Chapter 8: Entrainment

The "dissonance, the dephasing, the complementarity of the between" is made palpable during an exercise at a workshop for dance scholars with *Duo* dancer Allison Brown.[1] I have invited Brown to teach us something from her practice of *Duo*, something without virtuosic movement so that my fellow scholars can join in. Brown asks us to find a partner. She gives the small group of dancers and scholars the task: "You go, I go, we go." Without music, she asks us to improvise movement together accordingly, while moving from one side of the room to another. She lets us negotiate the transitions, some speaking, others sensing.[2]

The instructions render aspects of dancing William Forsythe's duet *Duo* palpable to those outside it and inexperienced in moving with others. True to the experience conveyed by Brown's assignment, *Duo* is a choreography that foregrounds the interplay of commitment to synchrony—not of timing mandated by an outside force but timing negotiated between people. In an interview with me, Brown described her memories of dancing *Duo* onstage as a continual interactional stream: "meeting, arising and coming to each other and being in unison and being out of unison, in aligning and dis-aligning but staying together, and this seeing each other with other senses and other body parts than the eyes."[3] This process of sensing betweenness and passing in and out of phase is the focus of this chapter, which explores how this practice is cultivated and asks how it produces subjects in relation. The concept given to name and explore this is *entrainment*: "the process that occurs when two or more people become engaged in each other's rhythms, when they synchronize."[4]

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1 Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 61.

2 Allison Brown, workshop at the *Dancing Together* conference at the University of Bern, October 25, 2018.

3 Allison Brown, studio session dancing in Frankfurt, September 23, 2016.

4 William Condon, referenced in Hall, *The Dance of Life*, p. 177; see also Spier, "Engendering and Composing Movement," pp. 142–43. Most dance and music are forms of entrainment. Entrainment may also feature in spectators' expectations of dance and lead to frustration when this is not met. For a discussion of the reception of *Jérôme Bel* (1995), see Lepecki, *Exhausting Dance*, p. 2.

Steven Spier has named *entrainment* as one of four factors important to Forsythe's work: "counterpoint, proprioception, entrainment, and authenticity."[5] For Forsythe, proprioception is about experiencing oneself, whereas entrainment is about experiencing relation, a sort of empathetic kinesis of one's own and another's body. My aim in this chapter is to analyze my fieldwork studies for accounts of entrainment and to use these to reflect on how dancers experience time and order in choreographic process.

8.1 Synchronizing the First Step of *Duo*

The first movement of *Duo*, the movement called *showerhead*, is a delicate threshold in which synchronization takes place. The dancers begin the piece by performing this movement in unison. To do so, in the shift from backstage to onstage, the dancers increase their sensitivity to their bodies, time and their awareness of one another. They rely on their "spidey sense," dancer Jill Johnson joked with me, referring to the superhero Spider-Man's endurance, agility and the power to sense incoming motion and react before his body comes in harm's way. Another term for this, Johnson proposes, is *entrainment*, which she describes as a rhythmical acuity, based on longstanding practice, interaction and care.[6]

During the minutes before *Duo* begins, the dancers are separated backstage in the wings, waiting on either side of the stage.[7] After the first piece on the program, the dancers would receive a signal from the stage manager, waving her flashlight to tell them to enter the stage and start. In the blackout, they would walk quietly through the darkness onstage to their starting position. Then the stage manager would cue the technicians to turn the fluorescent stage lights on. Cut: the lights come up and the audience sees the two dancers standing at the front of an empty stage, their arms resting at their sides. The women wait, with neutral expressions, focusing straight ahead. They listen. Since they face the same oblique angle and are separated by more than half the width of the stage, they cannot see each other's faces. They have to rely on other senses than their eyes in order to start the first movement together. After a consequent pause they inhale and begin the motion *showerhead*.

Duo starts by tuning into the virtual: the potential to synchronize, the process of *entrainment*. Listening, the sound of the dancers' mutual inhale pulls them into action. Aside from this little breath, there is no external musical cue to start. They entrain to one another, while also tuning into the audience: waiting for the audience to adjust to the new lighting conditions and become hushed. *Duo* dancer Allison Brown remembered this vividly:

> [I remember] going out on stage in the dark. Trying to find your glow-in-the-dark mark on the floor and hoping that it's good, that we're in good alignment and we're ready. And the audience taking us in and us taking the audience in and this first moment,

5 Spier, "Engendering and Composing Movement," p. 135.

6 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

7 I speak here of the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo* (1996–2004), not *DUO2015*.

> standing naked there basically. And yeah, I remember the whole thing actually, in lots of different places, and lots of different times, and in lots of different bodies.[8]

Bodies on the move and changing, fragile to others through their visibility. Brown gets in a rhythmic narrative groove remembering the multiplicity of enacting *Duo*, nakedly, across bodies and time.

Movement complicates the triad of volition, intentionality and agency, writes philosopher and dancer Erin Manning. She proposes: "experience cannot be reduced to individual volition. It is collective—ecological—at its very core."[9] *Showerheading* demonstrates that the dancers' sensitivity to the audience was enacted through their first decision: when and how to start moving. How was this decision made and by whom? Studying different video records of this history of beginnings, I watch variations: more or less synchronous starting movements, bigger and smaller stages, more or less light, quieter versus more animated audiences. In my interviews with the dancers, I learn that some pairs planned which dancer would initiate. Others did not designate a leader; instead the togetherness was intuitively mutual. Some told of an unspoken hierarchy of letting the more experienced dancer take initiative, and the insecurity involved in working to get things right. In just a few seconds, in a moment of pregnant anticipation, togetherness was already at issue.

8.1.1 Stretching Moments

The audience's attention *precipitates* the dancers' delicate motion. The dancers' testimony, such as Johnson's below, illustrates that even when one dancer was designated to start, the process was collective and ecological (that is, tuning into the space of performing and the signs of the audience's mutual attention). Drawing upon the terminology of performance scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Duo* dancers sense the audience as a resonator of attention, as "co-presence." The spectators' sounds and motions provide a "feedback loop" to the envelope of interaction on stage.[10] In *Duo*, these reactions are amplified because the environment is so quiet. Like the tiny sounds in the middle of the night, the audience's little shifts in their chairs and vocalizations (sniffs, coughs, whispers with a neighbor) are very audible.[11] Though the spectators do not share the longstanding history of the co-performers in *Duo*, they may still become caught up in the time-making sensitivity and the intensity of motion anticipation, entraining with them. They may participate, with their breath, their focus, and attention. They might also decide to participate *differently* than the artists. Catcalls, the dancers remember, also occurred, voicing male spectators' response to women in "diaphanous" costumes,

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8 Allison Brown, interview with the author, Frankfurt, September 23, 2016.

9 Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p.117.

10 Fischer-Lichte provides a historic overview of how these practices of participation have shifted in western theater, from the deliberate suppression of spectators' response in the late 18th and 19th century, to experiments in the early 20th century seeking to organize and compose this "feedback loop." See Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance,* in particular pp. 38–41.

11 Music scholar Ian Biddle's study of tiny sounds shows that they are a rich and politically strong realm of affectation. See Biddle, "Quiet Sounds and Intimate Listening," in particular pp. 206–7.

showing much of their bodies, including their breasts.[12] This was part of the risk each night and the dancers' vulnerability. The attunement of entrainment made this tangible from the first second of the dance. Entrainment as the tuning into the emergence of organization in time.

"I gave that cue." Videoconference interview with *Duo* Dancer Jill Johnson, June 28, 2018.

> LIZ: When you are on stage and about to begin motion. Was there a cue for that?
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> JILL: I gave that cue. And it was to spend some real time—in other words, not choreographed time, not the two of us getting to our first places and waiting for two [musical] eights, before we started. It was … we waited for the audience: for the two of us to settle and kind of feel each other. But also, there was always a response from the audience, in part because we were so close to them, and they weren't necessarily expecting that. There was always a bit of like (*she vocalizes, similar to a sigh*) "ahm." In Frankfurt, with our home audience, they were like "oh, ok." And it settled pretty quickly. In Orange County [Los Angeles, a tour in 2003] for example, where we were (*pause*) restricted because there was quote "nudity"—it was a conservative bubble … there was all kind of (*she vocalizes*) "flaahflahflahhh" and we had a heckler, you know? So it varied, with where we were. But a time when we could really feel that it settled. And then a borderline, not pushing the audience, but let's see how far we can (*pause*) have this moment be … just being with each other (*she inhales, starting showerhead*) and then start. […] You would feel the audience finally in real time settle, and then you take a real long second or five and then start.

Duo dancer Jill Johnson's stunningly detailed reflection upon cueing the start of *Duo* shows how pregnant one moment can be. Like a conductor, Johnson describes her role modulating communal attention. The process involves acuity in listening to the audience's settling, and then an extra nudge—a trust in prolonging that time. Johnson's perception illustrates that time is in this way "real" and shared at the beginning, in search of a sort of "being."[13] Her mastery of negotiating time intimately, through detailed somatic attention, shows the way that time in *Duo* is much more than just skill or discipline. Rather, it is a way of negotiating expectations and intimacies of sharing time with the audience and then modulating these intensities and qualities. Johnson also describes how this varies on tour, suggesting it is based to some degree on shared experience and history. The "home" audience of Frankfurt could more quickly settle

12 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016. Allison Brown, video elicitation in Frankfurt, September 23, 2016. Johnson reflected further: "To my mind, a see-through, black, fine-mesh top is different than being bare-breasted. It could be said that the issue at hand here is that the diaphanous costumes which showed much of our bodies (including breasts, torso, arms and legs) were often seen through a sexist focus on breasts and the shock/offense/sexualization of women's breasts." Johnson, email to the author, September 14, 2020.

13 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, June 28, 2018.

with them; conversely, it was more difficult when the audience became uncomfortable because of their closeness and nakedness.

