I, more or less randomly, skipped through during the performance.
As the activity of choreographing appeared for the first time it was called orchesographie. Much later on, during the 50s and 60s, through movements such as minimalism and concept art, the score was given a different meaning. Instead of functioning as a form of notation that would preserve a work intact and allow it to travel geographically and then be re-enacted without its author, the score is used as a tool to produce difference by leaving more place for interpretation. Instead of being a tool for conservation it became a machine for production. The score then opens up for a very programmatic way to produce, by first drawing up the entire process that is to be performed and then executing it step by step. A way to escape self-expression and to make art as on an assembly line. At the same time there was a possibility for an extreme openness towards the interpretation of the task expressed in the score. Many of the artists in the fluxus movement wrote event scores that would choreograph an event in someone's everyday life, without spectator. One can find concrete actions such as “Brush all your teeth using a different brush for each tooth.” And more abstract as “Something is wrapped in the most humble way”. Mixing this openness with its absolute commanding nature, the score can allow a performer to stray off into places she or he would never have ended up using their own creativity and without the exterior influence that a score provides.

I’m engaging in this process to push dance out of choreography. I do it for two reasons:

1. To render the structure of choreography visible without the dance getting in the way.
2. To create a sort of activity that the spectator does not understand and where it is obvious that the performers are doing something but one cannot read what it is.

I have some hopes about what this sort of work can produce:
- To focus on the live performance as corner stone in staged arts.
- To see a greater part of the performer than his/her dancer identity.
- To escape the judgemental aspect of being a spectator by being so incoherent that the spectator stops trying to understand and just looks.
- To allow the performer to escape the self-judgemental aspect of performing and occupation with the spectator’s gaze by having too many other things to think about.
- To criticize a conventional idea about what meaning meaning has. To not judge meaning as right or wrong but to engage in meaning production within an excess of meaning.
- To avoid being pretentious in spite of these extreme pretentions.

Deborah Hay said in a post-performance discussion that she recognizes her own choreographies as she sees the performer transcend and self-regulate the choreography he or she is already subjected to. I see it as a way for the performer to co-exist with the score that the performance has chosen.

I believe that this approach can be translated right back to what we call traditional dance, but that this detour via the score is necessary to discover these potentials.

The score is graphic. It is a visual representation in form of text, notes or shapes. It is a picture. Different from visual arts’ use of the score the staged arts use the human body to represent. The performer must therefore appear and disappear simultaneously. The performer needs to be universal as individual. A part to represent the whole. Right now I believe that the way to this simultaneous appearing and disappearing lies within its own paradox. In the place where extremes meet. Not where black and white mixes into grey but where black and white keep changing place and become each other. Where everything emerges. In a chaotic big bang of meaning production.

Mallarmé wrote about the dancing woman that does not dance and is not a woman. When I watch MODUL 4 I see students that dance, who are not students and who do not dance.

In French, experience means both experiment and experience. Tonight we will get an experience on the experimental stage.
1.5 MODUL 5 - a Becoming Group

Presentation: 9-10th of June 2011
Venue: The Royal Opera
Duration 12 minutes
Participants: Michelle Arrué, Rebecka Bengtsson, Louise Hallman, Niki Lovild, Anna Oremark, Linnea Wilhelmsson and Elin Örneholm.

Presentation at the Stockholm Opera 2011-06-09. Niki Lovild, Rebecka Bengtsson, Michelle Arrué, Louise Hallman and Anna Oremark. Photo: Carl Thorborg
MODUL 5 was a commission and like MODUL 4 it gave me an opportunity to combine teaching with the creative process. The Swedish Royal Ballet School commissioned me to choreograph for their 30th anniversary. I was asked to work with seven of their graduating students and make a short piece of 10-15 minutes. The work was presented at the school’s own stage and at the Royal Opera in Stockholm. Similar to MODUL 4, I did not choose the cast or the performance space and as in MODUL 4 we aligned with the contextual conditions. The score method was left out, but the work with blending technique and choreography was still pursued, and this time revealed a political aspect of that relation.

1.5.1 The Choreography of Technique

The ruling understanding of technique, dance and performance at the Royal Ballet School is different from the one I work with. In the representational approach to technique that in my view reigns at there, technique is an identified knowledge that the teacher possesses. Through repetition of exercises the students assimilate this knowledge and their efforts are assessed by correctness of representation towards that original. There is a right and a wrong, and since perfection is the goal, most of the time you’re wrong.

The constant risk of being wrong becomes an expression in the body and it was hard for the students to express something else confidently enough to drown the physical expression of fear of potential failure. I know some of the teachers at the school personally and I know that this is not the goal of what they teach. It is a larger structural problem that is not limited to the walls of that building. It is institutional choreography expressed through embodied angst. The fact that the school still carries the epithet Royal can serve as reminder of how ballet was developed in the royal courts with an interest for representing a good subject. The judgmental awareness of good/bad and right/wrong still lingers in its tradition and along with it comes a hierarchy within the group, as the individuals are compared, or compare themselves, to each other. I remember how I, during my education at that school, inflicted much more harmful physical demands on myself than what my teachers demanded. The understanding of what technique, dance and choreography is – and subsequently what the dancer’s labour consists of – is cultivated in a much broader context than that of the Royal Ballet School, but it is a good place to start asking questions.

1.5.2 Techniques of De-Subjetivation

To do away with judgment and hierarchy between individuals we approached the group as a body. We identified four steps in this Becoming-Group: Imitate, Mirror, Interpret and Accompany. I’ll explain them briefly. Imitate meant standing behind someone and doing the
bodily movements or actions that she did. The experience I wanted each of them to have was how it felt to have the group following you as a way to experience the body of the group. The group body does not react as quickly as your own body does. To move the group body demands a different experience of time and space. Mirror meant that they would stand in front of each other and mirror the movement. Similar to Imitate the goal was to flip one’s own bodily awareness into another body and to move another body through one’s own movements. Puppeteering with invisible strings. The secondary goal was to experience the moment when one no longer knows who is following or leading. Interpret meant that you would watch a movement of another person, in the same position as mirroring, and simultaneously perform a version of that movement. We then moved from Mirror to Interpret to feel the difference between the logic of a correctness of representation and the logic of difference. Accompany meant to move in relation to some one else’s movement. Everyone learned the same phrase to be able to anticipate the movement of the person they were Accompanying. The Accompanying movement was not supposed to be the same movement as the person that performed the phrase was doing. Accompany was thus a tool to relate through difference instead of correctness. The work was on extrapolating bodily awareness from ones own body onto the group-body and it heightened the kinaesthetic awareness of the individuals towards their own body and towards the movement of other bodies in the space. It was a four step de-subjectivation process, and we used it as a means to get away from the anguish of judgement on the personal performance. I could call it a subjectivation process, but I add the prefix to emphasise the deconstruction it entails and to show how it is about dismantling the presentation of an individual self that the representational approach generates. I call the techniques used in this process Techniques of De-Subjectivation.

The second exercise used to create a group body was flocking. To create a sensation of the other bodies moving in space around oneself we imitated flocking movements of birds or fish. The first thing we did was to start focusing on the kinaesthetic and proprioceptive experience of one’s own movement. First simply balancing the weight back and forth without loosing balance (as in taking a step); then starting to follow the directions proposed by the weight into the space, taking steps in the direction the weight was directed. From there we started directing the walk through the space and varying the speed. After the first experience of what I call the Tipping Point, as one takes the first step, there is a second one, as one breaks into a run. The Tipping Point is an event as when something falls – an accident. A movement happens. I will discuss this below in section Exercise 1 B.

After sharpening the individual’s own kinaesthetic awareness we transposed it to the group body. The body is an assemblage of different collaborating systems and parts and
we worked on creating a new body – the group body – built on the idea of an assemblage of bodies moving in relation to each other. This group body works with different logics than the individual body. It can be torn apart and reconstructed without surgery. It can turn itself inside out, dislocate, dissolve and resurrect. In spite of these extreme features it can still be considered as an assembled body that moves in relation to all its parts. Just like the elbow moves in relation to the ankle as we walk, a head on one body can move in relation to a hip joint on another. Even if nature does great work, it still takes culture for a child to stand up and walk. The kinaesthetic logic is constructed. Maybe then, a similar construct can be made, on a different kind of body, in this case the group body.

1.5.3 Align to Divert
The three elements, or Choreographic Agents, of space, music and costume were dealt with through the method of alignment. In relation to the space I will talk of two different aspects even though they are completely entwined. On one hand what the Royal Opera represents in a symbolic order and on the other hand the stage room. To present something at the Royal Opera provided a unique opportunity to see how entwined the subjects of technique and choreography are, even on institutional scale, and to see the biopolitical impact they have in the archaic representationalist model of the theatre dispositif. I say biopolitical since we have already discussed what sorts of tensions the theatre apparatus can create in a performer’s body.

I wanted to propose some alternative to this representationalist paradigm, but without assuming the stereotypical role of the independent bad boy rebelling against the institutional structure. Instead I considered that the most radical proposal in this context was to do something completely harmless. It was the same affirmative approach that I had used since I started to include existing materials in MODUL 1. In the following two I had been able to choose space and cast and could align them with the topic. In MODUL 4 I had instead started to affirm and align with the framework. In MODUL 5 my reason to align with the structure was in order to divert it. In place of the collision there was a slight push, seemingly subtle but that in the long run could change its course significantly. This was the performative aspect of MODUL 5. I imagine it as a sort of implantation where I would make the institutional body believe that it was its own idea to have chosen this direction. I wanted us to interfere with the symbolic order of The Royal Opera by staging a different body than the one usually represented there, but I wanted to do so without anyone having noticed. It was a silent and subtle revolution. Some sentences that inspired me in that work:
To create an event, no matter how small, is the most delicate there is, and the opposite of making a scene or create a drama. To love those who have that ability: as they enter a room they're not persons, characters or subjects, they are a change of atmosphere, a variation in nuance, an imperceptible molecule, a discrete population, a mist or a drizzle. Then everything has, indeed, changed. The great events are not of a different kind: the struggle, the revolution, life, death...¹

Fredrika Spindler and Jan Holmgaard (2004:3)

As for the stage room we were using the typical black backdrop and side wings. We had a general white light illuminating the entire stage throughout the whole piece, but with a few very slow changes in intensity. The only interference we made in this typical stage was that all the curtains rose, very slowly, until the entire space of the stage was visible. Then the curtains slowly went back down again returning to their original position. My aim was to reveal a different aspect of the space and let the stripped space contrast with the red velvet and golden paint surrounding the spectators. The stripped space is what the performers and other stage workers see, but the spectators do not. It is a working space, more than a frame for visual representation. All the same, I did not want this laying bare of the space to be seen as a violent act, hence the slow speed of the curtains' movement. An analogy could be the difference it would make if a flasher would open the classical trench coat reaaaaallllyyyy sllloo0000000wwwilllllyyyyy. Changing the speed changes the effect produced. The spectator can see the laying bare slowly taking place, which produces a different form of observing position. One that is less victimising.

There was one element from the Inclusive Method in MODUL 5. The responsible technician from the school, Daniel Hakamäki, turned out to be a composer and made the soundtrack for the piece using recordings the Symphonic Orchestra, as they tune their instruments. We did this for two reasons: 1. To use a sound that echoes the space where they perform; the sound of expectations as you enter the hall before the performance starts, except in this case, the expected performance never quite starts. 2. To illustrate the attunement that the performers were involved in as they balanced their own bodies’ movement with that of

the others. It resulted in a monotone undulating composition with some changes in intensity as more instruments joined in.

For costumes I asked the school for their budget and handed it out to the performers to go shop for their costumes. The style we agreed on was that they should buy something that they thought they would have worn if they came to the Opera to see the performance they were performing in. My intention was to empower the performers by letting them choose themselves how they look, and to have the performers dressed in way that did not differ from the spectators.

As for the movements that we worked on it was material developed through the technique *Horizontal Fall*, as I since 2008 have called the technique I teach. The technique is described below in the chapter *Rasmus Technique*. They are movements that were also used in *MODUL 1* and in *MODUL 6* in the scene *Event Horizon* that will be discussed in *MODUL 6* and then more in detail in *Conclusions*.

The overall choreographic structure of the short piece is best described by the tuning character of the music, the movement and the space. It evolved slowly, no sudden movements. The walking pace of the beginning of the piece eventually reached a full run through an almost secret augmentation in intensity.

1.5.4 A Diverted Attention

In school performances the audience mostly consists of the student's friends and family. For quite a few of the spectators, it was likely the first and last time they set foot at the Opera. In this sense I think that a large part of the spectators did not have a fixed idea about what kind of dance belongs in that space. Similarly to the other attempts on performative actions that the *MODULs* have tried on, it is not possible to prove whether my implantation was successful or not but, as I was sitting in the audience during one of the two performances I experienced a change of attention among the spectators. I noticed how people sat back in their chairs and started to let their gaze wander in space, watching for example the spectacular ceiling paintings, or fellow spectators, and then coming back to the performers. To me this expression of distraction was a success. There was nothing repulsive in the performance, nothing to avert one's gaze from. But it did not demand attention, allowing instead the spectator's gaze to drift.

In the first three *MODULs* we had set up the events in a way that would let the spectators attention roam. They were performed in large spaces often with several activities going on at the same time. As we entered the theatres again, in *MODUL 4* and *MODUL 5* which
MODUL 5

were both very short pieces, it was not as easy to produce such a loose attention, but as it did seem to still take place.
1. 6 MODUL 6 – Assembling

   Ponderosa, Stolzenhagen, 19th of June 2013
   Hellerau, Dresden, 14-15th of September 2013
   Studio Alta, Prague, 6-7th of December 2013
   DOCH, Stockholm, 19th of May 2014

Duration: 55 minutes

Participants: Linda Adami, Ulrika Berg, Karolína Hejnová, Dan Johansson, Martina Hajdyla Lacová, Tilman O’Donnell, Andrea Opavská and Rasmus Ölme

MODUL 6 differs from the previous MODULs in several ways: it was not produced for any specific space; it did not have a premier date and working process streched over a much longer period. Several working periods were spread out, stretching over a year and a half.
MODUL 6

Although MODUL 6 was still research, and revealed a lot of new information, it was at the same time a result of the previous works. MODUL 6 gathers previous experiences, discards some of them, and assembles the knowledge gained into a deliverable format. Writing about this last MODUL demands a larger effort and different format than the previous MODULs. Since I consider it as a result of the research I describe the different scenes at the end of the thesis in the chapter Conclusions. In this chapter I therefore only report on our process without discussing the actual material it resulted in.

1.6.1 Teaching/Producing, Space and Casting
Since MODUL 6 was not a commission, as the previous two were, it allowed me once more to shape the production conditions myself. The first working period started in September 2012 and finished with a presentation in February 2013. The second working period included the collaboration with the Czech group ME-SA and stretched from June to December 2013, during which there were three different presentations of the work.

I wanted to maintain the relation between teaching and producing work and set up a three week teaching period with the BA students in dance at DOCH. We had by then already set up a score with the group of people I was working with – Svärmen (The Swarm) as we came to call ourselves – and the teaching was done by the whole group, sharing the score with the students. This was a breakthrough in the research as the two practices of choreographing and teaching came together. This had occurred as well in the two earlier commissions but this time it was not about including students in the presentation of the work. Instead it was a method to proceed in the work and it meant that technical training was also choreographic training. Each day Svärmen and the students ran through an evolving version of what would become the performance score.1 It was interesting that we could present our class as a technique class. The conventional set up for a dance school, and this applies to the large majority of schools, is that before lunch there are technique classes (mostly two of them, each of them being between 90-120 minutes, and sometimes preceded by a shorter warm up class, about 60 minutes long). After lunch there are theory classes or workshops involving creative processes with specific topics. We shared our score with the students in the session before lunch in the form of a technique class. The score took about one hour to perform which gave us time to work the ideas, run through the score and then evaluate the experience together.

1 In MODUL 3 I engaged with the score method for the first time and Amanda Steggler, who was my supervisor at the time, asked if the score method would feed back into the teaching. An idea that at the time I had not at all considered.
Since MODUL 6 was not made for any specific space there was no context to relate to except for the classic disposition of stage and seats, which we did not want to keep. The spaces that we have performed in so far we have moved the seats away and instead placed chairs on the four sides of the space (so far we only performed in rectangular spaces). We do not allow several rows of chairs; all spectators should be “front row”. We do not need any specific lighting, as long as we are visible, but when there are lighting equipment, we use them. The spectators share the space with the performers, since there is no proscenium or elevated stage that separate them. Since all spectators are facing other spectators it is not only the performers who are being watched.

The casting procedure in the original plan for MODUL 6 was very elaborate. I wanted to make the work modular on a macro scale as well and initially it was to be a collaboration between four different organisations: Cullberg Ballet in Stockholm; an
independent group in Prague, called ME-SA; Terrence Lewis contemporary Dance Co in Mumbai and Svärmen. I wanted to create a flexible format that could vary in size and allow each group to perform it alone or together with the other groups (or some of them). As could have been expected, organisationally I was in way over my head. With Terrence Lewis it was the geographical distance and the lack of administrative personnel that made it impossible for us to proceed with the collaboration. With Cullberg Ballet we collided with the institutional framework that did not allow for the sort of production we wanted to construct. The modes

Scan of score for the Prague presentations 2013-12-6 and 7.
of operation were too distinct. While maintaining contact with ME-SA I started by setting together my own group and invited Linda Adami, Ulrika Berg, Dan Johansson and Tilman O’Donnell. Each of them was cast for specific interests I have in their work, but they were also all very close to me personally (though they did not know each other very well). Since this time I chose my collaborators with a lot of care, it can, to some extent, be compared with how I curated specific practices into MODUL 2. But this time I was not inviting them to continue their work independently, as I did in MODUL 2. The idea was instead to share our interests and to build a common material from there. I assumed the authority of deciding how we would build a common material and in that sense had a very different role from the curatorial one in MODUL 2.

1.6.2 Svärmen - a Modular Body of Work
In MODUL 5 we had worked on extrapolating bodily perception onto the group body as a way to dismantle individualism. In MODUL 6, we started our Becoming Group by building a body of work. In our first week of work, I asked each member to propose something to work on all together.

Linda Adami proposed a game dealing with two corner stones of performing: repetition and the fact of being observed. One person left the room and the others hid a set of keys. The person was called back in and had to look for them until they were found. Then the same person was asked to go back out and return to do the same thing again. The keys were in the same place, so this time performing the action meant acting it and this distinction was discussed and worked on a lot. All of us, as we performed the searching the second time, asked ourselves if the task was to pretend that we were actually searching, or if the task was to repeat what we remember we had done the previous time. It led us into the very fundament of performing.

Ulrika Berg proposed what she called Quality of Touch/ Quality of Movement. This played a big part in the work and created three different sections in what came to be the final performance score (or at least in its current version). The proposal was to localise a specific material quality in the body through touch and then translate that into a movement quality. A concrete example could be to touch the bones of another person; giving both the toucher and the touched a sensation of bone as the actual bone is situated. From then on, one starts moving focusing on the bone quality (whatever that means to the performer) and thus turning the sensation of bones as material into a movement material. It was important for the work in two ways. First, in how the sense of touch could be explored as alternative to vision and secondly how touch questions the relation between inside and outside and the impact it
MODUL 6

can have in one’s relation to the spectator. How can an inner sensation be communicated to someone exterior? Inside this question we find the line of questioning that has followed through the MODULs, concerning Diffracted Communication as opposed to “Do you copy?” Ulrika Berg’s proposal Quality of Touch/ Quality of Movement was picked up as such and has its own part in the score, now with the title Muscle Group. Introducing the sense of touch led to two more parts of the score entitled Inside Touch and Transmission. All of them will be discussed in detail in the closing chapter Conclusions.

Dan Johansson proposed an improvisation exercise dealing with spatial and bodily coordinates. It did not have a specific outcome in the performance score but was very helpful for me in order to articulate the deconstruction of Da Vinci’s Vitruvian Man that I had started in MODUL 1. Dan Johansson’s proposal was to spot three different body parts; he called them points, and then move them in relation to each other. It can be described as an internal version of the flocking exercises I did with the students at the Ballet School in MODUL 5 and shows how the MODUL method works as fractal. Instead of expanding proprioception to include other bodies, the awareness is focused on three spots on the body, turning the body into an abstract geometrical entity. Since I had tried to move away from the extensive properties of geometric points and lines, I questioned this approach and proposed a version in which the direction of the movement, the line if you like, would never move to a point, but always around it.1 Instead of being one within a swarm, as the flocking movement proposed, one would have a swarm of points within the body. Such relation between point and line will be discussed below in the chapter Functionality Without Function.

Tilman O’Donnell proposed the concept of Focal Points; something he had come in touch with through his work with his colleague Nicole Peisl. It is an exercise drawn from Somatic Experiencing® developed by Dr Peter Levine as a way to heal and prevent trauma. In short, Focal Points deal with three states of somatic experience: grazing, alert, fight/flight. Each of the state has a relation to space, muscular tonus and perceptive qualities. For example in alert, vision is peripheral while in fight/flight it is focused. We used Focal Points as a method to deepen bodily awareness in communication with the surrounding space and the other individuals within it and it came to be a very important tool in addressing performance skills within the score. The form of awareness it creates towards the body also communicated well with the philosophical concept Becoming Animal from Deleuze and Guattari that became important in the work, as we shall see further on. Additionally it led us to develop a scene we

1 Examples of extensive properties are mass and volume. Intensive properties are for example density, pressure, speed or a quality of the material, say its softness.
called *Unknown Creature* where we try to imagine ourselves having bodies of creatures that do not exist. We did so in order to step out of the default perception of one’s own body and to rediscover it. In our current version of the score it exists as a form of prologue as we enter the space and later in the score, as an *entr’act* where we tell the spectators about the characteristics of the Unknown Creature we experienced. (See Conclusions)

Rehearsals at DOCH. Dan Johansson and Rasmus Ölme. Photo: Nicklas Dennermalm.

For my own part I contributed two proposals. The first was a set of movements from the technique Horizontal Fall (see below in *Movement Meditation 2*) that has developed throughout my movement investigation, including experiences of dancing, teaching and choreographing. Some of these movements had already appeared in *MODUL 1* and *MODUL 5*. We will look closer at that technique in the chapter *Rasmus Technique*, and the part of the proposal that got into the score will be discussed in *Conclusions* in the section *Event Horizon*. To have some idea already now, it evolves around the figure of the spiral – the metal-spiral of a spring system – and how this spring contains both a vertical bounce and a spiral movement. Vertical and horizontal coordinates blur into vortical movement. The second thing I proposed was the techniques of De-Subjectivation that I had started with the students in *MODUL 5*. There it consisted of the four steps Imitate, Mirror, Interpret and Accompany. In *MODUL 6* it became Mirror, Reflection and Diffraction. Mirroring was understood in the same way as it was explained above. Reflection was understood as sending back a version of a movement one
had seen. In this sense it resembled how Interpret was explained above, except that Reflection signified a version closer to that which one had seen. The space for interpretation was a bit more restricted. Diffraction had, in turn, a much larger frame for interpretation, actually as big as it gets, meaning that as long as you know what you’re doing, you’re doing it. In the previous chapter, *Introduction*, the term Diffraction was already briefly explained and we can now take a closer look at its implications in the work.

Unlike reflections, diffractions do not displace the same elsewhere, in more or less distorted form... Rather, diffraction can be a metaphor for another kind of critical consciousness at the end of this rather painful Christian millennium, one committed to making a difference and not to repeating the Sacred Image of Same... Diffraction is a narrative, graphic, psychological, spiritual, and political technology for making consequential meanings. Haraway (1997:273)

Haraway words Diffraction very well in relation to my concerns around meaning-making and the logic of difference as opposed to that of correctness of representation, or what in the quote above is called “the Sacred Image of Same”. In our improvisations Diffraction became a tool to relate to each other’s movement in a distorted and obscured way. Examples of such distortions could be: How would I move if I were the space that you bend with your movements? Or as Dan Johansson poetically phrased it: “If I let your image pass through me what would it look like behind me?” The De-Subjectivation method did not receive a specific place in our score. It did however play an important role in our thinking about the readability of our actions and how that relates to composition as sense-making just as it is expressed in the quote above as “technology for making consequential meanings”. The section in the score that deals with this is called *WUPWOUP*, which is the (diffracted) abbreviation of a task I proposed under the name of *Warming Up Without Warming Up*. This was a third proposal from me, but one that showed up within the work. It came from an absurdity I noticed in my own behaviour. Before going for a run I would squat a few times to warm up, but then another time I would run for a while to warm up before doing squats. It made me realise the procedural, or ritual, nature of warming up. If warming up was not done to warm up, how could we warm up without warming up? The two video lectures by Giorgio Agamben (see following section) were also important and together with a practice called *Frakkensteing* – that we borrowed from the group Los Que Quedan (Sandra Gomez and Vicente Arlandis) – these were the corner stones to the construction of that part in the score. In *Conclusions*, in the
From WUPWOUP to Definition, you will find further explanations of the materials that emerged from these processes.

1.6.3 Theoretical and Philosophical References.

Next to the different individual proposals I wanted us to have a common platform of theoretical and philosophical references. Certain concepts had become important to me during my research and I found it crucial to share them with the others. We therefore dedicated a lot of time reading out loud to each other and watching video lectures. The thematic of these philosophical references were twofold. On one hand I was interested in questioning the theatre dispositif, and the reasons for doing so were twofold as well: 1. To question the relation to the spectator – for this we used Slavoj Zizek’s lecture and Jacques Rancière’s text – and 2. To think about production matters with a choreographic perspective, as the earlier MODULs had brought me to do. Here the reference was Giorgio Agamben’s text on the apparatus. The other theme was in relation to performing skills. In his lecture “From Logic to Anthropology, or Affirmative Dialectics”, Alain Badiou proposes a form of political action that does not work by negation. As we have seen from the earlier MODULs the concept of affirmation had been important; from the including and recycling method in MODUL 1 to the aligning method in MODUL 4 and MODUL 5.

There is no exact line that connects all the different references but a tentative, though simplified, trajectory could be the following: We watched the documentary on gravity to get an idea of the invisible force in matter that enables movement. This aspect on

2 The texts were:
- Agamben, Giorgio, What is an apparatus? from What is an apparatus?: and other essays, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 2009
- Deleuze, Gilles & Guattari, Félix, Extract from the chapters Introduction : Rhizome, 1914 : One or Several Wolves, and 1730 : Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible from A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia, Continuum, London, 2004

Video lectures
- Giorgio Agamben Gesture, or the Structure of Art and Animal and Man and Language. (2011) Available at www.egs.edu
- Alain Badiou From Logic to Anthropology, or Affirmative Dialectics. (2012) Available at www.egs.edu
- Jacques Derrida The transcendental stupidity of man and the becoming animal according to Deleuze. (2004) Available at www.egs.edu
- Documentary on gravity. Produced and directed by Ben Wilson and Chris Holt. A BBC/Discover Channel/ Science Chanel co-production © BBC MMXI
movement and matter altered our bodily perception closing in on the biological body as an inhuman body. By performing such a body in an observed situation our critique towards a ruling representational paradigm became performative.

1.6.4 Three Swarm Concepts: Affirmation, Diffraction and Becoming Animal

An Event is not initially the creation of a new situation, the creation of a new world; an Event is the creation of a new possibility of a new world, which is not the same thing. In fact the Event takes place in a situation that remains the same, but the same situation can be seen and can be transformed inside the new possibility.

Badiou’s concept of affirmative dialectics emphasises how change can come from within, instead of through resistance, as in opposition. This change does not have to aim at a specific definition. Change is then not one thing replacing another, but the possibility that one thing could mean something else.

For Svärmen, next to its political stance, affirmation became an important improvisational tool. To do away with one’s own resistance, to discard the judgemental opposition of “not like that” and instead embrace whatever the task at hand generated, presented a new point of view on performing skill. The Diffracted Communication mentioned earlier was now included as a performing technique that tries to undermine its own definition. The judgemental approach is based on the idea that we already know what things are while the affirming technique opens up to the possibility that one thing can mean something else than what it already is understood to mean. It works on the same concept of Align to Divert, as in MODUL 5, but in this case it is at the heart of the meaning production itself. Together with Haraway’s notion of diffraction the affirmative logic was a crucial tool for the sort of improvisational work we were developing in the section WUPWOUP.

In the flocking exercise with the students at the Royal Ballet School, we used the metaphor of a flock of birds or a school of fish. As Svärmen started the work with Becoming Group we discussed what it could mean to become a multiplicity and the relations of different animal groups. We talked about the different names that animal groups have, like flock, herd, pack and so on. This is what led us to call the group Svärmen. We opted for the swarm

3 From above mentioned lecture.
because of its cloud-like shape with indistinct borders and its movement connotation. In the chapter *1914 One or Several Wolves*, in their book *A thousand Plateaus*, the two French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari point to the close relation between animality and multiplicity through their concept Becoming Animal.

I am on the edge of the crowd, at the periphery; but I belong to it, I am attached to it by one of my extremities, a hand or a foot. (...) To be fully a part of the crowd and at the same time completely outside it, removed from it: to be on the edge, to take a walk like Virginia Wolf (never again will I say, “I am this, I am that”)

Deleuze & Guattari (2004:32-33)

Deleuze and Guattari ask the question of *One or Several Wolves* drawing on the Freudian case of the Wolf-Man and critique Freud’s Oedipal analysis that seeks to frame the wolf as a representation of the castrating father: “Castration, lack, substitution: a tale told by an overconscious idiot who has no understanding of multiplicities as formations of the unconscious.” (2004:36) In their *schizoanalysis*, they see the Wolf-Man dreaming of being a pack of wolves, a multiplicity. They describe the necessity for creating the term multiplicity “in order to escape the abstract opposition between the multiple and the one, to escape dialectics.”(2004:36)

For our work with *MODUL 6* it was not only the relation to multiplicity and Becoming Group that made us turn to the concept of Becoming Animal. The term Becoming had a precise meaning within our work, as a specific way of escaping representation. In *MODUL 5* the Becoming Group had been worked through what I called the De-Subjectivation process to dismantle the correctness of representation. The most important divide was the passing from Mirror to Interpret. In *MODUL 6* it was Diffraction that became the most important term, which Haraway explained above as commitment to “making a difference and not to repeating the Sacred Image of Same”. We can see how Diffraction and Becoming Animal share interests in multiplicity and a logic of difference. To not “repeat the Sacred Image of the Same” was for me also a way to describe my efforts towards the Diffracted Communication between performer and spectator (and between teacher and student). Diffraction affirms difference. It affirms the gap. The gap is even one of the typical examples of how diffraction appears, as a wave or a particle passes through a slot. The form of escape from representation – no matter how momentary it is – that Diffraction can allow in the relation performer/spectator can also be found in Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of Becoming.

In a later chapter of *A Thousand Plateaus* called *1730: Becoming Intense, Becoming Animal*,
MODUL 6

**Becoming Imperceptible...**, this understanding of Becoming is stated by noting how "A correspondence of relations does not add up to a becoming." (2004:261)

The correctness of representation is looked at in terms of correspondence to an original and here we see that this relation will not create a Becoming. This conclusion is absolutely crucial to the entire project of moving from model to module. To perform in this way, means that the communication between performer and spectator is not based on recognition of what is presented. For the event to take place both the performer and the spectator engage in a Becoming. The performer representing a symbol that the spectator recognizes, as that which it is already defined as, is not a Becoming. Instead, "A becoming is not a correspondence between relations. But neither is it a resemblance, an imitation, or, at the limit, an identification". (2004:262) For me it is that last word, *identification*, that sums it up. As we were working on mirroring we could notice tiny Becomings within the imitation and within the resemblance. Small diffractions within. The problem arises as one identifies with that imitation or resemblance. For us, to identify would be to define and we wanted to escape definition, and just like the quote above “never again will I say, “I am this, I am that”.

**1.6.5 The Animal Body**

There is yet one more thing to address through Becoming Animal and its inherent relation to multiplicity: a relation to the body.

> It is at this point the human being encounters the animal. We do not become animal without a fascination for the pack, the multiplicity. A fascination for the outside? Or is the multiplicity that fascinates us already related to a multiplicity dwelling within us.

Deleuze & Guattari (2004: 264)

Here the multiplicity is no longer to be one among many. Instead the “one” that refers to a singular individual is questioned all in all, as Deleuze and Guattari point to an interior multiplicity. Later on they address another relation to the body by quoting Schérer and Hocquenghemspeaking of “an inhumanity immediately experienced in the body as such.” (2004:301-302) – a reference we will return to several time in this thesis.⁴

In the previously mentioned chapter, *1914 One or Several Wolves*, there are several references to the body as multiplicity and to the multiplicities in the body such as

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⁴ In the text the quote is has no clear reference, but the page after there is a note that reference: *Co-ire, Recherche*, no. 22 (1976), pp. 76-82.
teeth, pores, the hairs of the beard or the bones in the body. Even if Deleuze and Guattari find themselves in a line of thought separated from that of phenomenology, as they come to speak of the body there are links (or lines of Becoming) to make with some thinkers in the phenomenological tradition. In *A for Animal* Gilles Deleuze explains what relation to the animal it is that he addresses in *Becoming Animal*. It is not the domesticated pet and it is not the animals that mankind like to use as heroic symbols, such as the lion or the eagle. Instead he takes the example of a tick, using Jakob Van Uexküll’s description of the tick in *A Stroll in the World of Animals and Men*. By doing so, Deleuze and Guattari approach the phenomenological question of how the perceptual characteristics found the base of a creature’s the world.

Asking what is it like to be a tick shows clear similarity in interest with Tomas Nagel’s essay *What is it like to be a bat?* This phenomenological question of how one’s perceptive capacities form one’s world was what we worked on in the practice of *Unknown Creature* as explained above. Deleuze and Guattari quote Schérer and Hocquenghem again speaking of how it is “impossible to say where the boundary between the human and the animal lies” (2004: 301) and that “it is as though, independent of the evolution carrying them toward adulthood, there were room in the child for other becoming (…)” (ibid). This relates closely to what is called *Constructive Phenomenology* and I will come back to that several times in the following chapters, but more specifically in *Techne and Self*. There are certainly a lot of differences between the Constructive Phenomenology and the post-structuralist concept of *Becoming Animal* and I’m not trying to unite them. The same method for knowledge production that the Diffracted Communication with the spectator manifests could be applied to my reading of these different philosophical schools. Instead of proving similarities between the two traditions, we can consider their relation as “aparallel evolution”, a term that Deleuze and Guattari borrow in order to describe a becoming through the metaphor of the relation between an orchid and a wasp:

There is neither imitation nor resemblance, only an exploding of two heterogeneous series on the line of flight composed by a common rhizome that can no longer be attributed to or subjugated by anything signifying. Remy Chauvin

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5 These are also expressed in term of their concept Body Without Organ, but I will not involve that term since it is such a broad concept that I will not have space to develop here plus; the concept has not shown itself helpful in what I’m working on.

6 From *L’Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, a series of interviews of Gilles Deleuze by Claire Parnet. Produced for French television by Pierre-André Boutang in 1988-1989. On Deleuze demand it was only to be broadcasted after his death and it is first airing took place 1996.
expresses it well: "the \textit{aparallel evolution} of two beings that have absolutely nothing to do with each other.

Deleuze & Guattari (2004: 11)

1.6.7 Summary
Why were the works called \textit{MODUL}? The short answer is the title of the thesis: From Model to Module. The \textit{MODUL} method is an attempt to leave the representational paradigm in which representation is assessed on its correspondence with the original – the model. The \textit{MODUL} method re-articulates multiplicities and forms new ones.

Choreography as an art form has extended its \textit{champs d'action}, and finds itself banging up against structural frame works. To create space for the art form’s development, it no longer suffices to vary the content within the existing production framework. The format needs to be more flexible, and the content should be allowed to shape the form rather than the opposite. The question of form/content also applies to the actual performed movement: to let the body shape a movement, instead of shaping the body into a mold that reproduces movement. The mold is the model and the module is its re-articulation. When in \textit{MODUL} 2 Max Cucarro and I constructed the plaster mold of me, we could notice how the mold could still produce different results as the material placed into it varied. At the first glance the created replicants would all look the same since the spectating eye so eagerly identifies through resemblance, but closing in one would perceive their differences.

The first step in the \textit{MODUL} method is a topographical movement analysis of the situation in which the work is going to take place. This is to rule out any idea of neutrality. In his book \textit{Exhausting Dance}, André Lepecki points towards modernity’s desire of reproducing a subject in continuous movement and shows how such a fantasy of perpetual movement demands that “modernity imagines its topography as already abstracted from its grounding on a land previously occupied by other human bodies, other life forms, filled with other dynamics, gestures, steps and temporalities.” (2006: 14) In a lecture at DOCH in November 2010, Lepecki made a similar remark on how the stage, as a pretended neutral space and levelled ground, presents a similar refusal of topographical self-critique. \textit{MODUL} has been working on how a choreographic intervention can reveal an inherent topography instead of obscuring it, by leveling it with the ground. Similarly, I understand the technical work for a movement practitioner as a way to reveal the body’s topographical prerequisites for movement instead of obscuring the platform of both one’s physical being and one’s subjective stance.
One is never capable of encompassing all the aspects of a context but the
topographical analysis gives an idea how one is situated, and allows for an informed decision
about which items to include in the work. Outlining that new contexts within a larger context
is an agential cut and already a part of the choreographic work. Once the modular Items, or
Choreographic Agents as I have also called them, have been outlined the re-articulation starts
as a choreographic work that alters the relations between the selected Items. Instead of
thinking of choreography as a structure we can think of it as revealing structures. But it is not
an innocent activity that merely reveals what was already present. The agential intervention
needs to reveal itself as well.

The goal of performing the topographical movement analysis, and the re-
articulation of the unconcealed Items, is to enter in dialogue with them in such a way that
allows both them, and my own practice to change. Presenting my work in for example an
exposition hall, as I did in MODUL 1, changes my work but changes as well the exposition hall.
The result of such entanglement is not obvious. As Badiou’s afirmative dialectics proposed
change does not mean changing from one definition to another. To engage in a becoming it is
helpful to have vague ideas of its result. In Deleuze and Guattari’s words: “But you do not
know what you can make a rhizome with, you do not know which subterranean stem is
effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment.”
(2004: 277)
MODUL 6
2. Dance Technique

2.1 Introduction
In the contemporary European dance scene, the definition of choreography and dance has been challenged head-on in the last 15-20 years. This is a justified attack. In this chapter we are going to look at this challenge through the lens of dance technique. It is important to state that my understanding of technique involves all aspects of dance production. Since one of the research questions concerned the relation between technique and choreography I want to articulate a relation to technique that does not make a difference between teaching, producing work and presenting it.

In my own case I began teaching and choreographing in the late 90s in Belgium where I had been living and working as a dancer. Teaching always served me as an artistic method and mode of production. A few factors have allowed me to get a specific angle on the relation between technique and choreography, and on a possible relation between teaching and choreographing: The teaching I have been doing has been to professionals or in professional schools and I have never done regular teaching to the same group for a longer period of time. Therefore my teaching has never really been confronted with certain pedagogical, educational and administrative dilemmas. Instead my concerns have been around how I can articulate my specific interests in a way that helps the participants and me to understand what those interests are. This parallel development of teaching and producing artworks has made me ask the fundamental question of the relation between choreography and technique. One would think that this question is obvious, however it is a rather untouched terrain. It should be noted that my concerns are not pedagogical. As I teach, I want to be a good teacher and my aim is to be as clear with my intentions as possible while creating a productive and pleasurable working atmosphere, but my main goal is to develop the idea that we are working on. However this does not mean that I use the teaching situation as a laboratory for my productions. The relation between the two is not causal in that manner where one serves the other. Instead I like to think of the two under the umbrella of the notion of study. Both producing work and teaching can be seen as ways to "apply oneself to the
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acquisition of learning” and “to be pressing forward”, which are both early translations of the
Latin term *studiare.*

To contextualize my position I start by describing the education I went through
and the understanding of technique I encountered there. I then provide a historical backdrop
and describe a possible shift in the understanding of dance technique and choreography
through the emergence of so-called postmodern dance in New York in the 60s. A few different
techniques, or approaches to technique, are mentioned and from them I tease out a few topics
that are important in my own practical work, both teaching and choreographing, and that are
important concepts to be developed later on in this thesis. At the end of the chapter I give a
description of the tradition I have been laying out and explain why I choose to present my
work within that tradition. The next chapter will be more on my own teaching.