Some dancers found the first moments of *Duo* challenging: the neon lights were harsh and at times one's heart was fluttering in anticipation of performance.[14] The bare costume might make one feel vulnerable. Also, one is very far away from one's partner (over ten meters), a separation at odds with the intimacy of the piece. In his first few performances dancing *Duo*, Watts—who inherited Johnson's role and took responsibility for initiating the first cue—focused more on his partner than the audience. He explains his approach:

> I know Brigel [Gjoka, my partner] is listening to my cue, and from a distance I have to feel that he is ready to begin. It is our job to imagine the connection between us, and sometimes I would imagine a phantom limb connecting us between our shoulders. I try to imagine, what does [he] feel like right now? What does his body look like? Can I feel what his body feels like? Only when I feel that we are sufficiently connected do I audibly exhale and begin the first movement.[15]

In our interviews, Watts used the terms entrainment, connection and rhythmic connection interchangeably. Once he spoke about "telepathy"—entrainment as the "superpower" to communicate at a distance, as if they could read what one another were thinking, another term for Johnson's "spidey sense."[16]

While Watts learned the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo*, which begins by synchronizing *showerhead*, the version of *Duo* that the dancers toured extensively (*DUO2015*) was modified with a new beginning. Instead of starting *showerhead* together out of silence and stillness, they began by building connection through an open improvisation.[17] The curtain rose in the middle of this process, showing the dancers already moving without music. Though their improvisation varied from performance to performance, they generally moved with light gestures, predominantly of the upper body and arms. They performed side-to-side, sometimes while walking or shifting place—playing with similar rhythmical movements of their arms, precise directions of gaze (on 'my' body, on 'your' body, in the space forward, below, up and back), as if grooving together on common themes and sharing some common music. This window of improvisation progressed for a few minutes until a commonly designated alignment, precipitating unison. The game, a way into the material through their rhythmical connection in play, was also a practice of *entrainment*.

In my conversations with the *Duo* dancers I asked: What enabled them to entrain? When did their synchronization begin? And what supported or harmed it? Jill Johnson

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14 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

15 Riley Watts, videoconference interview with the author and Bettina Bläsing, January 14, 2014.

16 Riley Watts, interview with the author, Bologna, October 25, 2017. Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

17 This is described in the opening passage of my Introduction. By open improvisation I mean an improvisation without a defined task. Forsythe initially asked the dancers to mark the movement, meaning to perform the movement at a smaller scale, with less force and energy. While Forsythe occasionally gives open improvisations to his dancers, in my experience as a dancer, the majority were task or proposal based.

explained to me that, in her view, the opening movement in *showerhead* was not the start of entrainment. Rather: "The entire trajectory of the piece [*Duo*] stems from the intimacy and entrainment between the dancers from preparations prior to the piece, to the moment we would walk on stage in the dark, dance the piece together and even beyond the bows and finishing the piece."[18] What this suggests is that the entrainment of movement is based on more longstanding shared experiences—histories of practice and shared understanding.

8.2 The Scientific Discourse of Entrainment

Entrainment in music frequently involves play, groove and pleasure—although few musicians use the scientific term of entrainment. Musicologist and jazz scholar Charles Keil writes of musicians: "We use this word/concept 'groove' because it is used in common parlance to name the broad range of phenomena we want to understand well enough to foster. 'Entrainment' is a technical term from physics favored by some ethnomusicologists who may be uncomfortable using African American slang, but why burden an organic life process with a physical mechanical model?"[19]

The gap between the theory and practice of human entrainment is a large one. The phenomenon is studied across a wide range of fields, reflecting a history of the concept migrating from physics to the biological sciences, systems theory and most recently sociology and ethnomusicology.[20] Entrainment has come to name the phenomenon whereby independent, coupled rhythmical oscillators interact and stabilize—producing synchronized or rhythmically related activity.[21] Beyond the groove of jazz musicians or dancers, entrainment is taking place, for example, when humans synchronize their biological clocks to day and night, when fireflies blink simultaneously and cicadas pulsate rhythmically; even, intriguingly, when pendulums, hanging from a common beam, synchronize their swing.[22] The common element here is order and organization, perceived by a human.[23] Entrainment is not one common mechanism, especially one occurring

18 Jill Johnson, email to the author, June 28, 2017.

19 Keil, "Defining 'Groove'," p. 1.

20 Reviewing this literature across disciplines, including the limited literature on entrainment in dance, see my writing in Waterhouse, "In-Sync." The verb 'to entrain,' from the French *entrainer* (16th century), means to drag away from oneself, or to draw as an accompaniment or consequence. In the late 19th century, the word was used colloquially to describe entering a railway train. Source: *The Oxford English Dictionary of English Etymology*, p. 317 and *The Second Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, p. 303. Today, in contemporary French, the word *entrainment* means to train oneself, such as the movements that one might perform in the gym.

21 The first recorded observation of this phenomenon is traced to Dutch physicist Christiaan Huygens (1629–1695), who described this in a letter to the Royal Society of London (1665) as the "odd kind of sympathy" between two pendulums suspended on the same beam. Huygens, cited in Czolczynski et al., "Huygens' odd sympathy experiment revisited," p. 1.

22 Clayton, "What Is Entrainment?," p. 49.

23 Massumi and Manning consider a spectrum of experience between entrainment and entertainment, advocating respect for neurodiversity. They associate entrainment with Whitehead's "causal efficacy" noting how neurotypical western persons can target affordances and punctually use,

ideally in humans; rather, it designates a suite of things that humans find similar across biological and mechanical systems: when coupled systems appear to sync up.[24] It is a term that we use to name what we describe as "coordinated rhythmic movement."[25]

Occasionally, experimental research into human entrainment has disregarded factors of history and culture—identifying the social as just what passes between people, as lacking its complexity of formation, context and material. Frequently this coincides with valiant though constraining empirical methodology, intended to measure events of synchronization for the purpose of refining a hypothesis. By contrast, within the pioneering work in ethnomusicology, the term has helped to differentiate approaches to timing in music across genres and cultures.[26] Some of this work has been notably interdisciplinary,[27] overcoming the tendency to think about sociality and bodies as rhythmic signals and receivers, involving power plays of *Zeitgeber* (time-givers) controlling time-perceivers.

My fieldwork examining *Duo* has taught me that entrainment, as distinct from the apparent perfection of being co-timed, is a thick maelstrom of living bodies—bodies that are processual, with ambiguities of inside and outside, and betweenness—all aspects central in dance science and the humanities. Thus, rather than trying to further enter and build upon the entrainment literature, as I attempted in previous publications,[28] in this chapter I venture a fresh approach, studying entrainment inductively by investigating the dancers' testimonies. In doing so, I think of entrainment as "an ecology of practices," to borrow a concept from philosopher Isabelle Stengers. This implies:

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mount and speak. Entertainment they understand through Whitehead's "presentational immediacy" which is relational in its inframodal dreaming: "the relational quality of a welling environment that dynamically appears in a jointness of experience." Manning and Massumi, "Coming Alive in a World of Texture," pp. 7–8; see also ibid., footnote 12 pp. 155–56. My understanding of entrainment in *Duo* considers it as a fusion of causal efficacy and presentational immediacy, so that relational components come to the fore.

24 Clayton specifies that entrainment is a process in which independent rhythmical systems interact and stabilize. Their interaction occurs through coupling (i.e., a material connection or perception causing a feedback loop). When entrained systems are perturbed they return to rhythmical relation. The mathematics of systems theory models this definition. Clayton, "What Is Entrainment?," p. 49.

25 Phillips-Silver et al., "The Ecology of Entrainment," p. 3.

26 See Clayton et al., "In Time with the Music."

27 Wonderful examples using blended methodology are: Doffman's study of jazz musicians' experience of groove, hybridizing ethnographic and psychologically informed empiricism; Clayton's critical exploration of scientific methods of timing measurement and ethnography; Hahn and Jordan's research, which also blends ethnographic methods and cognitive neuroscience to propose a multi-scale view of entrainment within Japanese dance pedagogy; lastly Ancona and Waller's ethnographic study of software teams' working activities as a dance of rhythmical enmeshment to shifting pacers of different sorts. See Doffman, *Feeling the Groove*; Clayton, "Entrainment, Ethnography and Musical Interaction"; Hahn and Jordan, "Anticipation and Embodied Knowledge"; and Ancona and Waller, "The Dance of Entrainment."

28 Waterhouse, "In-Sync"; Waterhouse, "Entrainment und das zeitgenössische Ballett von William Forsythe"; Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*."

> […] the demand that no practice be defined as 'like any other', just as no living species is like any other. Approaching a practice then means approaching it as it diverges, that is, feeling its borders, experimenting with the questions which practitioners may accept as relevant, even if they are not their own questions, rather than posing insulting questions that would lead them to mobilise and transform the border into a defence against their outside.[29]

To explore these layers, I now clarify how the *Duo* dancers' practice of entrainment is situated in the ecology of the dancers' activities and histories with ballet.

8.3 The Conventions of Entrainment in Ballet

In the studio, western dancers use the term *unison* to describe dancing the same movements at the same time, usually to music supporting that synchrony.[30] Ballet dancers regularly perform in unison while facing the same direction, at times with symmetric variations (as a group, some dancers facing right and some to the left, etc.); they strive for exactness in this practice, which is achieved through rehearsal and is supported by listening to the music.

Ballet dancers master dancing in unison. Balletic unison is part of the performance aesthetic, featuring spatial formations of dancers performing as one body, as well as a pedagogical strategy lingering in the daily technique of training (that is, exercises perfected all together in groups). The spatial patterns of dancers in ballet choreographies are derived from European court dances. The co-joining of bodies in harmonious movements and symmetric formations was later named the *corps de ballet*, literally the body of the ballet, like the *corps d'armée* (from the 16th century). As a dance form produced through the body-politic of French king Louis XIV, his staging of ballets required the participation of his court. To rectify the imperfections of courtiers and gain control over competition, in 1662 Louis XIV established a Royal Academy of Dancing. Dance scholar Mark Franko describes this as when ballet was established a "discipline," what Michel Foucault defines as methods making "possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility."[31] Not only did the institution, according to Franko, "strike at unwanted or offensive movement potentials," but through the schooling of ballet, dancers formed themselves into useful, masterful and obedient movers.[32] Ballet was thereby linked with the power to rule, and the power to define what was proper and improper—and to make this visible in performance. Aesthetic perfection and discipline were entwined. Synchronization *subjected* bodies.

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29 Stengers, "Introductory Notes on an Ecology of Practices," p. 184.

30 The word presumably has been adapted from the field of music, with origins in the Middle French *unisson* (16th century) or Medieval Latin *unisonus*: "of the same sound as something else." *The Second Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*, p. 75.

31 Franko, "Archaeological Choreographic Practices," p. 98; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 137; see also Franko, *Dance as Text*, pp. 108–12.

32 Franko, *Dance as Text*, p. 111.

Over 300 years later, one might question the extent to which such history is relevant to dancers in *Duo*—how it comes to be passed down, in techniques of training and performance, now distant from their historic origins. It is my thesis that the heritage of balletic synchronicity and its alignment with discipline and the hierarchy of imperial rule remained important, both to the aesthetic appearance of synchronization in Forsythe's choreographies, and the dancers' real lives in this work. To develop my argument, I will now consider an example: the well-known ballet *Swan Lake*.

8.3.1 Entrainment in *Swan Lake*

Classical ballets manifest virtuosic patterns of coordinated grace, inspiring what William Forsythe has called, "the joy of the evident."[33] The quintessential example of *Swan Lake* is a staple of ballet companies internationally.[34] Performing this ballet involves contributions from dancers partitioned by rank—the *corps de ballet* dancing mostly in unison and the stars shown as individuals and partners. The female *corps de ballet* of the swans has become integral to the aesthetic look and training of ballet, in which female dancers wear identical white tutus and perform movements in unison—also holding long poses. All the dancers entrain to the music, their movement a visual manifestation of the rhythmic patterns it contains. The protagonists of the ballet, Princess Odette (transformed into a swan) and Prince Siegfried who falls in love with her, frequently stand out in relief against this mobile landscape of women—a constellation that echoes and frames the soloists' action. They also explore their partnership, dancing the *pas de deux*. Touching one another, the man assists the women to bend, float and rise off the ground.[35] The female villain, a black swan Odile (performed by the same dancer who plays Odette), moves—unlike the harmony of the graceful swans—with dynamism, rhythm and vigor. Here the fable is quite clearly narrated through entrainment modes: defining casts of animals, persons and royalty, dynamics of male and female, and morals of good and evil. Intertwining cultural codes, beauty is constructed by entrainment of dance to music and a highly ordered cosmos of participants.

Contemporary European dance, including the work of Ballett Frankfurt, has taken issue with norms of dancers courteously synchronizing to choreography and music, staging many experiments with choreographic form and presentation. Across Forsythe's repertoire there is investigation of and through entrainment. Forsythe has taken the sensorimotor proclivities of dancers who have learned to entrain in their ballet education, together with the conventions of entrainment in classical ballet, and staged a new and critical range of synchronizing and de-synchronizing dynamics. These become a compositional field: entrainment varies in scale (within the one body,

33 Forsythe speaking in Figgis, *Just Dancing Around*, 10:55–11:05.

34 With choreography usually referring back to the imperial version of 1885, choreographed by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanovich Ivanov, which was performed at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

35 A short synopsis of this "sexual division of labor," which Novack rightly categorizes as guiding, supporting, carrying and manipulating the women, is found in Novack, *Sharing the Dance*, pp. 125–32; citation p. 128.

dyadic, group or between groups), rhythmic complexity (unison rhythms versus hierarchical or polyrhythmic relations, symmetric versus asymmetric), synchronizing mediums (sound, light, movement), and ranges from planned to improvised.[36] I agree with dance scholar Heidi Gilpin: "Rather than retrieving and reproducing classical balletic forms that are fixed entries in the roster of movement, Forsythe bursts open these forms so that previously hidden moments in balletic movements are made plainly visible. In doing so, not only are movement and form given a new life and a new set of possibilities, but so is ballet in general."[37]

8.3.2 Individualization in the Hierarchy of Ballet

Ballett Frankfurt's repertoire explored a range, or ecology, of synchronizing and desynchronizing. This involved many links of cooperation: relations between dancers, between dancers and musicians, between the dancers and moving elements of the set, between dancers and changing lights, and between all of these and the audience. The dancers entrained through touching, listening, watching, breathing-sounding, speaking and moving rhythmically. Entrainment congealed alignments between movement, light, material and sound—producing "relationscapes" of emergent experience.[38] The entire team working on the performance had to synchronize their efforts to modulate light, sound and space *together*. The audience attuned to this vacillating field of emergent organization, perceiving rhythmically, expectantly with the unfolding performance.

Entrainment in these works is an aesthetic *process*—not only producing artistic works but a manner of being artful and explorative, with unusual bundles of perception, signs, communication and sense. Entrainment *may* be beautiful; but such tastes are complex and culturally constructed, based upon much common understanding about their meaning. What the scientific literature has largely missed is how entrainment is a spectrum of manifestations of force and power. Forsythe's choreographies recognize and stage this critically.

Working with harmony and causing chaos, Forsythe has been accused of ruining or critiquing the norms of classical ballet—including the notion that pleasing harmony or synchrony is beautiful and good and should thus be visible, whereas chaos and irregularity are vulgar and should be hidden.[39] The Ballett Frankfurt's work also decentered ballet, from the symmetry and axis of organization controlled by one person, to or-

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36 For further exploration of this argument via a consideration of dancers' experiences of entrainment in Forsythe's choreographies *Artifact* and *Eidos:Telos*, see Waterhouse, "Entrainment und das zeitgenössische Ballett von William Forsythe," pp. 199–200. On these categories of entrainment, see Clayton, "What Is Entrainment?," pp. 50–52; Phillips-Silver and Keller, "Searching for Roots of Entrainment and Joint Action in Early Music Interactions," p. 3; see also Waterhouse, "In-Sync," pp. 66–67.

37 Gilpin, "Aberrations of Gravity," p. 122.

38 I take the term "relationscapes" from Erin Manning, which she uses when exploring various ways that movement, material, sensation, thought and dreaming enmesh. See Manning, *Relationscapes*, pp. 153–83.

39 Cf. Nugent, "Seeking Order and Finding Chaos in the Choreography of William Forsythe."

ganization produced with many personal and spatial centers, through collaboration.[40] By doing this, Forsythe's team explicitly critiqued the hierarchical framework of the classical ballet ensemble and the entire promotion system framed around de-synchronization in the form of soloist parts. In contrast, their work revealed dancers in complex constellations of interaction, and often in mutual partnerships, as in *Duo*. Forsythe has described the last decade of his projects as work that "tries to make the audience aware of its own attention."[41] Instead of entertainment, as the "the joy of the evident,"[42] the audience is included or provoked into the process of deciphering: what is going on here? In this way, Forsythe's choreographies reinvent their own heritage, exploring the potential of entrainment as *relation*.

When I exposed a draft of this argument to some peers from The Forsythe Company,[43] my ideas resonated in particular with Italian *Duo* dancer Roberta Mosca. She responded that in the ballet company of Teatro alla Scala in Milan, a *corps de ballet* dancer contractually has no opportunity to dance as a soloist—to make his or her movements individual or to desynchronize from the others. From her remarks, I was reminded that my argument needed to further emphasize that entrainment is not only a representative matter in performance, but part of the dancers' professional culture and careers. De-synchrony figures in promotion: the career of a successful ballet dancer involves the hope for individualization, through exiting the communal *corps de ballet*. Via de-phasing, standing out from the others, an individual ballet dancer becomes highlighted and recognized. Thus, ballet dancers are trained paradoxically, both to conform (as rules require) and also to stand out (as promotion lures). Rehearsal of the *corps de ballet* involves a director telling each individual how to better fulfill the common form of unison, often requiring the dancer to look at him or herself in the mirror to diagnostically conform to their peers. For ballet-trained members of Forsythe's companies, this history is part of their bodies, their disposition and tendencies, and their sense of right and wrong (as such, their *habitus*). The group-subject of the *corps de ballet* is devalued compared to the individualization of the star—who is more respected, dances more and earns a greater salary. This is why *Duo*'s staging of entrainment is so critical: performing movement with mutual and not hierarchical entrainment.

Complementary ethnographic fieldwork has added credence to my observation that entrainment features strongly in dancers' *habitus* and daily work. In her fieldwork exploring the contribution of the dancer, Tomic-Vajagic assesses the challenges of setting Forsythe's ballets within other companies, observing the differences of ballet ensembles' occupational cultures. She finds: "The manner of negotiating the mutual space with a

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40 Spier, "Engendering and Composing Movement," pp. 140–41.

41 Tusa, "Interview with William Forsythe." In an interview from 2001, Forsythe explains similarly: "[…] if you're looking at something very hard, if you're trying to watch very carefully because it's somewhat obscured, you tend to be a more careful viewer, to ask 'what are we doing there?' Are we teaching people the aesthetics at hand? No, we're teaching them about watching, about being a viewer. I'm not trying to refine someone's taste, I would like to make people who watch dancing better dance viewers." Forsythe cited in Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, p. 146.

42 Forsythe speaking in Figgis, *Just Dancing Around*, 10:55–11:05.

43 Thank you to PACT Zollverein for the opportunity to give a presentation of this text during a HOOD residency, April 26, 2017.

larger group on stage is not so typical for the soloists in the hierarchical construct within international repertory ballet companies."[44] Substantiating this view is her interview with principal dancer Zdenek Konvalina of the National Ballet of Canada about his role in Forsythe's *the second detail*. Konvalina recounted:

> And so, I think I always wanted to be part of that group-movement and make sure that I'm on the same music, on the same rhythm as the other people … Being a soloist, usually you don't have to be with anyone … So, I feel that there is a double challenge here—in a way you want to stand out because you are supposedly a principal, you should be better. But in some way, it's a challenge saying, "no, you know, I can do that—I can be a part of the group" … so I think *the second detail* was more about community, and how to be a part of that.[45]

The argument that I would like to draw from this examination of ballet's aesthetics of entrainment and hierarchal working modes more generally, is that Forsythe's choreography challenges the proclivities of his ballet-trained dancers to reference, surpass and reinvent synchronization as *relation*. Forsythe and the dancers believe that contemporary performance of unison must evolve and achieve a new expression of its classical principles—requiring investigation of the obedience of individuals in-concert and the consumption of this product by spectators. When entrainment was called upon, it explored not a "docile" utility but an active pact of taking part—even and especially when the dancers performed in unison.[46]

8.4 The Dancers' Entrainment

Within the changing manifestations of *Duo* across the project's history from 1996–2019, each new set of partners has nurtured their manner of intimate listening as they dialogue about the movement sequence that they have inherited. Entrainment remains essential, though its appearance and sound may change. Each *Duo* pair has found their way of being musical with one another, negotiating the timing of complex twists and turns of the choreographic material. This is visible and audible in their rhythmic signatures of breathing-movement: common phrasing, preferred places to accelerate or decelerate and flexibility to prolong or shorten movements in order to surprise one another. Nervousness was cited as a block to connection and entrainment—as was holding one's breath or fixing one's head on the spine, limiting the acuity needed to turn and attune to one's partner.