2.2 Personal Backdrop

After some years of evening classes in my teens I started, in the early 90s, at Danshögskolan
(University College of Dance) in Stockholm, the institution that today is DOCH. At the time
there were only programs for choreographers or teachers and I started to study to become a
teacher in Classical Ballet and Jazz Dance. However, I wanted to be a dancer and the next year
I started at the modern department at the Swedish Royal Ballet School. In this school,
technique was something almost palpable in spite of its immaterial ontology and, as we could
see in the description of MODUL 5, there is still today a different understanding of technique
than the one I will advocate in the following chapters. Existing techniques had names. They
were Classical Ballet, Modern Dance (Graham, Cunningham and Release Technique) and Jazz
(Mattox). Classical ballet and Release Technique do not, as the other three, relate to a specific
person. Classical ballet breaks down into different schools of style and technique, such as
Cecchetti and Vaganova¹ and release technique has an even more disparate background of
influences and origins that I will come back to. However, in the school I went to, classical
ballet was simply referred to as ballet and release technique was referred to but not explicitly
taught.²

Classical Ballet, Modern Dance and Jazz were created as techniques to help a
dancer develop the skills that the corresponding repertory requires. However, no one
expected that any of the students in my class would actually work with those specific

¹ Named after named after the Italian Ballet Master/pedagogue Enrico Cecchetti (1850–1928) and the
Russian dancer/pedagogue Agrippina Vaganova (1879–1951).
² The head of program at the time, Kajsa Giertz, had been educated in New York and was teaching
Cunningham but also some “floor work” that I consider as a form of release technique but I do not recall
it being talked about as release technique.
techniques directly applied to the repertory they were created for. In that sense the techniques were detached from their function and went from being one technique, i.e. a tool to access a certain skill necessary for a certain movement vocabulary, to being considered technique as such. While training in these techniques I acquired bodily coordination and control that both are skills that have been very helpful for me to become a dancer but also more or less inevitable if you spend three years training in any kind of physical discipline. They are skills developed in class but not that easily traced back to the actual technique taught in the class. Looking back at what gave me the most insights into movement, it was not the aesthetic definitions that the techniques represented. The Modern techniques studied were Graham and Cunningham. The two techniques were not taught in their pure form as our teachers brought other influences into the work. Considering that the two techniques were developed in the 50s and that none of my teacher’s had actually danced the original material, nor studied it straight from the source, one can really question why the names prevailed. The two names were referred to, but they were not taught to us with the purpose to have a professional career working with those two companies. With the jazz training it was the same case. Jane Darling taught Mattox technique but not for us to perform Mattox choreographies. I never became a jazz dancer, and in that sense never directly applied the technique to its real purpose, but in her classes I learned a lot.

I think that the information I got from Jane came from the movement knowledge she possessed, not only from Mattox Technique. What I picked up from Jane was movement perception and kinaesthetic awareness. A knowledge most likely influenced by her work with Eva Lundqvist in the group Vindhåxor. Even though it was never talked about as movement perception or kinaesthetic awareness with that terminology it is how I would describe it today. She would probably describe it as musicality and I remember her teaching using a lot of different sounds. Sounds that described a movement quality, and along with them a visual presentation of what she meant. We were mostly moving on one level, knees slightly bent in a demi-plié. It had a hovering quality, sweeping across the floor. It was an important piece laid into the puzzle that shaped the technique I teach today. One could say that she was teaching something other than Mattox technique through the Mattox technique. This shows two things that may seem paradoxical at first. On one hand, the surname technique does not guarantee a skill but on the other hand one can learn something other than the technique through that same technique. One can use a technique to progress in skills detached from the performing of

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3 Finnish researcher Riikka Korppi Tommola has studied this hybridisation of established techniques.
4 Eva Lundqvist founded Vindhåxor in 1977. The technique that she has developed in relation to her work does not carry a name.
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that same technique. Thus, the result from a teaching process should not be assessed by looking at the students’ capacity to reproduce a corresponding copy to an original. Yet, there still seems to be a belief that it is the name-given technique that contains the knowledge. In this sense, the technique works as a brand. Not only through its marketability but also as a quality stamp that allows entry into conventional institutions.

The modern techniques mentioned came about through art production but were then detached from their purpose of making art and used to train students. It is different today but at the time the institutional framework demanded a form of guarantee that what is taught is a recognised technique, like the ones mentioned in spite of the fact that those techniques were not really related to professional life outside the school. I remember Jane Darling once saying: If you really want to get strong you should just shift your weight back and forth. I thought to myself: Why isn’t that what we’re doing? A few years ago, meeting Jane in a corridor at DOCH I reminded her of this. She said that what she probably was referring to was Tai-Chi and how, in difference to how dance is taught in dance classes, it works with a constant weight shift. There was definitely some of that quality built into Jane’s low sweeping across the floor. Tai-Chi was not in the curriculum at the Royal Ballet School, but it was still there where I met it first, as a ballet teacher – Vladimir Mogilida – taught it to some of us in the evenings. So even if the school would not accept Tai-Chi as technique it was indirectly the school that ended up providing it. The more contemporary technique that Eva Lundqvist developed in relation to her choreographic work was sneaked in to the curriculum via Mattox Technique, as was Tai-Chi in the after hours. The potential of those teachers were overshadowed by the techniques they were employed to represent. On the other hand, those techniques did not prevent them from undermining or overriding what they are employed to represent. The technique itself is not the problem. It is the symbol that the technique becomes.

2.3 A Performative Approach to Technique

The founding mother and father of the two mentioned modern techniques – Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham – had both developed techniques related to their movement vocabulary. These techniques have, ever since, been modified, bastardised and used for other purposes than that of performing the originally corresponding movement vocabulary, although still taught under the surname of its author. As the so-called postmodern dance entered the dance stage at Judson Church in New York in the 60s, it presented a different
relation to technique. It was an intense period for the development of the Arts around that
time and the Judson Church movement should be placed in the context of the emergence of
happenings, minimalism, the fluxus movement, conceptualism and pop art, to mention some. The
definition of what art is was up in the air and so was the definition of the skill that an
artist would need to display. The dance concerts presented at Judson Church started from a
series of composition classes taught by Robert Dunn at the Cunningham Studios in New York. As
the participants were looking for a place to show their work, the priest Howard Moody
gave them the opportunity to use the Judson Memorial Church. This openness gave place to a
remarkable event in history and the Judson group involved performers and choreographers
such as Yvonne Rainer, Deborah Hay, Steve Paxton, David Gordon, Trisha Brown and Douglas
Dunn. The Judson movement spanned over the 60s and beginning of the 70s with the
formation of the group Grand Union, but was then dispersed into more individual directions
and even if the venue is still in use today it has not returned to its peak since then. What went
on at Judson Church was a re-articulation of dance and choreography and as the skill of
dancing in a conventional meaning was broken down, what happened to technique under the
influence of the Judson movement was radical. As Susan Foster writes:

Unlike ballet, where standard criteria of evaluation and a universalist ideal of
expertise are developed, Hay and others of her generation have proposed projects
that require radically alternative sets of physical skills. Unlike modern dance,
whose vocabularies seemed to issue from panhuman psychic dynamics,
choreographers from the 1960s shifted the focus away from psychological origins
and toward the physical matter of dance making. Their work demonstrates how

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5 This movement did not appear out of nowhere. There is a historical lineage within American modern
dance, oriental influences, and earlier art movements such as the surrealism, futurism, Dadaism.
There’s a lot to be said about this period, and most of it has already been said. For an overall
description see Sally Banes: Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-Modern Dance ( Wesleyan, 1987) and
6 At the Movement Research festival Sidewinder in 2008 Barbara Moore showed a slide show from the
Judson church era and on stage or in the audience one could see artists like Sol Lewitt, Robert Morris,
Donald Judd, La Monte Young, Dick Higgins, Andy Warhol, Allan Kaprow, John Cage, Robert
Rauschenberg and Carolee Schneemann, all key figures in their disciplines and movements.
7 The references vary on the importance of the participation if his partner, Judith Dunn, in the classes.
8 Grand Union was the name that the artists involved (give some, take some) around Judson Church
took as a group. Under that name the performed improvisational work. See: Happ –Ramsay, Margaret,
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each new choreographic project requires special skills and hence special training in order for the dancers to acquire those skills.
Foster (2000: x-xi)

Just like Merce Cunningham and Martha Graham felt the need to develop new techniques in correspondence to their choreographic projects, the artists Foster refers to felt the need to reinvent technique, since the existing techniques could not provide the skills their work demanded. An emblematic illustration of what was at stake is Yvonne Rainer’s piece Trio A, produced in 1966 and part of a bigger work called Mind Is A Muscle. The actual steps of the dance were maintained intact but it was performed in various versions, as solo or as group piece. The original performance was by David Gordon, Yvonne Rainer and Steve Paxton. In Trio A Rainer works consciously against phrasing and proposes a different sort of kinaesthetic dramaturgy, similar to what the minimalist sculptures called “one thing after another”. She disrespects the flow of movement and lines them up as if they were objects. A display that Susan Leigh Foster describes by saying that “Movements follow one another with no sense of development, causality, or flow. (...) The result is not chaotic but matter of fact.” (1986: 32-34) We should note however that Trio A is a very deliberately and thoroughly composed piece.9 But its composition works in a different way from what was conventional at the time (and, to some extent, still today). It is a form of composition that despite its thoroughness looks improvised and random. The movements are on display as singular objects, separated from each other and from any theme connecting them. They are placed there for observation.

Within what appears to be an easy, pedestrian whatever-look, hides an in-depth understanding of the sense-making procedures involved in choreography. Or even in thinking as such. To be able to make sense out of the sensory data we are confronted with, our minds are constantly processing. To consciously operate parallel to this sense-making, triggering it without falling into it, is a very subtle and skilful endeavour that carries the potential to alter a spectator’s understanding of dance. What Rainer manages to do is to let the movement appear as such and not as a vehicle for other meaning. As Sally Banes puts it, Rainer manages to “make dance as such the locus of the audience attention by making dances in which all the audience was given to see was structure and movement per se, i.e. movement without overtly expressive or illusionistic effects or references.” (1986: xxi) Banes calls this form of relating to dance Analytic Post-Modern Dance. Dance is used to show itself instead of as a tool to express something. An interesting thing in the quote above is the use of the term “structure”. I suppose

9 A recording of Rainer performing it on her own was made in 1978. Produced by Sally Banes and filmed by Robert Alexander. Available on-line on YouTube.
that what is meant by structure in the quote is simply choreography. The re-articulation of
dancing allowed choreography to leave its place as structural tool and step into the
foreground. As dance was not used as a vehicle for any other message than itself its structure
revealed itself, or the dance revealed itself as structure – as choreography. This approach on
the relation between dance and choreography is interesting in regard to the research question
concerning technique and choreography. Rainer develops a specific technique in relation to a
specific dance work that critiques phrasing and by disregarding phrasing, the structure of
phrasing appears as such. We could say that phrasing reveals itself as the choreography of
dance through its absence. I believe that it was something similar to this that I was trying to
address through the collision of dance and music in MODUL 3.

Just as modern dance has tried to free itself from classical ballet, postmodern
dance wanted to free itself from modern dance and its definition of skill, dynamic phrasing,
dramatic expressions and forms of representing the body. By the same token, technique was
no longer something easily identified. Since each choreographic project demanded different
sets of skills there was no longer Technique with capital T and the shift can be illustrated by
the fact that the techniques developed in contemporary dance from then on do not carry a
surname. What kind of techniques did the redefinition of dance and choreography bring
along? To answer I will use a few examples of techniques that have developed in the
aftermath of the Judson movement.

2.3.1 Contact Improvisation

The origin of Contact Improvisation is mostly attributed to Steve Paxton but it was developed
in close collaboration with others such as Lisa Nelson and Nancy Stark-Smith. In spite of
Paxton’s strong involvement in developing the technique Paxton does not teach or perform
Contact Improvisation anymore. Contact Improvisation consists in, as its name clearly shows,
an improvisation in physical contact with others. It moves up and down from the floor and it
involves lifting and being lifted. In a presentation at ISTA in Copenhagen 1996, Paxton,
together with Lisa Nelson, speak of Contact Improvisation and name two supporting surfaces:
the earth and the human partner. Paxton says the second one is a relation to: “The thing-ness
of another human being”.¹⁰ This thing-ness is, as we shall see, a very important remark for
me. Paxton is not speaking of what is human in the body, but about that what is thing in it. I

¹⁰ International School of Theatre Anthropology was founded in 1979 by Eugenio Barba. It is based in
Holstebro, Denmark, but functions as an itinerant university. There is a recording of the presentation
available on line at http://www.odinteatretarchives.com/thearchives/the-audiovisual-archives/examples/video-steve-paxton-1996 (the quoted section is at 6min 50).
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would say that this thing-ness is the materiality of the biological body. In Contact it is experienced through a sensation of weight mediated by touch. Contact Improvisation renders the weight evident to the practitioner through feeling the partner’s weight and noticing how to use one’s own weight as to counterbalance. It is an interesting way to see how partnering work can develop each individual’s technique, not just their partnering technique. It is difficult to experience one’s own weight since we are so accustomed to it. We do not feel the effort of lifting the weight of our arm, or carrying our body straight. Sensing someone else’s weight can reveal one’s own.

2.3.2 Material For the Spine

Material For the Spine can be seen as a system for exploring the interior and exterior muscles of the back. It aims to bring the light of consciousness to the dark side of the body, that is, the side not much self-seen, often an omitted element in a dancer’s self-definition. Via exercise, idiokinetic imagery and specific examples, I wanted to bring to consciousness, the inner sensations. The moments when usage reveals its operation of the skeleton, the muscular connections available between pelvis and fingertips and the soft energetic support of leverage which I take to be the eastern concept of chi or ki. Material for the Spine takes as given the palette of the dancer exists as sensations in their body. It attempts to point out naturally occurring events and develop exercises, which bring them forward for examination. What if those sensations were allowed to play? What if it was like the sensation you got from your Tai-Chi class were the blues and were going to play or dance? You might have to learn to technique and you might have to learn to notice that you improvise. I think that’s a good clear reason for keeping Material For the Spine minimal but puzzling.

Steve Paxton\(^{11}\) (emphasis added)

While the origin on Contact Improvisation is spread among several artists, Material For the Spine is Steve Paxton’s own work. Before going on I want to remark how Paxton says “to technique” (my italics in the quote above). This is video material of Paxton speaking and maybe he stumbles in his speech and would have expressed it

\(^{11}\) DVD-rom produced in 2008 by Contredanse, Brussels. (Duration: 4 hours. PC-MAC compatible. Bilingual English-French).
differently in written text. Intentionally or not he shifts the word from substantive – a technique, to verb – to technique. Later in the same video he describes this activity:

That's the technical work. It is just how to get the body's qualities or possibilities into this tiny little conscious brain. Maybe that's the technical work right there, repeating enough and slowing things down enough so that the consciousness which seems to me is enmeshed in the kinds of speeds that we use in talking and thinking to ourselves, when we're kind of wordy in the mind. (...) When you are trying to assess the feelings, in all the sensations, and you want to remember them and you want to remember the anatomy of them and you want to figure out the energy of them, when you're doing those things, it again seems to be at that speed; it is not. Steve Paxton

There are a few things in the quote that I would like to focus on. Whereas the earlier techniques developed skills to perform a specific movement vocabulary, Paxton instead wants to “point out naturally occurring events and develop exercises which bring them forward for examination”. Instead of applying a technique onto the body there’s an effort to look at the body from a technical viewpoint. However, the use of “naturally” is complicated. It is very hard to say what is natural and it can easily fall into an ideological trap where the body is defined as something simply natural and as such unreachable. However we can distinguish certain genetic information passed down, such as the suction reflex, from the capacity to teach oneself how to stand upright in a fifth position, and we can make this distinction without having to claim the natural. In a transcript from a conversation held in Brighton in February 2007, there is a more useful term. “I'm still working on walking and it has now turned into a technical approach (...) and I have always felt that walking, being such a basic programme of the human being, was the source of all the dance steps that you would ever want to see.” The term “basic programme” is easier to handle than “naturally occurring events”. Paxton draws on a certain functionality found in primal movements and as we have seen he refers to walking but above as well to Tai-Chi and in other places also aikido.

Walking is not a capacity that the human infant is born with, as for example the gripping reflex, but the body material is clearly well designed for it and in this sense it could

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12 Ibid.
13 Organized by Movement 12 Group. The transcript was found on-line, but the site is now down (www.movement12.org).
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be considered a basic programme. Here is a first hint on how to think technique in relation to physical functionality. In the second quote Paxton moves into another tricky terrain, that of the body-mind split: “how to get the body’s qualities or possibilities into this tiny little conscious brain.” He is not using the terms body and mind but he does point to a separation between body and “conscious brain”. This is a topic that I will address several times throughout the thesis. It is still too early to make any specific statements, but I would like to draw the attention to how he does not speak of a union between the two. Instead he speaks of how to put them in contact with each other through “repeating enough and slowing things down”. He speaks of a communication between two different instances in the body and he describes this movement through a difference in speed and since speed is of an intensive nature – not extensive – it is a difference in intensity.

2.3.3 Release Technique(s)
Release Technique is a very nebulous term and several different techniques are involved, which is why I add the plural (s) in the heading. As I have already mentioned it was used very vaguely in my own education and the European context where I started my career it was not more defined, since at the time, anything that today would be called contemporary technique was called Floor Work or Release Technique. It was indeed an American phenomenon and it has taken quite a while for the more informed knowledge of the origins to spread in the European dance scene. In the Swedish context, the technique that clearly relates to Release Technique and is the most widely spread and taught is Klein Technique, but there are many other techniques that can be placed under its umbrella, such as Alexander Technique, Skinner Releasing and Feldenkrais. Given the scarcity of information I had access to, for a long time I understood Release Technique more as a movement style that I related to the work of the American choreographer Trisha Brown. In an on-line article of the magazine Contact Quarterly, Melinda Buckwalter shows a similar understanding (although being American) as she says that the term Release Technique had come to “refer to a movement style – after the fashion of choreographer Trisha Brown, characterized by loose-jointed, relaxed movement.”

Buckwalter continues by describing this movement style by saying that “Where limbs had once moved as a whole, they were now made of pieces—wrist, knee, elbow, shoulder, hip—and could initiate movement as easily as the torso once had.”

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15 Ibid.
In his article "What is Release Technique?" Daniel Lepkoff describes Release Technique from his experiences studying with Mary Fulkerson in her Anatomical Release Technique. Lepkoff describes what he calls an "image" that the body has of itself and the surrounding that it engages with. He describes this image as constituting the preparation of any action in movement and that "The details of this preparation are based upon the body’s expectation of what will be required to fulfil the ensuing task." He continues to state "release work attempts to bring consciousness to bear on the subtle process of how we bring ourselves into motion." As Lepkoff uses the term "image" he touches on another important origin in Release Technique - that of ideokinetic imagery, which Paxton also referred to above, in his explanation of Material for the Spine. The term *ideokinesis* was coined by Mabel Elsworth Todd and combine the two Greek terms *ideo* (idea) and *kinesis* (movement). Todd developed the use of imaging movement in the early 20th century as a way to improve posture and alignment in the body. Students of hers, such as Barbara Clark and Lulu Sweigard, continued the work and Sweigard was invited to the faculty at the Dance Division of Juilliard School of Music in New York. This was in 1956, which coincides with the change in understanding in dance technique that the shift from the modern to what usually is called post-modern dance brought about, but also the time around the performative turn.

It is not necessary to explicate further the different techniques involved under the umbrella of Release Technique, but there are a few things I would like to remark on. First we need to understand what the term release means in this specific case. In a dialogue with Chrysa Parkinson (supervisor in my doctoral project) she explained how she understand the term, not just simply a release of tension as in relaxing one’s muscles, but about how to release movement patterning and to replace them with more adaptable ones. Since a lot of the earlier modern techniques were so focused on repetition of a specific set of movements, patterns were carved into the body and chiselled it into form. The different techniques mentioned, tried instead to open up the body to different movements and install less rigid patterns. To deepen my understanding of the origins of Release Technique I interviewed the Swedish dancer and choreographer Irene Hultman. Both Hultman and Parkinson mention the fact that the techniques mentioned were rehabilitation techniques and were not developed to be specifically aimed at dance. Release Technique grew out of a generation of dancers with backgrounds in modern techniques and classical ballet, which then pursued into

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17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
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rehabilitating techniques for injuries (or to prevent them). Since these rehabilitational techniques are based in quotidian movement patterns, they fit well into the Judson and post-Judson Church desire to de-hierarchize the spectacle of virtuosity and instead bring attention back to the simplest, most daily movements. However, later on the rehabilitational techniques have also generated virtous dancers and spectacular movements.

In the 60s there was also a strong oriental influence that brought along martial art techniques that Paxton referred to but also Qi-Gong, Zen meditation and alternative healing techniques of Chinese medicine such as Shiatsu.

In contrast to the modern techniques mentioned above these techniques are not aimed at stage performance and they do not relate to a choreographic style. Instead these techniques seem to speak directly to the interest of the dancer. As mentioned above the choreographic style of Release Technique is often attributed to Trisha Brown, but this legacy seems to be indebted to a lot of the dancers that worked with her and brought their technicity into the work. Brown has never claimed any ownership of Release Technique, but before closing the door on Release Technique I would like to quote her for another reason. “Speaking in all humility, I have an amazing body. It was a gift. I didn't make it go this way. It does not even really belong to me, although I'm in charge of it. (...) I just had this piece of machinery that was looking for a driver, a pilot.”(2004: 60) Brown expresses her relation to her body and points to an experience of a piloting distance and I want to emphasise how she, just like Paxton, speaks of a distance experienced between her self and her body.

2.3.4 Performance Practice

In the last 8-10 years the term practice has become increasingly important in the discourse of contemporary dance and choreography. I have been following this development quite closely since I started the PhD project, some 5 years ago, because the project was initially called One Practice. As the term got more and more frequently used I changed the title to From Model to Module. The term had started to have an importance in the field that did not allow me to use it in the casual way I had done. My emphasis in the title was on the word One and related more to how I considered teaching and art production the same practice. To describe what consequences the term can have on our consideration of dance technique let’s look at a course description by Martin Kilvady and Chrysa Parkinson:

20 Examples of names were Jeremy Nelson, Irene Hultman, Juliette Mapp, Lance Gries, Rebecca Hilton and Stephen Petronio.
Lost and found: Developing a personal practice.\footnote{Workshop program for the 2006 edition of Impuls Tanz in Vienna, Austria.}

The goal of the workshop is for each of the participant to recognize what they want to do and to find a way to do it.

- When are you dancing?
- When are you performing?
  - Whose dance is it?
  - What is technique?
  - Whose technique is it?
  - Whose performance is it?

Using practice instead of technique proposes a different disposition of a learning situation and their description problematises the relation between given terms such as dance, technique and performance. It also shows an understanding for how individual a learning process can be. But maybe most important is how the participants are asked to engage in the work instead of being taught something. The participant is the one who should find out what to work on and how.

I would like to trace the term practice back to one of the artists at the Judson church – Deborah Hay. Ever since the Judson era she has kept developing her work, first in New York City, then Vermont and from 1976 in Austin, Texas. In 2001 she was commissioned to make a duet (Single Duet) with Mikhail Baryshnikov and in 2008 William Forsythe commissioned and produced the piece If I Sing to You. The recognition by two male living legends placed Hay’s work in a different position and most likely also in history. Today Hay’s work is highly acclaimed globally and I believe that her work has played an important role in the widespread use of the term practice since Hay’s term Performance Practice proposes a great opportunity to look into the relation of technique and choreography. Susan Foster describes this relation by first pointing out that “Many contemporary choreographers blur or obscure the ways that training inculcates aesthetic values.” (2000:xi) while “Hay, instead, nurtures the relationship between her approach to dance training and performance and she stands by its integrity.” (Ibid)

In the beginning of this chapter I mentioned how the aesthetics of modern techniques were blurred and obscured as they were considered technique as such and their inherent aesthetics were considered givens. Just as we did with the different techniques
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evered in *Release Technique* we find here a difference from how I described modern
techniques as movement vocabularies broken down into transmittable exercises, aiming at a
one-to-one correspondence between emitter and receiver, in that case teacher-student. But
even more, what Hay brings with the term Performance Practice is an entirely different
relationship between training and performing.

Just as Contact Improvisation could be performed in the same format as it was
studied in, Hay constructs a procedure that cancels the distinction between training and
performing. As we could see with Kiévady and Parkinson's course description, the term
practice allows for this blurring of borders. First of all a practice is not taught, it is shared.
Secondly a practice is not performed in the typical sense with a focus on the showing for a
spectator. Instead it is performed in the way an action is performed and it can be done in the
same way in front of an audience as alone in a studio (even though clearly the experience for
the performer will be different and demand different strategies. One is not indifferent to being
watched). But what is even more interesting is that Hay calls it Performance Practice, making
the performance a part of the practice. Instead of rehearsing and then showing, what one is
practising is performance. Hay takes the skill of performing very seriously by considering it
both practice and technique, which in most education is still completely missing. In my
experience, even if every dancer is interested in performing, the actual technique of
performing is almost completely left aside. It is as if the execution of the movement technique
(which ever one that is) would be the performance. I mentioned this below in the description
of *MODUL 5* where we needed to create techniques that produced another relation to the act
of performing to be able to move away from judgement. When performance technique is not
included into the technical work the dancer is left with only physical exercises, and the actual
goal of performing something remains unattended and veiled in vague ideas of self-
expression. The charismatic qualities that would help a dancer’s career are then something
you have or have not and they are separate from (and added on top of) technique. It is a very
delicate and complex operation that Hay’s work carries out. She blends performing with
training by joining the two in practice. Technique is then not just means to an end. Training
and performing are entwined. She removes the dance from choreographic work and replaces
it with perception of time and space. It is the perception of oneself, one’s body and the space it
moves through that is the material of the choreography. It is an all in all different approach to
movement vocabulary.
I was inspired to construct a verbal dance vocabulary that merged personal and universal images. I wanted it to include the sensual experience of perception. (…) I have come to understand that the body's form and content are not what they appear to be; likewise, my dances do not coalesce around specific subject matter.

Hay (2000: xxiii)

We can see a similarity with what Sally Banes above described as Analytical Postmodern Dance, where dance was used to show itself instead of being a vehicle for narration.22 Here the dance as well is out of the picture to instead be replaced by experience of perception (even though it might express itself in movement.) Performance Practice consists of the discoveries one makes while venturing into the physical performance of the score prepared. Hay makes the performance the material, instead of performing a material: “I learn what my dance is by practising an uninteresting material; the performance of that material becomes the material.” 23 This understanding of performance carries a radical view on the spectator’s status. The absence of any clear message to communicate prompts the performer to relate differently to the spectator. A relation that Hay describes through the expression “invite being seen”24 and it is striking how differently it resonates from the term “showing”. The practice is performed, invites being seen, and since, as she expressed above, the dance does “not coalesce around specific subject matter”, the spectator makes a singular interpretation of what’s going on. Hay’s Performance Practice invites the seeing subject to works on a different level, as she states it: “No coherent being or movement, no identification of what the performer is doing.”25 This should be put in contrast to the one-to-one transmission between student and teacher described above, and to how I discussed the use of score as Verfremdung technique in the descriptions of MODUL 3 and MODUL 4. With Hay’s proposal, knowledge is produced rather than transferred. It is very important to note that this is not disrespect towards, or ignoring of, the spectator. Just like the term “invite being seen” shows, it is a generous gesture, and far from any form of navel-gazing cliché. On the contrary, she claims to “add perception of space to help me to not dwell in my own movement.”26 There is a crucial difference between these two ways of relating to knowledge, on one hand as

22 It should be said that Merce Cunningham’s work already used movement in such a way and, in truth, his work is hard to place between the general categories of so called modern and postmodern dance, or even the categories of representationalism and performative for that sake.
23 My notes from Hay’s research presentation at Tanzkongress in Düsseldorf June 2013.
24 My reference here are colleagues that have worked with Hay: Ulrika Berg, Petter Jacobsson and Chrysa Parkinson.
25 My notes from Hay’s research presentation at Tanzkongress in Düsseldorf June 2013.
26 Ibid.
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transference and on the other as production. I will come back to it frequently since I believe it is the key to rethink performance and training, choreography and technique.

Hay reminds the students that they are teaching themselves by attending rigorously to the body's impulses. (...) Compare this approach to dance training with a generic college level dance class in either ballet or modern dance. Such a class stresses the body's ability (and inability) to conform to specified shapes at a given time. The technically proficient body is one that can accurately and efficiently responds to the specifications. (...) The body succeeds or fails, becomes recalcitrant or insufficient. It functions in reactive response to the will being exerted over it. (...) Students receive no approval or criticism for engaging in these explorations, nor do they learn to hate the body for its inadequacies. Rather, they orient toward body as a generative source of ideas.

Susan Foster (2000: xiv-xv)

I have already mentioned how I aim not to differentiate between a teaching situation and a performing situation by uniting the two under the idea of study. I'm not referring to performance as a way to educate the audience in a didactical manner in which the performer carries information and transfers it to a spectator. Instead, borrowing from the quote above, the notion of study considers both the performance and teaching situations as an opportunity to reveal realities and produce knowledge "as a generative source of ideas". The term generative is also the one used in the subtitle for this thesis to describe a way of understanding choreography, not as a fixed result of a choreographing process, but as a set of parameters that generate something. It is not an ordering of bodies, time and space but a subtle, Intra-Action that generates bodies, times and spaces.

2.4 Weight and thought
We have looked at how Contact Improvisation can allow a practitioner to rediscover her/his weight and experience the thing-ness of the body. Paxton has said that one of the reasons he got involved with dance was to finish his movement development, a development that he says was interrupted by schooling.27 Considering Release Technique as a tool to undo unwanted neurological and muscular patterns, it also backtracks inside bodily construction. We will get back to this construction of body later on while looking into Constructive Phenomenology. It

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27 This comes from a youtube clip that Paxton seems to have published. I have not found any other more accountable reference. www.youtube.com/watch?v=a82Qy62bUTc.
is not difficult to see a shared interest between Contact Improvisation and Release Technique from this point of view. Even if releasing is not the same thing as relaxing one of the things one needs to learn to release is one’s weight and the released body in movement works with a different tonus than what the earlier modern techniques made use of. A good way to describe the difference between releasing and relaxing is that one can release in any direction, while relaxing points down in the direction of gravity.28

What role does weight play in Hay’s Performance Practice? In the aforementioned presentation in Düsseldorf, Deborah Hay stated the following: “When I notice my whole body at once, it is weightless, when I focus on it, it has weight.” Hay points out a difference of attention between noticing and focusing, and she expresses that difference in terms of sensation of weight. Similarly, Hay uses the cue “Lighten Up” as a tool not to focus too much on a task. It is interesting to see this metaphorical connection between weight and thought.29 A metaphor we can find already in the term gravity where something of great importance is expressed in relation to its weight. Hay describes how “the whole body at once” produces a sensation of weightlessness, while focusing on it drops it to the floor. It is an argument for certain lightness of thought. By focusing too much on the task at hand one risks blinding oneself to what is going on within the task already. We can also note that “focusing” mostly relates to vision while “noticing” can include other senses. This lightness that Hay connects to noticing can be seen as a form of thinking that does not hurry to identify the subject of its thinking. It allows definition to hover instead of being pinned down. Releasing thought.

If we accept this metaphorical relation between weight and thought we can express it with the same metaphor as the difference between the actions release and relax. Releasing in every direction as weightlessness and focusing as giving weight and grounding. Focus has one direction while noticing has many. I understand this way of thinking as a performance skill, thus relating it both to technique and performance as Performance Practice aims at doing. I have remarked earlier how both Trisha Brown and Steve Paxton spoke of a distance between body and mind and I think we can understand Hay’s statement on the relation between attention and weight as a form of communication between the two and that this communication is the activity “to technique”. Another possible expression of the self is “I” and let’s look at how Deborah Hay makes use of the different terms: thinking, body and I. Starting with thinking: “We are dying. We think we are not. This is a good argument for giving

28 It is second hand information. I have been told that American dancer and Alexander Technique practitioner Shelly Senter uses this explanation.
29 Here again I lean on aforementioned colleagues’ outgivings.
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up thinking.”(2000:1) Obviously we should not give up thinking as such. It is a specific form of
thinking that she wants to give up and I understand it as the form of conscious focus that she
relates to gravity. It is also worth noting how she says we are dying instead of we will die.

Death is in life, not the end of it. I will die one day, but my biological existence that gives a
platform for my experience of self – and for thinking that I’m not dying – is living and dying
simultaneously. In Hay’s quote thinking seems stupid and we have reason to come back to this
relation between thought and stupidity in the chapter Techne and Self. During the
Tanzkongress presentation Deborah Hay happened to stumble on the stupidity of thought.

She said she had a thought, and pointed to her head and then immediately commented her
own reflex by saying: “Still after all these years, I still instantaneously house a thought in my
mind in my head. And still I want to get it right when I do something.” Two things that she has
spent almost a lifetime to undo: that the thinking happens in the head and that an action can
be self-fulfilling without being right or wrong. This shows us that she still has not been able to
undo the pattern that rules our understanding of body and mind after about 50 years of
practice. I wouldn’t say that this shows her efforts to be in vain, since they have generated
amazing ideas and works, but it does show the strength of the mentioned patterns. At the
same presentation Hay also mentioned how she, for a few years time, had tried to unlearn to
sneeze; another patterning she had not been able to undo. What about Hay’s relation to self in
form of the “I”?

What if:

"I" is the reconfiguration of my body into fifty-three trillion cells at once?

"I" practice non-attachment to each movement?

"I" know nothing.

Hay (2000:1)

Let’s start with the second question. I think the non-attachment she speaks of is
related to the difference between focusing and noticing that we spoke of above. The non-
attachment notices what is happening in “the whole body at once” but does not focus with the
desire to define. Svärmen used this mode of thought to apply Deleuze and Guattari’s concept
of Becoming Animal and to work with Diffraction. In Becoming Animal it was expressed
through the rejection of identification. We experienced it in Diffraction by keeping an object
of observation in peripheral view. In the first question Hay addresses the topic that is
absolutely crucial for this thesis, namely the relation between the self and the body. Hay asks
the question of whether she can consider her self as her biological body. Or even more
precisely, if it is possible for her self to reconfigure in a manner that allows her to experience
her biological – in her words cellular – body. By asking this question Hay shows how her Performance Practice shares an interest with both Contact Improvisation and Release Technique in looking back towards a body pre-existent to the body experienced by the self. Clearly, the trillions of cells were there before the body emerged. But who is then the “I” in the last question? I suppose it is the I that thinks it is not dying. The “I” that does not even know it is dying. Knowledge is not residing in this “I”. Knowledge would instead be found in “the whole body at once” that reconfigured itself into a platform for an experience of self, allowing identity to emerge. Knowledge is within the body, or rather emerges through and throughout the body and Hay refers to her body as “my teacher”. By doing so she marks a distance between herself and her body. Between the two a learning situation can appear that she describes by saying that “At such times Deborah Hay assumes the devotion of a dog to its master; reading the simplest sign of life, lapping up whatever nuance my teacher produces.” (2000: xxiv) Deborah Hay, speaking of her self in third person, is studying the body in which Deborah Hay (presumably) resides. Just like Trisha Brown and Steve Paxton phrased in their way, Hay points to the difference between her identity and her body. There is communication and knowledge production taking place between the two entities of Deborah Hay and her teacher, the body. In this example the self is taking a very submissive position towards its teacher the body. But she starts the quote by saying “At such times” so I presume that it is not a statement on how she defines the relation between the two in general, nor the kind of submissive behaviour she would ask from a student when Deborah Hay is the teacher. However, the way that Hay gets carried away while expressing her affection towards the body can show us the importance of trying to not sacralise the body in the process of granting it knowledge. I do not think we would be doing the body, or the self, any favour by getting on our knees in praise.

2.5 Body-Self Attunement

I have shown how Paxton, Brown and Hay, all in their own way, express the experience of gap a between body and self and how crucial this is to my research. I will now introduce an important term that I refer to frequently throughout this entire thesis: Body-Self Attunement. The term is an alternative to the body-mind split and I understand it as a technical activity of balancing the relation between body and self. It is my version of what Paxton called “to technique” and to what Hay calls “my body, the teacher”.

I came across the word attunement for the first time while looking at a video recording of a panel discussion called “Forays into the Non-linguistic and the Challenge of
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Languing Experience”. Three persons whose works have been seminal in my research were present: Steve Paxton, Daniel Stern and Maxine Sheets-Johnstone. In the discussion they refer to the term “affect attunement” that Daniel Stern has worked on extensively through the interplay of parent and infant but also between adults in clinical psychotherapy. In the discussion Paxton mentions how he heard the term in a presentation done by Stern in the 70s, as Paxton was developing Contact Improvisation, and realized how the two were connected.31

My use of attunement does not specifically relate to affect or human behaviour. Instead I choose the word for its relation to movement. In my understanding attunement is not done to find a once-and-for-all tuned harmony, but on the contrary, to engage an on-going activity of modulation between different influences.

Our bodies carry within them the capacity to create a platform for an experience of self. It is from this platform we define ourselves as “I” and it is from this point of observation we point to our heads to place our thoughts. Proposing this construction as an inherent function in our biological body does not mean that I want to separate it from culture. The platform is culturally traced as well. The nature/culture split as mode of thinking will not get us far here and as Barad proposes through her term Intra-Action we can consider nature and culture as outputs rather than as pre-existing singularities. They are entangled with each other just like body and mind and we need to expand our concept of our biological body beyond what the term *nature* has brought us so far.

There is a construction of the body. The trillions of cells that Hay speaks of have configured themselves in such a way that a self can emerge. This bodily construction takes place before the appearance of language. Once our biological body has enabled the symbolical body to emerge the latter obscures the earlier. The claim of the Self-Body Attunement is that this process can be revisited and altered. The alteration is limited, we cannot undo everything and we cannot reverse the development. We keep sneezing when we have to but there is some margin for change. There is plasticity. This revisiting is what I call Body-Self Attunement. To be able to construct and engage in reality the body needs to be a default. We need the construction of self to make sense of our surrounding and to engage with it in the way we human do. But we need to be reminded of our biological bodies, at least if that is the material of our artistic endeavour as it is for someone in the field of dance and choreography, but maybe also for those who do not. Mostly one is only reminded of one’s body as it malfunctions or expresses basic needs. The immense complexity of the body is generally disregarded and

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30 June 27, 2007 7:00 p.m. The Philoctetes Center, New York. A transcript from the discussion was prepared by RA Fisher Ink, LLC, and can be found on-line at: www.philocetes.org.
31 Ibid (p.5).
most people have a lot more information about the world outside them than the one inside of them. An average adult in western society will be swifter parking their car than getting themselves over a fence, or will have less difficulty explaining where the closest grocery shop is situated than pointing out the location of one’s spleen. It is in this forgetfulness of body where Body-Self Attunement can play a role and remind us about the thing-ness in our bodies.

2.6 Body as Thing
How can we understand this thing-ness of the body? Simone Forti, who also worked around the Judson group, recalls seeing Trisha Brown thrusting a broom in the air with such force that her body followed. (Banes 1877: 77) The weight of the broom was not enough to make Brown fly through the room; it probably does not have more weight than Brown’s own arm. However, Brown’s experience of the weight of the broom is different from her experience of the weight of her arm. It is the fact that the broom is an extra-corporeal object that allows Trisha Brown to experience its weight in a way that allows her to align with its trajectory trough space. The broom allows her to experience weight in the same way as a physical partner does in Contact Improvisation and what Paxton above called “thing-ness in the body”. This thing-ness is difficult, or maybe even impossible, to experience in one’s own body, but the perception of one’s body can be altered and an arm can be experienced in different ways. Turning oneself into a thing may sound like a boring thing to do and treating someone else like a thing as in objectification is not what I recommend. The thing should instead be understood here as the biological body. The biological body is, in some sense, more alive than the symbolical body of the I, but since the symbolical body is what we assign as human, the biological body becomes nonhuman; a thing. In that sense, to experience the thing-ness of the body is to experience its bodi-ness. It is a materialist approach to the body.

While using the Judson Church artists to speak of an understanding of choreography and technique that I consider myself belonging to, I mentioned how Yvonne Rainer’s Trio A showed a relation to minimalist sculpture. There are more references to the body as thing in her work, even if it was never expressed in terms of technique. In the programme statement for her performance The Mind is a Muscle Rainer explains how her overall concern is to “reveal people as they are engaged in various kinds of activities – alone, with each other, with objects – and to weight the quality of the human body toward that of objects and away from the superstylization of the dancer.”