Though dancing in unison was a significant part of the dancers' learning practice, the majority of the piece is not performed in unison.[47] In addition, the dancers move

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44 Tomic-Vajagic, *The Dancer's Contribution*, p. 184.

45 Ibid., p. 185.

46 Foucault cited in Franko, "Archaeological Choreographic Practices," p. 101.

47 Unison accounts for approximately a third to a half of the choreography. See section 9.2 Charting the History of *Duo*.

rhythmically, have solos, turn-take and pause. These are all modes of entrainment, sutured together to make a complex structure. Entrainment in *Duo* involves learning how to measure and forecast this rhythmical material, so that dancers come in and out of alignment at the right time. The structure of *Duo* devises intensities of relation, connecting and then distancing the performers—not only literally in space, but through their shared attention to co-movement and breath.[48] Underscoring the nuance of this co-performance, dancer Riley Watts has described *Duo* as pertaining to "the art of elastic temporal integrity," in which the pair plays elastically with these coming and goings of relation.[49] His partner, dancer Brigel Gjoka, explained entrainment pointedly in the French sense of training and practice as "a form of progressive work, reaching a level of interrogation on how connections, composition, rule-breaking and listening can create a dialogue between individuals."[50] When Watts and Gjoka teach *Duo* they let students self-direct rehearsal and develop their partnership, to achieve these dialogic timings.[51]

Unlike the hierarchical precision of rhythms enforced within the ideology of ballet, the dancers' testimonies taught me that *Duo*'s entrainment is pliant and filled with the liveness of indeterminacy. It emerges ecologically, with the audience and with (rather than to) the music. Rather than being perfectly in-sync, what was important for the dancers was what was "done with synchronicity."[52] Attempting to dance only with identical tempo and rhythm to one's partner would remove the elastic temporal integrity and delight of dancing *Duo*. Instead, the partners engaged holistically: challenging and pushing one another, enjoying moments of lilt and surprise.[53]

Particularly in *DUO2015*, the dancers' interpretation allows for considerable liberty. Not only are there more passages of improvisation, but both the phrasing and the position of the dancers on stage can be adapted spontaneously during performance—leading to subtle variations of the choreography in which the performers may accelerate through a passage, skip a beat, make a variation upon a movement, pause suddenly or change their facing. This is done in order to surprise the other, knowing that the surprises will ideally elicit a reaction and enliven the play. The tools the dancers use for this are similar to those of jazz musicians: "'to push,' 'to cook,' 'to lock up' or 'interlock,'

48 Anthropologist Marilyn Strathern observes, echoing my remarks on *Duo*, that in some cultures relations are felt as connection in the polarity of connecting/linking/merging as well as splitting/separating/dividing, see Strathern, "Kinship as a Relation," in particular pp. 47–48.

49 Riley Watts, interview with the author and Bettina Bläsing on January 14, 2014. See also Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*," p. 8.

50 Gjoka, "Workshop DUO2015."

51 Fieldwork observation, *DUO2015* Workshop in Bologna, October 23–27, 2017.

52 Riley Watts, email to the author, May 9, 2013.

53 Mark Doffman and Charles Keil have also noted the importance of imperfections for jazz musicians. Keil calls them "participatory discrepancies," the millisecond differences in time between attack and release: See Keil, "Defining 'Groove'," p. 3. Doffman also reports of "anecdotal experiences of jazz musicians who often speak of a certain elasticity in the timing between players for the music to work." Doffman, *Feeling the Groove*, p. 64. As described previously, elasticity is central to Manning's understanding of relational movement: "The in and of movement folds. Elastic, we feel the becoming-form of movement's shape. In the amodal tactility of elasticity, force is stored and then released. Elasticity acts on the movement." Manning, *Relationscapes*, p. 34; see the prior discussion in section 7.2.

'to take it higher,' 'to get down,' 'to funk it up,' 'to get down on it.'"[54] By comparison, the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo* involves far less funk and much more sustaining of alignment through "spidey" sensing: intuiting, supporting, observing and listening. The dancers remembered: "I'm there for you," "I hear you," "I will wait for you," "I see you," "I feel you," "I'm with you," "I change it with you," "I answer you."[55] In both cases, the dancers engage relationally with the virtual potential to co-create—perceiving micro-variations and nuances.

Tuning to the collaborative, what Rudi Laermans defines as "the always contextually embedded, at once partially realized and still virtual potential to co-create," entrainment became stretchy, consensual, and dialogic.[56] The dancers in *Duo* understand that they could never be perfectly identical. More important than achieving perfect unison is how the dancers choose to play or engage time, using dynamic musical strategies based on their collaborative duet relationship. Beyond just sharing the intention to synchronize, the dancers work toward the more complex shared goal of enjoying their interaction and communicating, based upon their shared knowledge of the choreography—as *play*.

The consent of togetherness is a series of agreements. It is a process of affirmative dialogue: a succession of cues and negotiations, embedded within a posture of listening. Rather than imagining entrainment (in *Duo*) as rhythmic synthesis, I view it as an ongoing synthesizing. The dancers' entrainment has a forward momentum and a thickening, to borrow metaphors from Richard Sennett.[57] The dancers' practice of sustaining consent is one in which the productive friction of difference is generative. Consent and listening must thereby be preserved through continual attunement. Processing entrainment in *Duo* shows a stability of synchronization through a flexible maintenance of attention and care. It is active, even when the dancers' practice enables it to feel light and even effortless; it is active because it requires listening.

Viewing any single performance of *Duo* might preclude perceiving how entraining both holds the piece together and allows it to vary through the choreography's becoming. This overview reveals elasticity, an agency of inventing around the margins of attunement. Ethics and novelty are at stake here: the ethics of making sure it is satisfying and playful for both dancers, and the novelty of letting iterations continually reimagine the old. The word that I would like to suggest for this is *virtuosity*: both in the sense of virtue and of excellence. Serial or chronological analysis of multiple performances could potentially grasp this virtuous choreographic multiplicity. It would show the structures holding the work together, as well as the variation. Dance scholar Kirsten Maar understands, as I do, that Forsythe's composition of entrainment: "seeks to develop not a formed but a dynamic multiplicity of (re)acting bodies."[58] From my study of entrainment in *Duo*, I have clarified how order does not come from the outside; rather structure

54 See Keil, "Defining 'Groove'," p. 2.

55 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

56 Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 387 (italics in the original).

57 Here I draw from Richard Sennett's illuminating discussion of dialectic and dialogic conversations, see Sennett, *Together*, pp. 18–20.

58 Maar, "Uncanny Connections," p. 257.

emerges dynamically through interaction and agonisms—through feeling entrainment burgeon—a feeling of relational betweenness.

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Having developed the thesis that *Duo* dancers' movement was constituted relationally, through practice richly explorative of one's individual (historicized, embodied, changing) self in mutual dialogue with one's partner, this chapter turned to the aspect of *entrainment*—the time- and rhythm-sensitive aspects of moving together. Entrainment can be provisionally understood as processes sustaining synchronization and rhythmical relation. Section 8.1 relied on ethnographic analysis to describe the dancers' accounts of entraining in the first movement of *Duo*: the movement *showerhead*, which was the focus of chapter 6. Section 8.2 positioned the discussion within the entrainment discourse. Section 8.3 outlined the conventions of entrainment in ballet through analysis of the example of *Swan Lake*. Turning back to *Duo*, section 8.4 analyzed the forms of entrainment manifested in *Duo*'s choreography, outlining how entrainment entwines skill, dispositions and subjectivity.

Chapter 9: Movement Profile of *Duo*

"You relate through a sequence, more than to a person." Videoconference interview with Roberta Mosca, April 27, 2018.

> ROBERTA: [*Duo*] is hard, but very beautiful. I have a great memory of this. And I love this music. […] What timings we are using … no, not what timings, but how it was built. It is extremely complex. When is one doing something in relation to the other? The steps are the same and it is choreographed for both, but we are not doing the same thing at the same time. Somehow, this produces a complexity. You don't know. You just can focus on what you are doing. […] It's all you have. 'Cause you're exhausted. It's complex 'cause you're kind of doing the same [as your partner] but not. There is a total coherence, but at the same time, you don't know how to figure out how … what's happening, really. This is very in much *Duo*, I think. I don't know if I experienced it in other pieces. This sensation of: you're together with someone, and you're so linked into something, but you're so overwhelmed by what you are doing that you just only pay attention to what you are doing, but what the other person is doing … it also linked to what you are doing, but you can't even see it (*pause*) except some little breaths of moments when it opens up. And then you're like "Ok, you are there." (*pause*) "And I'm here." Those moments are so important […] This is a concentrated, like, tunneling. You deal with space and relations different than in other pieces, like [Forsythe's] *Quintett* [1993]. The relationship is out of these exact timings, and (*pause*) the sequence. You relate through a sequence, more than to a person (*she laughs*). It's much more abstract. It's on the realm of the physics, somehow with gravity and timings and repetitions, and then back and forth, back and forth, so you lose the sense of where you are. Did you do this again, or not?

This rich testimony of being moved by *Duo* points to an intensity of moments and streams of interaction, as dancer Roberta Mosca processes the choreography and discusses her relationship to it. This is a relationship *with* and *through* dance. It is an affective relationship. The dancer notes her happiness in taking part in the hard work of making something beautiful.

During this interview with Mosca, we are speaking as she watches a video of herself dancing *Duo*. Because of her sensitivity to coming in and out of sync, she remembers *Duo* as a complex arrangement of steps—producing relations of timings, space and persons. I have considered these under the rubric of entrainment in the previous chapter. But pocketed in Mosca's memories are not only discussions of time, but recollections of the existential struggle she experienced in performance, fighting exhaustion and feeling the vacillation between straining and regaining energy. Her testimony, both in content and in its narrative form, describes dilating from long streams of individual focus to brilliant bursts of joint attention. She focuses on herself, but always resurfaces to a world where she knows where she and her partner are working together.