32 The performance took place at the Anderson Theatre, New York in April 1968 and the entire statement can be found in: Wood, Catherine, Yvonne Rainer: the mind is a muscle, Afterall, London, 2007 (p. 41).
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To accompany her performance Rainer writes an essay where she expresses how she conceives of the body as object and proposes to “be moved by some thing, rather than by oneself.” (1968: 269) First of all we should notice the use of two difference terms: object and thing. To avoid the connotation of objectification that the dancing body has, and is still subjected to, I will opt for thing and I will make a small re-articulation of Rainer’s quote and propose that the body moves as a thing and not by one’s self. It is not me moving it, but it moving me. I believe that such an approach, from the performer’s side can overturn the representationalism still present in dance. To consider oneself as a thing, or rather to acknowledge the thing-ness in one’s being, can escape the objectifying gaze (the spectators’ or one’s own) through its own objectivation. To objectivate oneself to escape the objectification by the other.

In his article “Moving as Thing: Choreographic Critiques of the Object” André Lepecki asks the question what happens with the subject when an object becomes a thing and “Specifically what does the subject who dances become?” (2012: 78) Lepecki takes examples of different artists that engage with objects and understands the objects “as vectors of subjectivation” (2012: 76) and he quotes Gilles Deleuze saying that “if the status of the object is profoundly changed, so also is that of the subject” 33 (2012: 77) What the Body-Self Attunement proposes is an affirmation of the thing-ness of the body, and in that sense it proposes a different approach to the object/subject definition. It does not engage with exterior objects to change their meaning in order to form a different subject, but instead turns inwards to objectivate the biological ground on which the subject is formed. I use the term objectivate in difference to objectify in order to hold off the relation to the body as object of desire of the spectator. This is also why I prefer the term thing to the term object.

2.7 Summary

We have seen how the performative turn, through the appearance of so-called postmodern dance, proposes a shift in the understanding of technique. Going from the acquiring of a specialised skill related to a codified movement vocabulary, towards a knowledge producing technological process in an interwoven relation with the choreographic work. We have also seen that the difference between a representationalist approach and a performative approach does not depend on a specific movement style but on a relation towards the material and towards teaching. In the representationalist understanding of technique one trains to achieve a definable skill in order to perform it with virtuosity. In a performative understanding

33 The quote Lepecki uses is from The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque (2006:20).
specific techniques could develop for each work and be thrown away for the next work and even a specific technique can be used for a different function than what it initially aimed at. With the introduction of different rehabilitating techniques as bases for artistic practice mentioned in the section *Release Technique*, a different goal for performance appeared: one that did not aim to develop a virtuosity (or at least not the same sort) to be represented on stage. Instead these techniques turn toward the practice of the dancer and the study of the body. The term practice does not maintain a difference between technique and choreography, or between process and product – the two research questions of this project. Hence, the previous working title – One Practice.

The performative approach to a technique class, as they are called, is to see it as a facilitation of a learning situation that allows the participants to find new information about their own body and its movement. We could see an example of such approach in Kilvady and Parkinson’s course description. This understanding is far from the idea of training in form of stretching for flexibility, building muscular strength or excelling in a codified movement style. To some of the readers this may seem obvious but the image of the (suffering) dancer’s labour remains very pertinent in some public domains, as well as among practitioners. Instead of training the body to achieve something it does not yet master, the performative approach discovers, or actualizes, potential functions and possibilities, which is how I understand the inherent functionalities that Paxton called “basic programme”.

While engaging in this form of technique production one needs to tread lightly into the terrain of what is inherent and not fall into the essentialist trap of granting the body mystified truths and universality by referring to the *natural*.

There are inherent physical functionalities passed on genetically, as in the reflexes of grabbing or sucking, and there is an evolutionary shaped choreography of our material body that defines which movements are possible and which are not. In spite of this, let’s start by assuming that the movements taught in a traditional dance class are not natural. If they were, why would we need a studio and a teacher to develop them? There is no such thing as the body’s own natural movement. With this assumption we can disqualify the blunt critique often expressed by contemporary dancers against the more established classic and modern techniques, claiming them to be unnatural. Undoubtedly, contemporary techniques can be just as codified and full of mystifying aesthetic constructs. By saying this I’m not trying to assert a relativist view that all techniques

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34 There is a similar problem as the term *technique* is replaced by *tool*. Here, a toolbox is presented to the student who then engages in a technique production by using, miss- using or discarding those tools. But the tool is not neutral and influences that which is built. As the expression says: If all you have is a hammer, then everything looks like a nail.
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in the end are the same. The difference lies instead in how the techniques are taught and what kind of values and belief systems they engage with. In that sense the technique of classical ballet is in itself not pernicious. If anything it is the ideological climate and value system in which it mostly grows that might be harmful, even for development of the technique itself. Unfortunately the two are not that easily separated. We can conclude by saying that a specific technique is not an all over encompassing salvation. Nor is it the axis of evil. There is not one technique that can guarantee any skill. Yet, any technique can potentially produce a skill it does not contain itself.

In the following chapter Rasmus Technique we will look at how some of the concepts pointed out in this chapter dialogue with the technical work I do. Those concepts are:
1. The thing-ness of the body and how it is expressed through the sensation of weight.
2. The technical perspective on the basic programme of walking as an interface between reflex and skill.
3. The experienced distance between self and body that all the movement practitioners referred to above mention, each in their own way. I understand this distance as a technological aspect in our being and my formulation of engaging with such a technifying process is the Body-Self Attunement.

The other techniques mentioned in the MODUL descriptions – Becoming Animal, Diffraction and De-Subjectivation – are not developed in the following chapter but will be returned to further on.

2.8 Digression: Getting in line
To close this chapter I will digress to give a note on the tradition I place myself in. I have already mentioned that I’m sympathetic to the term performative and the term can be seen as a way to avoid other categorisations such as postmodern or conceptual. However, they both figure within the performative and should be commented on. In her new foreword to the 1987 edition of Terpsichore in sneakers, Sally Banes describes what I see as a difference between those two categories:
Scholars in every field turn to linguistic analysis and the new jargon of literary criticism and French psychoanalysis in attempts to make tidy sense of the messiness of experience. (...) While the critical community in dance has not rushed to embrace semiotics and post-structuralism with the fervor found in other fields, choreographers (though not necessarily motivated by deeply theoretic concerns) have been exploring some of the implications of this perspective. Banes (1987: xxviii-xxix)

Is this rushing "to embrace semiotics and post-structuralism" not what happened in the European “critical community in dance” in the mid 90s? The literalness of conceptual art and minimalist sculpture that Yvonne Rainer expressed influence from (and influenced back) introduced an aesthetics of presentation that shows proximity to linguistics and semiotics, but the choreographers in the 60s do not refer to such theories. Maybe the simple explanation is that those theories were not yet spread in that period, but in the making, and the Zeitgeist of that era for both art and philosophy. It is important to state as well, that this influence should not be a reason to reduce or dismiss the European movement from the 90s and on. As Serbian performance theorist Bojana Cvejić puts it: “we have to be careful when pronouncing the judgment that European dance only now experiences the influence of the American so-called post-modern dance and therefore, is somehow a bastard child of the 60s.” (2006: 53) Clearly the European re-articulation of the American postmodernism in dance is not just its bastard child. Nevertheless, it is clear that the challenge that dance and choreography has faced in Europe since the mid 90s carries an inheritance from the Judson Church movement. A good example to show this was the re-enactments of the Quatuor Albrecht Knust.35

In the same way that postmodernism broke with modern dance in America, the European re-articulation opposed its tradition of dance and dance theatre. I’m not saying that there were no other streaks of development in dance happening in Europe, and surely time has not been standing still in New York since the 60s. From the 70s to the 90s there are works from European choreographers such as Dominique Bagouet, Siobhan Davies, Michael Clark and the Swedish Margaretha Åsberg – and many more – whose work, without showing any similarity with each other, cannot be easily placed in generic categories as Modern Dance or

35 Quatuor Albrecht Knust was a group of performers who started to make re-enactments of works from the Judson movement, such as Satisfyin Lover and Continuous Project Altered Daily. Original members were Dominique Brun, Anne Collod, Simon Hecquet and Christophe Wavelet, but many more performed together with them.
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Dance Theatre. Without denying the existence of other forms of dance, and clearly the mentioned choreographers do not represent them all, this study uses the perspective of the legacy of Judson Church and its implications for a line of development in European contemporary choreography. I’m not trying to give a correct account of dance history, but describe the different traditions that I believe my research is indebted to.

European dance theatre has a long tradition of trans-Atlantic exchanges with artists like Isadora Duncan, Mary Wigman, Rudolf von Laban, Kurt Joos, Alwin Nikolais, Doris Humphrey, and Ruth St. Denis. Ted Shawn, Charles Weidman, Martha Graham and Pina Bausch. All things considered it is not so easy to see who would be the bastard child of whom. In a comment to the Cvejić text quoted above, the German performance theorist, critic and professor Gerald Siegmund mentions (published as a note in the end of the text) how the modernism described in the text focuses on the American modernistic dance and does not reference the European dance theatre tradition. He claims that some of the European dance theatre makers, such as Mary Wigman and Pina Bausch, worked with similar procedures and questions like the ones Cvejić attributes to the conceptual movement:

There must be something else that is at stake with the misnomer “conceptual dance” than a critique of so-called modernism. For me, it has to do with the body as an image, as a performative formation and not as a stronghold of emotions and individuality. It is the "naturalness" and the "realness" of the body that is being questioned and which a lot of people do not like.

Siegmund (2006: 56)

As we have seen in this chapter, Siegmund voices a deep concern of mine, since we have been questioning both “naturalness” and “the stronghold of (...) individuality”. I have addressed these issues in terms of dance technique and Siegmund shows how they are entangled with choreography and the staged representation of the body. In his essay “The Desiring Body in Dance” (2006:80-85) – found in the same publication as Cvejić’s text – Siegmund traces the contours of what I see as the representationalist body of dance. It is not a very encouraging image he gives, but his comment to Cvejić’s text also shows that there are alternatives. He starts with the question why anyone would want to be a spectator of dance and we will return to his question in the chapter Spectating.

Next to the concerns I have expressed and now found resonance with in both the postmodern American Dance and the European conceptual movement (still in lack of better term) there is yet one more reason I place my work in this tradition: I believe there is a
relation to the appearing of artistic research. In the same foreword, quoted earlier, Sally Banes mentions how "The analytic dances called attention to the workings of the body in an almost scientific way" (1987:xxviii-xxix). This analytic approach that Banes saw as a branch of post modern dance has, in my view been picked up by the so-called conceptual dance. Together with a more explicit interest in critical theory, it has led to the approach between the art field and the academic institutions that in turn have played a role in the development of artistic research.

2.9 An ending note
In relation to the possible connections or breaches between the categories of modern, postmodern and conceptual dance we can make a thought experiment. In Jerome Bel’s piece from 1998, Le Dernier Spectacle (The Last Performance), the performers re-enact the solo Wandlung (1978) by Susanne Linke. (Bel asked several choreographers if he could "cite" their work but apparently Linke was the only one who agreed). Linke is an important figure in European dance theatre, a peer of Pina Bausch and student to Mary Wigman. We can see a form of push and pull between different traditions, and my thought was: what if Bel had used instead Yvonne Rainer’s Trio A from 1965?
3. Rasmus Technique

Introduction
There is no such thing as Rasmus Technique. At least there never has been before this chapter was given a name by its author. As you will see in this chapter, the techniques that I teach have other names. Looking at how colleagues of mine choose to name their work in programs of a workshop festival, or of a studio for professional training, I mostly finds poetic names such as Flying low (David Zambrano), Gravity Happens (Kerstin Kussmaul), Playing in the Extremes (Bruno Caverna) or WILD/WISE (Kathleen Hermesdorf) or more descriptive one’s like Exploring Physicality (Damien Jalet) or Tools for Dance Improvisation (Thomas Hauert). The surnames of modern techniques have disappeared but are still found in some of the rehabilitational techniques as we saw, such as Feldenkrais, Alexander or Klein technique. This shift can also be seen in how contemporary dance companies name themselves. The companies that I grew up admiring in the early 90s had names like Bat Sheva, Lalala Human Steps, Ultima Vez, DV8 and Rosas. This was already different to Merce Cunningham Company or Trisha Brown Company. Today choreographers are mostly presented by their name, and if they have a name for their production unit, most of the times, both are mentioned. Kobalt works/Arco Renz for example. In the spring 2012 the Slovak dancer and choreographer Anton Lachky taught professional classes at the Brussels studio La Raffinerie. In their program he entitled the class Tono’s Dance Class. The formal address of the surname has disappeared and we can now call ourselves by first name. The author(ity) is replaced by the personal brand in a similar way as what Esposito, referred to above, called the “Dispositif of the Person”.

The French choreographer Jerome Bel has explicitly problematised the relation between titling and authorship. His two first works were called Name given by the author (1994) and Jerome Bel (1995). The first title is the lexical definition of the word “title”. The author withdraws from naming the work; the most obvious imprint on the work. In the second work he does exactly the opposite and gives the work his own name. In a later work the titling dilemma almost reaches slapstick level. Bel curates his colleague Xavier Le Roy to make a piece under his name (Bel). Le Roy accepts on the condition that Bel titles the piece.
Rasmus Technique

Bel accepts and titles the piece Xavier Le Roy. Both the title and the authorship become a hot potato thrown back and forth between the two choreographers.\(^1\) Removing one’s name from the technique does not remove one’s subjective stance. The problem of the authority of the author’s role is not solved through titling. The (ironic) title of this chapter is for transparency’s sake and should be seen as a comment on how authorship does not grant ownership. The technique is mine, but you can use it.

The chapter starts off by describing the technique that has emerged while dancing, teaching and choreographing both before and during my doctoral research. To give a backdrop I present a few class descriptions used for different teaching occasions over the last 6 years. The descriptions are then put in relation to the elements that were singled out in the previous chapter, followed by a more in depth look at the technique itself. This is done through three exercises, as they could appear in a class of mine today, together with five meditations on movement. The last two sections of the chapter summarizes the chapter and conclude on the form of relation to technique that the two research questions have generated.

### 3.1 Class Descriptions

The descriptions are presented chronologically. Some were written for specific teaching occasion and in those cases I also state where they took place. I have treated the texts as documentation and have not edited them to suit my current approach to technique, nor have I corrected any of the language.

**Mobilize** (2007)

The technique has been given the name Mobilize and it is a research on the physical rules that condition our movement. We will search for softness and release in fast and dynamic movement. We will learn how to use the body’s weight through basic themes such as drop, suspend and bounce. Mobilize focuses more on the movement in space than the movement in the body. The final aim is to embody all of this knowledge and to release it into movement, Mobilizing the body, the weight and the will in a single intention: to abandon the body into movement. Class starts with simple, basic warm up for body and breath. We take our time to enlarge body consciousness and prepare our body from the inside. We

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\(^1\) A discussion between the two choreographers about their collaboration can be found on www.jeromebel.fr
then continue to material in three different levels.2 Starting on the floor, continuing to up-straight and then bigger movement in space.

**Horizontal Fall (2009)**
Defying gravity is doomed to fail. We are its slaves. We cannot fly. But by understanding our limits we will find freedom. To use one's weight in a movement instead of fighting it will give a sensation of weightlessness. I have in my movement research found a method I call "the horizontal fall". It is a controlled fall that, in difference to the vertical fall, never reaches the ground. Instead of falling to the floor we fall along the floor. The horizontal fall focuses on the movement in space more than the movement in the body.

**Hooking Up (2011, Impuls Tanz)**
Maybe dancing alone could be like partnering yourself, and maybe the best way to find out how to partner yourself is to partner another body. Hook on to another system to learn more about your own. Maybe then we can we step beyond the understanding of our bodies as the entities defining us as individuals and bring that back to our own individual dancing and objectify our body as a physical representation of something else? This question will be asked through the practice of sharing weight in improvisation and proposed set material guiding us to a swift way of interlacing those two approaches until we do not know which one we are doing.

I am convinced this class is very different from Contact Improvisation, but I am not so sure in what way.

**Horizontal Fall (2011 Impuls Tanz)**
Right now I'm thinking about the combination of the arboreal bone structure and a rhizomatic perception whole. I'm thinking about how movement is a spatial direction that can be directed through the body. I'm thinking about buoyancy on land, meaning how to float on the ground by exercising just enough effort to cancel gravity, and that this buoyancy is, just like under water, related to density which mean that we can regulate it with the breath. The work could also be expressed as spatial projection and releasing without relaxing. Or through the difference of doing movement and letting movement appear. So I think a lot, for quite a while, and then I forget about it, put some music on and dance. For the fun of it.

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2 Material here refers to movement material composed to a phrase, i.e. set choreography.
3.1.2 Note to Class Descriptions
In the class descriptions above we can trace some elements looked at in the previous chapter. In MOBILIZE, from 2007, I speak of using “the body’s weight through basic themes such as drop, suspend and bounce”, and to “release it into movement”. The terminology shows lineage to the relation of weight and release as it was discussed in the sections Contact Improvisation and Release Technique(s). First by bringing the body's weight to consciousness through the sensations and actions of “drop, suspend and bounce” and then that to release is not just to drop weight, but also to “release into movement”.

In the same description we find the idea “To abandon the body into movement”. This points back to the separation of conscious thought and bodily movement, as it proposes a form of displacement of the self. There is a movement that one can abandon to, which is different from doing a movement. In the 2009 description of Horizontal Fall there is a similar hint of displacement as it focuses "on the movement in space more than the movement in the body”. The same description also mentions an experienced weightlessness that I will follow up on here below in Movement Meditation 1.

The 2011 class titled Hooking Up connects to Paxton's description of the supporting surface of a partner. (See Contact Improvisation) The same class description includes an early articulation of how altering bodily perception can be seen as a technical tool: "a step beyond the understanding of our bodies as the entities defining us”. This is to be seen as an opening towards the possibility to generate other definitions of the body entity.

In the Horizontal Fall from that same year there is already a more articulate discourse and it points to issues that this chapter will dig deeper into, such as “the arboreal bone structure and a rhizomatic perception whole”, "movement is a spatial direction that can be directed through the body” and “buoyancy on land” (similar to the experienced weightlessness in the 2009 version of Horizontal Fall). The most important phrase to point out is “the difference of doing movement and letting movement appear”. This will be elaborated on below in the section Speed and Tipping Point.
3.2 Movement Meditation 1. – Where Does Movement Happen?

To arrive at such deeper understandings of the conceptual significance of movement, we must necessarily forego the common notion that movement is merely a change of position in conformity with some “mental” directive. That notion is statically focused. Indeed we must restore to movement its inherent dynamics and in so doing acknowledge the spatio-temporal play of forces that particularizes and situationally defines movement and that potentially generates a particular domain of concepts.

Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2011: 32)

This entire chapter is an attempt to articulate what such a “particular domain of concepts” might be in difference to the “statically focused” notion of movement: a movement that does not need to be an expression of “some ‘mental’ directive”. We start by asking ourselves a simple question: Where does movement take place? Let us say that I bend my arm, in the elbow, from straight to a 90-degree angle. To avoid what Sheets-Johnstone called “merely a change of position” – in this case the hand being transported from one place to another – we look at the movement in the elbow. A joint is a space between two body parts. The space in between them allows a change of position in relation to each other. The pieces have changed their position in space, but where is the actual movement? Is the place of the movement a void? If we’re only looking at the change of position, the object in motion, we are disregarding the experience and quality of the movement itself. When opening a door, it changes its relation in space, but the door is one solid piece and in a sense does not move, it is moved. The hinge is its joint but is constructed by two solid pieces that, just like the door, do not move. They simply shift position in space. Is it then your hand pushing the door that moves it? Is it the intention, described in the quote above as “mental directive” that opens the door? But then, what movement is it that allows the synapses to fire to create such an intention?3 Where is the movement? Where is it not?

The Swedish translation of the word joint is led and the verb leda means to guide or direct, similar to the English lead. The adjective ledande can also signify a material’s capacity to conduct electric current. The Swedish word for joint can allow us to think of the joint as a movement conductor that transmits motion. When a body is put into motion the movement will conduct itself where it can. If it is directed with too much force towards a place

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3 For this reference and a comprehensive analysis of the expression of firing, see the chapter Neural firing: A phenomenological inquiry (Sheets-Johnstone 2011: 396-402).
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that is not jointed, it will fracture the bone and when the movement does not respect a joint’s construction it will dislocate it. The movement is indifferent towards the structure and the eventual pain and suffering of its medium. It will go, without aesthetic preferences, where it can. For the mover it is of course different, which is why it is helpful to gain a good understanding of how one is pieced together. The jointed pieces can be seen as a multiplicity within the body, which is a modular system with the ability to reconfigure itself by altering the relation between its parts. The body is a hardware system with great flexibility.

3.2.1 Isolation and Causality

Most traditional dance techniques approach the jointed body with a deconstructive method. With the aim of being able to control each body part separately, the body is broken down into its parts by isolating joints from each other: lifting an arm without lifting the shoulder, moving a leg without moving the pelvis. It is an effort to articulate one’s movement and to make it readable. We saw this in the previous chapter as Buckwalter described how Release Technique changed the perception of what is a whole and what is it parts: “Where limbs had once moved as a whole, they were now made of pieces (…)”. We can compare it with voice exercises that works with one sound at the time to be able to then eloquently make every sound in the text appear. In my view this produces a quite idealised body language, remote from pedestrian attitude. When a child starts exploring how to walk it is not by separating body parts, but rather by finding out how to connect them. The isolation and articulation of each joint is surely an important and helpful tool to develop technique and it is absolutely relevant to revise one’s patterns, using a different mind set from the one that was available for the one-year-old who put them together. Just like it is useful to deconstruct a bike if you want to understand how it functions. However, before taking it for a ride you are going to want to piece it back together again.

In my teaching I speak of an antidote to this chopped-up body. It is presented in the later class description of Horizontal Fall (2011 Impuls Tanz) as the difference between an arboreal structure and a rhizome. I call this antidote: Everythingeverywhereallthetime and it is addressed further below in Exercise 2: To end with causality and thresholds of stillness. The isolation of body parts easily leads to causal explanations of movement such as: The hand leads the movement. Or: bend the knee and drop your shoulder. Let me remind you of how Simone Forti saw Trisha Brown flying across the room due to the weight of a broom. To describe that event in a causal manner as: “she threw the broom so hard that her body was brought along with it”, is too simplistic and points to how an exterior force creates that movement, forcing the bodily matter to comply. But what about the movement that the bodily
matter with its plasticity performs to allow that bending? To allow her body to follow the broom’s movement through space, Trisha Brown must have performed a whole set of skilful alignments. Considering the weight of most brooms in relation to Brown’s weight, the broom cannot have made such a big difference. In this sense, what Trisha Brown did was to act as if the broom could throw her across the room. Brown’s experience of the momentum from the weight of the broom is different from that of, for example, her own arm. The fact that the arm is an animated part of the body and the broom is an added prosthesis makes a difference we cannot ignore. At the same time, it is this thing-ness of the body that the experience of one’s own weight can add; the self already has a certain prosthetic experience in relation to the body. Brown herself expressed that distance in the previous chapter as she described her body as waiting for a pilot. Even if it is the body itself that creates that pilot and no matter how wrong that experienced piloting distance is, it is there. The experienced thing-ness of one’s own body can question the default setting of what is bodily and what is prosthetic extension. Therefore, describing a movement as “guided through the hand” is more of a visual or stylistic cue. We can see it as an expression of intention of how to make a movement look and we can use it as means of exploration of different qualities within a movement. The problem arises, as it becomes an explanation for what the movement is, and frames it into a causal appearance. I propose instead to use this form of description – the causal chain of events – as a metaphor.

Let us go back to the initial movement, opening this section, of bending the elbow where we discovered that the movement itself was hard to locate. Where is the elbow? It is a word that vaguely describes an area of the body. We use it for the joint between upper and lower arm but also for the extremity of the Ulna (the longer bone of the two in the lower arm). When we use the expression of “elbowing someone out” we refer to a different elbow from the actual joint. In this sense we could say that the causal description of bending the elbow is a metaphor. A practical example of my critique is found below in Exercise 2. To end with causality and thresholds of stillness. I do not think the sort of explanatory movement descriptions that causality provides us with will bring us to “deeper understandings of the conceptual significance of movement” as the opening Sheets-Johnstone quote called for. Although causality is a form of creating understanding of something it covers up as much as it reveals. French philosopher Gilles Deleuze gives a note on this:
Causality always moves not just from the clear to the obscure, but from the clearer (or more-clear) to the less-clear, the more-confused. It goes from what is more stable to what is less. Such is the requirement of sufficient reason: clear expression is what increases in the cause, but also what diminishes in the effect.

Deleuze (2006: 153-154)

We do need words to speak about things and using the word elbow can be as good as any other word. We need the clear and stable expressions and it is not a question of precision. The description of the movement of bending one’s elbow would not be more correct if we used the Latin words for each muscle that flexes. This would only – paraphrasing Deleuze – increase in cause and diminish in effect. When a movement shapes itself, whether it is Trisha Brown flying through the space or your hand shifting position, there is a myriad of processes taking place and I would therefore propose that we consider movement as an expression of our bodily matter. Instead of thinking that it is the broom, the hand or even the intention in the mind (what Sheets-Johnstone called ”mental directive” in the opening quote) that initiate movement let us use the metaphor that it is the body itself that unfolds its inherent capacity to morph.

Bengt Elmström, an osteopath that I see, once challenged me to look for a different vocabulary to speak of what’s going on in my body. “Imagine the millions of processes at work in your body at all times”, he said. “How can you then speak of something like ‘stretching a leg’?” When I critique causal explanations to movement it is with the purpose to concede to the body a form of knowledge that such descriptions do not do justice. By leaving out such a descriptive approach to movement I attempt to come closer to the “particular domain of concepts” that Sheets-Johnstone called for in the opening quote.

3.2.2 The Modular System of a Hyper Mobile Skeletal Structure

The linear contours and linear paths we create in moving are basically directional aspects of our body and our movement (...)

Sheets-Johnstone (2011: 124)

Next to the possible different experiences of how one is pieced together and the movement range of each joint, the jointed body is what determines the directions in space that the body is able to conduct itself. Leaving the elbow behind, let us move to the joints of
our legs. The ankle has rotation and flexion. The knee has a very limited rotation but a great 180 (or more) degree flexion. The hip joint has both great rotation and flexion. All the possible combinations of them are what give us the possibility to move in any direction, something that the system of a crab fish does not allow. But despite the mobility of a leg, how can these three extremely mobile joints, placed on top of each other, create balance? If we add an exterior object to the balance, like standing on top of a ball, we immediately sense the continuous work balancing involves, but balancing the pelvis on top of our two round hip joints is such a default status in our bodies that its complexity is disregarded. Looking at a child standing up for the first time we can see how wobbly the skeletal hard ware is before it is properly wired by the intricate proprioceptive weaving of the motor system. What is achieved in balance is a very complex alignment, able to calibrate all the involved forces. This activity of balancing is what I referred to as Attunement in the previous chapter while describing the Intra-Action of body and self.

Next to gravitational force and all the directions movement can take in relation to the jointed body, there is something else. The aforementioned osteopath (Bengt Elmström) expresses his practice as finding and supporting the body’s mid line.4 He describes this line as a direction that appears already in the moment of conception, as the direction in which the embryo grows. As Jim Jealous, an influential teacher in cranial osteopathy, says in a course transcription from 2003: “The forces of embryogenesis become the forces of healing in the adult.” (2003:4B) Once we are full-grown the direction of our growth remains as a vector of vital force, a healing direction. We stop growing, but keep the capacity to, to a certain extent, grow back injured tissue.

In the quote above Sheets-Johnstone provided us with the idea of "directional aspects of our body" and earlier I described how the shapes of our joints affect our movements. We now add the vital direction of the motion of growth. This motion shapes our joints and they in turn shape our movement. Such an interplay between shape and movement is example of "the difference of doing movement and letting movement appear" as it was expressed above in the class description Horizontal Fall from 2011. A movement gives a shape that gives a movement, and so on. The “mental directive” that Sheets-Johnstone referred to can no longer be a command telling the body what to do. Instead of using our mental capacity as a commanding device it can serve as an instrument for observation of movement already

4 For an insight in the different definitions and expressions for the midline see Master Thesis by Monika Dunshirn (Master of Science in Osteopathie at Donau Universität Krems through Wiener Schule für Osteopathie) Die Mittellinie in der Osteopathie - ein Balanceakt zwischen Struktur und Spiritualität (available in English on-line http://www.osteopathic-research.com/paper_pdf/Dunshirn_engl.pdf)
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taking place.

3.2.3 Suspension

The attunement, as I describe the balancing activity, happens between the directional aspects of our bodies. Between gravity, vital force and bodily matter. The attunement is regulated through tonus. Negotiating the tonus implies looking for a point zero in which the body is suspended in between internal and external forces, between all the potential directions in which the jointed body can conduct movement (the movement apparatus of the muscular-skeleton system is not the only system that generates movement, but it is the one I study for now). I consider this balancing of the hyper mobile skeletal structure as a form of suspension. In the 2009 class description of Horizontal Fall, I spoke of how using “ones weight in a movement instead of fighting it will give a sensation of weightlessness.” To suspend the skeletal structure can give a similar feeling of weightlessness, as the effort of keeping oneself up cancels out the gravitational pull and allows us to float on ground neither burdened by our own weight nor rigidified by our effort to stay up. For the fine-tuning, next to the attunement between muscular tonus, skeletal alignment and gravitation, we can bring in our breath.

Anyone who has tried scuba diving has experienced this fine-tuning while setting the buoyancy. Having descended to the desired depth one regulates the pressure of one’s vest by inflation or deflation. When the pressure of the vest cancels out the water pressure of the specific depth, one stays suspended in mid-water. It then suffices to take a breath from the tube to start ascending, and to re-descend one simply exhales. The density of the scuba-diver apparatus and the ocean attune. This is how I imagine the suspension of the skeleton-muscular movement apparatus: floating in suspension, in its zero gravity, ready to take off in any direction at any time. It picks up on movement and conducts it through the voids of its joints, letting the movement pass where there is space to pass. Performing a movement can then be seen as a way to create space for the movement to take place; to get out of the movement's way, to let it pass. The suspended and highly responsive, hyper mobile system reacts, as if it were weightless, at the slightest impulse. To consider movement this way displaces its agency. It blurs the borders of inside and outside and opens up the modular system of the body to engage with other units in form of other human bodies, tools and apparatuses in a larger sense of the word.

3.2.4 Concluding Movement Meditation 1

I started out by asking where movement takes place. When we looked into the jointed body all we found was space in between parts; space that allows them to reconfigure their spatial
relations to each other. Where does movement take place? As I discard causal explanations like “drop the knee and guide through the hand” the only answer I have is: Everything everywhere all the time.

I started this section by using the Swedish word for joint – led. I will finish it using a French word. When a joint is loose one says that there is play – jeu; there is something to play with.5 The play that the in-between spaces of our joints set out can play the body. It is the play played by the flag and the wind. It is the flames in the fireplace played by oxygen and wood. Dealing with these forces, and the extreme complexity of the processes at work in our body, is beyond the representational scope of dance techniques. In this reconsideration of what could constitute training in a movement-based art form, the body is not there to tame or to be taught tricks. It is not there to stand corrected. It is there to playfully find out things you did not know you knew.

To introduce the “directional aspects” of the body, as I propose to do, is a reminder from the biological body to the symbolic. The displacement of agency from “mental directive” to bodily matter proposes a different way to think of movement. Very concretely: instead of striking a pose the dancer’s task becomes to create space in the body for forces to pass through it and shape the bodily matter as it shapes itself. The movement is no longer that which brings someone, or a part of someone, from one point to another. This relation to movement is addressed in different ways throughout the class descriptions opening this chapter, as in the experience of weightlessness (suspended in between directions), the abandoning into movement and the notion that the movement happens in the space rather than in the body.

3.3 Exercise 1a: Three Aspects of Movement Perception

Start walking. Find a pace that seems neutral to you. You are not in a hurry, but you are going somewhere. Direct your attention to the articulation of your feet. Notice how they touch the floor, and notice the arch of the foot that does not. Notice how weight is shifted from one foot to the other, from the first touch against the floor and then increasingly receiving weight until there’s no weight on the first foot. The foot receives the weight, and the arch of the foot allows weight distribution throughout the entire foot. The structure of the arch produces a rebound, similar to a spring system. See if you can sense how the arch pushes back up again as you continue into the next step. Try to not slow down while sensing these things. Many times we

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5 I have later been told that the English word play is used for this as well but it was in French where I encountered it first.
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slow movement down to be able to concentrate at the task at hand. The speed of the movement is tuned with the speed of the conscious capacity. The concentration alters the object of your observation. Check if your concentration has caused a facial expression. "Lighten up" and remind yourself that you’re walking. Find back that pace you had in the beginning.

Keep walking and shift your attention to the hip joints. See if you can make out how they operate. Use the sensation of movement to locate the joint and analyse the movement. What kind of movement does the shape of the joint facilitate? Can you sense how the roundness of the joint defines its movement? Can you sense the moment that you fall off the joint? Almost like stepping on to a ball and loosing your balance. Sense the momentum the fall creates. That momentum is what swings your pelvis and brings the other leg into the next step. Now connect that with the sensation of the spring system of the arch of the foot. We can feel two different momentums in collaboration. The bounce that the spring system of the arch of the foot creates, and the rotational momentum created by the spherical shape of your hip joint.

Keep walking. Remind yourself of the pace you had when you begun. Ask yourself why your arms move. Keep walking but stop the movement of your arms. What difference does that make? Let the arms join the movement again. Can you perceive how the swing of your pelvis demands a counter movement in your upper body and that this is what makes your arms swing? The counter movement enables you to keep directing your walk forward by maintaining the off balance in the direction you are heading. The arm's swing catches the sideway momentum of your hips and brings it forward. Notice now how the articulation of your joints use a pretty small percentage of the full movement range. Except for your ankle that almost finds full flexion and full extension. The knee, the hip joint, the shoulder; they all perform relatively small movements, yet they facilitate a big movement in space. It is an efficient movement; we can walk for a long time without getting too tired. You can lie down on our stomach, crawl like a lizard and notice the difference. Large movements in each joint, but less movement in space. A much heavier way to transport yourself. Get back up again to the walk and feel the difference in ergonomics.

Keep walking. This was an articulation of movement within your body. Let us shift to the spatial aspect of movement perception. Instead of focusing on movement in the body, focus on movement in space. Let us consider the movement as a force. Just walking contains a lot of force. If you would walk into a lamppost at this speed you would get an idea of the force. This is the intensity of the force, but let us also consider the direction of the force. You are the vector. You’re riding your own movement. Surfing your own curves. What it is you
do that facilitates the redirection of the force? As for now, we are walking forward all the time, but that forward is not a direction in space, it is a direction in you. How does that direction negotiate with the architectural directions of the space you walk in? Remind yourself of your pace. As you might have noticed earlier, we tend to slow down when we focus on movement articulation within the body. As we focus on movement in space we tend to speed up instead. The different aspects makes one respond in different ways.

Keep walking. Bring your attention to the movement around you; the movement of all the other bodies moving through the space. First of all, those bodies are doing what you do. What you sense inside you is also taking place around you. Everything you see around you is an example of what you are doing. Start moving in relation to the movement around you. Notice if you’re following someone, or cutting him or her off. If you resist a proposed direction or if you join it. Let yourself be moved by the movement around you. Surf the movement of the others.

Maybe you can feel the draft that the movement of another body creates. The air that is pushed away from that body and pushed onto yours. Imagine the room was full of smoke and think of all the movement one could see in the smoke, created by our movement through the room. That movement is there even if we do not see it now. The smoke would show it to us. It would materialise a movement that is not visible to us in thin air. But even thin air has some thickness and you can feel it on your skin as you move through it. Sense that resistance. Let us see now if we can move between these three aspects of movement perception: the articulation of movement in your body, the movement's force and spatial direction and the movement around you. Even though we can look at one at a time, when moving, they are all entwined. Alignment takes place everywhere. When you are changing direction to align yourself with someone’s direction, you do that by letting the movement that was already taking place articulate itself in a different way throughout your body. The fact that you are not able to give the same amount of attention to all aspects at the same time does not mean they are not happening and evolving continuously. As we all took the first steps, before I started to speak of these aspects, they were already functioning in seamless collaboration. We are developing conscious knowledge about something we already knew on a different plane.

On the attached DVD there is an audiotrack of me reading this text so that you can play it on a sound system in a studio or at home or listen in earphones and try the exercise out among people in the street.

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*Chrysa Parkinson gave Svärmen this idea of how to consider a shared task.*
3.3.1 Exercise 1b: Touch, Speed and the Tipping Point

Keep walking. Focus again on how you’re dealing with the movement around you. Try now as well, to be conscious of movement that is not taking place within your field of vision. Naturally you’re reading the movement with your eyes, but see if you can also create a perception, or prediction, of how that movement moves, as it moves out of your field of vision. Make predictions, or qualified guesses, of the movement happening outside you field of vision, giving yourself a more spherical perception of space and your location within the movement around you. Separate the front of the body from the direction of movement by adding the possibility to walk sideways or back wards. Take into account the reach of your body; your kinesphere. Let anyone who enters it know, by touching them.

As you touch someone, do not leave your hand still on the other body but let it slide on its surface as you move along, allowing the touched person to experience a direction through the touch instead of bringing his/her attention to the specific place where the touch starts. If a hand is placed on my shoulder my attention will go to the shoulder. If the hand slides from my shoulder across my chest I can also feel a direction. You are now orienting yourself through space via touch and vision. Next to the prediction of what happens outside our field of vision we can now add the tactile sensation as a navigation tool. Add the possibility of gripping. Letting your hand sometimes slide and sometimes get stuck in a grip. Notice what change of dynamics this involves. Notice how you react to the pressure of someone’s grip. How do you answer to that information and how does your reaction affect the movement that appears?

Keep walking. Drop the touch. Add the parameter of speed. Start altering the neutral speed I asked you to use as default. Start by slowing down and notice how it affects the movement of your arms. Lowering the intensity of speed changes the movement that is produced. By altering the intensity of the force that comes from projecting your weight in space, different movements will be produced. There’s one easy way to feel this: keep walking faster until you break into a run. Notice how that movement breaks out. There’s a boiling point – a Tipping Point. The intensity of the force trespasses the borders of what your walk can hold and the run appears in your system. Try this out a few times and see if you can feel the difference between starting to run by performing running movements in your body, and letting the run break out as an effect of the increased intensity of speed. This is one example of the aforementioned difference between doing a movement and letting a movement appear.

Stop walking and stand still. We will now experiment with the very basic loss of balance that allows you to move through space. The loss of balance takes place as your centre of gravity passes beyond the contact surface you have with the floor. From your pelvis, start
shifting your weight, forwards until you lose balance. I’m not asking you to hold your balance as long as you can, but simply experience the subtle loss of balance that takes place with any step you take. I call this the tipping point.

Walking is a continuous maintained off balance through space. You are then maintaining the tipping point. It is not just one step after the other it is a continuous movement. It is the horizontal fall. As you take a step, you make sure you do not break the movement, but let it continue through your body and through the space. If you take the step at the right time you catch the momentum of your fall without having to stop it. Waiting too long will mean that the step you then take needs to be so large that you will put your centre of gravity back on top of the contact surface (if you fail to do so you will instead fall to the ground). As a result you will not be able to maintain the movement and you will bring yourself to arrest. The same thing can happen if you place your foot to take a step before the Tipping Point in the form of momentum takes place. The contact with the floor can break your weight-shift and stop you. We can walk without tipping, as we do when we sneak around silently but there is then not such an experience of momentum. The Tipping Point does not take place. Timing your step with your tipping point catches its momentum and allows the movement to continue into the next step. The body’s curved joints are present in the trajectory of its movement; every time your foot drops vertically to the ground it is curved into a horizontal movement through space.

3.4 Movement Meditation 2: The Pedestrian Horizontal Fall

The technique Horizontal Fall is my take on how to use the bi-ped walk as an inherent functional system to develop technique. We do not walk immediately when we are born (as some other animals do) but the bi-ped walking apparatus exists as potential, as does creeping and crawling but not flying. By studying the biotechnology of the walk we can produce technical knowledge. In terms of movement comprehension the complexity of the walk lies in maintaining balance while moving, as we just saw. To maintain off-balance without falling, as in falling to the ground.

This might sound simple but the complexity it entails can be shown in how difficult it is to construct a bi-ped robot that can walk. To construct a computer that beats me in chess is easy, but to construct a robot that actually can play chess by moving the pieces on the board is far more complicated. As it comes to the movement involved in playing chess, a five-year-old does better than the robot. This example is used by neuroscientist Daniel Wolpert who also states: “We have a brain for one reason and one reason only — and that’s to produce
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adaptable and complex movements.”⁷ His point is not to say that it is the only thing we use our brains for today, but that this is the reason evolution has provided us with a brain. From an evolutionary point of view, our large brain is more indebted to complex movement than complex thinking. Next to the technical aspect of walking there’s still one aspect of the pedestrian to be addressed, which is its connotation of ordinariness. Since the body of the dancer suffers from an idealizing gaze, both internal and external, the body represented on the dance stage mostly aims at the extra-ordinary rather than the ordinary. As we could see in the previous chapter Dance Technique, this idealising gaze was challenged by the post-modern dance, when the understanding of technique shifted from serving a staged style of movement and expression to an analysis of what Steve Paxton above called “basic programme”.
Pedestrian movement provides more than the actual walking. It includes ordinary movements. In that sense the pedestrian body had a political impact since it opted for a different representation of the body on stage. As we have seen I have an interest in changing the staged representation of the body, but in this section we will focus on what Paxton above called “a technical approach” to the pedestrian body.⁸

On earth, what we consider as up is the direction opposite to gravity. Gravity is directed towards the centre of the earth, its centre of gravity. Since the earth is round, two vertical lines, even two people standing next to each other, are never quite parallel. The same goes for the horizontal. The horizontal line is the line of the tangent to the sphere of the earth. Strictly speaking, when you take a step you hit a new tangent that is not on the same line, nor parallel to, the one of the previous step. A horizontal fall is thus not flat. It is curved and tips into the horizon. The tipping fall is the difference in angle of one step and the next and its smallest expression is the clenamen – the slight angle in which the tangent differs from the curve that it is the tangent of. The curve of the earth and the “directional aspects of our body” as discussed above, bend the kinetic force of one’s movement to project it into a walk or a run. This is what maintains the off-balance crucial to the Horizontal Fall. This transfer between – or Intra-Action of – vertical and horizontal is of interest to fully understand the implications of the Horizontal Fall. On one hand the step transfers the vertical drop of the foot into the horizontal movement of walking. On the other hand that (seemingly) horizontal movement has a vertical component as it tips into the horizon. The technique Horizontal Fall works on

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⁷ From his TED talk The real reason for brains.
⁸ Paxton says this in 2007 and that this technical approach is something he has “now”, indicating that it was not his reasons to work with a pedestrian body before. However he does not mention when this new approach begun for him.
transposing the pedestrian logic into more complex movement. An illustration of this attempt could be seen above in the Pedestrian Score in MODUL 1.

To consider the cinamen and the curve that gravity performs on the spherical earth is a way to question the stability of spatial directions. Coordinates of x, y and z are replaced by what Sheets-Johnstone above called “directional aspects of our body” plus the spherical shape of the earth and the force of its gravitational pull. The curve that redirects the vertical drop to a horizontal movement bends back to vertical tipping into the horizon. I believe that I owe some of these insights to the kinaesthetic experiences I had as a child through skiing and skateboarding. The half pipe is a great example of the curve between vertical and horizontal, and the falling line of downhill slope gives a clear sensation of how to maintain movement. Hours and hours in the playground with my daughter also made me realize the importance the swing has in our physical education.

3.5 Exercise 2: To End with Causality and Thresholds of Stillness

In a multilinear system, everything happens at once (...)

Deleuze & Guattari (2004: 328)

On the attached DVD there is an a video documentation called To End With Causality that shows the movement of this exercise. There is also an audio recording of me reading the later part of the exercise – Thresholds of Stillness – so that you can listen to it and let me guide you through it.

You are standing with your two feet more or less parallel and they are separate from each other by about the same distance as your hip joints. You swing your arms front and back in opposite directions (peaking the movement with left hand reaching front and right hand reaching back, or vice versa) and you let your pelvis accompany that movement. You are engaging both in the bounce and the spiral. The end of your twist of spine and hips corresponds with the highest position of you hands and the closest to straight legs as you get. The rotational momentum of your hip joints that kicks in as your pelvis is symmetrical in relation to the turn in and turn out of your two legs and it corresponds to the lowest position of your two hands (which is also when they meet symmetry in relation to each other) and the most bent that your legs are. You can sense both the vertical drop/bounce and the rotational wind/unwind of the twist. Let this movement express itself throughout your entire body. Let the movement articulate itself in all the places where it is possible. Every joint is engaged. Every place where movement can take place it does. Try out a few different causal
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explanations for yourself by thinking that you are initiating the movement in different parts of the body. Focus on the knees. Or the fingertips. The rotation of your head. Or the elbows. See how this thought changes your perception of the movement and how the altered perception then changes your performance of the movement. Then drop that idea and think instead that all those movements collaborate to produce the movement you do. There are lots of movements throughout your body and together they coproduce this easy swing from side to side. There is no causality. No one thing because of another. Not one before the other. Everything everywhere all the time.

Start diminishing the movement. Fade it out, but maintain all the articulations of movement throughout your body. Do not end the movement by shutting articulation down. How low can you go in this fade out until articulation of the movement in certain joints disappears? Earlier we were looking at how different intentions would create different qualities and hierarchies within the body, as we shifted our intentions of initiation to different parts of the body. As we are fading the movement out, a different form of hierarchy shows up since some movements will disappear before others. Just like between walking and running, different intensities of speed produce different dynamics of movement. Notice how movement, little by little, disappears. Notice stillness appear in its place. Keep fading out and see which articulation of movement disappears last. The next threshold of stillness we are going to transcend is that of visibility. Try to sense the moment when your movement would no more be visible to the naked eye. Imagine different spectators at different distances from you and how, one by one they would experience how your movement has stopped. You are still feeling your movement, but it is imperceptible to the eye. Keep fading out until you experience stillness. Imagine a motion capture system in you and notice the moment this proprioceptive system detects no self-movement.

See if you can still experience a certain echo of movement. Imagine that you place a bucket of water on the ground after having walked with it in your hand. The bucket is no longer moving, but its content is. Perceive the echo of the previous movement as a form of resonance. Listen to how it fades out. Watch it disappear over the horizon. We pass the next threshold of stillness. Switch your movement capture system to a different mode, as you try to notice movements within this stillness. Slight weight shifts. A muscle changing its tonus. The movement of your breath. Maybe you can feel your pulse. See what movements hide inside of your perception of stillness. Our next threshold of stillness is to take into account movement that you cannot sense but that you know are there. We know that our hearts beat, but unless we have worked ourselves breathless we do not feel it that easily. I can put my hand on my heart and feel it, but it is then the sensitivity of my hand that picks up on the movement. We
know that our heartbeat pumps our blood through the vascular system but we do not sense that movement. Imagine that you could sense it. Imagine that you could feel the electrical charges that your nervous system communicates through. Imagine you could feel a neuron “firing”. Imagine you could sense the chemical processes taking place continuously in your body and not just the affects of them. This last threshold is vague since it questions what a perception is. When I perceive my arm moving it is the result of multiple events and micro perceptions. Our nervous system allows for more articulate perceptions in some places and less in others. However we perceive the effect some movements can have on us, especially as they malfunction. I may not be able to feel my heartbeat but I feel if it skips a beat. Which movements do you regard as a part of our self?

3.6 Movement Meditation 3: Different Centres
In dance classes, one can often hear the idea of moving from one’s centre, but centre is quite vaguely referred to. Where is that centre and how does one move from there? I believe that there are several different centres addressed at the same time and that they are often confused with each other.

3.6.1 Gravitational Centre
While writing about Contact Improvisation and Release Technique(s) I mentioned the rediscovery of one’s weight as a method to experience the thing-ness of the body. Weight has a centre but in what sense? The centre of gravity is a physical fact related to one’s shape and mass. When a human stands up vertically the centre of gravity is somewhere between the pubic bone and the belly button. If you want to balance something it is right under the centre of gravity that the support needs to be placed. The centre of gravity should not be understood as an experience of movement, or a quality of movement, which is not to say that different ways of dealing with the gravitational centre cannot produce different movements or different experiences.

There is another way of considering the centre of gravity as well: the point that the gravitational pull is directed to. We know this in relation to the earth. The mass of the earth creates a gravitation pull that is directed to its centre. In this understanding the centre of gravity it is not exactly a place but more of a direction. It is not a point since it keeps moving inwards in the direction of the gravitational pull.

I ask myself something that my limited knowledge in physics does not allow me to answer. On one hand the centre of gravity can be seen as a point. But when we weigh in gravity as a force, the centre of gravitation is the direction of the gravitational pull. If the
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centre of gravity is the place towards which my own gravitational pull points I would guess that this place needs to be inside my body. But my centre of weight can be placed outside my body and it can be done without loosing my balance. It is the same for other objects. A horseshoe for example has its centre of gravity outside its material body.

3.6.2 Structural Centre
Looking at the skeletal structure we find two major pieces: the pelvis and the skull. The skull protects our brains and the pelvis plays a crucial role in our movement apparatus as it intersects between legs and spine. The pelvis is divided into three pieces: the sacrum and the two wings. The sacrum is both a part of the spine and the pelvis. If we look at mobility throughout the spine, moving from up to down we can see that mobility decreases. There is larger movement range between vertebrae in the upper spine than in the lower, and as we come to the sacrum the vertebrae are fused, leaving no place for movement whatsoever in between them. I therefore consider the sacrum as a structural centre. A form of grip.

3.6.3 Centre of self

Animation designates the way in which mind acquires a locality in the spatial world, its spatialisation, as it were, and together with its corporeal support acquires reality.

Edmund Husserl (1977: 101)

I have proposed that there is a self in the body, but where is that self located? It is a centre of experience rather than a physical locality in the form of a body part in the way that I proposed the sacrum as a centre of the bone structure. In the quote above Husserl proposes that it is through animation that the “mind acquires a locality” and I think we can translate the mind into self here. Thanks to the fact that we are animate we acquire a sense of being in space. We can note a similarity with Wolpert’s claim that we have brains in order to organize our movement. Our animate nature has led us to develop a nervous system that provides us with a “spatialisation”. Proprioception allows me to have an immediate sensation of my own body’s placement; I do not need to look for it. The self can experience a locality produced out of internal relations of different systems at work within the nervous system. How is it that I can have a clear sensation of being in my body and at the same time experience a distance to it?

The self experiences a distance to the body but not as a distance from the body as an outer-body-experience, but from the inside; a distance within the body itself. That distance is measured from that self-centre, from that experience of self.

Let me invite you for an experiment that can give us an idea of the situation of the self. Stand up (I assume you not standing as you read this) and ask yourself the question: How far am I from the floor? Most likely, you will perceive a distance to the floor, even though your feet are on the floor. In other words, your self is not on the floor and your feet are not you. If your self was in your feet you would not have experienced a distance to the floor, but to rid the sensation of distance to the floor we need to lie down. As I write "myself", the two words "my" and "self" are put together as if there is no space between self and me, or at least less space than what you just experienced between you and the floor. Where is the centre of self? It is likely experienced somewhere in the torso, close to the solar plexus, and more related to our sense organs and to the nervous system. Coincidentally or not, this is also where people mostly point when they want to underline the word "I" or "me".

The distance in relation to the body is measured from there. When you measured your experience of distance towards the floor while standing up, my guess is that you experienced your centre of self further up than both your centre of gravity and structural centre. Since this centre is a centre of experience it has no exact location, but it serves as platform to perceive both space and body. Being the centre of experience it is not just sensitive to directions in the space but also to affect, to time and any other kind of perceivable qualia.

There are clearly more centres that we could refer to according to different systems in our bodies, like proprioception, blood circulation, balance, expression and many more. The ones mentioned are those that are the most relevant to me in terms of the movement technique that I’m addressing and I will now explain how.

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10 It was Chrysa Parkinson who asked this question in a workshop I organized at DOCH before she became supervisor of this PhD project. Chrysa references it, in turn, to David Zambrano and Julian Hamilton.

11 Heidegger comments on the relation of proximity in Being and Time (2001: 141-142): “So too, for instance, does the street, as equipment for walking. On feels the touch of it as every step as one walks; it is seemingly the closest and Realest of all that is ready-to-hand, and it slides itself, as it were, along certain portions on one’s body- the soles of one’s feet. And yet it is farther remote that the acquaintance whom one encounters ’on the street’ at ’remoteness’ [“Entfernung’] of twenty paces when one is taking such a walk’.
3.7 Exercise 3: Centre Attunement

We are able to subjectivate different parts of our bodies. Some body parts or regions seem to lend themselves to subjectivation with more ease than others, which might be why there are more songs about our hearts than our spleens. However if the construction of the body proves its own plasticity, which parts, areas or regions that are possible to subjectivate are not written in stone. There are, without any doubt, also cultural aspects involved in the construction of the body. Subjects are produced but how? If we consider the symbolisation of body as a "basic programme" the way Paxton called walking, we can see that even though all of us who are able learn to walk, each and everyone of us develops a singular gait. Thus, the "basic programme“ has a lot of variables. Similarly the subjectivation process has both stable basic principles and a broad margin of plasticity. I might not be able to convince myself that I am my foot anymore than Deborah Hay could unlearn to sneeze, but my experience of self is likely just as singular as my gait.

This is the most important exercise and it demands some contextualisation. It is the simplest and the most complex. It is a Qi-Gong exercise that I learnt in Kung-Fu class at La Salle de Baal by master Huynh Chieu Long.\footnote{Franck Baal and Celia Torrens run the studio and the Chi Kung -Fu style taught by them is Pak Mei.} As I did the exercise for the first time, around 12 years ago, I sensed that it was of importance for me. I have kept doing it ever since and I tell the participants in my class that anything I could ever teach them exists within that movement. It is also one of the reasons why I ended up working with (and against) Da Vinci’s drawing the Vitruvian Man in MODUL 1. I believe this exercise can offer a practical tool for the altering of the body's perception of itself through the attunement of the three centres mentioned above. It is a practise of becoming that can allow for subjectivation of aspects of our bodies that do not seem to come to us that easily, at least in the Western culture and tradition in which I work. This subjectivation process is in some sense a de-subjectivation just like the ones described in MODUL 5 and MODUL 6. In MODUL 5 it was the flocking exercises (also mentioned as the third aspect of movement perception as described above in Three Aspects of Movement Perception) and then what I called the de-subjectivation process of Imitate, Mirror, Interpret and Accompany. Later with Svärmen they became Mirror – Reflection – Diffraction.

It is important to note that the attunement that this exercise will propose is not a unification of the centres. I’m not trying to make them into one and similarly it is by no means a way of finding oneself. It is about tuning with different aspects of the human body.
from what the self mostly identifies with. It is my belief that the exercise produces a body less caught up in representation, and that staging such a body carries a political impact.

I will not explain this exercise in text but invite you to watch the video documentation Centre Attunement 1, 2 and 3.

3.8. Summary

Through earlier class descriptions and described movement exercises I have placed my own technical work in relation to topics that were singled out in the previous chapter Dance Technique and shown practical examples of how to re-articulate the perception of one’s body. In Movement Meditation 1 we have asked ourselves the question of where movement takes place and noticed that it organizes itself around the void between parts and thus relates to a modular method of re-organising units in relation to each other. I put forward a critique towards the causal explanations and the following performance of movement that comes from not considering the organised system in its entirety – the Everythingeverywhereallthetime. I have proposed attunement as a synonym to balance and described it as a form of suspension between forces, both the directional aspects of the body, in terms of the shape of the skeletal structure and the vital force, and the gravitational pull of the earth.

In Exercise 1a and 1b we looked at different aspects of movement perception and noticed how it can be applied to movement in one’s own body as well as to movement around us. We experienced the tipping point as the space-time in which a movement happens and we explored moving in relation to touch as a supplement to visual orientation in space.

In Movement Meditation 2 we looked at how walking can be seen as a technical tool and how the technique Horizontal Fall was an attempt to articulate such an approach.

In Exercise 2 we explored the difference between a causal approach and the Everythingeverywhereallthetime. We continued to discover different aspects of movement perception, as we stepped across thresholds of stillness only to notice how movement still prevailed beyond them. We ended up on the border of fiction and reality of our own perceptions and asked which movements in the body we think of as belonging to our selves.

In Movement Meditation 3 we situated different centres in the body and in Exercise 3 I proposed the Qi-Gong exercise as an attunement between them. This attunement can be understood in terms of modularity as it assembles several units without uniting them and thus respects the divisibility and heterogeneity of the assembled system.
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All the exercises and movement meditations should be understood as explorations of the biological body, through the use of our conscious reflection and as such examples of what Steve Paxton called “to technique”. They can be seen as ways to revisit the bodily construction that took place during infancy. Once the self is constructed it is very hard to imagine any previous state of being. German philosopher Martin Heidegger (whom I will speak more of in chapter Technne and Self) makes the distinction between the ontic and the ontological and differs being (Sein) from existence (Dasein), which is the ontological status of mankind. (2001: 21-32) We can consider infancy and early childhood as a transition from being to existence. But what is important is that being does not dissolve into existence as our biological matter prevails. The construction of the symbolic body – as we can describe the experience of self – does not erase the biological, but it does create a distance. An experienced divide in our being. The implications of the distance between the biological and symbolic is a vector throughout this entire thesis. To re-articulate their relation to each other through movement analysis and movement exercises, as this chapter has proposed, can be seen as a form of subjectivation.

3.9 Conclusions on Technique

Development does not happen because internal maturational processes tell the system how to develop. Rather development happens through and because of the activity of the system itself.

Thelen & Smith (1994: 305)\(^{13}\)

I have proposed three different aspects of dance technique: 1. The investigation of basic programme as walking, breathing and self-defensive mechanisms, 2. The altering of bodily perception through Centre Attunement, 3. To consider movement a materialisation of forces, and the making visible of those inherent forces. This third aspect will be further explained in the following section. All three aspects point to the biological body as alternative to the idealised, geometrical and anatomical body that dance mostly engages with.\(^{14}\)

As a dancer sets her/himself to track the knowledge of the body, it is initially mostly with a will to dominate the body; to acquire measurable skills by teaching oneself to do

\(^{13}\)As quoted by Sheets-Johnstone (2011: 198).

\(^{14}\)Anatomy is a subdisciplin of biology. Anatomy is Greek for “I cut open” (anatemnē). I relate this cutting up to a more functionalistic approach and prefer the term biological that means “study of life” from the Greek bios (life) and logia (study of).
tricks and use the body as a representational tool. Technique is then means for those ends. Instead we could think of technique as something that is produced through the movement exploration of ourselves and of our surrounding world. This means that the ability "to technique" is something we are born with and that we engage with as soon as we enter the world and we do so without having been given any sort of method or explanation of how to go about it. This technological capacity allows us to develop methods and procedures that expand far beyond what the "basic programme" provides us with, finding new ways to move sensory experience. I probably should not differentiate between the "basic programme" and the capacity "to technique", since that capacity can be seen as a part of the programme. The body system comes prepared and carries the capacity for its own development.
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4. Functionality Without Function

4.1 Introduction
In this chapter I first describe what I call functional movement through the influence that the Chinese Martial Art techniques have had on my adult movement exploration. After having earlier proposed Body as Thing I now propose Body as Weapon. With the form of movement that these proposals can generate I return to the Vitruvian Man, as it was described in MODUL 1 and MODUL 2, to show how representationalism can be deconstructed by adding movement to the picture.

The above described exercise Centre Attunement comes from Qi-Gong and I will now elaborate what relation to functional movement that I have found in practising the aforementioned martial art techniques. When we move in every day life it is mostly based on function. When I lift a cup to my mouth my intention is to drink and not the chain of events that enable the drinking, such as: close the hand, bend the elbow and soften the wrist to not spill, open the mouth, tilt the glass, swallow the content. When it comes to dancing there is not one obvious intention but there are “mental directives” – as Sheets-Johnstone called them above – involved, such as “bend the elbow”, but such intentions do not have a direct function the way “drink” has. Like other artistic practices dance engages in what Immanuel Kant calls \textit{purposiveness without a purpose}. (2007: 52) One can, of course, speak of less direct purposes such as recognition in the social realm but it is the lack of obvious meaning that gives art meaning. The artwork is purposeless in at least two ways. Firstly, if we disregard how art can be used for political or economical purposes, it has no direct use. Secondly, even if the author has a specific intention with the work, the artwork does not grant the communication of that intention. This emptiness is what allows the artwork to produce a new way to look at something already known, ungrounding an existing definition and even that of the author’s intention. Similar to the \textit{purposiveness without a purpose}, I’m seeking to detach functionality from function. This detachment can in turn provide an alternative understanding of biology.
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that does not so easily fall into functionalist determinations. As Dona Haraway reminds us:
"Biology is a discourse, not the living world itself" (2004: 67)

When describing my own education I found a problem in how a technique, once
developed for a specific movement vocabulary, became a generic definition of dance
 technique. On the other hand I noticed how I could acquire skills within a specific technique
that are not specific to that technique. In the first case the technique as functionality is
detached from its original function, which was to serve the performance of the repertory for
which it was created. In the second case technique shows performative capacities in terms of
what it can do and not the aesthetic values it represents. Technique is released from its
original purpose and starts to generate new (purposeless) purposes. A teacher can then teach
any technique and trust the students capacity to use or miss-use the technique for his or her
own purposes, which in Paxton’s words is the ability “to technique”. A functionality is given a
new function and the instrumentalist understanding of technique as means to an end is
overthrown. The means create a new end or initiate an open-ended process for questioning
and adapting both the ends and the means themselves.

In the two examples we see two different ways of detaching functionality from
function, one representational and one performative. In the first example the technique is
detached from the function of developing the skill to perform of a specific movement material.
Divorced from the generation of such a skill the technique gets caught up in institutional,
educational and representationalist apparatuses. In the second case it is quite the opposite
process, as a technique that aims at the representation of aesthetic preferences is turned into
a generative device for difference in outcome. The model starts to modulate. Technique is
released as it shifts from a tool for representation and becomes generative for new forms of
life.

This is the form of knowledge production I am aiming for and where I believe
that art – and specifically artistic research – in line with divergent thinking and
enstrangement, as they were described in Introduction, can provide an interesting
epistemological perspective.

This chapter starts by defining my perspective on functional movement, using
Chinese martial Arts and from them propose the body as weapon instead of as tool. This
difference between weapon and tool will be approached through Deleuze and Guattari’s
concept of the War Machine that will be put in relation to Sheets-Johnstone’s call for a less
instrumental understanding of movement, as it was expressed in the previous chapter. I will
then return to the deconstruction of the Vitruvian Man, as described in MODUL 1 and MODUL
2 and show how movement concepts can deconstruct representationalism. To emphasise the
importance of movement I will add a forth centre to the three centres that I located above in *Movement Meditation 3: Different Centres*. The deconstruction through movement will be explained through a second concept from Deleuze and Guattari: the Smooth and the Striate, and we will see how that concept communicates with the movement techniques and concepts that were teased out in chapter 2 and 3. To conclude the chapter I will show how the topographical movement analysis that the MODUL method works with can articulate a relation between technique and choreography.

4.2 Functional Movement
What do I mean by functional movement? It is what Steve Paxton described above as “basic programme”. They are movements found in everyday life. Evolution and mishaps have left us with proportions and a movement apparatus that both enable our movements and limit them. Some of the movements enabled are necessary for our survival, such as the proportionate relation between wrist, lower arm, upper arm, shoulder, neck and head that allows us to pick something up and put it in our mouth to feed ourselves. These movements are functional and the function is survival. Another life-maintaining capacity that the movement apparatus provides is self-defence. It was the Chinese martial techniques Kung-Fu, Qi-Gong and Tai-Chi that provided me with my first concepts of functional movement.

Although the mentioned techniques are self-defensive, I initially found their violent functions problematic. Why is it that these violent techniques seemed to have more to teach me about my body in movement than the pacific dance techniques that I had run into? I believe that the answer is homeostasis. Homeostasis is the life-maintaining principle of any organism. It is each organism’s will to survive and works even on a cellular level. Any thing that shapes itself in the material world does so trying to optimise its own sustainability within that same physical world. We can for example see how the proportions of our extremities allow us to protect vital organs in our abdomen or how the heart and lungs are placed within the protective ribcage. The etymology of the term shows us the combination of the two Greek words *homeo* (similar) and *stasis* (a standing still). It is thus a question of maintaining something stable, but as we have seen, maintaining something in balance is not the same thing as being static. Balancing is a mobile activity. Since homeostasis has played a role in the evolutionary development of our physical proportions and motor system it makes sense to study movement through techniques of self-defence.

By addressing evolution I border on the problematic term of what is natural and I would like to stress that I’m not giving evolution any undeserved credit. That matter has organised itself in relation to both its inherent molecular structure and exterior forces does
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not mean that it is “true” or should be given divine properties. The problem with the term *natural* is when we humans use it as an excuse to not look further and as a way to justify the “nature of things”. Nature is appropriated for specific purposes. It becomes static, unchangeable and either divorced from culture or consumed by it. The next problem is the assumption that nature is good. We speak of natural beauty but the fact that we can see beauty in nature does not mean that nature is beautiful. A sunset is not more natural than a brain tumour. Above I quoted Donna Haraway on biology being a discourse and not a living world and Haraway makes a similar critique towards the term *nature*:

Nature is not hidden and so does not need to be unveiled. Nature is not a text to be read in the codes of mathematics and biomedicine. It is not the "other" who offers origin, replenishment, and service. Neither mother, nurse, nor slave, nature is not matrix, resource, or tool for the reproduction of man.

Haraway (2003: 65)

Speaking of functionality is not a solution and biology often reduces its subject to its functions. Just like nature, functionality runs the risk of turning itself into a mere representation and the Chinese martial art techniques that I have mentioned are as well victims of ideology and have been aesthetically manipulated towards representation of an idealised body and a strong national identity. We should, however, not blame that on the knowledge itself. The way something is picked up and institutionalised cannot be blamed on the technique itself, just like we cannot blame Martha Graham for how her technique, developed for her artwork, got institutionalised. That being said, I still find great inspiration in the martial techniques mentioned and I strongly believe that there is something to be learned about the body by studying those functionalities, even while separated from their original function of self-defence.

As a form of reversed engineering, the martial art techniques have supplied me with a possibility to study movement principals by practising the effects of those principles themselves. Although I have practiced the three mentioned techniques for about 20 years, it has been done with great irregularity and I do not consider myself a practitioner. I know very little about them as techniques and have instead used them for my own purposes: to track physical functionalities and assign them new functions. They have proposed a different consideration of the body than the one I met through dance classes. Even though there is the purpose of self-defence I have found them less instrumentalist in the sense that they do not consider the body a tool. In a Tai-Chi class I took in 2013, teacher Thierry Bae pointed at this
fact as a reason to why in Tai-Chi there is no stretching. Martial art considers the body, not as tool, but as a weapon. What implication could it have to consider the body as weapon?

4.3 Body as Weapon

The more mechanisms of projection a tool has, the more it behaves like a weapon, potentially or simply metaphorically. In addition tools are constantly compensating for the projective mechanism they possess, or else they adapt them to other ends. It is true that missile weapons, in the strict sense, whether projected or projecting, are only one kind among others; but even hand-held weapons require a usage of the hand and arm different from that required by tools, a projective usage exemplified in the martial arts. The tool on the other hand is much more introceptive, introjective: it prepares a matter from a distance, in order to bring it to a state of equilibrium or to appropriate it a form of interiority. Action at a distance exists in both cases, but in one case it is centrifugal and the other centripetal.

Deleuze & Guattari (2004: 436)

The title of the chapter in which Deleuze and Guattari speak of the weapon is entitled 1227: Treatise on Nomadology – The War Machine. From the start they make it clear that the aim of the war machine is not war. War is the result when the State Apparatus appropriates the War Machine. (2004: 464). I do not know what motivates them to use the term War Machine if it is not about war, but my reason for using the term weapon is to relate it to the skills of martial arts and to move away from an image of the body as tool. The term Nomadology however points to a shared interest in mobility and Deleuze and Guattari refer to martial arts remarking how “one learns to ‘unuse’ weapons as much as one learns to use them, the weapon being only a provisory means” (2004: 442). Using Kant's description of art having purposiveness without purpose we can understand how terms such as “weapon” and “war” can be detached from their purpose and be considered as art, albeit a martial art. The appearance of gunpowder made the martial arts' weapon techniques obsolete, but instead of dying out the techniques turned on themselves and started to develop techniques without prosthetic weapons. The function was turned away from the utilitarian goal of war. In the film “...in a non-wimpy way”Steve Paxton speaks of his understanding of how dance, and specifically

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1 I thank Victor Johansson, PhD student at the Pedagogical Institution at the Stockholm University (until 2013) for pointing this reference out to me.
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Contact Improvisation, can relate to martial arts.\(^2\) He describes a non-violent use of the martial techniques in which winning ”should be the preservation of both opponents” and how the attitude presents an “unbelievable philosophical leap in movement and in martial arts”. Paxton describes how his experiences from training aikido allowed for a different reason to move, as it was survival that choreographed the movements. Paxton speaks of the preservation of both opponents, which means that it is not be actual survival that he refers to, since no one is out to kill. Instead I understand his use of the word survival referring to choreography of homeostasis that has shaped those movements.

To summarise the potential advantages of the metaphor of the weapon let’s remember our quest for what Sheets-Johnstone called movement’s ”particular domain of concepts” that is not a “change of position” and look at one more quote from 1227: Treatise on Nomadology- The War Machine:

Linear displacement, from one point to another, constitutes the relative movement of the tool, but it is the vortical occupation of a space that constitutes the absolute movement of the weapon. It is as though the weapon were moving, self-propelling, while the tool is moved.

Deleuze & Guattari (2004: 438)

In accordance with Sheets-Johnstone, Deleuze and Guattari consider the linear movement equipmental, while the weapon is placed in relation to the spiral movement through the beautiful expression of ”the vortical occupation of space”. In the chapter Dance Technique I discussed the body as thing, and although both weapons and tools are objects we can see how the weapon lends itself better to the sort of movement this thesis advocates. Another reference from the moving thing can be found in The Fold- Leibniz and the Baroque, where Deleuze refers to Bernard Cache’s neologism objectile that fuses object with projectile. Deleuze proposes that if the status of the object changes so does that of the subject.\(^3\) (2006:19-20) We can thus presume that by adding the vortical movement of the weapon to the thingness of the body we can form a new object/subject relation within ourselves.

In the description of MODUL 1 and MODUL 2 I explicated my deconstruction of

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\(^3\) The form of subject that he claims the objectile generate is the superject, which he lends from Whitehead.
the Vitruvian Man in the two scenes From A4 to Human Scale and The Dissolving Body. I mentioned how I ended up working with that image by recognising how my movement material often brought me to the two position of Da Vinci’s drawing. We shall now see how this relates to the weapon’s vortical occupation of space.

4.4 Smoothing the Vitruvian Man

Da Vinci’s drawing relates to Marcus Vitruvius’ work on the geometrical proportions of man. That is, a normative stereotypical white man in his best years and obviously well proportioned for a perfect fit into geometrical ideals. The sketch is seen as an effort to fuse scientific and artistic objectives but here it serves as an example of representationalism and static aesthetics. The two positions the man finds himself in are exactly that – positions. Man is pinned down, limbs separated, like a frog before dissection in biology class. This immobilisation was not what brought me to those two shapes. On the contrary, movement had created those shapes, but what movement? The unfolding and the spin, both related to centrifugal force. To use the description of a weapon’s movement from above, it was the “vortical occupation of space” and the “mechanisms of projection” that made those shapes appear.

If Da Vinci’s effort was to divide man into proportionate parts and frame him inside perfect geometrical forms I do not share his interests. I believe that the position with both feet together and the arms reaching straight out from the shoulders have nothing to do with a square. Da Vinci uses it to show how an ideal proportion would mean that one has the same length between one’s fingertips as from head to toe. For me it is instead the centrifugal force that flings my arms out to the side as I spin on the vertical axis. I do not assume the position to prove correct proportions but I let the spin lift my arms. If there is a shape to deduct from this movement it is not the square, but the circular movement one would see by looking at the movement from above.

Now to the second position. In Da Vinci’s drawing the man is suspended in mid-air like a jumping Jack. My first encounter with that shape took place lying down on the floor. My first clear memory of being in this x-position was through the classes of Nienke Reehorst,

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4 Canadian choreographer Eduard Lock used this expression in his presentation at Danscentrum Stockholm during the conference Ballet Why and How? in September 2012.
5 We should note though, that Da Vinci has depicted the man in that position with his feet asymmetrically placed. It is the only slight divergence from frontality in the drawing as one foot points straight forward while the other is pointing in a 90 degree angle to his left. Would he have let his upper body follow this shift he would start turning and his hands would detach from the square.
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Iñaky Azpíllaga and David Zambrano while working with the Belgian choreographer Wim Vandekeybus. It was through a frequently used floor movement exercise where we would curl up into fetus position on the side and then roll back onto the back and unfold into the x-position. I remember Zambrano calling the position the starfish. This was before I was introduced to the Qi-Gong exercise described above as Centre Attunement that also works with this shape and today I think of the floor exercise as a horizontal version of the Qi-Gong exercise.

Vitruvius himself mentions the fact that this position is easier to construct when one is laying down on the floor: "For if a man can be placed flat on his back, with his hands and feet extended, and a pair of compasses centred at his navel, the fingers and toes of his two hands and feet will touch the circumference of a circle described there from."

While analysing closer this x-position I realized that the resemblance between Da Vinci’s version and mine was deceptive. While the Vitruvian Man has the arms at the height of his head mine were further up. In the quote above Vitruvius says "hands and feet extended"

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6 Vitruvius, Marcus; De Architectura, Book III, Chapter 1, p. 3
but does not define in what direction. The hands and feet should touch the circumference of the circle and looking at the drawing we can see that there is only one place where the hands and feet can touch it. If the Vitruvian Man would lift or lower his feet or hands they would no longer touch the circle, so he arranges his limbs to fit the circle. He does not worry about the movement he needs to perform to get there, but about the display of proportion and geometric ideal.

It is Leonardo, not Vitruvius, who points out that ‘If you open the legs so as to reduce the stature by one-fourteenth and open and raise your arms so that your middle fingers touch the line through the top of the head, know that the centre of the extremities of the outspread limbs will be the umbilicus, and the space between the legs will make an equilateral triangle’ (Academia, Venice). Here he provides one of his simplest illustrations of a shifting ‘centre of magnitude’ without a corresponding change of ‘centre of normal gravity’. (...) Leonardo repeatedly distinguishes these two different ‘centres’ of a body, i.e., the centres of ‘magnitude’ and ‘gravity’.

Keele (1983:252)

In this description the position is not constructed lying down, but by “reducing the stature by one-fourteenth” and lifting the hands until the “middle fingers touch the line through the top of the head”. Again, the movement is not taken into account, only the position is of importance. Furthermore, one would need tools to construct that position since we do not have an intuitive sense of how to “reduce the stature by one-fourteenth” or an immediate sensation of creating an “equilateral triangle” with the legs. Even finding the line of the top of the head with one’s middle fingers is difficult without a spirit level.

In the end of the quote Keele claims that Da Vinci illustrates a “shifting ‘centre of magnitude’ without a corresponding change of ‘centre of normal gravity’”. This is why the two feet are off the floor in the x-position of Da Vinci’s drawing. It is as if Da Vinci wants the Vitruvian to change position without actually moving. To me this seems exactly like the sort of picking apart of the body that I critique in the representationalist approach to dance technique and that I propose to undo with the idea of Everythingeverywhereallthetime. The exercise Centre Attunement showed the opposite idea as all centres are tuning in movement instead of trying to shift one centre and not another.

I noted above how the Vitruvian Man can only touch the circle in four specific spots. The rest of the circle is outside of the human kinesphere. I find this a striking metaphor
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of the strive towards geometric perfection outside the body and out of reach. Since my efforts instead points inwards to the body I will propose a substitute to the Centre of Magnitude as Keele calls the centre of the circle.

4.5 Centrefold

Above, in Movement meditation 3. Different Centres, I tried to locate Gravitational Centre, Structural Centre and Centre of Self. I now want to propose a substitute to the above mentioned Centre of Magnitude and add the substitution to the list a fourth centre: Centrefold.

As one finds oneself in the x-position, as described both in the starfish shape from the floor movement and the Qi-Gong exercise of Centre Attunement, it is in relation to the Centrefold instead of Centre of Magnitude. The folding movement goes from the full reach with no joint bent (except for the ankle since we are standing) to a position in which all joints are bent. In the floor version the folding can go further (since one does not need to keep any stable balance) all the way to foetus position. The unfolding from foetus position to full reach can be seen as an illustration of the embryological unfolding I mentioned related to the vital force. I say illustration since the embryological movement is far more complex and performs movement we cannot repeat.

But what is the Centrefold? It is not an existing place; it is not a body part. It is a location around which the movement articulates itself and can be understood in the same way as I described the in-between space of a joint. While bending an elbow the body parts change place in relation to each other, and that change of position articulates itself in relation to the Centrefold. It is the emptiness around which the movement takes place: the eye of the storm. It is the centre of movement that I lacked in the Vitruvian Man while working with it in MODUL 1 and that made me add the triangle. I saw the triangle as the angular foldings and directional aspects of the body. Not the geometrical shapes that a body is supposed to fit into, but the body’s own multilinear system. It is not the contours of an extension but the internal directions of the hyper mobile skeletal structure and all other directions at work in our pulsating, biological body. Adding all those lines and directions into the picture made the man inside it disappear into all the potential curves and folds within him. The man was no longer in the star shaped centre but disappeared into a swarm of movement. He was made invisible, just as the centre of movement is, and the representational body blurred into abstraction. Using the terminology of the class description of The Horizontal Fall 2012: The arboreal structure disappeared into a rhizome.
4.6 Smooth and Striated
To describe my questioning of the Vitruvian Man I used the term *smoothing* and I borrow the
term from Deleuze and Guattari who oppose the two terms *smooth* and *striated*. The two
terms exist in anatomy – a reference Deleuze and Guattari are not explicit about – and
describes two different forms of muscles: striated musculature as in the fibrous skeletal
muscles of our movement apparatus (but also the cardiac muscle) and smooth musculature,
as for example gastro-intestinal. They both consist of similar filaments but the organisation of
them differs. The two terms first appear in the end of the mentioned chapter 1227:*Treatise on
Nomadology- The War Machine* and they are then developed in their own chapter 1440: *The
Smooth and the Striated*. Deleuze and Guattari articulate the difference between smooth and
striated space through several different models: the technological, the musical, the maritime
the mathematical, the physical and the aesthetic. I will apply their terminology to articulate
yet one more model (or preferably module) – that of bodily movement.

The smooth space relates to the movement of the non-violent weapon, which is
made clear already in the first line of the chapter as Deleuze and Guattari describes how the
two forms of space, “smooth space and striated space – nomad space and sedentary space –
the space in which the war machine develops and the space instituted by the State apparatus
– are not of the same nature.” (2004: 524) Smooth space is movement – “nomad” – while
striated is “sedentary”. Although the two terms are placed in opposition, they are not
separable and their Intra-Active relation is noted as Deleuze and Guattari say, “the two spaces
in fact exist only in mixture (...)” (2004: 524).

Adding movement to the picture deconstructed the Vitruvian Man and we shall
now see how the concept of smooth and striated can be applied in movement. In the *MODUL 6*
description I described how I re-articulated the Dan Johansson's movement improvisation
into a version in which movement is not from one point to another but instead swarms in
between points. Similar to the deconstruction of the Vitruvian Man, the re-articulation was
made in order to escape a geometrical relation to space and body. The relation between point
and line expressed through smooth and striated by Deleuze and Guattari like this:
“In striated space, lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points: one goes from one
point to the other. In the smooth, it is the opposite: the points are subordinated to the
trajectory.” (2004: 528) The trajectory is thus the line and “In smooth space the line is

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I would like to thank Leif Dahlberg for pointing this reference out to me. The difference of those two
musculatures is of importance for the argument I try to construct in relation to the self and the body.
The experienced self relates to a sensation of free will. The striated muscles (with the exception of the
cardiac muscle) are under voluntary control while the smooth are not.
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dependently a vector, a direction and not a dimension or metric determination.” (Ibid) In the
above Exercise 1a, one of the aspects of movement perception proposed was to sense the
movement as a force in space – a vector. In that exercise this movement aspect served to undo
the fixity of spatial perception that result from the architectural characteristics of the space
we were walking in. This aspect of movement perception relates to the concept of Becoming
as Deleuze and Guattari describes what they call the Line of Becoming as that which “is not
defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes
between points.” (2004: 323) By adding all the trajectories that the lines connecting points
have neglected the Vitruvian Man was deconstructed by means of movement. The Vitruvian
Man moved only in order to reach the designated points, instead of following the movement –
the Line of Becoming.