One important theme within Mosca's testimony gives direction to this chapter. The topic of "sequence" is frequent in this interview, pointing to something that I have hitherto refrained from discussing: the importance of the *order* of the movements. The sequence of *Duo*—that is, the series of movements in time—according to Mosca, enables relation and gives the choreography a body. At another point in this conversation, Mosca refers to *Duo*'s "anatomy of sequence," which I understand as a knowledge of *where* things are located and *how* they fit together to form a whole. Common knowledge of this anatomy (shared with her partner) is what makes relation possible, as Mosca lives through the physical reality of gravity, body and balance. In this section, I will consider the sequence of *Duo* in greater detail to understand what this stringing along and between movement does and is comprised of—giving it terms and noting its potential.

Gaining insight into the dancers' experience of *Duo*, as I have attempted in the previous chapters, has reconstructed an array of activities and concepts involved in dancers' movement practices. It has shown how the dancers' movement skills accumulate collectively, through shared practice and investment in their project. I wished to know how *Duo*'s movement came about and explain the key features through detailed review of seminal movements, such as *showerhead*. Yet I also aimed to describe the piece's particular movement style and aesthetic, and how this had been arranged in a compositional structure (specifically, the sequence). The very nature of *Duo* made writing about it particularly difficult: How was I to specify this, when the dancers themselves admitted that the choreography was in-process and changing? Was this a choreography progressing from the first version? Or was it more open, and complex in its multiplicity?

This chapter provides two proposals for consideration of these issues: The first part (9.1) provides a catalog of movement principles found in *Duo*—the sort of list I hope might prove useful for dance educators developing a practice-based *Duo* curriculum. The second (9.2), titled *Charting the History of Duo*, presents graphics that visualize change in *Duo* longitudinally, continuing in the vein of Forsythe's digital projects. After observing the potential of *Duo* as a reserve of renewable ideas and inspiration, I concur with Brian Massumi: "Reality is not fundamentally objective. Before and after it becomes an object, it is an inexhaustible reserve of surprise. The real is the snowballing *process* that makes a certainty of *change*."[1] To find out about this "snowballing," I reconstructed *Duo*'s anatomy, attempting to find out about the momentum that keeps the force of choreography alive—like a body itself.

1 Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual*, p. 214.

9.1 Core Movement Values

Many dancers have asked me how this research around *Duo* could impact the teaching of dance practice. Responding to this concern, this section offers an overview of the movement principles that describe the movement style and choreography of *Duo* generally, providing a *Duo* curriculum. Developed after dance scholar Cynthia Novack's synopsis of the "core movement values" of the dance form contact improvisation,[2] the profile has been formulated by bringing the lens of Laban Movement Analysis into my ethnographic fieldwork and study of video sources. In doing this, I blend first-person and third-person perspectives of movement—that is, the experience of dancing and the experience of watching the dance—as is common with a Laban approach. Uncommonly, I foreground properties of moving *together*, showing how dynamics are cooperated upon. My emphasis on *Duo*'s shared and common attention to dynamics suggests how a Laban approach, which typically emerges through attention to the individual body, has the potential to be extended to look at co-movement.[3]

The core movement values of the *Duo* project can be categorized as follows:

Relational Movement: In *Duo*'s relational movement, the movement emerges contingently through mutual attunement of the dancers to one another, the context of performing, the audience and the ambient musical score. Connection is forged through practice. This involves listening to one's partner while dancing—neither dominating nor following passively—retaining at all times an awareness of the other. The connectivity between people, through mobile bodies, is an active component of *Duo's* movement, as well as the source of variation within the choreography.

Shared Intentionality: *Duo* can be described as an instance of "shared intentionality," that is, when two people share experience of moving and breathing together, while *knowing* that they are doing this.[4] The dancers describe the movement as a common "language"

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2 Cynthia Novack takes this term from the movement analyst Billie Frances Lepczyk. See Novack, *Sharing the Dance*, p. 115. Contact improvisation is an international dance practice of improvisation that is practiced predominantly in pairs, in contexts outside of performance, i.e., not as a stage art. The form emerged through experimentation by American dancers in the late 1960s and early 70s, and was named in 1972 by Steve Paxton. Cf. Novack, *Sharing the Dance*, pp. 114–49.

3 Laban Movement Analysis is an analytic frame based upon the work of Rudolf von Laban (1879–1958). I draw predominantly from Laban's study of dynamics, known as *Eukinetics* and *Effort*. This approach to studying motion regards the emphasis the mover lays upon four factors, which blend mental and physical intention: weight, space, time and flow. An additional regard is shape, or the architecture of the body. In my approach, I reconsider the single-body effort of an individual mover, which is the basis of the Laban System (i.e., one person's attitude toward the motion factors) to consider the joint efforts that emerge in *Duo*. For further background on Dance Dynamics and the interrelation of these with Laban's notation and *Choreutics*, see Tomic-Vajagic, *The Dancer's Contribution*, pp. 65–73; see also the textbook Maletic, *Dance Dynamics*.

4 American Psychologist Michael Tomasello has described shared intentionality as a form of collaboration in which humans share goals, plans and knowledge to complete something together. This involves sharing of psychological states, affects and experience, and is different from the

between them, enabling them to stay in dialogue.[5] They rely on their shared histories of cultivated movement intention: involving joint practice; shared movement concepts, images and names; and cultivated sensation of their bodies, other bodies and movement.

Common Sequence: The movement of *Duo* follows a choreographic sequence that has been handed down from pair to pair. The partners practice this succession of movement until they can remember it easily. The structure involves phrases of unison movement, deftly synchronized, as well as solos and segments where the dancers perform different actions. Repetitions and variations of movement within the structure create loops, in which the dancers must pay attention in order not to get lost. Part of the skill-building and musicality of *Duo* comes through sharing the feel for these comings and goings of synchrony and assisting one another through the loops.

Improvisation: The dancers' practice of improvisation within *Duo* has changed over its history. In the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo* there was less improvisation. Only one section of the choreography involved an improvisation task: the dancers lay on the floor and intermittently slid their limbs into transpositions of standing movements from elsewhere in the choreographic sequence (see Fig. 10). In *DUO2015* this floor section has been cut. Yet overall there is much more task-based improvisation and dancers' cooperative adaptation—such as marking, referencing and phrasing the sequence.[6]

Breathing-Movement: *Duo* dancers share an implicit practice of audibly breathing together with the movement. This is done for the purpose of sensing the movement internally and progressing simultaneously through the sequence. The dancers use explicit breath cues to guide their timings. Forsythe names these acoustic aspects of the composition *Duo*'s "breath score."[7]

Balletic Tendencies: The movement constituting *Duo* is closely related to ballet steps and the general proclivities and aptitudes of ballet-trained bodies—such as the vertical alignment of the spine, turnout, the ability to shift weight seamlessly, the maintenance of balance, the skill to move lightly, extending the limbs with balanced tensegrity[8] and cross-lateral connection. In particular, the practice of *épaulement* gives *Duo*'s movement distinct torsional properties. The degree of turnout and leg work in *Duo* is one aspect

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chance occurrences of synchrony because the participants are *aware* of their sharing of plans. See Tomasello and Carpenter, "Shared Intentionality"; Tomasello, "Joint Attention as Social Cognition."

5 Dancer Brigel Gjoka specifies, a "language in permanent change and development." Brigel Gjoka, interview with the author in Dresden, March 6, 2016.

6 For greater elaboration on the different modes of improvisation longitudinally in *Duo* sketched here, see section 9.2.3 Counterpoint Model.

7 William Forsythe, phone interview with the author, January 30, 2019. Cf. Vass-Rhee, *Audio Visual Stress*, pp. 240–44.

8 Tensegrity, a term from Buckminster Fuller, is a structural property of systems in which tensions distribute sheering force throughout, making them resilient.

that has changed over the course of its history; the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo* stresses turnout and legwork more than does *DUO2015*.

Figures 21-28. Duo *rehearsal with Brigel Gjoka (black training clothes) and Riley Watts (blue and yellow training clothes) in 2013.*

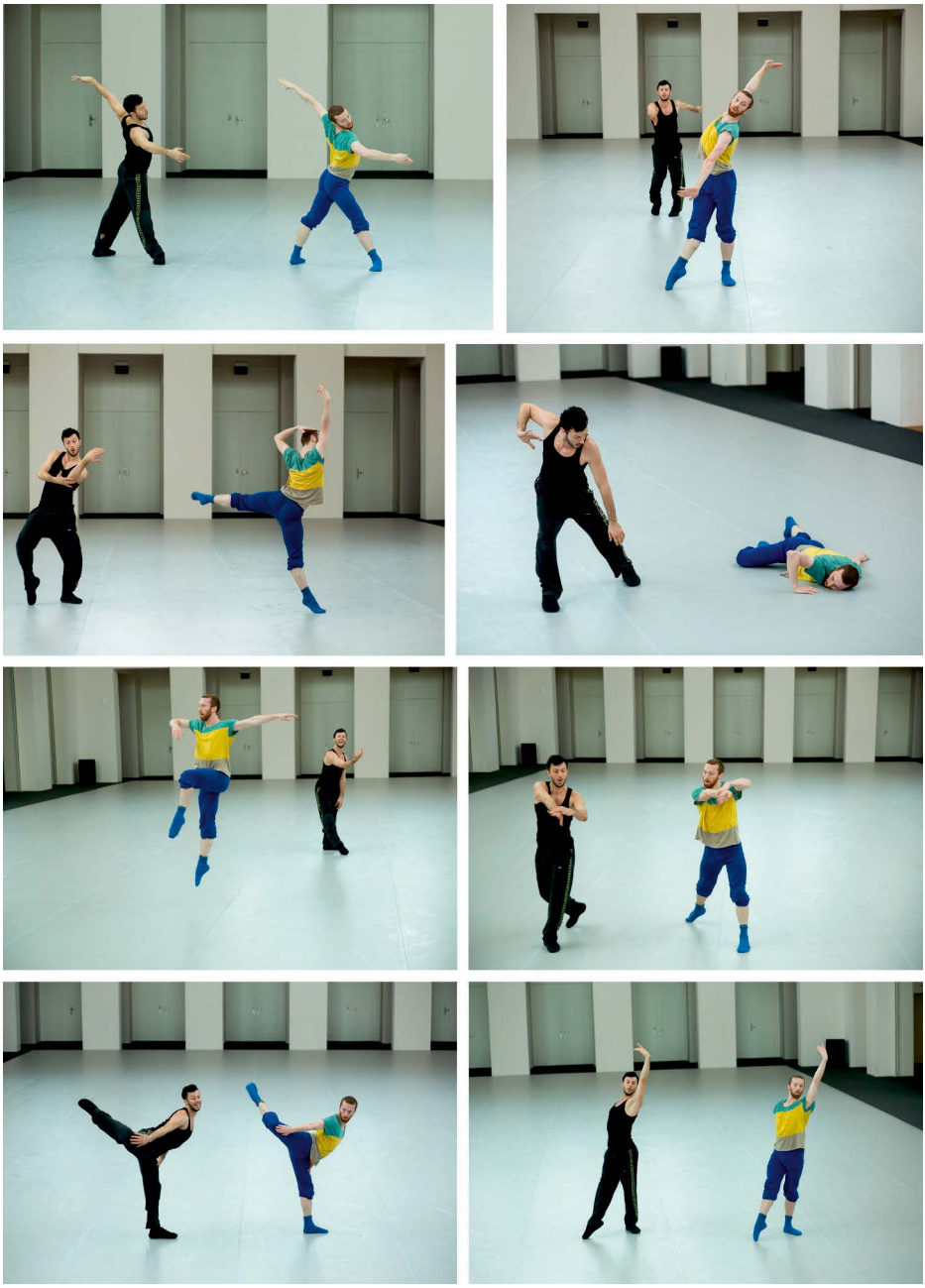

Photo © Dominik Mentzos.