Keele’s statement of how Da Vinci made sure to shift one centre without shifting
another shows the effort of maintaining one central point in the picture in order to produce
symmetry in the depicted body (with the exception of the slight turn out in the left foot).
Deleuze and Guattari describe how by “maintaining the organic domination of a central point
with radiating lines” (2004: 549) one prevents “infinite progression” (ibid). It is such
symmetry that I critique by introducing the Centrefold.

4.7 Escaping striation

We can now see how the concepts of the War Machine and the Smooth and the
Striated can provide a vocabulary that allows us to “restore to movement its
inherent dynamics” and the play that “potentially generates a particular domain of
concepts” as Sheets-Johnstone called for in the quote opening the section Movement
Meditation 1 in the previous chapter. To leave the instrumental and
representationalist approach to dance technique can be described as an escape from
striation and Deleuze and Guattari propose two different strategies to do so. The
first is by declination which is described as “the infinitely small deviation between a
gravitational vertical and the arc of a circle to which the vertical is tangent”.
(2004:539) The second strategy to escape striation is by the spiral or vortex that
Deleuze and Guattari understand as “a figure in which all the points of space are
simultaneously occupied according to laws of frequency or of accumulation,
distribution (…)”. (2004: 540)

We have, in this thesis, already come across these two strategies to escape
striation. In the description of MODUL 5 I described how I tried to align with the institutional
assemblage in order produce a slight deviation. A tiny declination to smoothen the striated

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institutional choreography. This minimum angle was also referred to as *clinamen* in the section *Movement Meditation 2: The pedestrian Horizontal Fall* where the term described the slight horizontal fall of a step while walking on the spherical earth. The second way to escape striation – the spiral and the vortex – has been seen in several movement descriptions and specifically the vortical occupation of space that the weapon’s movement proposed.

Without using the exact terms of declination or spiral there are still two terms that I have introduced that I understand as ways to escape striation: Body-Self Attunement and the *Everythingeverywhereallthetime*. The Body-Self Attunement escapes striation by working on the Centrefold as the void around which movement organizes itself. There is an emptiness that arranges movement around itself, just as the empty space in the joint that allows re-articulation. Movement takes place in the void between materials.

Everythingeverywhereallthetime escapes striation by working against causal descriptions of movement. There is a metaphor to describe *Everythingeverywhereallthetime* that I frequently use while teaching: We have probably all seen in physics class how metal shavings arrange themselves under the influence of a magnetic force. It is the possibility to respond to a force that makes all the shavings move and they all engage at the same time as long as they find themselves within the reach of that force. They materialize the force, which is how I understand the above quote describing how “all the points of space are simultaneously occupied according to laws of frequency (...).” Every cell in my body aligns with the Line of Becoming that is the movement of movement. As Deleuze and Guattari describe the maritime model, they speak of how the ocean’s smooth space is striated by bearings. They mention how there also exists a more nomadic way of navigation: by interpreting the capillary waves on the sea one can predict the location of landmasses out of sight. This is an exact description for the sort of mapping of interference that Diffraction consists of, as quoted above, describing how it “does not map where differences appear, but rather maps where the *effects* of difference appear.” Using the maritime model I want to propose a relation to bodily movement based on the idea of a Diffractive navigation and to the metaphor of the metal shavings. This would mean to navigate through my own movement by observing the ripples of the bodily matter and affirming them by letting them materialize throughout my body and space.

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8 The English translation of *clinamen* is *swerve* and shares its etymological root with *swarm* and indeed, the reason we chose to call our group *Svärmen* (and not pack, herd, flock or other names of animal multiplicities) was the swerving movement of such a gathering.
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4.8 Movement in Matter

In all these cases we see the vortical movement appear. How come it keeps reoccurring? It seems to be a basic way for matter to arrange itself when put in motion. Difference in temperature in the air alters pressure and the air organises itself into a tornado. Pulling the plug in the tub creates a vent for the water’s gravitational pull and the liquid materialises the vortex. I am now proceeding in a speculative manner and I realize that I am risking a certain mystification. But since this vortical and spiralling movement persists in appearing in so many ways in both practice and theory I will venture on. Next to (or inside of) the vortical movement is the spiral shape. Imagine a metal spring like the one used in the suspensions of a car. You push it together and it will push back out. You pull it out and it will pull back together. The same functions appear when winding up or unwinding the spiral; it will move back to where it came from. The spiral functions with both vertical and rotational momentum. In Exercise 2, I describe the combination of vertical and rotational momentum, both being a part of the directional aspects of our body. The plasticity of the material enables both the in- and outward movement. The material itself, metal, in the case of the spring, has its own properties and can show more or less plasticity. But there appears also to be a function in the form of the spiral itself. The function that pulls it back together is limited. If you pull it too far it will not pull itself back together and the movement capacities of the spiral shape disappear. The material has not changed, it is still metal, and it didn’t break but the spiral lost its function. The interior arrangement of the material changed and the described movement capacity disappeared. I am not able to explain why this is, but I cannot help but notice how the vortex keeps returning as a basic form of movement whether it is forming galaxies or haircuts.

In The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque, Deleuze describes one perspective on the fold using a term from his student Barnard Cache: point of inflection. The term is yet another way to describe the clinamen and this is how Cache himself describes it: “The point of inflection, however, designates a pure event of curvature where the tangent crosses the curve; yet this event does not depend in any way on the orientation of the axes, which is why it can be said that inflection is an intrinsic singularity.” (1995: 16) Singularity is a complicated mathematical term that I will not be able to explicate thoroughly but it can be described as a singular point that can form an undetermined event. As an image we can think of a knothole in tree trunk to show the sort of pivotal property it has. The singularity is not the knothole, but that which occasioned the knothole to emerge. If the point of inflection is an “intrinsic singularity” we can see it as a speculative assumption to why the spiral and the vortex keep

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9 The Swedish word for suspension is fjädring and fjäder means both feather and spring.
re-occurring. This assumption, regardless of its actual empiric value can allow us to consider one more fictive threshold of stillness as it was expressed in Exercise 2: To end with causality and thresholds of stillness: By regarding the intrinsic tendency of movement in matter that the point of inflection as singularity proposes we can imagine, or simply accept, that there is movement within the bodily matter. Self-movement can thus refer to the bodily matter as self-propelling and not a body that is moved by the self.

4.8.1 Occasioning Movement

To consider one’s own body in movement as a thing with inherent movement is one way of acknowledging the biological body. Even if we are not capable of sensing all the movements happening in our body we can, as Diffraction has showed us, navigate in relation to the interferences those movements produce. The acknowledging of movement in matter brings about the question of agency. Drawing from Judith Butler's understanding of performativity and the Danish physicist Nils Bohr’s analysis of causality, Karen Barad understands causality as “neither a matter of strict determinism nor one of unconstrained freedom. Causes are not forces that act on the phenomenon from outside.” (2007: 214) Barad’s description coincides with how I initially described a modular system that questioned choreography understood as “strict determinism” and improvisation as “unconstrained freedom”. In Barad’s materialist theory of agential realism, agency is not something one has or that one can be given. Causality is not "construed as a unilateral movement from cause to effect. Rather, the 'causes' and 'effects' emerge through intra-actions.” (2007: 214) When it comes to self-movement the agency of the “I” can thus not be considered as the sovereign power to move one’s body freely. That is an anthropocentric lullaby. The initiation of a movement is always in relation to other parameters, which is why I prefer occasioning as an alternative to initiation.

I regulate the suspension in between forces to let one or several potential directions release the spatial projection of my weight. This would be a recognition of movement within matter as inherent. The movement is always already there, suspended, waiting to be actualized. Static energy in arrest, waiting to become kinetic. Abandoning oneself into movement, as it was expressed in the 2007 class description Mobilization or the Tipping Point (See Exercise 1b), assumes such a reformulation of the agency of the “I” in self-movement. Remember again how Deborah Hay’s effort to unlearn to sneeze was in vain. It was a movement she could not resist. She could not help but let it happen, letting her matter align with its force. We can imagine a similar way in relation to self-movement, which would be a movement technique: through attunement with the ripples of our own matter in movement we bring ourselves to the point where a movement cannot help but appear.
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4.8.2 Making Visible.

To sense is to witness the passage of a force, not just those forces that effect us, but also the forces that pleats mountains, that makes our clothes wrinkled, that deforms clouds and bodies. Sensation is a way to perceive and make visible these forces, since it is their own expression

David Lapoujade (2010: 123)\(^{10}\)

We have seen examples of how to consider movement within matter, pointing back both to “the directional aspects” of the body and the motion of growth, and the quote above brings yet one element that needs elaboration: “make visible”. To occasion movement, as expressed in the section above, is to make it visible. It is to materialize forces as the metal shavings materialize the magnetic force. The making visible in terms of technique involves the topographical movement analysis of the forces at work in the body. “To technique” is to become sensitive to those forces in order to make them visible. It is the same sensitivity that I advocate for in the topographical movement analysis of a choreographic work and the approach that I have been working with in MODUL. To be sensitive to the movements within a structure and make them visible. The “making visible” is not an innocent act of only revealing what is already there. One chooses what to unconceal, but one also unconceals more than one chooses to.

To be able to notice the different forces at work one needs to engage with the system by proposing an idea. Throughout the different MODULs I practiced different forms of proposing. In MODUL 1 the inclusive method meant to affirm side-tracks and spin offs of the original set up. In MODUL 2 it was by curating other artist to work within my set up. In MODUL 3 it was by proposing a score and in MODUL 4 I continued the same score method but directed the participants to work with it and composed a structure of their contributions instead of just lining them up as we did in MODUL 3. It was never my intention to withdraw from the impact of my own authorship but to regulate it in intensity and to try out different forms of choreographic engagement. I cannot withdraw from my own presence but I can chose to place

myself differently in relation to the movement that is produced by the Choreographic Agents at work.

The meaningful and sensorimotor divisions of the perceptual world, as it is organized by the human animal when it turns itself into the centre of the world, transforms its position as a picture among other pictures to a cogito, a centre from which it can proceed and divide the world’s pictures (...). Art’s work is to dissolve this world of figuration or doxa, to depopulate this world, to efface that which is always there beforehand on every canvas or surface.

Jacques Rancière (2010: 99) 11

I agree with Rancière’s definition of art’s labour and how it critiques anthropocentric representationalism, but as Lapoujade put forward it is not just a question of how “to efface that which is always there beforehand” but also of making the invisible doxa visible. Rancière’s description of the artwork relates beautifully to how Deborah Hay describes her choreographic work by saying that she recognises her choreography being at work, as she can see a performer transcend and self-regulate that by which they are already choreographed. 12 To be able to transcend and self-regulate the doxa in which one is caught up. Gilles Deleuze gives a similar account as he connects our perceptive capacities to the activity of making art and names percept as the result of artistic production.

And this, first of all, is what makes painting abstract: summoning forces, populating the area of plain, uniform color with the forces it bears, making the invisible forces visible in themselves, drawing up figures with a geometrical appearance but that are no more than forces – the forces of gravity, heaviness, rotation, the vortex, explosion, expansion, germination, and time.

Deleuze & Guattari (1994: 181-182)

Deleuze mentions the same making visible of invisible forces that Lapoujade spoke of and not of an effort to efface them. It is important to note how he says that one can draw geometrical

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11 Ibid. (p.99) Original text: “De betydelsebärande och sensomotoriska uppdelningarna av varexistentsvärlden såsom den organiseras av mänskodjuret när det gör sig till världens centrum, förvandlar sin position som en bild ibland andra bilder till ett cogito, ett centrum från vilket det kan fortskrida och dela upp världens bilder (...) Konstens verk är att upplösa denna värld av figuration eller doxa, att avfolka denna värld, att sudda bort det som alltid finns däriför på varje dukt eller yta (...)”

12 I’m paraphrasing from a post-performance talk she did at Dansens Hus in Stockholm after presenting If I sing to You (2009).
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appearance without representing geometry. To perform a circular movement is not the same thing as representing a circle. In the same section Deleuze asks if the goal of the percept is not "to make perceptible the imperceptible forces that populate the world, affect us, and make us become?" (1994:182) We can thus see a relation between making visible and line of becoming as I described it through the movement model added to Deleuze and Guattari's models of Smooth and Striate.

4.9 Summary

This streaming, spiraling, zigzagging, snaking, feverish line of variation liberates a power of life that human beings had rectified and organisms had confined, and which matter now expresses as the trait, flow, or impulse traversing it.

Deleuze & Guattari (2004: 550)

The chapter started out by describing the ideas around functional movements and how, by detaching them from any direct function, they can be studied and generate movement knowledge. This is the way that functionality in martial arts has influenced my movement exploration and consequently the understanding of technique that I promote through my teaching. It consists in detaching the "basic programme" from its function. Drawing on the separation between Deleuze and Guattari's terms War Machine and State Apparatus I showed how the detachment of functionality from function could put forward a non-violent understanding of the body as weapon and a less functionalistic take on biology. The biological body is snatched from the hands of biology and its matter in movement is made visible.

With movement – centrefold, clinamen and vortex – as weapons I deconstructed and re-choreographed Da Vinci's normative and representationist body image. Finally, movement in matter was given recognition and the sensitivity towards such movement was understood both as technique production and choreographic method. The navigation between technique and choreography and between process and product was done in the form of Diffractive navigation that the Maritime Model of Smooth and Striate occasioned.

In understanding the difference of Smooth and Striate, strategies and tactics of escaping striation by means of movement have appeared, but where does striation come from? The need of inventing strategies to escape striation seems to show how the striating mechanism is intrinsic in mankind. If movement has this potential to liberate a power and let it express itself through our matter – as Deleuze and Guattari have it in the quote that opens this section – what is it that wants to striate it through rectification and confinement? Their
answer is the human being. Why does the human engage in the striation? Is striation even a trait unique to the human ontology?
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5. *Techne* and Self

PART I

5.1 Introduction – Where am I?

In order to conceptualise further the concepts, methods and techniques that the *MODUL* project has generated, this chapter briefly sets the practical research aside and reports on my reflective practice with the theoretical and philosophical concepts that have proved themselves performative. The only explanation I have presented so far as to what I mean by Self is the experience you had while measuring your distance to the floor. Although it is not the aim of this chapter to give an overall definition of the self, it calls for some clarifications on the self and its relevance for my research in technique and choreography. The first of the two parts of the chapter starts by presenting different perspectives on the self in order to show the technical aspect in Body-Self Attunement. In the second part of the chapter I turn to Heidegger’s concept of *techne* to show how the self can be seen as an inherent technical aspect in the human ontology. The chapter then concludes on a more contemporary technological perspective through French philosopher Catherine Malabou’s concept of *plasticity*.

What do I mean when I say “I”? In chapter two, I substituted *mind for self* as I proposed Body-Self Attunement as alternative to Body-Mind Split. The term mind is a much larger category than self and less relevant in this text. What I refer to as self is neither mind nor soul. The self might share its immaterial ontology with the soul but the soul carries a spiritual connotation that is not of importance for me in order to state my argument on the topic of this thesis. Another side of the self is identity in the form of the autobiography that I carry with me and potentially perpetuate. My social class, my gender identification and so on. This is not quite what I am addressing even though I think this is one of the great resistances that the “I” can put up as one tries to undo the construction of self. Instead, I am interested in the physical experience of self and its implications towards moving and thinking.
There is a strong tie between the self and conscious thought which most likely is what led René Descartes to state, “I think therefore I am.” But when asked where thinking takes place we would usually not point to the same place as we do when we say “me”. I mentioned in the previous chapter how an experience of self usually is situated somewhere around the solar plexus, while thinking conventionally is placed in the head, as Deborah Hay did, despite her own conviction. In terms of locality we do not situate thinking and self in the same place in the body. One possible reason for the close relation between conscious thought and self can be their similarity in sensation of ownership. Even though my foot can seem far away from my self I do not doubt the fact that it is mine and similarly when I think something I do not doubt that the thought is mine. I mentioned in the previous chapter how different parts of our bodies seem to be more or less apt for subjectivation. If we would consider thinking, in spite of its immaterial appearance, as something as concrete as our feet, we can say that thinking very easily lends itself to subjectivation.

A final disclaimer is that the self I am looking for is not a true self as it sometimes is spoken of, and mostly so for commercial reasons. My reasons to engage with the self are not aimed at finding a true to self or to maximize its potential. I am not even aiming at feeling good. It is less about how I feel than that “I” feels.

In the two previous chapters I have discussed dance technique. I would like to emphasise, in case it hasn’t been clear, that when I address dance technique it does not only relate to teaching dance. As we have seen, the performative approach to technique makes no difference between teaching, producing and performing. In this chapter I extend these concepts beyond the field of dance that generated them. It is my hope that this chapter can give examples of how the theoretical and philosophical reflections on movement can, through artistic practice, generate realities also outside the field of dance and choreography.

The chapter is divided in two parts. In the first part I explore different understandings of Self through the perspectives of self-movement, neurobiology, animality and language. In the second part I explore Martin Heidegger’s writings on the term techne to see how it can be put in relation to a technological aspect of the Self. The last section of the chapter I summarize by using Catherine Malabou’s approach to plasticity.

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1 From Discourse on Method written in 1637. The original Latin: Cogito ergo sum is translated into English as I think therefore I am.
5.2 Self-Movement

Self is a reflective pronoun, and it has two meanings. Auto means "the same", but it also conveys the notion of identity. The latter meaning shifts the question from "What is this self?" to "What is the plateau on which I shall find my identity?"

Michel Foucault (1988: 25)

In her book *Primacy of Movement*, already frequently quoted in this text, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone extends on what she calls Constructive Phenomenology (2011: 115), a term she credits to Eugen Fink. Sheets-Johnstone finds that movement, and especially self-movement has not been thoroughly considered in philosophy and even not in phenomenology. She makes the claim that movement investigation could be seen as the foundation of the phenomenological motto to “return to the things themselves”.

(...) to the things themselves – or more precisely, to ourselves – thereby showing first how movement is the generative force of our primal sense of aliveness and of our primal capacity for sense-making, and second how a descriptive account of the phenomenon of self-movement elucidates cardinal epistemological structures inherent in kinesthetic consciousness. To bring these kinetic and kinesthetic understandings and structures historically and resonantly to the fore, I would like to begin by framing them in the context of philosopher Edmund Husserl’s notion of animate organism. My purpose is not only to show Husserl’s consistent concern with, and insight into, animation, but also to call attention to his non-species-specific sense of animation.

Sheets-Johnstone (2011: 114 [emphasise added])

Sheets-Johnstone makes a leap from “things themselves” to “ourselves”. From thing to self or selves as things. In the end of the quote she brings in animateness to place the human within a larger “non-species-specific” category – that of “animate organisms”. Movement and animateness is thus a perspective that does not separate man from animal. As we share animateness with other species and even selfless ones, we need to ask ourselves what “self”

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2 Baruch Spinoza similarly speaks of something he calls animateness. Elizabeth Grosz shows how Spinoza’s use of the term deflates the Cartesian cogito: “Spinoza thus introduces the idea of an infinite gradation of "animateness" or soul in accordance with the type of physical organization of the body. The mind is the idea of the body to the exact degree that the body is an extension of the mind.” (1994:12)
signifies in self-movement. Sheets-Johnstone realises this, as she further down describes how “movement forms the I that moves before the I that moves forms movement.” (2011: 119). Movement is there to edify the self that then moves itself. We find the two possible understandings of self from the Foucault quote opening this section. First as “auto”, second as identity. There is an “I do”, or in this case “I move”, that precedes the “I can do”. Sheets-Johnstone uses the example of how a primate catches itself in a teeth grinding activity and how this discovery (this I do) leads to the realization of a capacity (I can do) which in turn leads to the idea of constructing a grinding tool with stones. (2011: 116) We can hear an echo from the previous chapter of how Paxton showed that technique could be developed by looking at “naturally occurring events”, in this case: teeth grinding.

The use of the phrase "sense-making" in the above quote hints towards the epistemological consequences that Constructive Phenomenology implies, as kinesthetic consciousness is said to contain inherent “cardinal epistemological structures”. Sheets-Johnstone points to the spontaneous self-movement of our animate organism, as the foundation of selfhood by saying that “movement is the ground on which transcendental subjectivity – in a broad sense, our sense-making or constituting faculty – arises.” (2011: 119)

The bodily construction happens during infancy, but Sheets-Johnstone points out that Husserl did not extend his analysis of animate organism to infancy. His assistant, Ludwig Landgrebe did, however, and came to the conclusion that the transcendental subject is created through kinaesthetic consciousness. According to Landgrebe the first reflection is made in relation to one’s own movement. As an infant sees the success or failure of the movements performed, there is a reflection on what worked and what didn’t. This reflection would be the first step towards sense-making. Self-movement is thus not only constitutional in terms of constructing the emergence of subjectivity but also the emergence of reflection. While reflecting on the success or failure of a movement intention emerges and studies have shown how preverbal infants detect such intentionality. Noticing an item dropped on the way to its box, the infant realizes the failure of intention and, when given the chance, picks up the item and places it in the box. If we consider primal movement as a pre-individual agency that forms the self, and agree to the constructive side of that phenomenological body, there are consequences to take into account. We need to recognize, as Sheets Johnstone proposes, that

4 Eugen Fink and Ludwig Landgrebe were colleagues, in Leuven, at the Husserl archive that was smuggled into Belgium, to escape the hands of the Nazis.
“movement must itself be considered a perceptual system”(2011: 206) and that self-movement is a base for any further epistemological ventures, including linguistics. The bodily exploration and construction takes place during the pre-linguistic phase at the age of 0-13 months. The fact that this phase is called pre-linguistic shows the semantic supremacy in our understanding of ourselves. Why isn’t instead the linguistic phase called post-kinetic? To try, by language, to teach an infant how to engage in the world would be senseless. Words do not yet have meaning and the speaking subject is yet to be constituted. Constructive Phenomenology assumes that the figuring out through self-movement is what constitutes the platform for a subject to appear and that it is the base for later linguistic development. What is close? Far? What does it mean to hold? To let go, to bring in or to give up? They are all kinetically based concepts.

But to accept Sheets-Johnstone’s position of the transcendental phenomenological body (without any distinction between nature and culture) through the primacy of movement also means that we accept certain plasticity involved in the construction. If there is plasticity involved I would like to add that the construction needs not to be a one-way ticket. Returning to the second of Foucault’s two definitions of the term self with the question “What is the plateau on which I shall find my identity?” my addition would mean that the platform does not need to be considered as an unchangeable stable fundament. We all know that we can change as persons but what does it mean to engage in such change on the basis of the primacy of movement?

I want to point back to the research questions of the relations process/product and technique/choreography. They both question the underlying problem of linear and causal development. A process is not turned into a product by the flick of a switch and choreography is not subsequent to technique. Similarly the construction of the bodily self during infancy need not to be a unidirectional move from non-existent to permanent. The technologies of self are continuously choreographing subjectivity and instead of the switch metaphor I have proposed the balancing activity of the Body-Self Attunement.

5.3 Biological self

(...) in approaching the conscious mind, I privilege the self. I believe conscious minds arise when a self process is added onto a basic mind process.

Antonio Damasio (2012: 8)

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Techne and Self

In the introduction to this chapter I mentioned how conscious thinking is closely tied to the self. In the quote above, from his book *Self comes to Mind: constructing the conscious brain*, the Italian neuroscientist Antonio Damasio mentions the relation of conscious mind and self-process. As he tries to understand the appearance of the reflecting consciousness in the human mind, he sets out to answer two questions: “First: how does the brain construct a mind? Second: how does the brain make the mind conscious?” (2012: 6) To ask these two questions, he claims, is to look at "(...) the mechanisms behind the construction of self" (Ibid), which leads him to propose three different instances, or stages, of self:  

1. The protoself is a neural description of relatively stable aspects of the organism.

2. The core self is generated when the protoself is modified by an interaction between the organism and an object and when, as a result, the images of the object are also modified. The modified images of object and organism are momentarily linked in a coherent pattern.

3. The autobiographical self occurs when objects in one’s biography generate pulses of core self that are, subsequently, momentarily linked in a large-scale coherent pattern.

Damasio (2012: 181)

Before mapping out the three instances and relating them to different areas of the brain Damasio shows us that consciousness is not taking place in any specific part of the brain but is spread throughout different regions, involving as well more primitive parts of our brain that the human species shares with selfless creatures who do not possess the same conscious capacities as the human do. Damasio points out how the simplest mindless one-cell-organisms still appear to be acting consciously and gives the example of how bacteria group together when under attack. Bacteria do not have the capacity to reflect on their own predicament even though their behaviour could look as if they have a plan. It is more likely homeostasis at work than a planning subject with strategic capacities in the form of an intellect, as we like to call it. To project our own reflective thinking onto nature implies a poor concept of the universe. If anything it is the universe’s capacity to organize itself that allows us

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7 Damasio has yet another goal that concerns what he calls primordial feelings. Since that topic is not relevant for my investigation I leave out the references to primordial feelings in this, and following quotes.

8 It should be noted that when Damasio speaks of conscious he means conscious of something, not just the state of being conscious as the opposite of unconscious. For example when we sleep we are not unconscious, yet we are not consciously reflecting either. I can be non-conscious of something without being unconscious.
to reflect on it. This point is also made by neuroscientist Rodolfo Llinás who, by looking at the brain from an evolutionary perspective, claims that it is the irritability of our cells that lay at the base of our perceptions as multicellular organisms (2001: 113). He claims that the creation of a nervous system is due to the fact that cells started to unite into multicellular organisms and that it took neurons to organize the movement of the new assemblage. This leads Llinás to conclude that our brains exist due to motricity. Not just to be able to move the body, but to predict the surrounding events in order to move in relation to them. This hypothesis sums up millions of years of evolution into this brief statement: “Part of the tissue becomes the nervous system that again generates motricity by activating muscles – has motricity pattern so you can go forwards or backwards or whatever, and has a desire to move; intentionality.”\(^9\) We see here a different take on the notion of a “mental directive” that I questioned in the previous chapter. Intentionality is not added onto movement nor is it what initiates it. Instead it is movement that is behind intentionality. Damasio and Llinás’ field of expertise – neurobiology – presents a perspective on the self that underlines the materiality of our biological body, in difference to the more metaphysical, transcendental and immaterial concepts of self, soul and mind. From a biological point of view there is no body-mind-split. Consciousness can be considered as biological and material as the vascular system. In consequence we become, as with Husserl’s term animate organism, less species-specific. Some of our seemingly conscious behaviour is shared with selfless, and even mindless organisms, such as the aforementioned bacteria. This relation to homeostasis that the biological and evolutionary perspective on the self proposes is of interest for us, since it is a topic we already touched while discussing martial arts.

Damasio notes how it is the “dynamic process known as homeostasis” (2012: 25) that guides the evolution from irritable unicellular organisms to what Damasio above called “autobiographical self”. Llinás does not use the term autobiographical self but he makes a similar remark on how consciousness takes on an authorship through (the illusion of) free will. For Llinás free will is an experience of the conscious self that is due to the fact that something is taking place outside conscious reflection, or “somewhere else in the brain”\(^10\) as he puts it. It is in that sense a form of appropriation rather than initiation, as “You actually take possession of something that does not belong to you.”\(^11\) Damasio makes a similar note on the guiding/following of conscious activity when he claims that: “For all intents and purposes,

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\(^9\) Transcript of an interview entitled Enter the I of the Vortex, conducted by Roger Bingham in The Science Studio on the 17th of April 2007.
\(^10\) Transcript of an interview entitled Enter the “I of the Vortex, conducted by Roger Bingham in The Science Studio on the 17th of April 2007. (p.9)
\(^11\) Ibid p. 10
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a conductor is now leading the orchestra, although the performance has created the conductor – the self – not the other way around.' (2012:24) Llinás and Damasio both show us how we need to reconsider biological material as intelligent. Damasio call this intelligence "covert" (2012:36) and claims it to be anything but primitive:

I am not downgrading consciousness but am most certainly upgrading nonconscious life management and suggesting that it constitutes the blueprint for attitudes and intentions of conscious mind. Every cell in our body has the kind of nonconscious attitude I have just described. Could it be that our very human conscious desire to live, our will to prevail, began as an aggregate of the inchoate wills of all the cells in our body, a collective voice set free in a song of affirmation. Damasio (2012: 36)

Intelligence does not need to be conscious. To relate intelligence to human thinking is an anthropocentric appropriation of nature’s capacity to self-organize. Damasio notes, as well, how the self is both object and subject since it is self-reflective. I observe my self. The self is both the knower and the observer. Within this self-reflective loop Damasio describes the self as an experencer. A phenomenon is experienced by an instance that is the self. Clearly that self is also a creator of that experience and cannot be completely separate from the phenomenon. What I want to bring with me is the possible analogy to a spectating situation in which this inner blending of subject and object is outsourced onto a plane of projection maintaining the schizo-identities of the self as both protagonist and witness. Performativity, from Irving Goffman to Judith Butler, revealed the every day performance at work in the interaction between the individual and society. The analogy between self and performance presents an aspect of spectating that I will come back to in the chapter Spectating.

Before closing this section of neurobiological inspiration I need to say that even though neuroscience provides us with great insights I still question their brain-centricity. Sheets-Johnstone makes a well articulated attack on cognitive science’s focus on the capacity of the brain by asking the fundamental phenomenological question: what is it like to be a brain? (2011: 391-417)\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{12} Sheets-Johnstone paraphrases Thomas Nagel’s article *What is it like to be a bat?* (1979)
5.4 The Self and the Animal

Both self-movement and the insights in neurobiology and the insight in neurobiology show
the instability between animal and man especially as intelligence itself is freed from man’s
sole domain. The capacity to think and the capacity for language are often held up as a
territorial marker of the (unstable) border between the human species and others. However,
the concept of Becoming Animal that we encountered in MODUL 6 proposed differently.

While engaging in philosophical activity we are on the border that separates the
thought from the non-thought. You have to stay on the border that separates you
from bestiality (animalité), but exactly for the reason to no longer be separated
from it. There’s a specific inhumanity in the human body.

Gilles Deleuze 13

In MODUL 6 we could see how Svärmen worked with the physical and material aspect of
Becoming Animal. In the proposal of Body-Self Attunement this Becoming was treated as a
technical device to alter one’s bodily perception. Now we can see how the Becoming Animal
also can be understood in terms of thinking. Deleuze uses thought to demark the border
between animal and man and then erases his own demarcation by saying that it is on that
border, where the two blur that one should place (his) thought. To follow this somewhat
paradoxical argument we first need to understand the French word used for stupidity – bêtise.
In French, the word for animal (beast) is bête, which also means stupid. Being stupid would
therefore mean that one is beast-like. However the beast itself cannot be stupid i.e. beast-like
since it is a beast. Only the human can be beast-like. Only the human can be stupid. In Deleuze
words: “Stupidity (bêtise) is not animality. The animal is protected by specific forms, which
prevent it from being stupid (bête).” (1994: 159)

If thinking carries stupidity within, it does not mean that all thinking is stupid
but that it is not a lack of thinking that makes man stupid. For Deleuze, animality is not a lack
of thought but a form of thought, bordering on non-thought. A thought that escapes stupidity
by the affirmation of animality. The human is no longer separated from animal but is instead
called to its becoming. The quote that opens this section mentions the “inhumanity in the
human body”. The separation between man and animal is no longer at the outside of our
permeable surface. In A Thousand Plateaus there is a similar statement as Deleuze and
Guattari speak of “an inhumanity immediately experienced in the body as such.” (2004:330-

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13 My own translation from French in A pour Animal from L’Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze.
Techne and Self

301) The experimenter, as Damasio called the self, notices something that it does not familiarize with. The experimenter considers itself human and calls this other inhuman. The self identifies with what it can subjectivate. The self is the human and the body is the inhuman, or at least that in which one finds inhumanity. The inhumanity is the thing-ness of the body. It is the biological body. It is nature within. It is the outside inside. The Body-Self Attunement that I propose allows for a re-articulation of the inner division between human and inhuman, between body and thing, between man and animal.


I would like to have the plural animals heard in the singular. There is no Animal in the general singular, separated from man by a single, indivisible limit. We have to envisage the existence of “living creatures” whose plurality cannot be assembled within the single figure of an animality that is simply opposed to humanity.

Derrida (2008: 47)

Again, we need to look at the translation from French to approach the quoted text: The animal that therefore I am (More to Follow). We have already dealt with bêtise and Derrida agrees with Deleuze on its meaning.14 The first singular conjugation of the word being (être) is in English I am and in French it spells je suis. However je suis also means I follow. We can see the multiple possible translations in the title of the text L’Animal que donc je suis. Not only is it a hint to the Cartesian Cogito ergo sum that in French translates to Je pense donc je suis, but also the double bind of being and following (être et suivre) that questions the agency of the “I”.

Derrida sees the same general singular in “animal” as in “I” and notes that “The ‘I’ is anybody at all; ‘I’ am anybody at all, and anybody at all must be able to say ‘I’ to refer to herself, to his own singularity” and that whosoever “poses herself as an ‘I’ is a living animal.” (2008: 49) However, a living animal is not the same thing as animality which Derrida calls “the life of the living” and describes as “sensibility, irritability, and auto-motricity, a spontaneity that is capable of movement, of organizing itself and affecting itself, marking, tracing and affecting itself with traces of its self.” (Ibid) These two forms of life are both present in human being but not as one and Derrida concludes his paragraph by saying that “between this relation to self (this Self, this ipseity) and the I of the ‘I think’, there is, it would seem, an abyss.” (2008:50)

14 Derrida does a great reading of Deleuze in the lecture Transcendental stupidity of man and the becoming animal according to Deleuze. Available on-line at: www.egs.edu
Can we develop a thought that does not deny animality? Is there an “I think” that is not remote from “the life of the living” as Derrida just described animality? In the description of MODUL 6 we looked at how Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of Becoming Animal relates to multiplicity since “you cannot become one wolf, you’re always eight or nine, six or seven. Not six or seven wolves all by yourself all at once, but one wolf among others, with five or six others” (2004: 32) Derrida remarked on the same problem as he coined animot to include the multiple in the singular. Thinking on the border of non-thought can accordingly be understood as thinking in multiplicity. A thinking that does not hasten to define something as one of two poles in a dichotomy, but dwells in multiplicity. Throughout the thesis I have emphasised the importance of holding more than one thought at the time in the head – if that is where we keep them. A roaming thought in movement that refrains from pinning down definitions. It is a strategy to suspend binary thinking and it functions in the same way as the balancing activity of the physical practice of Body-Self Attunement. The problem with the dichotomy is well expressed by Elizabeth Grosz: “Dichotomous thinking necessarily hierarchizes and ranks the two polarized terms so that one becomes the privileged term and the other its suppressed, subordinated, negative counterpart.” (1994:3) To her statement, Grosz adds a footnote saying that: “The problem of dichotomous thought is not the dominance of the pair (some sort of inherent problem with the number two); rather it is the one which makes it problematic (…)” (1994: 211)

The set up of the dichotomy between man and animal is a way for man to subordinate animal and the form of thought that Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of Becoming Animal implies, tries to undo such hierarchy. Language and thought are characteristics that are often used to separate man and animal but we have now seen several approaches that do not allow for such distinction. Sheets-Johnstone’s self-movement of Constructive Phenomenology where movement constructs the base for linguistics, and Llinás claim that we developed brains for reasons of auto-motricity. Thought can no longer separate us from animal and we have taken yet one step in the direction of the less species-specific.

5.5 Self and Language

The emergence of language appears as the child has first figured out the basics of self-movement. The “I” as identity of the self has not yet emerged, which one can see as a child uses its own name to refer to itself. In his lecture Animal, Man and Language Giorgio Agamben addresses how the utterance of “I” constitutes the linguistic subject.15 Referring to the French

linguist Emile Benoiste, Agamben remarks on a peculiar sort of utterances: "What is the meaning of 'I'? Benoiste shows it is a shifter; it is not like the other terms. A table means a certain object made by wood etcetera. 'I' has no correspondence in the world. It means the person who is uttering the present instant of discourse containing 'I'."16

The subject that speaks is constituted through that same speech and we can see a relation to what Derrida above called the general singular of both animal and I. Other such shifters are here and now, who linguistically form time and space as they are uttered. Those three shifters were the ones we used in the scene WUPWOU in MODUL 6 (See Conclusions). As one utters a shifter like I, here or now it is a tautological speech act. Benoiste puts forward the idea that subjectivity is produced through language, but clearly, there are other aspects of a subject still present and active outside (or within) the uttered "I". The kinetic capacities that precede the linguistic do not disappear as I say I. We can see the importance of Sheets-Johnstone's project of emphasising the primacy of movement, as the human tends to identify with a certain form of intelligence linked to thought and language. This identification is then used to draw a line between animal and man.

In The Animal That Therefore I am (More to Follow) Derrida discusses how the animal does not speak back when spoken to, but turns around the hierarchy implied: instead of the animal being deprived from the capacity to speak it is the human who is deprived of a response (2004: 53). Later in the text, in a section entitled And Say the Animal Responded? Derrida posits man, drawing from Lacan, not just as an animal that speaks, but an animal that is prey to language. (2004: 120-121) In the aforementioned lecture, Agamben makes a similar statement saying that man has sacrificed its nature for language. The animal is not deprived of language, but the animal – and surely there are many – have not developed the same relation to their languages as the human has. Agamben proposes a thought experiment: since science can show that there is such a thing as animal language we can presume that their languages have potential for elaboration but that the animals have not fully engaged with language as the human has. Earlier in the lecture Agamben states that the human has put its nature at stake for language and "Risks himself in language. Defines himself through language. Makes of language his specific proper power."17

Returning to the non-dichotomous thought of Becoming Animal we can understand it as a pre-linguistic thought that has not sacrificed its nature for language.

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16 Ibid. (56")
17 Ibid. (20")

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5.6 A Gap in Knowledge Production
In the previous chapter I asked what it is within the human that carries the tendency to striate. I will work from the hypothesis that the striating mechanism is linked to the conscious reflection, the self and the human. Thence, the smooth body is assigned the characteristics of the biological body and the animal. As we tune the Centre of Self with the Gravitational Centre and Structural Centre by using the Centrefold we open up the possibility to subjectivate the biological material of our body. We should however be reminded of Deleuze and Guattari’s Intra-Active note of how the Smooth and Striate only exist in mixture. It is not a dichotomy that I am installing, but instead an attunement.

Let’s consider further the Body-Self Attunement and the alteration of bodily perception in relation to knowledge production. As one confronts one’s sensation of self with the biological body it is not new information for the self, it is just forgotten. Once the physical world in form of our material body has enabled the human being to construct a subjectivated physical world, the body is taken as a given. Although the body is the most primordial element in human existence the human tends to leave it out of its calculations, which is why we need to be reminded of the simple fact that any unconcealment that a subject can experience in relation to the world is unconcealed through the body.

The world becomes world as a virtual exterior is folded into the monad (actualized), the individual becomes as pre-individual singularities are actualized and merge together to become an individual that can be defined as a point of individuation – or inclusion. Subject and object are thus variables of an individuation process and not entities already given in advance to later be “filled” with impressions and events.

Sven-Olof Wallenstein

The ”pre-individual singularities” that enabled the appearance of a subject are what we need to be reminded of. In the quote we can also note the compatibility with Karen Barad’s concept of Intra-Action, as the subject and object are considered here as variables of the individuation process and not ”entities already given”. It is important to note the difference of the two terms

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18 My translation from Swedish to the foreword by Sven-Olof Wallenstein to the Swedish edition from Deleuze, Gilles Vecket: Leibniz & barocken. Göteborg: Glänta, 2004 (p.22) ”Världen blir värld genom att ett virtuellt yttre veckas in i monaden (aktualiseras), individen blir till genom att pre-individuelle singulariteter aktualiseras och växer samman till en individ, som därigenom kan bestämmas som en indivialisations- eller en “inklusionspunkt”. Subjekt och objekt är på så sätt variabla resultat av individuationsprocesser, inte entiteter som vore givna i förväg för att sedan ”fyllas” med intreyck och händelser.”
“singularity” and “entity” in the quote above. We shall remind ourselves of the description of a singularity from the previous chapter, as a singular point that can form an undetermined event. The singularity precedes the entity.

Next to paying the dues to the pre-individual singularities of our nature, we should note that the forgetfulness of those is what enables our entering into the world. It is once I have become an entity in the form of a subject that I can act as such. A continuous process of self-construction from scratch would be unbearable and imply the end of everything we call human and rely on as our concepts of life and world. It is an absurdity that mankind is able to experience itself as separate both from it environment and its biological being, but it seems to be that absurdity that allows conscious reflection, just like the term itself – reflection – demands a distance. The reflective thinking allows categorisation and tool construction – mechanical or mental – and has played an immense role in the set up of the world that the human has created for itself on earth. This is why I am not, by any means, advocating a loss of self, but a re-articulation through attunement.

Time has shown the model of the Cartesian split to be insufficient. The fact that body and mind appear as distinguishable is not enough to claim them to be separate. However, we should not make the mistake of thinking that there is no division since body cannot be separated from my mind. There are such things as body and mind, just as they are such things as object and subject, but they are results of subjectivation process, as Wallenstein jus pointed out in the quote above, and I want to seize this moment to again point to how the research questions of MODUL, in a similar way question the dichotomies of technique/choreography and process/product. Just as between the mind and the body there might not be a split between the terms but there is a distance. Let us not hasten to unify this division but accept, as Deleuze does, that “the I and the Self are perhaps no more than indices of the species: of humanity as a species with divisions.”(1993: 151) Even more, it may be this division that forms the gap that allows for Diffraction that generates knowledge. Just as in our skeletal structure it is the void that occasions movement.

The self has forgetfulness towards the body. This forgetfulness allows the self to assume a sovereign (human) position towards the biological (animal) body. This should be understood in the same way as Esposito the dispositif of the person mentioned in Introduction how one becomes person only by mastering the animal part of oneself. What I am proposing is a form of dethroning of the sovereign self through a reminder of its origin from, and dependence on, the biological body. Let me remind you of how Steve Paxton spoke about the different speeds in the body and called – accidentally or not – that modulation of speeds “to technique”. This balancing activity of tuning intensities (speed being an intensive quantity)
suggests a less static understanding of balance, where balance is not "held", but suspended in between forces.

To experience to which point balancing is an activity, one only needs to stand on one foot and notice the continuous adaptations taking place throughout the entire body. Standing on two feet is more stable but there is still a balancing activity going on and as we noted in the Exercise 2. To end with causality and thresholds of stillness, standing still is quite impossible. Balance is not found and kept, but continuously negotiated. In this sense homeostasis is not static, and its mobility is not its weakness. The balancing shift of weight builds strength as Jane Darling is quoted mentioning in the chapter Dance Technique. The Body-Self Attunement aspires to such strength in movement as it aims to suspend ourselves in between forces and loosen up the anchorage that pins the body down in a representation that suits the self. It is not an easy task. The self experiences an ownership of the body that is constitutive to subjective experience. As I have already said: Even if the "I" does not identify with my foot it still calls the foot "mine" and when "I" think, I consider that thought "mine".

There is thus both an ownership and a distance. The basic ownership is not to be annihilated, nor is the distance to be built back together (how could it?) but their relation to each other needs to stay dynamic. I have noted how it is the space between two entities that allows them to re-articulate their spatial relation to each other. Unifying the entities impedes movement and the same principle may be at work when it comes to knowledge production.

Learning to swim or learning a foreign language means composing the singular points of one's own body or one's own language with those of another shape or element, which tears us apart but also propels us into a hitherto unknown and unheard-of world of problems. To what are we dedicated if not to those problems which demand the very transformation of our body and our language?

Deleuze (1993: 192)

The confrontation with a new knowledge “tears us apart”, which is why we should not deny the gap and strive for unification. Through a physical re-arrangement of one's modular self, knowledge appears through the gap. The now known became accessible through the encounter with the unknown. This is the way we go about any learning – “tearing apart”. Deleuze and Guattari use the same expression while describing the distance of reflective thought: “Tearing the conscious away from the subject in order to make it means of exploration.”(2004:177). To separate consciousness from subject may relate to the different levels of self that Damasio presented, in which the subject would find itself in the
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autobiographical self. Here the conscious capacity to reflect is detached from the subject in the form of identity. This concept can also be applied to the difference between moving and letting movement take place. It is not a subject moving, but a moving body with the conscious capacity to observe and explore its movements as they ripple through the body. When the self is detached from identity it can turn it into a technological capacity – a knowledge-producing apparatus.

Above, in the section Biological Self, I noted how the terminology of Damasio lent itself to a theory of performativity through words such as witness, observer or experiencer. The separation of consciousness and subject echoes a similar distance and we can imagine how the theatre dispositif somehow reflects such a division within the body. A distance that allows one to reflect and represent oneself, just as Sheets-Johnstone described the process of reflecting on one’s own grinding teeth leading to a representation in the form of a grinding tool. It is the distance of the self in the form of reflective thought that allows new knowledge to appear, which is why I consider the self as an inherent technological aspect of our being. Nature looks back at itself in the same way that I look at my foot and experience a (false) distance. Through the body, the potential knowledge residing in it, or outside it, is revealed – actualized. Deborah Hay addresses this idea by showing “Faith in the whole body, all at once, as my teacher”.19 If the body is the teacher and the self is the student, who needs a teacher? What is it that needs to be taught? The average student in a professional dance education has enough physical capacities and bodily consciousness to perform the movement presented to her or him in a dance class. It is not a lack of capacity that stands in between the student and the knowledge in movement. In some sense the body is already able to do it, but the emergence of skill needs to be facilitated. In Husserl’s words the “I do ” needs to become an “I can do”.

5.6.1 My Body, the Teacher
In his book The Ignorant Schoolmaster, Jacques Rancière uses the example of how we learn to speak our mother tongue to show that a student does not need a teacher in the way most schooling presupposes. The learning by doing that a two-year-old engages in is not studying grammar or chanting verb conjugations in a choir of peers. That formalised and instrumentalised learning process comes with schooling. Rancière’s example of learning to speak one’s mother tongue works perfectly in his case, since this is how professor Jacotot, who Rancière builds his theory on, taught languages. The radical proposal of Joseph Jacotot

19 From Düsseldorf presentation June 2013.
was that one could teach someone something that one does not know. Jacotot practised his theory in the early 19th century and Rancière brought it back as a way to speak of
democratisation and his concept of "the partition of the sensible" (le partage du sensible).\textsuperscript{20}
For our purposes, it suits us better to look at how we build pre-linguistic concepts through movement. Concepts that are constitutive for linguistic capacities. Even though Rancière chooses the example of teaching oneself how to speak the mother tongue and thus disregards the kinetic learning that precedes the post-kinetic skill of language, he frames well the question of the importance of a teacher. His answer is that the student needs someone to bounce against, and the learning needs some sort of formalization. The student and the ignorant schoolmaster meet at a specific time and engage with a specific topic. The student needs to be asked what they have learned so that it also appears to them. We can say that one needs a witness to perform and this connection between the teacher/student relation to that of the spectator/performer was seen by Mårten Spångberg, as he commissioned Rancière to write something on the subject, resulting in the text "The Emancipated Spectator".\textsuperscript{21} I will come back to this text later on in the chapter *Spectating*.

How can we understand Rancière’s concept in terms of teaching movement?
The student already figured out how to move during infancy, and to move in much more complex ways than being able to move separate body parts rhythmically while counting to eight. The body figured out its three dimensionality and spatial relation long before someone asked it to do a movement "4 times front, 4 times side, 4 times back, 4 times side and then the same on the left". This is my critique towards the body that the formalised Western staged dance produces. In my point of view, a conventional structure of exercise, as the one just mentioned, shows a limited and striated concept of the body. It is an example of a symbolic and geometrically idealised body moving in relation to striated spatial coordinates of x, y and z. Space and body are split into linear and binary conditions, such as right and left; up and down, instead of the “directional aspects of the body” that Sheets-Johnstone proposed above.
Unfortunately dance classes rarely transmit the profoundness of movement and what Sheets-Johnstone called the “particular domain of concepts” it can generate. In this sense dance is not necessary related to body, even though it is executed with the body, as it engages more with the symbolic body of the self than the living thing that is the biological body. Instead of using the potential knowledge of movement, dance is often taught as if it was a practice of dressage.

\textsuperscript{20} Rancière uses the concept of partition of the sensible to address equality and emancipation, and we can note that he makes an unequal partition between the two sensibles of language and movement, by starting at the mother tongue.

\textsuperscript{21} The invitation was to open the fifth Internationale Sommerakademie of Frankfurt-on-Main, on 20 August 2004.
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I am saying this since it is too easy for a dancer to consider her/himself on the side of the body when it comes to embodied knowledge as phenomenological epistemology. Surely, I am neither the first, nor the only one to advance such a claim and more progressive schools, and other educational initiatives, have moved far ahead of this critique. Nevertheless, there is still a large majority of dance institutions, educational or other, that have not freed themselves from such a representational paradigm. In a large perspective most dance is still busy with representing physical ideals of finesse – or its revolting flip side by trying to show how disgusted one can be by the body – and the practitioners who do not identify with any of those two representations seem mostly to instead turn to a linguistic and semiotic body. My critique to the dancing body is simply saying that we cannot call something bodily only because it is executed with the body, since everything we do, including thinking, is executed with the body. How else would we do it?

What body has dance produced? It seems to me that dance within the representational paradigm with its simplistic understanding of body parts, space, and time can keep a person at quite a distance from movement and body as I advocate them. A symmetrical movement performed within x, y and z coordinates in the beat of the metronome is striation. It maintains an image of the body, as the culturally constructed self likes to think of it. The balancing between different elements is askew. The sovereign thinking is overestimated resulting in a stultification and instrumentalisation of its own technicity. Technique is no longer a verb (to technique) but a substantive, an object on display. However, one should not consider the potential stultification of the technological process as exterior to that same process, but as its flipside. The risk of stultification that the technological process runs is inevitable. In the following section we shall look into the German philosopher Martin Heidegger’s work on the subject of technology. Heidegger refers to a verse from Hölderlin that describes well the relation between the two flipsides of the technological knowledge production.

But where danger is, grows
The saving power also
Friedrich Hölderlin22

In the opening of this chapter I quoted Foucault and to end this section and transition to Heidegger, we will briefly return to Technologies of the Self. The title of the essay

seems to offer more to my subject than it delivers, but one thing that is of interest for us is how Foucault brings in the term *technē*. "To help him gain the upper hand – to acquire technē – Alcibiades must apply himself, he must take care of himself." (1988: 24) The taking care of the self is then put in relation to the doctrine "Know Yourself" claiming it has obscured the "Take Care of Yourself". Foucault writes: "(...) in theoretical philosophy from Descartes to Husserl, knowledge of the self (the thinking subject) takes on an ever-increasing importance as the first step in the theory of knowledge." (1988: 22) Foucault here marks how the Cartesian split is rooted in the theory of knowledge. He also gives an explanation of the self (in brackets) as “the thinking subject”.

5.7 Conclusions on Self

We started by asking the question "Where am I?" and I noted how the self that I explore is not soul, identity, conscious reflection nor the potential for becoming a better person of maximised potentials. Instead we understand by quoting Foucault that the self means both “auto” and “The plateau on which I shall find my identity”. Sheets-Johnstone showed us how self-movement, according to Constructive Phenomenology, is a crucial agent in the forming of such a plateau, a plateau from which we construct and observe our worlds. Drawing on Husserl’s expression of *animate organism* Sheets Johnstone introduced the “non-species-specific” that followed us through the following three sections. In Biological Self the non-species-specificity regarded how animateness – there motricity – was understood by Llinás as constitutive to our neural development and how Damasio, by distinguishing different levels of self, advocates “upgrading nonconscious life”. In *Self and Animal* the same non-species-specificity was seen through the similarity of the two general singulars of “I” and “animal” and we construed a form of animal thought that does not aim at definitions but swarms between them in a line of becoming. In *Self and Language* we saw how the speaking subject is constituted by speech and how the animal mode of thought can be seen as pre-linguistic and thus not turning itself into the prey of language. In the last two sections we saw how the cognitive division of our species can be seen as constitutive for knowledge production. We can now conclude the first part of this chapter by noting how the division of our being entails a technological aspect. Altering bodily perception through Body-Self Attunement can produce a different self that in turn generates a different theory of knowledge.
PART II

5.8 Heidegger’s Techne

As mentioned in Introduction I was introduced to the term techne through the seminars at KTH on the relation between phenomenology and technology. The term has shown itself extremely helpful to me in my efforts to articulate a new form of relation to dance technique. In order to show how it has helped me I will, step-by-step, move through Heidegger’s development of techne. With other philosophical concepts that I have put to use, such as Intra-Action (Barad), Diffraction (Haraway) or Becoming Animal (Deleuze & Guattari) the application to practice has been very quick and smooth. Heidegger’s writings have generated a different form of engagement from my side. His methodical thoroughness has demand a more didactical approach, which is why his writings will be addressed in a different manner than the other theoretical and philosophical dealings so far.

Martin Heidegger, student of the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl, shows in Being and Time how phenomenon is at the heart of his quest of the ontological difference between being (ontic) and that which is (ontological). To tease out his phenomenology of being, Heidegger sets forth a terminological battery which we will not be able to plunge very deep into here but that we, nevertheless, will need to engage with. Heidegger frequently turns to Greek etymology and we will follow this path, starting with the term Phenomenology.

The Greek term for phenomenon – fainomenon – means that which shows itself. The corresponding verb is fainesthai, which is a reflexive form of faino, meaning to bring into light. It shares its root with fos – light/day. Fainomena is then that which, in itself, shows itself or that which brings itself into light (das Sich-an -ihm -selbst -zeigende). Heidegger remarks that this also includes that which shows itself as something that it is not, which he calls Schein – semblance/appearance. The phenomenological task is to apofainesthai ta fainomena – to let that which shows itself, be seen through itself, such as it shows itself. (Das was sich zeigt, so wie es sich von ihm selbst her zeigt, von ihm selbst her sehen lassen (1977a: 46)) This setting forth is crucial as we approach the next Greek term: aletheia. Heidegger arrives at this term passing by logos as speech and Aristotle’s explanation of the speech function as apofainesthai (sharing the root faino). Heidegger states that logos has come to be understood in relation to true or false, but warns us of a too simplistic understanding of truth and proposes the Greek aletheia as a more complex alternative to the Latin veritas.
5.8.1 Veritas and Aletheia

The difference of understanding of truth that *aletheia* proposes is unfolded in *The question Concerning Technology* where Heidegger states that a profound understanding of truth got lost as *aletheia* was translated to Latin as *veritas*. Through *veritas* truth appears as "correctness of an idea" (1977b: 12) and this is the simplistic understanding of truth that he warned us about with the term *logos*. To undo this understanding of truth Heidegger starts by problematising causality. He says that so far there have been four causalities (1977b: 6): *Causa Materialis* (the material itself, in Heidegger's example: silver), 2. *Causa formalis* (the shape: the chalice), 3. *Causa finalis* (the end: the rite of communion), and 4. *Causa Efficens* (the maker: the silver smith) But Heidegger disagrees with this understanding as he does not find the silversmith to be *causa efficens* and here we can continue the etymological back tracking that leads to Heidegger's understanding of technique.

To consider carefully [überlegen] is in Greek *legein*, *logos*. *Legein* is rooted in *apophainesthai*, to bring forward into appearance. The silversmith is co-responsible as that from whence the sacrificial vessel's bringing forth and resting-in-self take and retain their first departure. The three previously mentioned ways of being responsible owe thanks to the pondering of the silversmith for the “that” and the “how” of their coming into appearance and into play for the production of the sacrificial vessel.

Heidegger (1977b: 8)

Heidegger questions the ruling understanding of causality and claims that this questioning is inevitable if we want to " see what instrumentality, which is based on causality, actually is."(1977b: 9) So far we have seen how *fainomenon* relates to *aletheia* through *logos* and we will now look closer at how this relates to the critique of causality and the smith’s work of bringing forth. To set about a different understanding of the responsibility of the smith towards the chalice Heidegger proposes the term “to occasion” drawing from the Greek term *aitia* (being responsible) and that occasioning something by bringing it forth is *poieisis*. He then adds *physis* which is the bringing forth by nature itself (such as a tree reproduces itself and grows) while the chalice needed the know how of the smith to be occasioned. To include the two ways of Becoming and the four causes, Heidegger proposes the term revealing – *aletheia*.

Before continuing with the term *aletheia* we can (using Heidegger’s critique towards causality) remind ourselves of Simone Forti’s description of how Trisha Brown went
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flying through the air thanks to the broom. It was not the broom, but her technique, that allowed that to happen. Just as Heidegger wants to emphasise the techne of the silversmith as not just causa efficens I want to emphasise how Brown “occasions” that movement. Surely, everybody knew that it was not the broom that made Brown fly and when Forti mentions it, she does so to highlight Brown’s virtuosity and not that of the broom. What I critique is that form of causal explanation that leans towards an instrumental understanding of technology as means to an end. The goal of my critique is to give place for a different understanding of dance technique through the idea of functionality without function and that such a technique can be understood in terms of choreography.

The Greeks have the word aletheia for revealing. The Romans translate this with veritas. We say “truth” and usually understand it as the correctness of an idea. But where have we strayed to? We are questioning concerning technology, and we have arrived now at aletheia, at revealing. What has the essence of technology to do with revealing? The answer: everything. For every bringing-forth is grounded in revealing. Bringing-forth, indeed gathers within itself the four modes of occasioning – causality – and rules them throughout. Within its domain belong end and means, belongs instrumentality. Instrumentality is considered to be the fundamental characteristic of technology. If we inquire, step by step, into what technology, represented as means, actually is, then we shall arrive at revealing.

The possibility of all productive manufacturing lies in revealing. Technology is therefore no mere means. Technology is a way of revealing. If we give heed to this, then another whole realm for the essence of technology will open itself up to us. It is the realm of revealing, i.e., or truth.

Heidegger (1977b: 11-12)

This other realm of the essence of technology is what brings Heidegger to the term techne and he points out two meanings: the skill of the craftsman and a name for the fine arts and arts of mind; a form of knowledge linked to episteme.
Thus what is decisive in *techne* does not lie at all in making and manipulating nor in the using of means, but rather in the aforementioned revealing. It is as revealing, and not as manufacturing, that *techne* is a bringing-forth. (...) Technology is a way of revealing. Technology comes to presence [West] in the realm where revealing and uncealment take place, where *aletheia*, truth, happens.

Heidegger (1977b: 13)

We have thus arrived at the term *techne* that addresses not only technique as we mostly understand it as means for an end, but also as a form of revealing related to truth and knowledge and as a term that designates the fine arts and arts of mind; philosophy being such an art. The occasioning that *techne* comprises dismantles causality as instrumentalisation. While reading *The Question Concerning Technology* one can easily pick up on a nostalgic pessimism towards modern technology, but clearly Heidegger does not choose the topic of technology only to discredit it. Instead he seems to want to save technology (and mankind) from the instrumentalisation of itself.

**5.8.2 Ge-stell**

In *The Question Concerning Technology* we can find an example of Heidegger’s romantic reluctance toward the advent of modern technology as he describes how the river Rhine is exploited by the hydroelectric power plant in a different way than “the old wooden bridge that joined bank with bank for hundreds of years” (1977b: 16) The pastoral touch set aside, we see an interest in a mode of production that uses (*brauchen*) resources without using them up (*verbrauchen*). The power plant uses up the river and turns it into what Heidegger calls standing-in-reserve (bestand). (1977b: 17) There is s mode of engagement with the surrounding that instrumentalises it and turns nature into potential goods. What challenges mankind to this gathering perspective of turning resources into standing-in-reserve

Heidegger calls *Ge-stell* (1977b: 19), which mostly translates to English as *enframing*. The translation catches the gathering that the prefix *Ge* proposes, but it does not quite catch the second part – *stellen* - as “producing and presenting [Her- und Dar-stellen] which, in the sense of *poieisis*, lets what presences come forth into unconcealment” (1977b: 21) Enframing is the essence of modern technology, which means it is something more than technology.
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It is nothing technological, nothing on the order of the machine. It is the way in which the real reveals itself as standing-reserve. Again we ask: Does this revealing happen somewhere beyond all human doing? No. But neither does it happen exclusively in man, or decisively through man.

Heidegger (1977b: 23-24)

Technology is not just in man, Heidegger says, but at the same time it is not merely exterior and expressed through man. This difficulty in locating technology appeared already as he proposed revealing to include both poieisis and physis. Heidegger provides us with yet one perspective on how technique emerges and how technique is not to learn something specific but a form of knowing. By putting the two modes of Becoming under the umbrella of revealing Heidegger closes in on what we learned from neurobiology, namely that the revealing in form of physis, i.e. our own biological unfolding is enmeshed with our reflective thinking and not just a result of it in a more causal sense. Aletheia has then, by joining physis and poieisis, again placed mankind within a greater category. The same thing happened as we considered Husserl’s animate creature, Deleuze and Guattari’s Becoming Animal, and Damasio’s Self Process.

Can we now consider the concept of Ge-stell to be a possible answer to my question of what it is in man that strives to striate? Heidegger speaks of man as challenged, or destined to reveal and that the revealing of the real as standing reserve is one possible mode. It is at this moment that Heidegger turns to the verse of Hölderlin quoted above: “But where danger is, grows the saving power also.”

We find ourselves destined to the danger of enframing and it is also there the saving power can be found. As such, enframing is a paradoxical term and clearly there is a mystery in revealing and as Heidegger concludes the essay, he turns to a more poetic language: “When we look into the ambiguous essence of technology, we behold the constellation, the stellar course of mystery” (1977b: 33) At the same time Heidegger reminds the reader of how techne used to designate the fine arts and the last pages ask the question whether art could answer to the calling of enframing (Ge-stell) and face the danger to be saved from it. Not once and for all since it is not a battle to be won, but as a pondering over the enframing that we are destined to.

5.8.3 Techne and Art

The Origin of the Art Work was originally published in 1935 and precedes The Question Concerning Technology. It is here that Heidegger introduces the idea of how art could present
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a form of revealing that affirms yet escapes enframing. It is also here that we find the
difference between *aletheia* and the Greek translation *veritas* worked out, as Heidegger looks
at art production to see if there we might find a setting forth of truth that does not ground
itself in this correctness of representation.

Agreement with what *is* has long been taken to be the essence of truth. But then, is
it our opinion that this painting by Van Gogh depicts a pair of actually existing
peasant shoes, and is a work of art because it does so successfully? Is it our
opinion that the painting draws a likeness from something actual and transposes
it into a product of artistic production? By no means.  
Heidegger (1975: 36)

To describe the ontology of the artwork and to oppose it to the using up of resources
Heidegger claims that the human has a specific relation to what the human has manufactured.
The raw material has been instrumentalised by human hand to serve his/her purpose and the
resource disappears into usefulness. The artwork however, does not use up the material but
brings it forth as such and it is in this sense that art engages with truth. Using examples of
actual raw material such as stone or wood, this idea is quite easy to understand. The most
illustrative example I have found is by the Italian artist Giuseppe Penone (see picture below)
but one can also apply the idea to more immaterial objects and in that case the work that
comes to mind is *Veronique Doisneau* by Jerome Bel.

Bel was invited to do a work for the Paris Opera and made a solo for Veronique
Doisneau. The dancer tells the audience about her life as ballerina, shows what her work
looks like in the *corps de ballet* and describes what she would have loved to dance instead, had
she been a soloist. The work reveals the ballet dancer and the eco-system of the Garnier Opera
just like Penone digs a tree out of a tree to show its “tree-ness”. In this sense Bel stages that
which is. Not to say that his authorship (and that its obscuring can be regarded as
problematic) does not interfere with what is, but the approach is clearly different. In *MODUL 3*
we found a similar event as the work revealed the institutional framework it was functioning
within.

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23 The title of the piece is the name of the performer and we can see how Bel continues to wrestle the
relation between author and title as described in the introduction to the chapter Rasmus Technique.
5.8.4 Techne and Dance

Moving back to my own practical work the first thing I would like to point out is how crucial the difference between aletheia and veritas has been. We can easily notice a correspondence in thought to how a ruling understanding of technique as something existing that the student is to acquire from the teacher.\textsuperscript{24} This is the causal and instrumentalising understanding of technique that I try to move away from. Heidegger provides ground for this move, both in terms of concept and terminology. An instrumental understanding of technique turns the body into a standing-reserve for the technique itself. The biological body, unfolded through physis is used up for a representational purpose. Its functionalities are reduced to one sole function. The functionality without function that I would like to propose is of a different kind. What if the functionalities of the body are used to reveal the body? I’ll take a concrete example: the hip joint. The edge of the femur is round and fitted into its socket in the pelvis. This sort of joint allows both flexion and rotation. The body has genetically shaped that joint throughout evolution (and probably had to adapt largely as human became erect and bi-ped). The unfolding motion of growth is the movement, though a very slow one, that shapes the joint. Once the joint is shaped, it shapes in turn the possible movements of the joint. A

\textsuperscript{24} For another analysis of how techne can be applied in dance see: Parviainen, Jaana, “Dance Techne: Kinetic Bodily Logos and Thinking in Movement”, The Nordic Journal of Aesthetics, 2/2003, (p. 159-175).
movement that shapes a movement. The possibility to flex and rotate the hip joint at the same
time lies behind most forceful motion. In throwing a ball, for example the hip joint allows for
combined vertical and rotational momentum. In (most) contemporary dance no ball is
thrown. Instead it is the function of the movement itself that is interesting. Understanding this
movement-creating-movement as a constructional element in the body enables the mover to
perform that knowledge and reveal the body through the body. The body as artwork, not to
represent beauty, but as that which reveals the bodi-ness of the body just like Penone reveals
the tree-ness in the tree. Notice again the similarity of Heidegger's description of
phenomenology above, as to let that which shows itself be seen through itself, such as it shows
itself. (Das was sich zeigt, so wie es sich von ihm selbist her zeigt, von ihm selbist her sehen lassen).
Remember as well how Heidegger included Schein in that which shows itself, meaning
that it does not have to be considered as truth in the sense of veritas.

The human has a specific relation to what the human has manufactured and the
rough diamond is appreciated only for the promise of what we can turn it into as we
manipulate the raw material into a representation of value and beauty. It is a fetishist relation
towards one’s own creation and it is a form of utilitarianism and equipmentality that I believe
should be resisted in art if it should be able to answer Heidegger’s calling for a different form
of dwelling on a subject. As the body disappears into usability it is not. A tool exists for a
purpose, not for its own being. We could take this a step further. We have already discussed
the distance between the self and the body and how the dominance of the self involves a
forgetfulness of the body. The body is used up and turned into an extension of the mind, in the
Cartesian terminology. We can then see how Hölderlin’s verse on the relation between danger
and that, which saves, could be applied to our being. We need to embrace the forgetfulness of
the body to be able to enter the world as subject but then ponder over this destiny. Once the
physical body, the pre-individual singularities, has built a subject in Intra-Action with its
surrounding, the body withdraws into concealment. To work the functionalities within the
body it can again be revealed. If we consider technique from the point of view of techne we
can trust technique to appear through the engagement with a material, considered either as
the raw material of our bodies or the immaterial material of movement. Instead of
reproducing one technique we can think of the production of technologies. We can then leave
an idea of perfecting one definition. Instead of departing from one technique hoping that it can
be applied to several forms we can approach whatever subject we like and trust our capacity
to develop technologies on our way. Instead of studying to learn some thing we study
learning.
5.8.5 Conclusions on Heidegger

This chapter started out by showing how Phenomenological study looks at how things reveal themselves through themselves. Such an appearance can be understood as truth being revealed and Heidegger used the handiwork of the smith to show how the occasioning of a silver chalice was a form of Intra-Action between physis and poieisis that he relates to aletheia and finds at the heart of technique – techne. Heidegger then pointed to a gathering mode of engagement with one’s surrounding that turns it into standing in reserve and calls such engagement Ge-stell. The relation of techne and Ge-stell was seen as the danger and the saving power entwined and Heidegger claims them to be inherent in human ontology, but not exclusive to it. He then turns to art as a way to address techne and uses it to describe aletheia since it is not truth revealed as correctness of representation. In those terms Heidegger comes very close to the concept of Becoming as it has been expressed through Deleuze and Guattari throughout this thesis. I quoted them in MODUL 6 saying that: ”A correspondence of relations does not add up to a becoming.” (2004: 261) The two concepts of aletheia and Becoming Animal have both shown great potential in my articulations of the difference of a representationalist and a performative paradigm in Western dance.

The two concepts of aletheia and Becoming Animal relate to the problem that the two research questions share: that of undoing linearity in a setting forth. There is also something to note in how craft and handiwork is used as metaphor. Heidegger used the work of the silversmith and I used Penone’s capacity to dialogue with the physical material of wood in order to make the tree reveal itself. I have referred to this revealing as Making Visible (see Functionality Without Function) and described it both as the capacity to technique and as Art’s labour. The technical aspect of Making Visible is a similar dialogue with one’s bodily matter as the one that Penone has with the tree. The body revealing its bodi-ness. To describe such a bodi-ness I have referred to the thing-ness of the body as expressed by Steve Paxton and as inhumanity by Gilles Deleuze. Next to Penone and the silversmith there is already some thing pointing to craftwork in the choice of the title MODUL. In the section Body as Weapon (see chapter Functionality without Function) I discussed the moving thing and referred to Deleuze use of Bernard Cache’s term objectile. Deleuze expresses a relation between the objectile and what he refers to as modulation:
The new status of the object no longer refers its condition to a spatial mold – in other words, to a relation of form-matter – but to a temporal modulation that implies as much the beginnings of a continuous variation of matter as a continuous development of form. In modulation "a pause never intervenes for withdrawal from the mold because the circulation of the source of energy amounts to a permanent withdrawal; a modulator is a continuous temporal mold...Molding amounts to modulating in a definitive way; modulating is molding in a continuous and perpetually variable fashion".

Gilles Deleuze (2006: 20)

Deleuze's opposition of mold and modulation is the same as my opposition of Model and Module in the title of this thesis. The molding is described as definitive in the same way that I critique the representationalist model to be too deterministic. The modulating is "continuous and perpetually variable" which describes well the re-articulating aspect of the MODUL method, but also points its relation to plasticity and how the MODUL method is applied as movement technique in Body-Self Attunement. The relation of mold and modulation is pursued by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* where they state, "molding hides or contracts an operation of modulation that is essential to matter-movement." (2004: 628)

Modulation is thus connected to matter-movement and Deleuze and Guattari describe how we must, as they put it, "add an entire energetic materiality in movement (...)" that they compare with the "variable undulations and torsions of the fibres guiding the operation of splitting wood." (2004: 450) These are of course the fibres that Penone had to follow while working on *Versaille Cedar, 2002-2003*. Deleuze and Guattari note how there are different variations of wood itself but that regardless of such differences the activity of tracing such fibres in matter amounts to a "surrendering to the wood, then following where it leads by connecting operations to a materiality, instead of imposing a form upon matter (...)" (2004: 451). This "following where it leads" is as well the ontology they assign the artisan who they say is "the itinerant, the ambulant. To follow the flow of matter is to ititerate, to ambulate. It is intuition in action." (2004: 452)

It is now evident to us how *techne*, as both technique and art practice can be understood as the dancer's craft. The artisan practitioner of dance and choreography is "the

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25 The section marked with citation is a quote from Gilbert Simondon with the following reference: Simondon, Gilbert: *L’individu et sa genèse physico-biologique*, PARIS: PUF 1964 (p. 41-42).
26 The quote is from a footnote that Deleuze and Guattari attach to the same quote from Simondon as above.
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*Itinerant* that “follow the flow of matter”, or – as it has been referred to frequently throughout the thesis – the directional aspects of the body. Such is the kinaesthetic sensitivity that I advocate in choreography and dance technique and it concerns both material and immaterial forces that guide the proceedings. To make a topographical movement analysis to map the directional aspect of any body – institutional or one’s body proper – in order to engage with its movement.

### 5.9 Our Two Bodies – Plasticity of the Self

In 2012, French philosopher Catherine Malabou held a course entitled *Plasticity of Life vs. Biopower*, at the European Graduate School in Saas-Fee, Switzerland.\(^{27}\) Throughout the lectures she makes a reading of works by Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben and Jacques Derrida and deconstructs them by confronting them with contemporary biology.\(^ {28}\) I have not read the discussed texts thoroughly enough to give an informed critique of Malabou’s reading, but since her doctrine opens a path – I follow it.\(^ {29}\) The only critical remark I have is that even if Derrida and Agamben do not manage to propose the sort of satisfactory explanation of (or even relation to) biology that Malabou is looking for, they are addressing the biological body and maybe especially so in two texts that Malabou has left out of the reading list: Agamben’s *The Open: Man and Animal* and Derrida’s above mentioned *The Animal That Therefore I am (following)*.

Malabou’s reason for colliding biology with deconstruction is to “challenge the non deconstructed partition which still governs the philosophical discourse: the partition between biological and symbolic life.”\(^ {30}\) A partition she sees throughout the transcendentalist continental philosophy with concepts such as Martin Heidegger’s difference between being and existence or Edmund Husserl’s difference between *Körper* (body) and *Leib* (flesh). Malabou asks the question whether it is possible to deconstruct sovereignty by introducing a different relation between the two bodies and the two Greek terms *bios* (way of life) and *zoe*

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27 Video recordings of all the lectures are available on www.egs.edu

28 The reading list was:

29 As she proposed her students to do, see *Introduction*.

30 From the course description available at www.egs.edu.
(organic life). The question is asked from the conclusion that “The transcendental capacity of
the body is what constructs sovereignty.”

One choreographic work that needs to be mentioned here is Self Unfinished
(1998) by the French choreographer Xavier Le Roy since it addresses exactly this subject of
the plasticity of the self. By hiding bodyparts with his elastic costume Le Roy lets his body
morph into recognisable and unrecognisable figures. Referring to Le Roy’s work André
Lepecki writes: “Its most singular event is dance’s capacity to demonstrate that the body is an
‘open system of exchange’, ready for all kinds of metamorphosis, revealing a forever
unfinished and unfinishable sled, and occasioning the event of becoming(...)”. (2012: 22)

5.9.1 Self as Symbolic
As a vector through more or less all of the course literature runs another book: The King’s Two
Bodies by German historian Ernst Kantorowicz, who speaks of the difference of the king’s
symbolic body in form of sovereignty and the biological material body. The difference is
well known and can be illustrated by the classic “the king is dead, long live the king”. The
symbolic body is the subjectivated body and throughout this thesis it has been referred to as
the self. Malabou gives a description of the symbolic body as that of which one can make a
neural representation. For now we can accept such a definition but we will return to the
question of what in the body that is possible to subjectivate. To contextualise what the
symbolic means Malabou points to how French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss introduced
what he called the symbolic as a value- zero. Malabou accounts for how the term appears in a
foreword in an essay on the gift, showing how next to the material offering there is a symbolic
exchange. The symbolic is therefore described as something that is not material, which allows
us to well understand the difference of the biological and the symbolic body. The symbolic
also appears as one of the three Lacanian registers – Symbolic, Real and Imaginary – which
then, next to the material, also rules out the imaginary.

As Foucault introduces the notion of Biopolitics he points out a historical shift in
the relation between the biological body and the political subject. Malabou quotes Foucault
saying that since Aristotle, the human was an animal with an additional capacity to be political
but modern man places its being as political as “an animal whose politics places his existence
as a living being in question”. (1998: 143) The biological body is granted political agency and
biopolitics has appeared. To control this new political player several controlling mechanisms

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31 Lecture: Biopolitics as a Form of Sovereignty. (15”)
32 Kantorowicz, Ernst Hartwig, The King’s two bodies: a study in mediaeval political theology, Princeton
are introduced and one of them is biology itself, as it becomes a normative science that categorizes between normal and pathological corporeal behaviour. The individual strives to remain within the norm through self-subjugation and Malabou describes how “biology introduces the body as organisation but then re-instates sovereignty within the individual”.33 Malabou’s critique to Foucault, Agamben and Derrida is for not having found a relation to biology that is not normative. They all speak of the biological body but Malabou shows how their description of that biological body is still symbolic. Foucault uses somatic as synonym for the biological but Malabou reminds that somatic is a term invented by psychoanalysis and signifies the psyche, which is not biological matter.34 Similarly she points out how Agamben states that what he calls “bare life” dwells in the biological body, but if it dwells in the biological body it is not the biological body, but something symbolic.35 As for Derrida, he brings the animal body into the discussion and Malabou agrees that we need to abolish the difference between animal and man but she is disappointed as Derrida describes the animal body as a poem. Derrida seems to use the metaphor of the poem to escape the symbolic but Malabou, on the contrary, interprets it as a proof that he has not left the symbolic order.36

5.9.2 Sacralisation of the Biological

My first remark is how the biology as science is confused with the biological body and we can remind ourselves of Haraway’s saying that “Biology is a discourse, not the living world itself.” (2004: 67) Imagine a biologist carrying out an experiment on a body. There are two biological bodies involved but there is only one of them that is the object of biological observation. We could speak of the biologist’s two bodies. In this sense we can hardly accuse the biological body for being responsible for the normative discourse from biologists. Similar to how Deleuze and Guattari spoke of how the war machine is appropriated by the state apparatus, biology appropriates the biological and turns it into a territorial tool. Malabou claims that what we need to do to dissolve the dichotomy of the symbolic and the biological is to “create a bios of zoe, making biological life a way of life.”37 It is a subjectivation of biological life. I could not agree more, but I see the risk of yet another sacralisation of zoe. Because of the distance experienced between the self and the body, the symbolic and the biological, the human and the inhuman, there is a risk for the sort of idolisation that can take place between a performer

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33 Lecture: The Deconstruction of Biopolitics. (57”).
34 Lecture: A Critique of Foucault (18”).
35 Ibid (37”).
36 Ibid (39”).
37 Lecture: Giorgio Agamben and the Philosophy of Life (1’08”).
and a spectator and that we will analyse in the following chapter *Spectating*. The desired body of dance that will be discussed here tends toward sacralisation. Even somatic practices fall prey to this tendency to set domains of sacredness and sovereignty.

Somatic practices that have been very influential in contemporary dance are Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais and Body Mind Centering. They all work, in different ways, on subjectivating the biological body in similar ways as I propose. Different systems in the body are approaches via images, textual explanations of their modes of operation and through movement. Doing so, it questions Malabou’s understanding of which parts, systems or functions in our bodies are liable for subjectivation since it works on creating neural representations of other systems than those we seem to subjectivate quite spontaneously. However, when for example an organ is engaged in a subjectivating process, it risks to become prey of sacralisation and to re-install sovereignty. In this way the somatic techniques are, just as the Chinese martial art techniques that I have practised, potential victims of sacralising belief systems. Once more we can see the pivotal point in Hölderlin’s poem on the relation between danger and saving power. A good description of this risk can be seen in Richard Shusterman’s explanations to why he coined the term *somaesthetics*.

> From the earliest days of life, we are nourished by the pleasure of bodily beauty. Enchanting visions of loving bodies that feed and care for us are deliciously blended with beautiful feelings that body enjoys through its other senses and own inner experience. My interest in aesthetics emerged, I believe, from such childhood raptures of radiant bodily charms and blissful somatic fulfilment that branded me with a continuous yearning for beauty.  
> Shusterman (2012: ix)

In the effort to bring soma into aesthetics the soma gets aesthetisized. The distance to the pre-individual infant body allows for projections of beauty and bliss as echoes from the garden of Eden. I share Shusterman’s will to re-install the body in thinking and I do not question his good intentions, but from my perspective they pave the road to hell, as the saying goes. It can give an example of how difficult it is to strive for an acknowledgement of the body without, by that same token, granting it mystical silent knowledge and by doing so once again turn it into a surface for projection of the symbolic body. I find myself in that difficulty as I speak of how movement happens in the void, as I advocate the Body-Self Attunement and as I demand recognition of the biological body. We need to grant the biological body the agency it deserves.
without sacralising it, a risk that even BMC practitioners run: to re-install the exact same concepts that the technique has potential to dismantle. Maybe especially so when the practitioner is a dancer who has spent a lot of time sacralising the symbolic body within the representational paradigm. I believe that the solution to this relates to what I called functionality without function. Biology has shown a tendency to reduce the body into evolutionary functions that are then mostly used as proofs for endorsing political agendas. We need to be able to give recognition to our biological body, which demands a certain symbolisation, but without drawing conclusions from it. It needs to be a form of recognition that does not instrumentalise, not even for the sake of beauty. The functionalities can be left without function. We need to subjectivate the biological body without colonizing it with our selves. We need to use the body to reveal its bodi-ness without using it up in the economy of representationalism.