Sharing Space: The movement of *Duo* is rich in its exploration of the full range of space within each dancer's reach (see Figs. 21–28), termed by Laban the "kinesphere."[9] The dancers perform frequently side-by-side, shifting between facing toward and away from the audience. The proxemics of their nearness are sensed but not referenced; the dancers rarely make gestures that reach toward one another. Limbs activate complex relations towards multiple directions, instead of moving with simple gestures that are confined to one direction. Episodes of low-level movement on the floor are part of the introduction of the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo* (see Fig. 10) and solo elements of *DUO2015* (see Fig. 20).

Cross-Lateral Connectivity: The movement of *Duo* explores "cross-lateral connectivity"; that is, coordination between opposite sides of the body. Peggy Hackney defines this as "a sensation of connection along a diagonal pathway through the body's core between the body's four quadrants."[10] These contralateral chains often involve rotation as the dancers stretch and reach, following of arcs and curves within the body, in dialogue with pushing and pulling motion out of the floor. Cross-lateral connectivity brings the upper and lower body into an interplay, from fingertips to toes. Forsythe achieves this by coaching the dancers to articulate the feet and hands simultaneously.

Sharing Shape: Shapes of the body in *Duo* are dynamic, reaching and expressive, not angular and bound; the dancers' arms and legs articulate curves and lines. The dancers' active sense of proprioception enables them to know and sense the shapes through which they pass.[11] They perceive the shape of their bodies both individually and together, at times as an "echo" of their partner (see Figs. 6–9).[12]

Complex Coordination: The complexity of *Duo*'s movement is designed by: (*a*) amplified range of motion of the hips and shoulders, (*b*) usage of torsions and spirals, (*c*) spreading motion throughout the kinesphere, not just easy-to-reach places, (*d*) cultivating multiple rhythmic layers. As opposed to simple actions—such as isolations of one body part or the body following its own momentum around the center of mass—the complex movements of *Duo* often involve sending the hips in the opposite directions from the limbs, making biomechanics that appear complexly jointed.

Polyvalence and polyrhythm: As in dances of the African diaspora, in *Duo* there are multiple centers of the body (polycentrism), moving together rhythmically (polyrhythm).[13] In *Duo* these do not produce jointed, angular articulations but complex curvilinear chains.

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9 See Laban, *The Language of Movement*, p. 10; Tomic-Vajagic, *The Dancer's Contribution*, pp. 71–73.

10 Peggy Hackney uses this term to emphasize the connection, as opposed to opposition, i.e., contralateral. Movements can be contralateral without investigating connectivity. See Hackney, *Making Connections*, pp. 194–95. The prevalence of cross-lateral connectivity in Forsythe's oeuvre is a key signature of his style as well as ballet technique; it is less present in contact improvisation and other styles of contemporary dance, such as *Gaga* technique.

11 On proprioception see Section 6.2.2, footnote 27.

12 Jill Johnson, studio session dancing in Boston, December 6, 2016.

13 See Asante, *African Dance*, pp. 212–19.

Forsythe has described this generally in his movement style as "a many timed body as opposed to a shaped body."[14] Such interrelations of the body are a form of intra-entrainment: the rhythmical interaction and coordination between parts.[15] These rhythms are co-produced between pairs, independently of the musical score.

Sharing Time/Mutual Entrainment: The dancers' attention to aligning their movement and sound, when moving synchronously but also when performing different movements in counterpoint, makes *Duo* an example of mutual entrainment: that is, a process of interaction in which rhythms, in motion and sound production, are mutually attended to by partners. The partners share time in a nonhierarchical way without a leader. Together they push and play with time. The dancers strive to generate musical and novel timings as they reiterate the movement sequence.

Dynamic Equilibrium: Rather than posing or balancing in fixed positions (static equilibrium), *Duo* dancers delicately negotiate movement equilibrium dynamically and together. In *Duo*, the dancers perceive the shift and sound of *their* weight and *their* balance, and together search for lightness and sustainability, rather than heaviness, exhibitions of strength or explosive use of force. This is frequently combined with listening, as the sound of their bodies touching the floor and their breath reflect their effort towards moving their mass.

Sharing Flow: *Duo* dancers experience flow—the feeling of the "progression" or "continuity" of movement—most strongly when they perform unison movements at the same time, especially when they move through the space together.[16]

Shifting Dynamics: *Duo* is composed of scenes that foreground different dynamics. *DUO2015* has a "denser structure" than the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo*, with greater range in dynamics and phrasing.[17] Dancers of *Duo* participate in the modulations together, motivating each other for energetic passages.

Active Cooperative Phrasing: The movement of *Duo* has lulls, stops, resets, accelerations and decelerations that are produced by the dancers' attention to interpretation of the choreographic sequence.[18] They practice modulating their tempo and energetic level. This highly musical phrasing follows the logic of the couple's breathing-movement more than Willems' music. The phrasing and tempo are shaped and motivated by Forsythe's

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14 Forsythe, "Observing Motion," p. 24.

15 Clayton, "What is Entrainment?," p. 51.

16 Maletic, *Dance Dynamics*, p. 20. Here, I mean flow in Laban's sense, not like Csikszentmihalyi as "the feeling when things were going well as an almost automatic, effortless, yet highly focused state of consciousness." See Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity*, p. 110.

17 William Forsythe, phone interview with the author, January 30, 2019.

18 I use the term phrasing in a similar way to Maletic as "the manner of execution or the way in which energy is distributed in the execution of a movement or a series of movements." See Maletic, *Dance Dynamics*, p. 57.

coaching; he wishes for the choreography to remain interesting and not feel "lugubrious."[19] The range of phrasing, and especially the frequency of impacts, accents and sudden movements, has increased between 1996 and the present; it is a source of the distinct differences between *Duo* versions.

Sensorial Attunement: The dancers' practice of *Duo* activates a rich sensorium as they experience their bodily motion in relation to their partner and the environment. In doing so, they perceive across many modes: peripheral and direct vision, sound location and timbre, the body's orientation in relation to gravity, proprioception (sensing the location of one's limbs in space), the intensity of skin sensation and stretch, the visceral sense of internal organs, the sensation of breath, the temperature of the room, the warmth and direction of theatrical light, the sensation of one's clothes and the contact with the floor.

Listening Expressions: The dancers' facial expressions are typically one of pleasant concentration while conducting inner listening to their bodies and outer listening to the sounds in the space (see Figs. 21–28). The dancers do not look at or address the audience until the very last motion of the piece when they end *en face*—that is, directly facing the audience. The degree to which the dancers look directly at one another changes over the course of *Duo*'s history—with much more direct visual exchange, even expressions of joy and smiling, since 2013.

9.2 Charting the History of *Duo*

"I gave that cue," explained dancer Jill Johnson while reviewing an archival video of herself dancing the premiere of *Duo*.[20] Though the digitized video was grainy, Johnson could still decipher the pixelated moves of herself and her partner. Based on interview encounters like these in which I reviewed performances with the dancers, in this section I describe my endeavor to 'chart' the movement of *Duo*—graphically producing understanding in collaboration with a team of programming artists.[21] Working in an interdisciplinary framework between dance studies and creative coding, we developed a digital archive of the *Duo* dancers' and my own observations about their performances, systematized this vocabulary, and then mined these annotations through computer code, visualizing the outcomes. This was a highly constructed and cooperative practice of knowledge production, highlighting the multiple narratives and views of the *Duo* project. Here I delve into my research basis and findings; the important particulars of the innovative technical methodology and coding cooperation are highlighted elsewhere.[22]

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19 William Forsythe, phone interview with the author, January 30, 2019.

20 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, June 28, 2018. Archival video of *Duo*'s premiere in the Ballett Frankfurt, January 20, 1996.

21 Florian Jenett, Mark Coniglio and Monika Hager.

22 See Waterhouse et al., "'I Gave That Cue.'"

The choreographic movement analysis presented in this chapter—though unusual in its digital mediation—builds theoretically and methodologically upon the precedent case study examining Forsythe's piece *One Flat Thing, reproduced* (2000). This short work often toured on the same program as *Duo,* serving as the finale. Forsythe likened the elaborate composition to "baroque machinery."[23] Wearing practice clothes of diverse colors, a group of dancers maneuver dangerously and deftly: swarming like bees upon a rectangular grid of 16 shiny metal tables. The choreography organizes movement within this highly structured space. Over time, the patterns accumulate: approximately two dozen movement themes and motifs—ordered roughly from simple to complex—before a development section and a high-pitched conclusion. The performers manifest these complex constellations of interaction by cueing and aligning with one another. They swerve around sharp corners, heave one another over the gleaming table surfaces and duck through the shadow underneath—regulating their timings independently of Thom Willems' industrial sound score of crashes and whistles. The dancers, according to Rosyln Sulcas, perform "an almost mathematical construction of complexity."[24] Dancing this work is a carnal and relational thrill, providing some of my strongest memories of teamwork in The Forsythe Company.