5.9.3 Plastic Biology

Malabou’s core concept is that of plasticity and she shows how the discovery of epigenetics changed our concept of biology, as it reveals the Intra-Action of nature and culture. Epigentics discovered how although a DNA code stays the same, the combination of the code can alter and thus has plasticity. The code is stable but its activation and mode of operation is not fix. Therefore we cannot simply point to biology and claim it natural. The problem I had with Paxton’s "naturally occurring events” dissolves and we can see how his other term "basic programme" can propose a less deterministic expression of biology as it leaves space for epigenetic re-programming.

The use of the term code can be seen as an expression of a new understanding of biology. It is a term that can apply to both body and machine. A program or schema within biological matter. This is how Malabou describes Derrida’s understanding of biology. Every system inverts to its contrary as a result of its mechanicity. Life, which Derrida describes as an opening, a promise, turns into something automatic, a program. For Derrida biology turns the promise into a program.38

Through Heidegger’s use of techne I argued earlier that technicity is inherent in mankind. Derrida’s mechanistic understanding of biology can be used as an example: biology is a programmatic mechanism, a machine of life; the biology of man is its technology. Through the discovery of epigenetics the cyborg blending of man and machine shows itself obsolete.

38 Lecture The Concept of Life (45’’)

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Instead, as Malabou puts it: “Technology is now indebted to nature.” Haraway’s cyborg is substituted by what Beatriz Preciado call *pharmacopornographic capitalism*. Technology is no longer mechanical hardware prosthesis.

After World War II, the somatopolitical context of the production of subjectivity seems dominated by a series of new technologies of the body (which include biotechnology, surgery, endocrinology, and so forth) and representation (photography, cinema, television, cybernetics, videogames, and so forth) that infiltrate and penetrate daily life like never before. These are biomolecular, digital, and broadband data transmission technologies. The invention of the notion of gender in the 1950s as a clinical technique of sexual reassignment, and the commercialization of the Pill as a contraceptive technique, characterized the shift from discipline to pharmacopornographic control. This is the age of soft, feather-weight, viscous, gelatinous technologies that can be injected, inhaled—“incorporated.” The testosterone that I use belongs to these new gelatinous biopolitical technologies.

Beatriz Preciado

Although Preciado gives example of a whole different understanding of technology it is still an added substance she refers to. The techniques that I have proposed that also aim at altering bodily perception are immaterial.

5.9.4 Conclusions on Plasticity

Apart from her background in deconstruction, Malabou is a Hegel scholar and in the last lecture in the series she turns to Hegel’s philosophy of life divided into Nature, Logic and Spirit, which are all entwined. Her interest in the biological body is anchored in the belief that a change in Nature results as well in a change in Logic and Spirit. Malabou does not have any proposal for how this is done. My proposal for practising such plasticity is through movement, and by saying that the construction of the body can be revisited. Malabou does not necessarily agree on this. In her book *What should we do with our brain?* she describes how:

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39 Lecture *Subjectivity and Plasticity*. (4“)
41 Lecture *A Materialist Concept of Plasticity* (50“).
Techne and Self

“The sculpture of the self is born from the deflagration of an original biological matrix, which does not mean that this matrix is disowned or forgotten but that it cancels itself.” (2008: 74) This auto-cancellation would follow Derrida’s understanding of biology as nature having turned itself into a mechanical program. I would not, as Malabou does, describe the self with the metaphorical fixity of “sculpture” that I associate more with the mold/model that with modulation/module.

In his book The Open: Man and Animal (that I wondered why Malabou left out in the reading list) Agamben proposes a different stance. In §17 he discusses anthropogenesis – the animal man becoming human – and states that it is a result “from the caesura and articulation between human and animal. This caesura passes first of all within man.” (2004:79) He continues by saying that the philosophical exploration of human metaphysical and transcendental ontology plays a part in the anthropogenesis, and that it, in this sense is not a harmless academic discipline.

From the beginning, metaphysics is taken up in this strategy: it concerns precisely that meta that completes and preserves the overcoming of animal physis in the direction of human history. This overcoming is not an event that has been completed once and for all, but an occurrence that is always under way, that every time and in each individual decides between the human and the animal, between nature and history, between life and death. Agamben (2004: 79)

Agamben opens up for change. We cannot flick the switch back and erase the human from our inhuman body, and trying to is not the goal. I have associated Body-Self Attunement with balancing and suspending and in his closing paragraph Agamben turns to a similar vocabulary. To halt what he calls the anthropological machine ”that governs our conception of man” (2004: 79) he proposes to not seek new ”articulation, but rather to show the central emptiness, the hiatus that—within man—separates man and animal, and to risk ourselves in this emptiness: the suspension of the suspension, Shabbat of both animal and man. ” (Ibid)

5.5 Conclusion
Sheets-Johnstone’s understanding of self-movement and Constructive Phenomenology showed us an example of epigenetic Becoming by way of animation and thus proposing a non-deterministic view on biology. Although Sheets-Johnstone stresses the primacy of movement,
she does not speak of actual movements nor of the importance to move. She advocates
primacy of movement as a constructive corner stone placed during infancy, and uses the
example of dance improvisation as a specific form of non-linguistic thought, but she does not
propose any practical examples of how to re-articulate the bodily construction in an adult
practice. As a movement practitioner I find it obvious that if we accept the self-movement of
Constructive Phenomenology and the neural plasticity of epigenetics we need to engage with
the biological material through movement if we want to re-articulate the subjectivation of the
biological body. If movement is what constructed the body, it can de- and re-construct it also.
By saying so I want to emphasise that it is not just on the neural level that we show plasticity.
The change cannot be done through mere symbolic acts. How could one think that it is
possible to deconstruct sovereignty by separating the king’s head from his body? If the
dichotomy were dissolved, there would be no head to cut off. The more subtle non-surgical
incisions I propose are the Techniques of De-Subjectivation. Dancing might not be the best
way to approach this, since dance has a long history of symbolising the body, but on the other
hand we can maybe affirm dancing and change its definition. We could align with the dancing
movement in order to divert it from the representationalist domain.

In this chapter we have created a more informed idea of the self as physical
experience anchored in our biological bodies. We have been reminded of the materiality of the
body and that the immaterial and virtual object of knowledge actualises through our material
bodies – our teachers – and thus regarded the cognitive division within our species as a
technical aspect in its ontology. We have connected Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of
Becoming Animal to Heidegger’s aletheia and we have seen how art can be understood as a
specific practice related to techne in terms of revealing. We have, through Malabou seen the
importance of a re-articulation of the relation between the biological and the symbolic body.
My approach to such re-articulation are Techniques of De-Subjectivation. For clarity’s sake
and to conclude the chapter, I summarize.

1. Body-Self Attunement. Tuning the symbolical self-centre with the centres of
biological systems such as weight and bone structure together with the centre of
movement – the Centrefold.
2. To alter one’s perception of the body image by Diffraction. One way of doing so is to
move from vision to touch.
3. Becoming Group. Transposing proprioception to other bodies in movement by
kinaesthetic empathy.
4. Becoming Animal. Using consciousness as means of exploration rather than to identify with one’s consciousness as a subject – as the "I".

5. Body as Thing and Body as Weapon. Affirming the biological inhuman in the human – its thing-ness – and escape striation by means of movement that is not just change of position but movement of movement in the Line of Becoming.
6. Spectating

6.1 One Audience or Several Spectators?

What role plays the spectator in the MODUL project? I have already referred to Diffracted Communication and to Jacques Rancière’s idea of an emancipated spectator and it should be said here that the audience perspective in MODUL is looked at from the performer’s viewpoint. Instead of asking the spectator what was seen we have asked ourselves what kind of spectating we can propose the spectator to engage with. The goal has been to install a form of presentation that allows the spectator to pay attention as she pleases and to make up her own understanding of what is happening. This may sound like an easy thing to do but since the theatre dispositif has, by tradition, set up quite precise – although unspoken – regulations of how the spectator/performer relation is supposed to work it is a very delicate procedure. As Fredrika Spindler and Jan Holmgaard were quoted saying in the description of MODUL 5: “To create an event, no matter how small, is the most delicate there is, and the opposite of making a scene or create a drama.” This chapter will show how the techniques of Verfremdung, Diffraction and Becoming Animal can be understood as performing skills and what sort dispositif they may generate.

Throughout this thesis I have used the term spectator and avoided that of audience. The main reason is that the spectator is one person while the audience is a vague entity. Nevertheless, audience is mostly used as if it was one identifiable body. The most disrespectful proof is the expression “to please the audience” that presupposes that all the spectators in the audience like the same thing and that the reason they are there is to get that delivered to them. Although each person has a singular perspective, one of the reasons to place oneself as spectator is to take part in a collective experience. Seeing a performance as the only spectator is a very different experience. The representation that a spectator is visiting and engages with is at the same time balanced in relation to the collective surrounding her/him. A part of the spectating experience is to be one among many and be both individual and public. In that way the spectator engages in a becoming in the same way as we understood the Becoming Group of MODUL 6 and that Deleuze and Guattari described in these
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words: “I am on the edge of the crowd, at the periphery; but I belong to it, I am attached to it by one of my extremities, a hand or a foot. (...) To be fully a part of the crowd and at the same time completely outside it, removed from it (...)” (2004: 32-33) Surely, we find ourselves among people all the time but the theatre setting, or dispositif, presents a way to enact a representation of a collective, left in the dark to sense and ignore each other at the same time.

I have not included opinions of the spectators in my research. The main reason is that my perspective is from the practitioner’s point of view. To include trustable qualitative data would have demanded a lot of time and I have instead chosen to prioritise my artistic practice. The critical mass has been my collaborators and those who have been present in at the lectures, work shops and seminars. There have also been public talks after the performances. Instead of including the spectator’s reactions to the work, the spectator is included from the practitioner’s point of view. As the MODULAR method explicitely deals with the choreography of the entire theatre dispositif the spectator is present as one of the Choreographic Agents of the MODUL assemblage. The spectator is included as we have in all MODULs considered how the work is presented. What sort of visiting, or paying attention do we occasion for the spectator? As such the spectator is a part of the choreography and not just a spectator of it. Secondly, the spectator is included in the work through performance skill, or technique and this chapter will show how.

Although I have opted for the term spectator, its ocular connotation does not quite do justice to the perceptions that an audience member is activating. The experience of both belonging and being apart, as described in the quote above, is not bound to visual perception. Nor is the communication between performer and spectator merely an affair of watching. Yet, I want to emphasise the singular experience of one person and prefer the term spectator before other possible terms, such as audience member or public, because these words suggest a homogeneity that obscures the singular experience.

In the work with MODUL it was important for me to avoid the stereotypical critique of not caring about the audience. Still, I did not want to tamper with my own specific artistic interests. While working with the MODULs I realized that the format of presentation could play an important role in this question. The traditional theatre setting is a machine on its own that produces certain expectations, certain perspectives and modes of attention. A lot can be gained by simply presenting work in other contexts, as the first three MODULs did. At the same time, it is on stage that the battle of representation takes place and as MODUL has something to add in that debate, it was important to return to the stage in the later three MODULs.
In the description of Deborah Hay’s Performance Practice I mentioned how rarely the actual performing skill is included into the realm of dance technique and we could see how her use of the term Practice managed to dissolve the oppositions that I had put up in my two research questions. For Hay the technique was choreography and vice versa, and the practice is both process and product. Surely, what usually separates these supposed dualisms is the introduction of a spectator. It is then, at the premier, when the process finally appears as product and the technique is expressed through choreography. This is exactly why we need to look closer at spectating to understand how we can suspend that Tipping Point and remain in a position that allows us to deal with all of the terms at the same time and not just their transition from one to the other.

6.2 Why Watch Dance?

Why do people come and see dance? This question is what German theatre critique Gerald Siegmund asks himself in the beginning of his essay “The Desiring Body in Dance.”(2006: 80-85) As the spectator sits down to participate in the collective becoming, the presence of self is minimised. Darkness all around, silence and comfortable chairs to make sure the body proper is not calling for attention. The performer on stage is likewise supposed to erase subjectivity to let the role appear and allow the projection/identification process to take place; to be everyone and no one. This exchange of subjectivity is a beautiful act, but also victim to the most basic form of narcissism (by the performer) and idolisation (by the spectator). In the case of dance, since there is mostly no real role to perform, what is represented is an image of the body.

One can argue that a staged scene can never show anything else than a representation, but such an assumption would also propose that there is, off stage, a body that would be free from representation. That somewhere there is an authentic body that the on stage representation will always fail to produce. If no such authentic body exists it means that all we can do is present different representations but it also means that the step from a representational paradigm to a performative one can be performed through representations. This means that we should not confuse representationalism with representation. As Karen Barad puts it we should “Note that representationalism is not a prohibition against talk about ‘representations’, nor does it take the notion of representations to be meaningless. The issue at hand is what role representations play and how referentiality is conceived.”(2007: 410). In
Spectating

Exhausting Dance\(^1\), André Lepecki makes a similar interpretation of representation, already quoted in Introduction, as he says that in order to understand its relation to choreography and subjectivity we cannot think of it "as that which is specific to the mimetic" and instead consider it as "an ontohistorical force, a power that in the West has entrapped subjectivity within a series of isomorphic equivalences" (2006: 46). It is from this perspective that I understand Siegmund’s comment on Cvejić and Le Roy’s article “To End With Judgement by Way of Clarification” (2006:48-57) mentioned above in the chapter Dance Technique. I quote again:

There must be something else that is at stake with the misnomer “conceptual dance” than a critique of so-called modernism. For me, it has to do with the body as an image, as a performative formation and not as a stronghold of emotions and individuality. It is the “naturalness” and the “reality” of the body that is being questioned and which a lot of people do not like.

Siegmund (2006: 56)

According to Siegmund the resistance that the so-called conceptual dance has met is due to the staging of a body image different from the desiring body that Siegmund himself analyses in the above mentioned essay. In the performative paradigm representation and referentiality are given a different role.

6.2.1 The Psychoanalytic Mirror

As Siegmund is figuring out the reason for a spectator to find her/his way to the theatre, he turns to psychoanalysis for explanations. He claims that it is the split between audience and performer that constitutes the projection/identification machinery and uses the word alibi in its literal sense (in another space) to describe how the performer dances “in place of” the spectator. Using Pierre Legendre’s essay “La Passion d’être un autre” he shows that this split has its roots in the Judaeo-Christian tradition as dance was prohibited. The desiring body was extracted from the subject and staged at a distance to represent itself back to the castrated subject. Siegmund continues by saying: "Because it is forbidden for the body to dance officially, professional dancers have to find a way to make the soul dance. The symbolic laws take possession of the body by cutting it to pieces and reassembling its parts according to the principle of reason (…)" (2006: 81) The quote expresses eloquently my concerns regarding

\(^1\) Lepecki, André, Exhausting dance: performance and the politics of movement, Routledge, Abingdon, 2006
how dance engages with the symbolic body rather than the biological. First by saying that it is the soul and not the body that dances and secondly how he describes the body to be cut to pieces to be rearranged by "principle of reason". A fine description of the critique I have expressed towards how dance technique still operates in many places.

The identification/projection process between performer and spectator is often expressed in terms of mirroring. One tries to identify with an image that one is looking at, which would then also account for the image of oneself.

Uncertain about what this body looks like or how substantial it is, we perform an image of it by imitating what we think we look like. We imagine what people might see when they look at us and we try to perform (and conform to) those images (...) The imitative reproduction of the self-image always involves a detour through the eye of the Other.

Peggy Phelan (2001: 36)

First of all it should be said that this narcissistic drive that Phelan addresses is not specifically aimed at performers, but how we all perform in front of each other. The mirroring activity of imitating a projected idea of self forms subjectivity. I make an interpretation of what I think others think of me, and imitate that idea. There are many instances in the process and plenty of space for misinterpretations, yet the performance of this (more or less) solid identity is what constructs the platform for the self. We can see how unstable this construction is which is exactly the reason the reproduction of that image is so important to maintain. A different representation of the body threatens the identity as queer theory's take on performativity has shown. (Butler 1999)

In staged dance the same problem exists. The mirror has a dominant position in dance though contemporary dance has tried to do away with it, starting by ejecting them from the studio space. Techniques that are developed in a studio context, without necessarily aiming at a performance in front of a seated audience lose the obvious frontality towards the so called “forth wall” and allow for different arrangements of the studio space, which enables perceptions of space and body less connected to the stratified angles of the scrutinising gaze that later is to be re-enacted by an audience. In the optical logic the mirror sends back a reflection from which I form an image that I then imitate (image and imitate share the Latin root *imitari*). When performed on stage, there is another person sitting behind the mirror, in the audience, exercising the same kind of mirror image reflection.
Spectating

Jacques Lacan has described how the moment when a child recognises its own image in the mirror is crucial for the constitution of the ego. Several aspects of this analysis are relevant here. The mirror phase occurs at a time when the child's physical ambitions outstrip his motor capacity, with the result that his recognition of himself is joyous in that he imagines his mirror image to be more complete, more perfect than he experiences his own body. Recognition is thus overlaid with misrecognition: the image recognised is conceived as the reflected body of the self, but its misrecognition as superior projects this body outside itself as an ideal ego, the alienated subject which, re-introjected as an ego ideal, gives rise to the future generation of identification with others. This mirror-moment predates language for the child. Important for this article is the fact that it is an image that constitutes the matrix of the imaginary, of recognition/misrecognition and identification, and hence of the first articulation of the ‘I’ of subjectivity. This is a moment when an older fascination with looking (at the mother’s face, for an obvious example) collides with the initial inklings of self-awareness.

Laura Mulvey (1975: 8)

Even though Mulvey is addressing cinema in this article, her concept of spectating relate to ours. Mulvey gives a different definition of the desiring lack that Siegmund provided us. Siegmund pointed to the Judaeo-Christian prohibition of dance, but Mulvey shows how the mirror provides a possibility to momentarily neglect one’s awareness of how “physical ambitions outstrip motor capacity” and reconstitute a self-image more powerful than the one immediately experienced within. It is not just a censored body, but also a self-censorship of one’s own body at a moment in life when one is still articulating self-awareness. The distance (and disappointment) towards the body is already there as self-image appears. To watch the desiring body of the dancer (as Siegmund puts it) is to re-enact a castrating childhood experience. For a performer it means the same thing: To use the gaze of the spectator, as a mirror, in order to reconstitute an image of one’s potent body. In his lecture “The Spectators Malevolent Neutrality” Slavoj Zizek points out how Lacan redefined Freud’s visual drive by making it reflexive.
"I want to see" is desire to see, but "drive", (das trieb) is visual drive. It means not
"I want to see". It is the drive to make myself seen. Lacan thereby point to a
theatricality of the human condition. Our fundamental striving is not be observed
but to be part of a staged scene. Expose oneself to a gaze; to a pure gaze.

Slavoj Zizek

Still moving within psychoanalytical thought we meet one more possible answer to why
someone comes to see a dance performance. Here it is not just to watch an alibi perform what
is prohibited for myself, nor is it to reconstitute one’s potent body. Instead, the spectator
comes to participate in a staged scene. Next to the kaleidoscopic projection/identification
machinery between performer and spectator, there is the introduction of the third gaze, the
pure gaze that Zizek also calls phantasmatic, abstract and impossible. Clearly this gaze is what
is addressed in the previous quotes as the Other, but here it is given another meaning since it
points to certain theatricality in experience itself. In that sense we could consider the theatre
dispositive as a form of staging of this theatricality. Theatre did not produce the visual drive
and the stage room is one part of the staged scene of the theatre itself, in which the drive of
making onesel seen is played out. The theatre is the place in which the “theatricality of the
human condition” is institutionalised and where performance is consigned to the four walls of
the theatre in which one of them – the forth wall – is only pseudo-open. What Fischer-Lichte
calls the Transformative Power of Performance is restricted into the consolidating power of
mirroring and its "Sacred Image of the Same", as Haraway put it above in the MODUL 6
description. By framing the fiction we can maintain our idea of reality in which it is clear who
is the performer and who is the spectator. All territories are respected and the subject/object
illusion is held intact.

Watching the desiring body of dance is still within visual pleasure and to stage a
desiring body is to comply with the representationalist rules of pleasing the audience. The
headline of the quoted section in the article by Mulvey is “Pleasure in Looking/Fascination
with the Human Form”. We can see how the representation of “Human Form”, which the
Vitruvian Man is yet another great example of, stays within this first paradigm of the visual
drive as the scopophilian pleasure in looking. By adding the abstract gaze, the role of
spectator and performer become more complex and we can consider a different
understanding of what is being revealed in the dark room procedure of a black box.

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2 The Spectator’s Malevolent Neutrality was presented on June 8, 2004 during the Theaterformen
festival in Brunswick (DE). Available on youtube. The quote is from about 23 minutes into the video and
is slightly paraphrased into written text.
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In his lecture, Zizek makes a claim that the mask is more true than the face. Fiction is more true than reality. He turns around the saying of how someone escapes into fiction, by saying that one escapes into reality to avoid fiction. So to avoid the unstable construction of the performed self one names it reality and dispatches fiction and performance to literature, visual art, theatre, dance, cinema and TV.

6.2.2 A Biological Spectator

In the quote above Mulvey points out how the mirror stage predates language and how it is constitutional to subjectivation. Put in relation to Sheets-Johnstone's position on how self-movement constructs the subjectivated body, we can conclude that both mirror stag and self-movement predate language and that self-movement obviously predates the experience of lack in its own capacities. We should also note that researchers have found mirroring reflexes in infants already at a few hours of life.3 We can then understand the mirror stage, not as the appearance of the mirroring capacity, but as a period in which the two simultaneously developing capacities of animation and imaging generate the phenomenon called the mirror stage. We are now moving away from the psychoanalytical perspective and its understanding of desire as lack, to enter the biological domain. Surely, the neurobiological finding of the mirror neurons should have an effect on how we consider the projection/identification machinery.

Simply explained the mirror neuron allows us to identify with what we see. One could say that the mirror neuron cannot tell the difference between the body proper and the observed body, but since we have other senses picking up stimuli we can cross-reference and realise if the observed action is mine or someone else’s. In the section Biological Self we saw how Rodolfo Llinàs placed motricity at the base for the development of the nervous system, which would then include mirror neurons and in the section Self Movement Sheets-Johnstone's emphasised how animation constructs the body. Those two statements can present us a different way to consider what is taking place between a mover and an observer. But even more it can tell us something about the experienced distance within oneself.

Under certain circumstances, some groups of our own mirror neurons, fire as we act. It is as if we map our own actions in the same way as we do with those of others. For whom are we doing so? Maybe for other members of the family of multiple selves. This would enable intersubjective communication within

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3 The two researcher Andrew N. Meltzoff and M. Keith Moore have shown results (1977, 1983) of imitations of facial expressions within the first hour of life.
ourselves and give ground for a reflective consciousness based on two views from
two selves operating in one person.
Daniel Stern

We see how the mirror neuron works two ways. It confuses the other with the self and the self
with the other. Damasio used a similar dualistic logic within the self as he proposed the self
both as knower and observer.

Using the different levels of self from Damasio we can imagine that
communication between a mover and an observer is not just taking place at the level of the
autobiographical self through the identification/projection that psychoanalysis proposed, but
also at the level of the core-self or even proto-self. This communication is obviously already
taking place and one does not need theatre to trigger it, but for a performer to consciously
address them can definitely have an effect on the performer/observer relation.

Can we rearticulate the representation of the body by tuning the symbolic body
with the biological? If there is a theatrical element in the human condition as Zizek proposed
it is first in front of the self-image that one needs to perform differently. We should also note
then that the self-image is not something we see. Although we represent it visually, and try to
verify it in our mirrored reflection, it is mostly an experienced image; an experience of self.

6.3 The spectating performer

It will be convenient to begin a consideration of performances by turning the
question around and looking at the individual’s own belief in the impression of
reality that he attempts to engender in those among whom he finds himself.
Erving Goffman (1959:10)

Reality is a cliché from which we escape by metaphor.
Wallace Stevens (1960)

What Goffman proposes in the quote above is indeed a powerful insertion of the concept

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performativity: invert one's gaze and turn the performer into spectator of her/his own performance. Goffman reveals yet another aspect that further complicates the projection /identification machinery of the spectating situation and that questions the stability of reality.

What does it mean to be the witness of oneself? We have already spoken of the experienced distance of the self to the body – the self as experiencer – and how this distance is what enables self-observation. The gap that allows reflection but also opens up for diffraction. The gap is fractal; it follows experience all the way down to a subatomic level, as we find separations within each separated part. What is then the relation between a physical event in my body and the sensation I can witness as its result? Are not all our feelings fictive? If so, they are not less real. When a needle enters my body, what is it that produces a sensation of pain? Microscopic changes in my bodily matter. Isn't this why we often describe our sensations saying it felt "as if..."?

Pain does not represent the pin in extension, but resembles molecular movements that it produces in matter. Along with perception, geometry plunges into obscurity. Above all, it is the meaning of resemblance that entirely changes. Resemblance is equated with what resembles, not with what is resembled. That the perceived resembles matter means that matter is necessarily produced in conformity with this relation, and not that this relation conforms to a pre-existing model. Or rather, it is the relation of resemblance, it is the likeness that is itself the model that makes matter be that which it resembles.

Deleuze (2006:110)

My own different experiences of my body are affects of innumerable molecular processes and they reveal themselves through resemblance or representation. They are metaphors of the cliché of reality, as Stevens puts it in this section's opening quote. It is in such a way we can understand the fictive ground of resemblance that we base our reality on. The fiction of my experiences escapes into reality. This does not mean that there is a different, more real, reality within our reach and surely we need to use what we have to create metaphors that allow us to communicate with others and ourselves.

Taking this distanced witnessing within the human ontology seriously implies recognizing the spectating role as a constant and not as an activity exclusively taking place in front of live performance. In Jacques Rancière's words: "Being a spectator is not some passive condition that we should transform into activity. It is our normal situation." (2009:17)

In the previously mentioned article "The Emancipated Spectator", Rancière transposes
his understanding of the student/master relation from his book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* to that of the spectator/performer. The partition of the sensible that Rancière questions in the performer/spectator relation is the idea that the spectator is passive and ignorant. Rancière questions the partition of the sensible that presumes the spectator to be passive and ignorant and the performer active and knowledgable. Rancière tracks such an understanding of the spectator’s status all the way back to Plato claiming that: “theatre is the place where ignoramuses are invited to see people suffering.”(2009: 3) and with his own words Rancière concludes that theatre ”transmits the illness of ignorance that makes the characters suffer through a machinery of ignorance, the optical machinery that prepares the gaze for illusion and passivity.” (2009: 3)

Considering the potential knowledge production that the theatre apparatus can comprise, the relation to a teaching situation is evident. Rancière points to a supposed gap between master and student; a gap that is to be bridged as knowledge is transferred from one to the other. But Rancière shows how this knowledge partition constantly needs to reconstitute the gap in order to function. In terms of the power relation between performer and spectator it is the supposed difference of activity and passivity that is maintained. This supposition of a difference in value between doing and watching is a good example of an unequal partition of the sensible. The opposition of the two can easily be reversed making the spectator the capable and the performer the incapable, but to change the condition one needs to dissolve the opposition and realise that the partition itself is what sets up for the inequality. One way of proposing a different partition is to, as Rancière proposed, consider the spectating as our normal situation, but we can be even more specific. It is not our normal situation in the sense that we are always spectating, but we can always choose do so. Right now you can chose to observe the situation you are in. One of the things that you can turn your attention to is your body, and in this sense the observation does not equal spectating. The self-observation does not need to be ocular, which is why the term spectating is not ideal, as mentioned in the opening of the chapter. Surely, the capacity to choose to observe oneself relates to the division in our being that we have related to technique. Now we can see how it connects to spectating.

If we accept the inherent capacity to become spectator we need to ask for whom do we perform. Where does performance take place? I do not just mean this in terms of an internalisation of the abstract gaze as a judgemental super ego, but I consider it the profound theatricality of one’s own experience of self. In some teaching situations this has become very clear to me. As a participant asks for help in solving a problem, many times it is enough that I pay attention. I re-enact the observer and the participant solves the problem herself. In those cases the internalised gaze is projected on the teacher and giving the participant a witness to
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perform for. But there is an even more intricate example of what I mean while asking for whom we perform, as sometimes that observer does not have an exterior representative. When I describe a movement and I say for example suspeeeend (voicing the suspension by suspending the last vocal) I then see the participants performing the suspension as a reminder to themselves, not to me to show that they got it. Remember Damasio’s expression of the self as experiencer. In order to experience a new sensation the experiencer performs in front of itself. Remember as well how Trisha Brown flew through the space by aligning with a broom. She was performing, for herself and others, the “as-if-the-broom-threw-me”-movement.

To approach this absurdity of our interior theatre and to dissolve the opposition between spectator and performer, Svärmen invented a couple of techniques. For a performer to undo the hierarchy between spectator and performer, one needs to let go of the spectator from one’s grip. A performing skill. One way of doing it is to not know what one is doing as we tried in WUPWOUP and we will look closer at how we worked on this in the following chapter Conclusions. Another way is to consider oneself as a spectator of the theatre setting – “to be a part of staged scene”, as Zizek put it. In this staged scene we are all performers though some perform the spectator. A third way is to affirm what Rancière called our “normal situation” as spectator of reality. To look at what is going on and never quite fully identify with what one is doing. Such a detachment from one’s own actions means to leave a form of identitarian self expression that I relate to the representational paradigm and to enter a performative paradigm by observing what something does instead of trying to identify what it is. Or as Deleuze and Guattari put it in the previous chapter: “Tearing the conscious away from the subject in order to make it a means of exploration.”. (2004: 177)

6.3.1 The Performometer

All the world is not a stage, of course, but the crucial ways in which it isn’t are not easy to specify.
Goffman (1959: 72)

What implications could it have, for a performer, to consider her/himself as the spectator of his/her corporeality? With Svärmen we invented something we called the Performometer. In our early discussion on performing that resulted from Linda Adami’s proposal of the key-hiding game, we tried to explain to each other what we meant by being "on" and "off" stage. Just as Goffman predicted above, it was not easy to specify. It did not concern the actual
stepping on or off the physical space of the stage, but what sort of ontological status we were attributing to the different states in ourselves. During the work we replaced the switch metaphor of on/off with that of a potentiometer that we called the Performometer. I remember having touched on similar ideas in my teaching previously. In those cases I would ask the participants to perform the movements in a way that no one would notice. How could one for example go up on one’s hands and come back to feet, in a street full of people without anyone noticing. In the teaching it was a way to make sure that the mode of presentation was not always a “show”. A movement can be performed without being shown.

Just like Goffman, in the quote above, has trouble understanding the difference between the off and on stage, the work with intensities of the Performometer is obscure. It works in a very nebulous domain of intentionality and it is hard to put in words, but it provided us with a terminology for our discussions of performing and of logic of difference. We spoke of a level of performing that was never 100%. To never completely identify with one’s own actions and always leave a door open for divergence. I remember borrowing an expression from a tai-chi class by Thierry Bae who said that in tai-chi one should always place a part of oneself outside one’s action. He called this part of oneself the emperor, who would sit and watch without intervening. Surely this idea resembles the abstract gaze that Zizek spoke of, but in this case it was the practitioner her/himself who would chose to give that space for a spectator by never identifying fully with one’s action, which is different from the scrutinizing gaze of the great Other. Bae also mentioned that the emperor was there to provide support for one’s actions, and not to judge them, which is another form of spectating than the one that Zizek presented and called “malevolent” in the title of his lecture.

As I mentioned earlier Zizek contested the fiction of theatre by saying that the mask is more true than the face. This is the strength of Zizek’s radical argument: to fictionalise the reality of one’s self-performance. He expressed it by saying that “You are true to your real self when you are not identifying yourself with what you feel and who you are.” This is as well how Svärmens used the concept of Becoming. To always leave a split and give space for the diffracting movement to pass. This distance between one’s self and one’s action was discussed in MODUL 6 and one of the descriptions was the form of “aperiodic evolution” that Deleuze and Guattari use to describe their term Becoming in the example of the wasp and the orchid.

As the work went on, the Performometer became not just an intensity of projection of a performed material but, as Ulrika Berg put it: an actual material in itself. A

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5 Video lecture The Spectator’s Malevolent Neutrality. (1’15”)

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performing of the performance. The concept of the Performometer is a very concrete example of a bi-product that has come out the initial research questions as it connects both technique with choreography and process with product. In the 2013 edition of Impuls Tanz I proposed a workshop with the title The Business of Showing, with the precise intention of developing performance skills as technique and I will close this section with the workshop description. More details on how we worked practically with the showing business in MODUL 6 will come in the chapter Conclusions, in the section *Three Touches.*

6.3.2 The Business of Showing.

Here is the workshop description as it appeared in the program of the 2013 edition of Impuls Tanz in Vienna, Austria:

How consciously do you, as performer, deal with being watched?

Neuroscience has taught the world about mirror neurons. Contemporary dance and theatre has experimented with audience activation and participatory strategies. Gender studies and identity politics has debunked performativity. The web has provided a potential for self-exposure, and revealed a self inflicted Big Brother’s gaze that surveillance society could only have dreamt of.

Where does then contemporary choreography place itself in relation to subjectivity and the relation between the individual and the collective?

I have realized that even though everyone works with the aim of public presentation, the field rarely speaks of if as a technical skill. By some it is thought of as a soulful talent that will make the performer shine, by others it is dealt with by denial through a nonchalant, supposedly casual, attitude.

We will look into this technical skill by diversifying the idea of being watched into nuances of being watched, observed, witnessed or paid attention to. What intentional differences can we find in showing, doing, hiding, displaying, revealing, covering and uncovering.

**Workshop manifesto** (claimer/disclaimer):

The workshop aims at loosing your self rather than finding it.
The workshop aims at ungrounding a representational regime in performance.
The workshop is not about exhibitionism and will not develop your persona.

We will discuss all the above and we will engage in exercises to confuse object with subject; you with me.

6.4 Choreopolitical Dealings With Representation

Representation fails to capture the affirmed world of difference. Representation has only a single centre, a unique and receding perspective and in consequence a false depth. It mediates everything, but mobilises and moves nothing. Movement, for its part, implies a plurality of centres, a superposition of perspectives, a tangle of points of view, a coexistence of moments which essentially distort representation (...).
Deleuze (1993: 55-56)

The representation of the desiring and desired body of the dancer needs to be done away with, but how? Modern dance, but also contemporary choreography, have tried out many ways to rid themselves from idealisation by showing themselves as ugly as they possibly could. One has defecated, bled and screamed one’s heart out. Yet, the spectating gaze seems to almost always find a way to commodify any attempt and incorporate it into a desiring economy. This does not mean that nothing has happened, but still...

In Exhausting Dance André Lepecki addresses a question related to our current topic and presents other attempts to reify the representational body of dance, in this case by interrupting the continuous movement. Lepecki starts off from two incidents: First a review in the New York times where Ann Kisselgoff sees the “Stop and Go” tendency as a threat for the smooth flux of dance of tomorrow, worrying about if we can go tomorrow if we stop today. The second incident is in Dublin 2002 where a lawsuit is filed against French choreographer Jerome Bel for having presented something that wasn’t dance (in the eye of the accusing party) as if it was dance. The two examples shows us both what sort of resistance the attempts to re-articulate the dancing body can meet, and what challenges the performative approach to western dance and choreography face.

Lepecki identifies the continuous movement of dance as constitutive to modernity. He finds this definition in, among others, Peter Sloterdijk’s work, who claims that:

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6 31st of December 2000.
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"ontologically modernity is a pure being-toward-movement".7 Throughout his book Lepecki presents examples of works of contemporary artists that propose different methods of interruption to oppose the dance flux. Lepecki has since then developed the idea of the political implications of movement in what he calls Choreopolic and Choreopolitics.(2013: 13-27) Choreopolicing can be seen in how law enforcement develops techniques for both maintaining movement - "keep moving, circulate, there is nothing to see here" – and arresting it if it gets to violent. Choreopolitics means to consciously engage choreographically with movement’s political implications and the kinaesthetic implications of politics.

I empathise with Lepecki’s analysis, and I believe that such a break of flow was exactly what Yvonne Rainer’s Trio A performed. We can remind ourselves of how Susan Leigh Foster described the work by saying that the “Movements follow one another with no sense of development, causality, or flow.” However Rainer moves continuously throughout the whole piece and in this perspective it is not necessarily the continuous – in terms of on-going – movement that is the problem. What Rainer explicitly critiques is phrasing.

One example of a continuous movement that performs a different flux than that of modernity is the pedestrian movement. It maintains a perfectly calm and steady flux but still shows choreopolitical agency, as we can see in peaceful demonstrations, but also in dance performances, as for example Steve Paxton’s piece Satisfyin’ Lover.8 Even though the performers of the piece sometimes stop, it is the continuous walking movement that characterise the piece. The interruption instead takes place in the linear flux of representation as a pedestrian body was staged. One can also find examples of the opposite, namely choreographers who manage to stay within the constant flux of modernity without respecting the continuous movement in their dance.9 In the chapter Functionality Without Function we could also see how a different understanding of movement that does not move from one point to another could be understood as the movement of movement itself in the Line of Becoming.

From my perspective it is what image of the body that gets represented that

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7 Quoted by Lepecki with the following reference: Sloterdijk, Peter, La Mobilisation infinie, Paris: Christina Bourgeois Editeurs. 2000 (p.36)
8 First performed in 1967 and then in very changing condition, it consist of people crossing the stage from right to left walking and sometimes stopping.
9 Japanese butoh company Sankai Jukku can serve as example. I remember seeing a piece by them in the early 90’s at Dansens Hus in Stockholm. A full house of traditional dance audience watching a two hour show with hardly any movement at all, yet no one asking for re-imbursement afterwards. In the late 90s I saw Jerome Bel’s performance Le Dernier Spectacle (The Last Show) at Kaaitheater in Brussels, and even though more dancing took place in that piece, and inspite that the Kaaitheater audience is more used to avant-garde performances some audience members were absolutely outraged, getting up on stage an urging people to leave the theatre in order to not partake in such degeneration of the artform. As the show was over a woman stood in the door way saying she would not leave until Bel had personally re-imbursed her.

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matters and I try to produce an interruption within the representational flux by means of affirmation. To affirm and align with movement in order to divert and diffract its representation. Such was my choreo-political attempt in MODUL 5 and such is my approach to movement technique, advocated through the attunement between symbolic and biological body. Lepecki defines his term choreopolitics as being “both political and kinetic” (2013: 14) and even though we have seen that there is always movement within stillness it is the kinetic – as opposed to static – engagement I opt for. Let’s repeat the MODUL project’s different choreopolitical interventions in the representational flux both explicitly and implicitly.

In MODUL 1 there were the two scenes of the pedestrian lecture and the deconstruction of the Vitruvian Man that explicitly addressed ways of representing the body. In more implicit terms, the entire evening with its durational aspect and the dinner served generated a more diffracted way of paying attention. The inclusive method questioned the basic selection of what is shown – a selectivity which is clearly part of representationalism.

In MODUL 2 there was the Dissolving Body and the refusal of producing clear outcomes in a scientific – although disused – space. There was also a dismantling of authorship as the invited artists were presenting on-going works of theirs, and there was the Diffracted Communication enabled by the shuffling around of spectators that I called Kaleidoscopic Visuals.

In MODUL 3 I used the score as technique of enstrangement – Verfremdung – and the concert/restaurant dispositif. The authorship was questioned here as well since my choreographic agency was reduced to the scoring task.

MODUL 4 the score method stayed with the addition of Align to Divert as we tried to comply with all the limitations of the commission and the black box format in order to re-articulate it.

The affirmative method of Align to Divert continued in MODUL 5 and the Techniques of De-Subjectivation were introduced: Becoming Group and Diffraction that then developed further in MODUL 6. The last element added in MODUL 6 was the sense of touch that was used to diverge from vision in order to escape the scopophilian aspect of the spectating gaze.

6.5 Summary
We started out by choosing for a plurality of singulars in the term spectator, before the singular of pluralities of the term audience, with the disclaimer towards its ocular centricity. We looked at the theatre and the desiring body of dance from a psychoanalytical perspective and then applied a biological approach. We connected our consciousness to the capacity to
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observe and regarded it as a technical capacity. This capacity appears both in self-observation and spectating. This perspective made us ask the question of where performance takes place and showed the fictitious nature of reality. Using the Performometer and the class description of The Business of Showing I showed how the technical approach to observation can apply to performing skills as technique and in the last section we looked at the potential choreopolitical impacts the MODUL project may carry through its questioning of the binaries of technique/choreography and process/product.
7. Conclusions

7.1 Practical Results/ Resulting Practices
In this concluding chapter I start by describing the five scenes of *MODUL 6* in detail. They are not in chronological order, as three of the scenes are grouped together due to their shared theme: *touch*. The last description, called Unknown Creature, was in the latest version of *MODUL 6* a prologue and *ent’acte* rather than a scene on its own. All the scenes are results from the two research questions. After the descriptions I conclude on the *MODUL* project in its whole, by relating the different practical and theoretical concepts at work throughout the thesis.