Duo is of course a more intimate and subdued example of relational movement, yet its choreographic expression of *counterpoint* has much in common with this virtuosic table dance. While *One Flat Thing, reproduced* is outstanding in its complexity, the *Duo* project is exemplary because of its nuance. Forsythe chose *One Flat Thing, reproduced* as the keystone of his second medial research project in part because the organizational complexity made the constructive principles elusive—even after multiple viewings. The piece thus warranted and rewarded close study, making order emerge from disorder. The website *Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced* (2009) (hereafter, *Synchronous Objects*) presents animations that make these organizational principles legible, rendering graphics upon a high definition film of the piece made by Thierry De Mey in 2005 (see Fig. 29).[25] The website presents a multifaceted performance archive in which many people's interpretations are merged and reflected upon: documenting observations *and* observation processes. The website also included a *counterpoint tool* in addition to further graphical visualizations of the data, exploring Forsythe's generative questions: "What else might this dance look like?" and "What else, besides the body, might physical thinking look like?"[26] As a member of the dancer cast and the project team, this research precipitated my investigation of the archival videos of *Duo*: seeding

23 Forsythe, unpublished interview with Thierry De Mey in Frankfurt, April 13, 2006. Transcribed by the author as part of the research for *Synchronous Objects*.

24 Sulcas, "Watching the Ballett Frankfurt, 1988–2009," p. 15.

25 The resulting website is available online, see https://synchronousobjects.osu.edu/. Since 2021 however the Flash based content is no longer operational. The project was developed at The Ohio State University. See Huschka, "Mediale Transformationen Choreographischen Wissens"; Groves et al., "Talking About Scores"; Shaw, "Synchronous Objects, Choreographic Objects, and the Translation of Dancing Ideas"; Manning, *Always More Than One,* pp. 99–123.

26 Shaw, "Synchronous Objects"; "Synchronous Objects, Choreographic Objects, and the Translation of Dancing Ideas," p. 208; see also Manning, *Always More Than One*, pp. 99–110.

how I could imagine linking dancer interviews and analytic video study of performance to come to an understanding of choreographic structure.[27]

Figure 29. Screenshot of the website Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced.

The website *Synchronous Objects* models *counterpoint* in *One Flat Thing, reproduced* as three interlocking systems: movement material, cues and alignments. Through this research collaboration, Forsythe developed his understanding of counterpoint, from the provisional definition of "kinds of alignments in time," to "a field of action in which the intermittent and irregular coincidence of attributes between organizational elements produces an ordered interplay."[28] By further exploring how counterpoint manifests in the case study of *Duo*, and how this changes longitudinally, I will show the importance of creative components—highlighting the role of practice and process.

Synchronous Objects was pioneering in many ways—in particular regarding how the project team integrated interview methods with procedures of digital design and computational analysis. The empiricism that I embraced to chart the history of *Duo* drew on the approach of *Synchronous Objects* in deriving "data" from a dance: defining observable features in the choreography, which were systematically catalogued and then studied through new means of linking and comparing these instances in the dance.[29] As in "mixed methods" research, I espoused this pursuit as a process of triangulation,

27 As a dancer consultant for the project *Synchronous Objects*, I made ethnographic field notes as I rehearsed and performed the piece, transcribed interviews with Forsythe and the dancers and helped the team to brainstorm how to visualize counterpoint. I also recorded interviews with the dancers about their roles, as they watched the video footage, providing the content that the animators then encoded and animated.

28 William Forsythe cited in Sulcas, "Watching the Ballett Frankfurt, 1988–2009," p. 15; Forsythe and Shaw, "Introduction: The Dance." On *counterpoint*, see section 1.1.2 Choreography, Dance and Counterpoint.

29 See Shaw, "Introduction: The Data"; see also Palazzi, "Introduction: The Objects."

with qualitative and quantitative methods on equal terms.[30] Rather than focusing on Forsythe's observations, I took my own and those of the dancers as seminal.

My aim was to study the structure and change in *Duo* longitudinally by systematically making annotations—what I could observe, based upon my interviews with the dancers, about what the dancers *do in practice*. From this practice-view of what the dancers are doing in performance, as well as their testimony about what else they could have done, or how the performance could have been different, I began to decipher this choreographic logic—suggesting the importance of entrainment within the choreography and the manner in which dancer interpretation leads to variation.

9.2.1 Hypotheses and Questions

To study change and structure in *Duo* longitudinally, I focused on three clusters of questions and hypotheses, centering on the topics of the different *versions* of *Duo*, the *variability* of the work, and the role of *entrainment* therein.

Versions: Based upon my fieldwork with the dancers and preliminary study of the archival videos of performances, I had observed two primary choreographic structures of *Duo*—that is, the Ballett Frankfurt version, performed from 1996 to 2004, and the *DUO2015* version since 2015—with an intermediary version during the reconstruction in 2013. Through video annotation, I aimed to become more precise about how these versions related—namely, the extent to which they shared common movement, approaches to interpretation, and so on.

Variability: My fieldwork suggested that while *Duo* was variable, aspects endured that constituted the choreography specifically. I predicted that performances would change or adapt as new dancers entered and partnerships shifted. I also expected that the interpretive practice might shift between Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company. It seemed that the process of *Duo* developing over time was not a linear evolution—but one vacillating with the dancers and touring contexts of production. Through systematic consideration of video records, I hoped to refine these observations.

Entrainment: A third hypothesis was that modes of entrainment featured strongly in *Duo*'s composition. This is because mutual entrainment—or the sustained attunement to synchronize or rhythmically relate motion and sound production through each other in the setting of dancing—permeated the dancers' testimony of their practice. I predicted that the following matrix of entrainment modes would apply to *Duo*: unison, turn-taking, concurrent motion, solos and breaks. I was uncertain what proportions these modes would take and the extent to which they would vary longitudinally. I aimed to use video annotation to explore this further.

30 See Johnson et al., "Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research."

9.2.2 Procedures

To address these hypotheses, a cross section of archival videos of *key performances* of *Duo* were analyzed, spanning the history of the piece longitudinally (from 1996, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2013, 2015 and 2016).[31] These videos were annotated by myself according to a system of observable properties defined in the following section. Different than a choreographic notation that inscribes the movement of the dancers for the purpose of analysis and preservation, I use the term *annotation* to designate inscription of my observations of select aspects of *Duo*'s choreographic structure, as in the secondary annotations of a primary text.[32] My annotations focused on three categories of markings: (1) modes of entrainment, (2) movement material and (3) transitions.

Each key performance was annotated completely using encodings of the terminology (see Appendix J). The data was recorded in a spreadsheet and transferred to a Piecemaker 2 server, allowing for filtering, sorting and visualization (see Fig. 30).[33] To improve accuracy, approximately fifty troublesome data points were error checked with the dancers—through discussions about them. Our work, analyzing and improving this data, is available online.[34]

9.2.3 Counterpoint Model

Modes of Entrainment

Dance scholar Roslyn Sulcas has observed: "Alignment is in fact a fundamental principle of Forsythe's work; it is one of the ways that complex—even chaotic—activities on stage are rendered subtly comprehensible." She defines alignments, after Forsythe, as "moments when the dancers' movements echo one another in shape, direction, or dynamic."[35]

Agreeing with the emphasis laid by Sulcas, in my research I explored a model of counterpoint (for *Duo*) foregrounding alignment based on *entrainment modes*. I observed that not only is movement aligned when dancing *Duo*, but there are also rhythmic structuring of movement-breaks: durations of inertia, holding a pose or when the dancers briefly exit the stage. Importantly, the dancer might not rest in the sense of recuperate, as some still-acts may be strenuous to hold.[36] In my model, I explored counterpoint as the general set of permutations of two dancers performing movement and movement-

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31 See the Introduction, in the section Key Performances, for explanation of the criteria of the selection process. See also Appendix F, section 2. A cross section method was used, because study of the entire video record was too labor intensive. Complete annotation of the choreography from start to finish was desired and not analysis of excerpts. The quality of the data relied on my expertise as a Forsythe dancer, and could not be automated or distributed to assistants.

32 On dance notation, see the informative introduction: Guest, *Labanotation*, pp. 1–4. Reflecting on annotation process, see Rittershaus et al., "Recording *Effect*."

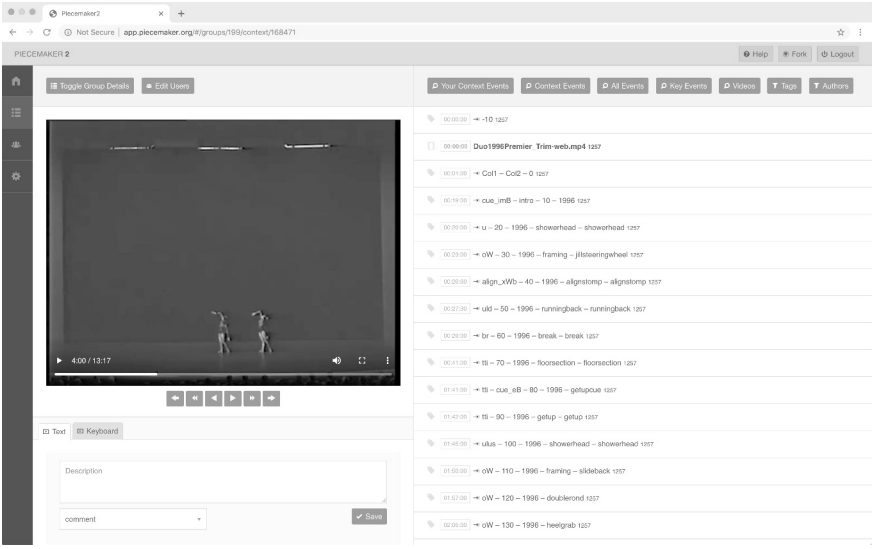
33 On these software developments, see Waterhouse, "'I Gave That Cue.'"

34 See https://duo.motionbank.org/.

35 Sulcas, "Watching the Ballett Frankfurt, 1988–2009," p. 15.

36 Throughout, I use the term movement and motion interchangeably.

Figure 30. Screenshot of the Piecemaker 2 archive of Duo *annotations, showing the 1996 key performance and the encoded markings.*



breaks in relation to one another at the same time. These permutations are modes of entrainment, spanning:

Unison: Dancers performing the same movement synchronously.

Concurrent motion: Dancers performing different or related movement at the same time, while attuning to one another's rhythms.[37]

Solo: One dancer moves, while the other takes a movement-break or frames the foregrounded mover.

Break: Both dancers perform a movement-break.