Photo: Nicklas Dennermalm
Conclusions

7.1.2 WUPWOUP to Definition

As we started first time the improvisation Warming Up Without Warming Up for the first time we really had no clue of what it consisted in. It resulted in a quite bizarre exercise based on this question: Is it possible to not know what you are doing? If I decide to warm up, how can it not be warming up that I do? In MODUL 6 I described how we – Svärmen – understood Becoming as not identifying and how Alain Badiou’s Affirmative Dialectics un-grounds one definition without necessarily replacing it with another. In improvisation one mostly starts without knowing what to do, at least not exactly. But as soon as one starts to do something, meaning production appears and mostly the rest of the improvisation follows the stream of meaning production. Is it possible to escape that? Well, only for moments. It is like trying consciously to create a form of unconscious activity of absent-mindness.

We have all experienced how our mind can drift and not being quite able to answer when asked, “What were you thinking about?” In WOPWOUP we are trying to place ourselves in a state similar to such indefinite drift, through movement. You take a step and when you notice yourself walking you need to do something else than walking or you need to un-ground your own definition of walking while affirming the walk. It has a clear relation to speed: the speed of your conscious mind as it identifies the walk as walking but also the speed of your movement. If you slow down your walk you will arrive at a point where it is no longer walking. As I described with the slow movement of the curtains in MODUL 5, a flash is not a flash unless it is done “in a flash” and similarly one has to walk the walk. This variation in speed between movement and conscious thought is also what Paxton called to technique.

WOPWOUP’s relation to the technical activity of Body-Self Attunement is to tip the balance over to body and to let the movement do itself in a way that does not allow the self to follow – the self, in this case, being conscious reflection. It is a form of chasing one’s own tail. WOPWOUP has to fail since an absolutely successful WOPWOUP would be the end of oneself. One cannot tip the Body-Self Attunement over completely and it is not the goal. One clearly needs to have a self to even get the idea to WOPWOUP in the first place. A possible hypothesis is that if you don’t have a self you are WOPWOUPing constantly. But since the human has a self WUPWOUP will fail, as we find ourselves being conscious of our own presence. The rule is to let the others know by calling out “I”, “here” or “now”. When you are successfully WOPWOUPing you are none of the three. There is no time, no place and no subject, at least not consciously for the performer. It is what the Bohemian poet Rainer Maria Rilke called “nowhere without no”.

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1 From the The Eight Elegy.
for those three words is not just because they are the vocal affirmation of what is happening, but also because they reveal the performative power in language. They are the shifters that Agamben spoke of, referring to Emile Beneviste, and they enact themselves as they are uttered. As we could see in the section Self and Language Agamben speaks of the difference between animal and human language as a difference in engagement. Agamben presumes that the animal does not put its nature at stake for language. Agamben’s idea of a nature that the animal has access to, but the human does not, seem quite naive and even anthropocentric though his intentions are the opposite. Once again, my purpose to WUPWOUP is not to return to a more natural existence than the self-conscious one, but to notice the instability of the sovereignty of consciousness by tuning it with other – pre-linguistic – agencies in the body.

What happens as you inevitably fail your WUPWOUP is that you catch yourself in the act. As Sheets-Johnstone’s example of how a primate catches itself in a teeth-grinding act. A coming to consciousness that leads to a technological advance in constructing a grinding tool. The “I do” precedes the “I can do” and in WUPWOUP one tries to stay in the “I do” and escape the “I can do”. The inevitable failure shows the impossibility of a non-technical being. Trying to WUPWOUP is already difficult in itself. Doing it in front of an audience is much harder. It shows us, on a very basic level, what the gaze of the other does to us. Being looked at while knowing what you’re doing is difficult and being looked at while not knowing what you’re doing – and trying to make sure you do not find out – can be almost unbearable. Of course we look like fools in WUPWOUP. But if we identify with the image we produce and start to represent madness, we completely miss the target of surfing the Line of Becoming. To “invite being seen” – as Deborah Hay puts it – during WUPWOUP really sharpens and challenges one’s performing skills.

This section of the score is called WUPWOUP to Definition. Before we came to this version we had been working the de-subjectivation process that went through the stages of Mirroring – Reflecting – Diffraction. We considered WUPWOUP as the most extreme version of Diffraction: a swarm of excess of meanings. We then tried to turn the process around and go from WUPWOUP to mirroring, constructing sameness out of chaos. WUPWOUP as the most possible unreadable situation leading to the most obvious representation of composition with the entire group involved in one and the same activity: unison, although not everyone facing the same direction. To better understand the difference of those two states we started to practice the opposite of WUPWOUP: conscious composition. We used the exercise Frankensteing, from the Spanish group Los Que Quedan.

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2 From the lecture Animal, Man and Language (1’14”)
Conclusions

Frankenstein is a collaborative exercise where participants have to make possible the construction of a logical system finding the logic while playing. The goal is to find out what are we playing. By using the body, space, sounds and objects as materials for an improvisation we will try to establish rules, to break them inventing new rules, to break them again, sabotaging the game to change it in a constant search.

Vicente Arlandis & Sandra Gomez

I had seen a performance of Frankenstein but not read this description as we started practising. The reason I brought it in was because it seemed to have the exact opposite relation between thinking and doing from WOPWOUP. Although the description above shows a morphing definition of the game, it is always definition that is looked for. One does not move, one makes moves. As in a game of chess you first think before you do. In WOPWOUP we always tried to do before we think.

I think of WOPWOUP as a form of attunement between neural and motor capacities. In the chapter Spectating I discussed how the phenomenon of the mirror stage in child development could be understood as a Tipping Point as the capacities of imaging and moving reach a specific event horizon. It is this horizon that we are balancing on in WOPWOUP to Definition. We can imagine that this balancing, or Attunement, takes place between different levels of self as Damasio expressed them above in the section Biological Self. We try to by-pass the autobiographical self of I – here – now and move on other levels of consciousness. One cannot turn off the autobiographical self like a switch. Instead it needs to be diverted through movement. One needs to move faster than the stream of consciousness, or speed up the stream of consciousness until it cannot follow and starts to diffract.

This is the score of the scene WOPWOUP to Definition:

1. Start WOPWOUPing.
2. Every time you catch yourself in the act, you give it recognition by saying “I”, “here” or “now”.
3. Little by little notice things you have done (could be moments when you have caught yourself in the act). It can be movements, positions, sounds, spatial trajectories or

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3 An abstract of a course description that Vicente Arlandis and Sandra Gomez gave to the students in choreography at the MA Program New Performative Practices at DOCH in January 2014.
anything else that you can identify as something. We call them Items. Once you have an Item you can repeat it but keep going back to WOPWOUP.

4. Notice if you have noticed other people’s actions. Use those as Items too. It may or may not be an item for that other person.

5. When you have about 5 Items say: READY!

6. When most of the performers have called out "READY!" one performer – appointed beforehand – says: SAVE! This means from now on, no new Items can be added and WOPWOUP has finished.

7. Start repeating the Items you have and start checking which Items the others are proposing. This goes on for a while as a selection of Items is taking place. If too few people are picking up on an Item you propose, you stop proposing it. If the majority is picking up on an Item you do not have, you pick it up as well.

8. As the Items are defined, keep repeating them for a while, but avoid conscious composition. Since everyone now shares the material, composition will auto-generate.

9. Start composing consciously. Use your training. At some moment the entire group should be in agreement with one single activity.

10. Keep going until one performer – appointed beforehand – says: STOP!

We can see WOPWOUP to Definition as an illustration of the entire idea of the MODUL method. We start by engaging in movement and little by little our attention identifies Items. The Items become Choreographic Agents within the modular assemblage. Structures start to appear, first loosely, by chance and little by little we respond to these structures by adding conscious intentions until everything aligns in one single direction. Eventually this movement itself emerged as a good metaphor for my entire research project.

7.1.3 Three Touches.
These three scenes do not relate to any specific theoretical reference. I have placed them under the same rubric since they share the topic of touch. Muscle Group stayed quite the same throughout our entire process since our first week with Svärmen, as it was something Ulrika Berg proposed as her contribution to the work.⁴ We have seen how Diffraction was a way to propose different optic phenomenon from Reflection. Another method is to leave the optic all in all and go to touch. However, the two need not to be opposed and replace each other.

⁴ I would also like to credit Jan Burkhardt who proposed a similar exercise during a working session within the Jardin D’Europe project IDOCDE (International Documentation of Contemporary Dance Education) that Ulrika Berg, Dan Johansson and I participated in.
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Instead we can regard the two present in the term *haptic*. Just like the spectating capacity need not be exclusive to vision, the haptic provides a non-dichotomous relation between touch and vision, between hand and eye. In Merleau-Ponty’s words: “The superficial pellicle of the visible is only for my vision and for my body. But the depth beneath this surface contains my body and hence contains my vision.” (1968:138)

In 2012 I participated in a research project called ”The Haptic Interface of the Image”, led by the Swedish painter Birgitta Burling. My contribution to the resulting publication explained my thoughts on haptic space in relation to movement and described two choreographic experiments I had done in the course of the research.\(^5\) What stayed with me from Burling’s project and spilled into *MODUL 6* was how to relate vision to touch through movement. As I want to sense the quality of velvet I will move my fingers along it. As I look at the same material it is my gaze that move to caress it. It was this relation between vision and touch together with Ulrika Berg’s initial proposal that led to the three scenes here described.

I choose to touch something just as I choose to look at something. The gaze reaches out in the room, as does my arm. It pokes like a finger on what it looks at. (...) I thus experience a relation between touch and vision. Hand and eye. Eye as hand. The neck is the wrist of the eye. The fingers the eyes of the hand.

The gaze embraces and touches like a hand. The eye pokes and senses. Rasmus Ölme (2012)\(^6\)

We sense through the skin, but the consideration of the skin as a sense organ is not as established as with eyes, ears, nose and tongue is. As Sheets-Johnstone constructs her platform of argument for *The Primacy of Movement* she uses Aristotle’s *De Anima*, and remarks on how he describes touch. In difference to the other senses, the sense organ of touch is obscure. She quotes Aristotle saying that the sense of touch is “farther inward” (2011: 85). As I touch a velvet curtain I experience the quality of that material as inherent to the material, and not a sensation within my sense apparatus, but as Sheets-Johnstone notes, when we perceive through touch “we are affected *along with* the flesh, not *by* it”(2011: 89). This flip happening at the level of our skin, as an exterior surface comes in contact with my own surface, is the interface of inside and outside – the inside out folding of our body as Möbius Strip.

\(^5\) Burling, Birgitta (red.), *Haptiska blickar, [Haptic Gazes]*, Birgitta Burling, Stockholm, 2012

\(^6\) My own translation from Swedish. There is no pagination in the publication.
Svärmen asked the question if this flip works both ways. Can an inside sensation be turned out to the surrounding, through the skin? Can you “spread your fat in space”? This question, and the flipping movement of turning insides out, involved what was as well at the heart of Ulrika Berg’s proposal Quality of Touch/Quality of Movement that became Muscle Group in the score. During the spring of 2013, between the two working periods of MODUL 6, I had a couple of teaching occasions in which I developed a couple of ideas, departing from Berg’s proposal, which resulted in the two scenes Transmission and Inside Touch.

7.1.3.1. Muscle Group

The Quality of Touch/Quality of Movement, as described above in the MODUL 6 description, consisted of localising a specific material quality in the body through touch and then translating that into a movement quality. In the earlier periods of the work we changed between different bodily materials to focus on. We worked with bone, fat, blood, skin and more. We also tried without agreeing on a common quality. For a while we also tried out working with materials that do not exist in our bodies and worked a lot with the material of

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7 A cue that Burkhardt proposed in his class.
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down jackets. To enhance our sensation of the fluffy material we would eat marshmallows at the same time. Finally we decided to affirm one quality only and we chose muscle, hence the title. Each time we performed, we put a lot of effort into redefining what muscle meant to not get stuck in a specific interpretation of that quality. There are smooth and striated muscles; there can be differences in tonus and those differences can take place in different speeds: maintaining a steady tonus or suddenly twitch.

Presentation at DOCH 2013-02-01. Svärmen expressing the quality of their down jackets while eating marshmallows. Photo: Nicklas Dennermalm

In all the above mentioned material qualities we maintained a specific procedure. We started by lying all together, on the floor, in a lump, with our eyes closed but with as much as possible of our bodies in contact with other bodies. Then we tried to locate the quality of material we were looking for through touch and immediately tried to touch using the quality of the material we were touching. Touching, for example skin, in a skinny way and thus operating with the double-sided sense of touch. We started moving our bodies with that quality while maintaining contact. As the movement got bigger, we opened our eyes, got up from the floor and eventually lost contact with the other bodies and moved on our own with the movement quality we had picked up through touch. We would keep our eyes open and let it drift in space and not fix any specific spectator or direction in space. As we were going through this process we kept the idea of projecting one’s sensation to the exterior to not dwell on one’s own experience, but flip it out into the space.

There are two basic questions at stake in this work, in relation to the spectator. First, if a performer is doing something that involves inner sensation, does it mean that she does it only for herself? Secondly, is it possible to transmit a sensation (as in something sensed by touch) visually? To the second question the answer has to be yes and we can see it happening all the time. When we see someone touching something we can mostly read the
sensation they get from it and we use the expression of saying that we are touched by things we see. There is a sort of tactile and kinaesthetic empathy within vision. What we see is the expression of a sensation taking place in another body. Some are more recognizable than others and when it becomes a more abstract sensations it is less clear. In Muscle Group, the point of expressing in movement an interpretation of a muscular quality, is not to make the spectator understand which quality it is. It is not a charade of “Guess my organ”. In that sense the spectators also work through diffraction since they are not watching the theme of the scene but mapping the interferences the scene generates. As for the first question it is more complicated to answer and concerns the question from the previous chapter about where the performance takes place. If my attention is turned inwards to my own sensations there is already an expression of that intention within me. Even just closing the eyes mostly moves an expression throughout the entire body. To turn one’s attention inwards already signals a shutting off from the world. In that sense the performer’s movement expression of muscular qualities can be overruled by the expression of working on that sensation. Outside of the theatre, when someone does not look at you while talking, or while you talk it is immediately interpreted as a lack of attention. That same reading in a theatre space can easily put a spectator off from the performance, but in the end it is up to the spectator to work in order to not demand this sort of egocentric demand of visual confirmation from the performer. It is a very fine line to walk on for a performer and indeed a performance skill. How irresponsible can one be in one’s communication with the spectator without entering in conflict with them? There are also many spectators and in MODUL 6 they are right next to us. How do you, as performer, read the reactions of the spectators and how do you work with that as a material of the performance and not just as a reaction to the material being performed?

7.1.3.2 Transmission
Transmission came into the work as we started to collaborate with ME-SA in the summer of 2013. The idea is very simple. One person stands with the eyes closed and another person touches her/him. The person that gets touched expresses the sensation in movement. Some diffracting technique was acquired to not fall into the most obvious representation of the touch. For example, if someone touches my arm there is a first impulse to move the arm where the touch took place. To be able to filter the most reflexive impulses we usually would take a few seconds to find which aspect of the quality in the touch we wanted to explore. Once
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Process documentation from Prague, August 2013 Andrea Opavska and Ulrika Berg in *Transmission*. Photo: Vojtěch Brtnický

there was a quality to start from the performer starts moving and developing the movement material. The movement material is produced as it is discovered. Similar to the methods discovered in WUPWOUP to Definition, there was, while moving, always the question of what quality is it that I’m working on and how can the performer continuously re-articulate its definition.

The next step in the scene was that a performer would come and stand in front of one of the moving performers. The performer standing still had two options: eyes open or eyes closed. Eyes closed was a signal to the moving performer to translate back the quality of movement into a quality of touch, passing on the quality for a new interpretation. The initial touch would then have been filtered through movement, which would result in a different touch and a new interpretation of that touch. Eyes open meant that the transmission would take place through visual information instead. Here, the De-Subjectivation technique of Mirroring – Reflecting – Diffraction was very important as a way to avoid a simple mimicking of the movement observed. We did not want to see how one person would pick up exactly what the other one was doing but to see how the movement could transform through its transmission.

In this scene the Performometer was important. Once a performer had identified a quality to start exploring, that quality needed to be kept on a loose leash. Not to
pin it down to definition but to let it develop, the performer could not hold onto its performance too tightly. To allow a becoming it could not be identified. We often talked about this in terms of not underlining which also could be considered a form of over-acting. It became especially important in this scene since through touch, the qualities discovered mostly contained a lot of affect which created quite expressive and often comical material. As spectators would confirm the comic aspects, underlining them through their reaction, the performer needed to both affirm the quality produced but not follow the confirmation by the spectators and start exploiting that aspect of the material. Align and divert was then a useful method. Affirming that aspect of the quality but not staying with it, letting it move along and re-articulate itself.

Once a quality had been transmitted, the one who took it over had a score to follow, in terms of directing the projection of the movement material. The first direction was back to the performer that the material came from, as a form of paying tribute to the author. Then we had three more directions that the performer could vary between: 1. Projecting the material towards a point in space where there was no person. 2. Towards a spectator. 3. Towards a fellow performer. The direction was set with the gaze, focusing on the person or the point in space, but the idea was not to try to send one’s movement in that direction. The direction one experiences from the direction one looks in is a very strong directional aspect of the body and it is very difficult to reach a sensation of projecting movement in another direction than that which one looks in. The sensation of the direction of one’s projection is difficult to detach from the gaze. The visual force is thus not just experienced through that which one looks at, but a very dominant experience of one’s own position and direction in space.

While projecting in space, the task was the same as that of Muscle Group: to try to exteriorise an inner experience through movement. While projecting to a fellow performer, the task was not to let the two materials affect each other. Not to fall into the mimetic trap, but see if it was possible to maintain an integrity in one’s own movement while communicating with another. Projecting towards a spectator was an attempt to see if the quality could be transmitted into someone even though the person did not move. This question is at the heart of the idea of why a person comes to watch dance, discussed in the previous chapter Spectating. If there is not just the identification/projection machine at work that to me seems to function on an optic foundation – the pleasure to watch – is their also a more kinaesthetic or haptic transmission taking place? To shift between visual and tactile transmission we wanted to explore that possibility.
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Another important thing in relation to the relation performer/spectator was that those of us who did not move, for the moment, stayed in the performing space, spectating the fellow performers. This meant that there was an in-between state. A spectator on stage that at any moment could choose to become performer. We could thus say that there was spectating shared by everyone in the space. The moving performer was regulating the Performometer in order to not fully identify with her own actions and keeping some percentage of attention to observe her own predicament. The other on-stage spectator/performers left their Performometer slightly on to be able to engage without having to crank it up – letting the engine run, ready to take off. Then there was the actual spectator that we would usually consider bereft of the Performometer all in all. But since we – both the we of the performers and the we of me writing and you reading – have considered the theatrical aspect of our being and the normal situation of observation and asked ourselves where the performance takes place, this view has been ruled out. The spectator is also working a Performometer, performing an inner kinaesthetic experience in front of themselves. Or – affirming our division within – in front of their selves. The transmission happening between the different stages of performing and spectating could thus be seen as a tuning of Performometers. Shifting the kinaesthetic experience of the movement quality between us. Cross-fading it, remixing it and varying frequencies like DJs on a mixing deck. Speaking of which: for this scene we used very different sorts of music. We made a playlist with well-known songs from very different genres. Mixing opera with grunge pop or club music. There was always one person at the sound desk that could change the music at any time, and to any song. The only rule was that we started with Whitney Houston’s *I Wanna Dance With Somebody* and that each change of song should change genre to contrast with the previous song.

There was no specific order for who would start standing; who would start moving, etcetera. The only rule was that there should be four people moving and the three people spectating in the space, ready to take over a quality. The last person, since we were eight, would be at the sound station to change music. There was no specific set duration of the scene. Through practice we found a common sensation of the duration and the performers would drop out as they thought they were done, leaving the four moving performers alone in the performance space for a while until we cross faded into the next scene, which was Event Horizon.
7.1.3.3 Inside Touch

A simple question: Can you touch yourself inside your body? When we touch something we have the sensation in our body but assign the quality of our sensation to the material we touch. In this sense there is a sort of flip of sensation taking place and in Inside Touch we try to turn that flip the other way around. Can my sensation of interior touch – for example my lungs pressing against my ribs – be projected out of my body?

When one touches something, one usually does so by moving. Not only does one have to use movement to get in touch with the material that one wants to touch, but also then to be able to sense what one is in contact with, one moves. Placing your hand on a fabric will give you some sensation of its quality but to find out more you keep moving, for example catching it between your fingers and rubbing it between them. Can we do this also inwards? I can for example move my leg with an intention of touching the inside of my hip joint with my femur (the bone of the leg that is attached to the pelvis). My amateurism in anatomy prevents me stating any scientific proof that one can feel a bone with a bone, but my guess is that it is not true. Our nervous system is not linked to our bone structure in such a way. What I feel when I touch the pelvis with the femur is not the pelvis and the femur, but I do sense the movement
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of them and the intention of touching bone with bone produces a specific kinaesthetic experience in term of quality. If I instead move my femur with the intention of touching its surrounding muscles with its periosteum (the thin membrane that surround the bone) I will have an experience of a very different quality and it will produce different movements with a different quality. This is the task of Inside Touch. To let different materials within the body touch each other.

In difference to Transmission that is very transparent in its intentions Inside Touch is completely obscure. Even though my own intention of what I’m doing can be quite precise, as the above example described, chances are slim that a spectator will actually think: Ah OK, he is touching his *aductor brevis* with his periosteum. This clearly relates to the Diffracted Communication that I have referred to throughout the thesis. The point is also that if a spectator could spot what it is that I’m “really” doing it wouldn’t make any difference since it is not what I would be trying to communicate. The techno-choreographic idea of touching oneself from the inside is there only to produce movement, not to be communicated.

The scene was set up in a series of trios. The performers of each trio stand close to each other, but without touching. There are four trios taking place and in the last one we all join and create an octet. The task of Inside Touch stays the same throughout the entire scene, but there is another layer involved, which concerns vision and spectating. We wanted to contrast the interiority of the subject with a strong projection outwards but at the same time question the importance of the gaze in such a projection. In Transmission we made the difference between touch and vision very clear. Even if the visual input was deconstructed through diffraction, we transmitted through one or the other and when we projected movement out, we did so in the direction of our gaze. Closing one’s eyes to feel something comes quite intuitively to us, whether it is listening to music, tasting something or sensing a touch. Since visual input is so dominant we want to rule it out to be able to profoundly sense another stimuli. However, the closed eyes immediately communicate a shutting off, both for the performer and the spectator. We decided to work on undoing these definitions of expression and sensation by trying to project with closed eyes, and not projecting when eyes were open. The scene started out with eyes closed but with an inverted blink, sometimes flashing our eyes open for a fraction of a second. We tried to keep a clear image of the surrounding space in mind even if the eyes were closed, as if we could see through our eyelids. As the scene went on we cross fade until eyes are open and sometimes blink as they always do.

In the end of the scene, which is also the end of the entire score, we formed an octet. We were all standing close to each other, but without touching. Everyone chose one
movement that they repeated. Moving away from the inside touch we started to show this movement to each other and the spectators. We showed a movement to another movement, dissociating it with the person performing it. We put movements together, in unison or not. This builds a rather absurd image of a group body that connects and disconnects its different movements. Much like the isolating and piecing together of the body that most dance technique proposes this group body is figuring out its corporeality through movement. It is an Inside Touch of the group body instead of the individual body and without the individual bodies touching each other, and just like in the trios that movement is projected towards the spectators surrounding us.

To finish the scene we all took one and the same movement – nodding our heads. What before was an abstract bending in a joint received meaning through the affirmative gesture of nodding. We looked at each other and nodded. We looked at the spectators and nodded. Trusting the idea of kinaesthetic sympathy and the compulsive force of mimesis we waited until we received nods back from the spectators and once we did, we dissolved the group, walked through the space and nodded to all the spectators as a version of bowing after the show. If they had not yet started to applaud, it usually happened then, as that
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simple bending of the neck, marking the end of a duration became a recognisable sign in the theatre dispositive.

7.1.4 Event Horizon

This section in the score is the one dedicated to the technique Horizontal Fall. The reference we used was the BBC documentary on gravity and the Event Horizon – the edge of a black hole. In the chapter Rasmus Technique I spoke of the Tipping Point, as when we leave our balance to take a step or break into a run. The Tipping Point is when momentum takes place and I used it to describe the difference between doing a movement and letting a movement happen. The Tipping Point is the momentum. It is the event of a movement. When movement cannot help but happen. I relate the Tipping Point to Earlier what earlier in the thesis was called clenamen or point of inflection as Bernard Cache called it. The terms were earlier referred to as a singularity that occasions movement and Cache gives a description of it as the “pure event of curvature”. The two terms event and singularity relate to the most extreme expression of gravity – the black hole – with the event horizon being the edge of a black hole and the centre of the black hole is called a singularity. To bring oneself to the Event Horizon, poetically speaking is to put oneself on the point of no return, where one cannot help but abandon oneself to movement. This is precisely how I understand what I describe as letting a
movement happen instead of doing it. To guide oneself to that place where the movement cannot help but appear. We can thus consider a movement as an event instead of an action.

We are so used to the gravitational force that we hardly feel it, but it is what we experience as speed when we jump off a cliff, and as weight when we lift something. In a sense, it is not the weight of the object but the force with which the earth pulls that object towards its own centre that we experience as weight. In the chapter Dance Technique I mentioned how Contact Improvisation and Release Techniques used the rediscovery of one’s own weight as a method to technique. Anything with mass has a gravitational pull (on subatomic level things get more complicated) and so have our bodies. The gravitational pull is directed towards the centre of gravity. As we move through space in Event Horizon we are imagining how the gravitational pull of our bodies affect each other. In the documentary the particle physicist Brian Cox asks the viewer to imagine that everything in the universe is falling. The moon is falling into the valley that is curved in space-time by the earth. The earth is falling into the valley that is curved in space-time by the sun. And so on. Event Horizon is our poetic interpretation how movement curves, and is curved by, space-time. The pivotal momentum of our centres of gravity flings our bodies through space. We are Swarming the Event Horizon (as the presentation was at Hellerau in Dresden 13-14th of September 2013).

The technique itself has been quite extensively discussed in the chapter Rasmus Technique so I will just explain how we use it in Event Horizon. We combine vertical and rotational momentums and we use, simultaneously the three aspects of movement perception (movement in one’s own body, movement in space, movement of the others) All together they present an understanding of what I called Everythingeverywhereallthetime in the sense that all gesture in the body relates to movement in the space i.e. travelling. It is a form of flocking technique as described in MODUL 5 where we extrapolate the kinaesthetic proprioception to the group body and communicate with each other through kinaesthetic empathy.

In addition to the quality of movement that the technique produces we have a structure for the improvisation and we have some set movement material that everybody knows. The set material could be described as micro phrases consisting of one movement (though it is very hard to say what one movement is, which is why I here prefer to call them micro-phrases). The micro phrases existed already in some versions in MODUL 1 since they are recycled movements from the technique I teach – Horizontal Fall. It was also from these micro phrases, or similar ones, that were used as movement material in MODUL 5.

The structure in the version we premiered at Studio Alta in Prague, 6th of December 2013 looked like this:
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1. We set up an improvised game where there are four possible activities. 1. Gravity Point made by one performer standing still with eyes closed. There cannot be more than two Gravity Points at the same time. The performers that swarm through the space consider the Gravity Points as strong gravitational pulls in space. 2. Centre, made by three performers that swarm in relation to each other and to the Gravity Points. The Centre does not have to be close to each other all the time but the kinaesthetic relation should be clear at all moment. 3. Periphery made up by two performers who swarm in relation to each other, to the Centre and to the Gravity Points. Since Periphery works more spread out the gravitational pulls do not affect them as much as the Centre and they therefore move with less speed and their gestures are smaller. 4. Out. Only one performer at the time can be Out, and it means to exit the performing space.

2. Throughout the entire game anyone can change activity with anyone at any time. This is done simply by calling out to the person one wants to change with stating your first name and the activity you want to change to, together with the first name of the person you want to change with and the activity that she/he should change to.

3. In the game, none of the micro-phrases can be used.

4. The game finishes as the Gravity Points decide to leave. When the Centre and the Periphery notices that there are no Gravity Points in the space they dissolve.

5. The music is turned off and all the performers engage in an open improvisation using the basic rules of the technique and insert micro phrases at will. All the performers can step in and out of the improvisation at any time as long as it is done with the kinaesthetic awareness of the movement that is going on in the space already.

6. At some point there is one performer alone in the space. It is not decided in advance which performer.

7. Two performers come into the space and "wash out" the performer who is there. It is not decided in advance which performers.

8. Two performers come into the space and "wash out" the two performers who are there. It is not decided in advance which performers.

9. The three remaining performers come into the space and "wash out" the two performers who were there. After a while, they slowly fade the movement out.

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8 "Wash out" here means that they pick up a movement from the moving performers, join that movement and replaces the moving performers.
7.1.5 Unknown Creature

In the break between our two major working periods I experimented with a task that mixed Tilman O’Donnell’s contribution Focal Points with WUPWOUP and Becoming Animal. My experiments were done in teaching situations where I asked the participants to imagine having different bodies than the one they have. On one hand it was a way to rediscover one’s own body, but even more it was a question of representationalism vs. performative in terms of how to perform. In this sense what was practiced in those teaching situations was the sort of performing skill that the concept of Diffracted Communication had led me to.

![Unknown Creature as Prologue. Presentation at Alta Studio 2013-12-07. Photo: Vojtěch Brtnický](image)

During the presentation we did on June 19th 2013 at Ponderosa this section in the performance score lasted about 15 minutes but since we doubted the idea’s capacity to generate experience for the spectator, we reduced its place in the score in the following presentations in Hellerau and Studio Alta. This was a good example of how some ideas lend themselves better to a performance format than others. Just as the other scenes, Unknown Creature did not easily communicate its own parameters to a spectator, but in difference to the other scenes, Unknown Creature was not generative – it was simply not as successful in generating experience for anyone else than the performer. Not being able to stand on its own, the scene was instead used for other purposes.
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At the first showing at DOCH, on the 1st of February 2013 I wanted to give a short welcoming to the spectators before entering the performance space. At the same time I did not want to appear too dominant in the work since Svärmen was all about Becoming Group. Right before we started we came up with the idea that O’Donnell would hide behind my back, do the introduction talk and move my arms in gestures related to what he said. I tried to lip-sync his words without knowing exactly what he would say next. This parasitic mediation through another body solved my concerns around fronting the work, but also introduced the topic of altering bodily perception that had been so important in our work. We thus used the less performatively successful Unknown Creature as a way to welcome our spectators, as a prologue.

While the spectators enter the space and look for a place to sit, the performers enter the performing space becoming a non-existent creature. All the creatures gather in the centre, forming a small circle and face the spectators. O’Donnell gets into the circle and starts parasitising the different creatures, moving their arms, as they try to lip-sync his words. O’Donnell welcomes the spectators and provides some practical information but also mixes this with descriptions of the creature that he has become. He speaks in first person, through a colleague’s body about a third body and describes its characteristics.

Unknown Creature as entr’acte. Presentation at Alta Studio 2013-12-07. Photo: Vojtěch Brtnický.

In the entr’acte that happens after Muscle Group, all the performers approach a few different spectators and describe the creature they became in the prologue. The performer decides whether to address the spectators directly or to mediate through another body. This second
time the Unknown Creature appears in MODUL 6 it is used to get a different contact with the spectators as we approach them and speak directly – or indirectly – with them and communicate much more concretely than what the more experimental communication of the rest of the work allows us to do. In that sense Unknown Creature finally proved to be useful for exactly what it could not provide – a generative communication between performer and spectator.

7.2 Recap

Let us first be reminded of where we started. The first attempt at a modular structure was aiming to find a system that had both stability and flexibility, in other words: that combined choreography with improvisation. The MODUL method aimed at un-grounding the dichotomous relation of the two. Already in MODUL 1 this method showed its performative capacity as the choreographic approach expanded into including other agencies involved in the occasioning of a choreographic assemblage or dispositif. This performative aspect was developed in MODUL 2 and MODUL 3. In those two MODULs I hardly generated any material for the performers. In MODUL 2 the artists were curated into the space due to my interest in their work and in MODUL 3 I proposed the score task and then watched it for the first time as it was performed in front of spectators, me being one of them. In this sense my choreographic attention was focused on the dispositif. What sort of parameters could I set up in order to occasion an event? The performative aspect of the score method was developed further in MODUL 4, in which we also introduced the technique of Align and Divert. I was now back in a more typical theatre dispositif and wanted to align with it in order to divert it from a representationalist domain towards the performative. This effort got heavily challenged in MODUL 6 as I entered the heart of representationalism – the Royal Opera. Here again, affirmation became very important, as a subtle technique to generate change rather than making a dance piece, albeit making a dance piece.

The following two chapters after the MODUL descriptions: Dance Technique and Rasmus Technique addressed dance technique in the way it appears in educational contexts but then tried to undo such categorisation through a performative approach to technique. In the chapter Dance Technique I referred to Deborah Hay's term Performance Practice as an activity that includes both technique and choreography; process and product.

In chapter four, Functionality Without Function, I showed further implications and applications of how my technical work, as described in Rasmus Technique, can be put to use, as I tried to develop movement's particular domain of concepts (paraphrasing the Sheets-Johnstone quote that opens Movement Meditation 1.). Movement was used to deconstruct the
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representationalist body image of Vitruvian Man. The chapter ended by showing how the topographical movement analysis that had been used as choreographic method in the MODULs can be understood as a way to technique through the movement exploration of one’s own body. A diffractive navigation on the movement of movement.

In *Techne and Self* we investigated further the different theoretical and philosophical concepts that the MODUL project has engaged with. We deconstructed the species-specificity of man and we looked at how the division between the biological and symbolic in our being could be seen as a technical and knowledge generative aspect of human ontology. In the following chapter, *Spectating*, we looked at how this division could be seen as a theatrical aspect in our being and how this aspect is put to use, or even illustrated, by the theatre dispositif. I also pointed out how it is usually at the moment when the spectator enters the room that process is turned into product and that technique is expressed as choreography. To present an alternative to this sudden change from one to the other we looked at how the different choreographic techniques that the MODUL project has articulated can be considered as performing techniques and introduce a different relation between performer and spectator. Such a relation suggests that there is not first a message that is then mediated through performance. The performative context is not a moment of transmission but of generation and we could see how the developed concept of the *performometer* was a material in itself and not just a regulated intensity of mediation.

7.3 Generative Choreography

Throughout the thesis the term choreography has been understood in several different ways. It has been approached as curatorial practice, educational device, performative action, and knowledge production and performance composition. It has been related to as writing as structure and as a technical, mental, sense-making devise. The initial question that MODUL posed to choreography, via the two research questions, concerned choreography’s relation to improvisation. In a round table discussion entitled "Dance, Movement, and Bodies: Forays into the Non-linguistic and the Challenge of Languaging Experience" Professor Daniel Stern questions the traditionally poor understanding of the term improvisation.

More and more I tend not to think in terms of, “Is it improvisation or is it structured?” but rather to see different combinations and degrees of them. If you use a different system, like dynamic systems theory, sort of like chaos theory of a

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kind, I think that you find that most things go along in a semi-structured way, and
then all of a sudden there’s an emergent property that you cannot predict, which
is where you all of a sudden do a new movement, or you receive a new movement.

That sets it in another direction and it now becomes different. These are not
predictable and they’re not plan-able. After you’ve gone through a moment that is
more chaotic and less structured, then you revert back to the semi-structured
thing.
Daniel Stern

What Stern describes is the movement of a dynamic system that sometimes occasions events
that in turn produce change. Such changes cannot be instrumentalised. If they are, it will not
be a real change but a replacement. The king is dead, long live the king. Business as usual, and
the more it changes the more it stays the same.

The topographical movement analysis of the MODUL method has shown us that
improvisation is not that improvised. Instead it can be seen as a form of auto-pilot, run by
forces whose existence have been taken for granted and have fallen into the vague category of
natural. In this sense we do not move freely as we improvise. We need choreography in order
to move freely. We need choreography to reveal pre-existing structures in order to diverge
from them. To think choreography as a movement practice that engages with structures in
order to make them visible, is quite different from regarding choreography as a structure in
and of itself. Further, such an approach does not distinguish between choreography and
technique, or the capacity to technique, since the same topographical movement analysis is
applied to the body proper in movement. Similar to how Wallenstein noted how subject and
object are results of an individuation process, we can think of an Intra-Active process that
precedes the entities of technique and choreography; process and product. This is a process
that one cannot easily instrumentalise. One can only engage in it and develop sensibility
towards its expressions. Navigating one’s way by following the rippling movement that
Diffraction has occasioned gives us the oppurtunity to sense the process’ directional aspects
and stay within the Line of Becoming. It is only when we have become sensitive to the
directional aspects of the environment we are engaged in – inside our bodies or outside of
them – that we can choreographically re-articulate their agency. This understanding of

technique does not reduce it to a means for an end but considers technique as something

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10 Ibid transcript (p.13).
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generated by movement exploration. An exploration we engage in even before we are born and that stays with us throughout our lives.

Pre-linguistic, pre-individual and even pre-minded agencies of our biological matter construct the base of the sapient animal we define ourselves as. We saw this both in material directions of our body, as when describing the shape of the hip joint, and in immaterial forces such as homeostasis, vital force, visual drive and the striating tendency in conscious reflection that Heidegger called Ge-stell. These agencies keep acting on us in the same way as osteopathy proposed that the force of growth keeps its healing agency also after growth has stopped. The phenomenological bodily construction is still at work. We are not models, fixed by the shape of an original mold, but open modular systems whose assemblages can be re-articulated by changing – through Attunement – the relation between the different agencies involved. The body is not linearly and once and for all manufactured into a fixed product. The two initial research question already proposed such a critique of the linear understanding of development by saying that technique/chorography and process/product are not arboreal narratives with a beginning-middle-end. To undo such a dichotomous mode of thinking the MODUL project has put to use rhizomatic methods, concepts and techniques like Diffraction, Intra-Action, Becoming Animal and Body-Self Attunement.

7.4 Fictive Dualisms
The two research questions question dualism and in this thesis I have set up methods, concepts and techniques to deconstruct the stability of pre-determined entities. But I have also set up even more dualisms: biological/symbolic, smooth/striate, representationalist/performative. Binary logic is not easily done away with, which is why we should consider the technique Align to Divert.

In an effort to abrogate dichotomy, multiplicity and logic of difference show up with the promise to drown dualism by adding multiple alternatives. However, Body-Self Attunement can instead show how dualism itself is fictive since multiplicity already dwells within duality. The diffraction of light shows how there is light in the shade and shade in the light and Intra-Action showed how there is a process that produces entities that are not pre-existent to that process. Multiplicity can thus be found within the dualism of black and white, and all colours of the rainbow exist in the perceived white light. Gilles Deleuze describes his writing with Félix Guattari, so frequently referred to in this thesis, not as writing together, as one, but writing between them. They did not need a multiplicity of authors. The two of them were enough to create a Line of Becoming between them. It is such an understanding that the Body-Self Attunement asks for. It is not a counterbalance of opposite points, but an on-going
movement in itself. It is not a Body and a Self engaging in some push and pull. Instead it is the Attunement that generates bodies and selves and re-articulates their relation to each other.

The re-articulation of relationship through Body-Self Attunement and Everythingeverywhereallthetime addresses all dualism in this thesis. The two techniques relate to the movement of movement. This is a continuous movement different from the representationalist and modernist as it does not move towards, but in between, like the Line of Becoming. It moves, as WUPWOUP does, to escape definition.

As a movement practitioner, my understanding of the Line of Becoming and Intra-Action is not as movement from one place to another but as movement itself – the movement of movement. Elisabeth Grosz mentions how she turned to the Möbius Strip in order to avoid dichotomous metaphors like the flipside of the coin. Such metaphors can only propose one or the other. Although the Möbius strip represents movement, it is still a static figure. It is turned inside out and shows an entwined relation, but it does not move. I will close this thesis by proposing a different metaphor: the spinning coin. As long as the coin is in spin – self propelling and vortically occupying space – we cannot tell one side from the other. It is only when movement is left out that one side conceals the other.
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