Intermittent motion/turn-taking: The dancers perform intermittent movement—alternating movement and rest, taking-turns. These movements may be identical, related or different.

Other: A mode not fitting the above categories.[38]

For the purpose of assessing the validity of how well these categories apply to *Duo*, the additional category named *other* was included. This enabled marking instances of the choreography that did not fall into the categories named above.

37 Forsythe and the dancers call this *counterpoint*.

38 Rhythms superimposed by chance, without the dancers' interaction, would have been in this category. This is a feature of Forsythe's practice of counterpoint more generally, but as I shall show, not pertinent for *Duo*.

Movement Material

The choreographic structure of *Duo* involves a prescribed sequence of interactions, including passages of structured improvisation. To understand the longitudinal change of this sequence, the movement material was parsed into small units (between 1–10 seconds) and then annotated.[39] The analysis yielded 116 movement 'building blocks' in the first 1996 key performance. The subsequent key performances were then annotated chronologically, noting the changes to the existing building blocks and additional elements. This enabled tracking of the genesis of the original elements and the addition of new material chronologically.

The dancers' practical approach to interpreting the prescribed sequences in each performance was also annotated—subtleties of *how* they enacted the choreography. I named these categories of movement transformation. These features were discovered through studying the videos *with* the dancers.[40] Through this, the following subtypes of transformation were defined:

Set: A planned sequence of movements/steps that performers reproduce as accurately as possible in performance.

Modified: A sequence in which one movement/step is briefly altered, while preserving the sequence order—that is, a deliberate change made to adjust balance or one aspect of the movement form. These did not affect entrainment between partners and were usually made by one dancer. Some modifications were due to injury.

Adapted: A sequence in which many seconds of movements/steps are adjusted while preserving the sequence order—such as changing the movement facing, dynamic, scale, body parts, fragmentation, and so on. Apart from adaptation of solo material, these required interactive negotiation.

Improvised: Invention of movement (based upon a task) or an open improvisation inventing movement (without a task or a sequence referent).

Each building block was assessed according to the above scheme, individually for each dancer.

Transitions: Cues, Prompts, Alignments

Transitions between modes of entrainment are important parts of the choreographic structure of *Duo*. Metaphorically speaking, if you think of the choreography of *Duo* as composed from sections of fabric, then the modes of entrainment describe the different

39 For this purpose, it was not necessary to divide the sequence into singular movements—chunks or short phrases sufficed. Initially, I named the building blocks using a consistent labeling scheme that mixed the dancers' and my own terms (such as *goldfinger* and *umpadump*). In the end, this was replaced with numerical identifiers, to enable computational comparison of the elements.

40 For example, watching the key performance from 2015, dancer Riley Watts noted the flexibility of the choreography. Referencing one instance in the archival video, he noted: "Those were always, like playful moments that were improvised. We're just playing with where it comes from. Like expansions on the material." At another point, he cautioned: "We never transformed that." This indicated an Alignment that stayed more regular. Such statements proved insightful to the regularities of practice. Video elicitation with Riley Watts, January 11, 2017.

elastic weaves of the fabric, and the transitions form the seams between the different fabrics. Three forms of transitions were cataloged: *cues*, *prompts*, *Alignment* (short instances of Alignment I designate using the capitalized form of the word to distinguish this from the ongoing process of aligning via entrainment). One could also describe these transitions as choreographed modulations of the performers' intention and attention, on which the choreographic structure relies to take form.

Cue: This term is used by Forsythe and the dancers to describe timing signals: usually practiced strategies of communicating timing information in order to initiate moving together. Cues interweave practice, communication, action and ethics. Many, but not all cues are perceivable to a public. To discern these transitions, I relied heavily upon video elicitation with the *Duo* dancers.

Along with annotating when the cues took place, I noted their different mediums: audible breath, stomps, vocalized short phrases and movement itself. I also observed how they vary in their "leadingfollowing," specifically who attunes to whom, or whether the attunement is mutual or hierarchical.[41] In the annotation of cues in *Duo,* it was found that cues may be doubled or have more than one medium; for example, a cue that is both an inhale of breath and movement. It was also possible that two cues are given simultaneously, by both partners. The annotation system was flexible enough to encode these complex instances. Ambiguous cues were also marked, such as when a voice was heard giving a verbal cue, but the speaker could not be identified.

Prompt: This term was introduced to name instances when the dancers spoke to each other on stage. These exchanges, which were intended for one's partner and not the audience, were reminders of where one was (such as "new beginning," "first," "snakedress") and sometimes included supportive words (such as "Almost there!").[42] Prompts functioned in a similar way to cues but might be uttered in the midst of *doing* as opposed to a causal signal, as previously distinguished.

Alignment: This term is used by Forsythe and the dancers to describe particular instances of aligning. An Alignment is a specific transitionary instance of movement that helps the dancers to bind their time and transition entrainment modes: for example, when the *Duo* dancers are performing different movements and then arrive in the same pose, this is recognized as an Alignment. Forsythe and Shaw have described Alignments as "short instances of synchronization between dancers in which their actions share some, but not necessarily all, attributes" such as "analogous shapes, related timings, or corresponding directional flows."[43] In contrast to cues and prompts, which are typically audible communication, Alignments are movements or poses. To use a metaphor, they

41 Drawing on terminology from Erin Manning, see Lepecki, "From Partaking to Initiating," p. 34.

42 Citations of the dancers: Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, June 28, 2018. Riley Watts, videoconference interviews with the author, May 22, 2018. Allison Brown, videoconference interview with the author, May 8, 2018.

43 Forsythe and Shaw, "Introduction: The Dance."

function like joints in carpentry. The design is purposeful but also may take on an aesthetic quality (such as can be seen in the beauty of a dovetail joint). A 'good' Alignment, the dancers noted, was often surprising; when it was unexpected to the dancers, they believed it would also be surprising to the audience.[44]

Subcategories of Alignments were also cataloged, distinguishing their form and partner relation. Alignments took the form of taking on the same or related poses, performing the same or related movements, such as stopping or tapping the floor together or in call and response. Their partner relation varied: sometimes they were achieved together; other times one partner or the other would take lead. It was found that for certain tricky Alignments, pre-Alignments were built into the choreography—key information preceding an Alignment, used to synchronize the action. These pre-Alignments can be metaphorically understood as signposts. In *Duo*, pre-Alignments take the form of attention—listening to rhythms preceding the Alignment—to arrive in-sync.

9.2.4 Analysis

Two approaches were taken to analyze the annotation markings. First, employing a statistical method, the data was mined to compute the cumulative duration for each annotation category's markings and graph this information; for example, to answer: How much unison was there? or: How many cues? This also enabled study of the relative proportions, namely: What percentage of the performance was in unison? We gained understanding from this an overview of change and continuity (Tables 4 & 5 and Figs. 31 & 32).

The second approach looked chronologically at the dis/continuity of the annotations, taking a graphical approach. Given the expanse of information we were considering, the online interactive view generally proves more insightful that the limits of the page.[45] For this book, we have included two overviews of this material (Figs. 33 & 34). In these, each staff shows the movement building blocks (numbered dots) vertically, progressing from the beginning of the *Duo* (top) to the end (bottom); some of these components had annotations rich with sub-information, which are marked with double dots.[46] Horizontal lines were added to show continuity and change: rendering continuities (solid line), adjustments (dashed line), and omissions in the order of these elements visible. An adjustment was defined as when a movement element or transition was repeated with variation—such as a unison section being changed to concurrent motion, or a cue delivered in a new way. These markings of discontinuity were made using a computer algorithm, programmed to compare my annotations chronologically and thus come to a more precise state of assessment.

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44 Riley Watts, video elicitation, January 11, 2017.

45 See https://duo.motionbank.org/.

46 Note, the time scale is not preserved in this rendering (pertaining to the duration of the segment), just a sequential relation (order).

Table 4. Entrainment modes (percent) of Duo *key performances*

	1996	1997	2000	2003	2013	2015	2016
Unison	42.5	44.7	46.9	47.6	53.5	34.1	46.0
Concurrent	17.0	16.7	17.0	18.5	22.4	35.1	28.5
Turn taking	22.0	22.7	18.1	16.4	0.7	1.4	2.03
Solo	11.6	9.6	10.2	12.3	13.0	24.6	21.9
Break	5.2	4.6	5.39	3.4	6.1	0.4	0.6
Other	1.8	1.6	2.36	1.75	4.3	4.33	1.04

Table 5. Number of cues, Alignments and prompts of Duo *key performances*

	1996	1997	2000	2003	2013	2015	2016
Cues	12	15	12	13	19	5	15
Alignments	29	35	30	33	27	34	35
Prompts	1	0	0	1	3	4	1
Total	41	40	42	47	49	43	51

Figure 31. Graph showing relative proportion of entrainment modes in Duo *longitudinally.*

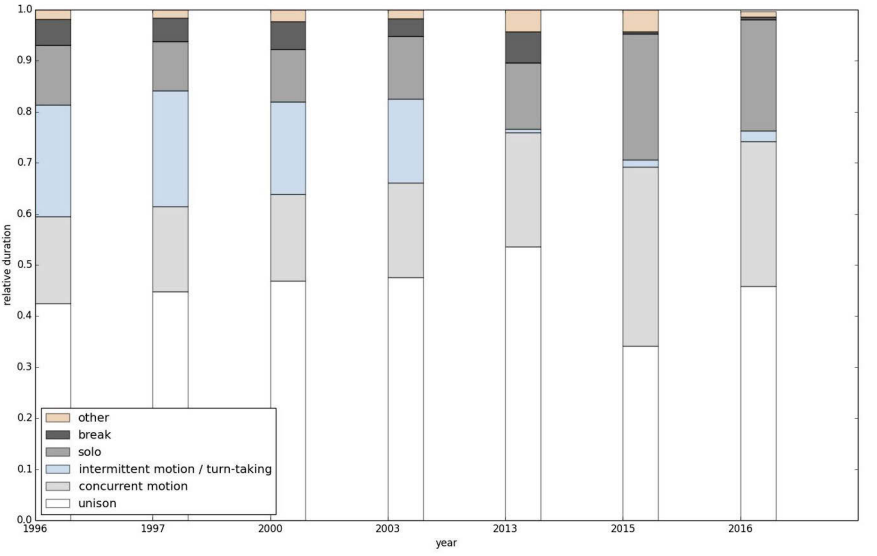
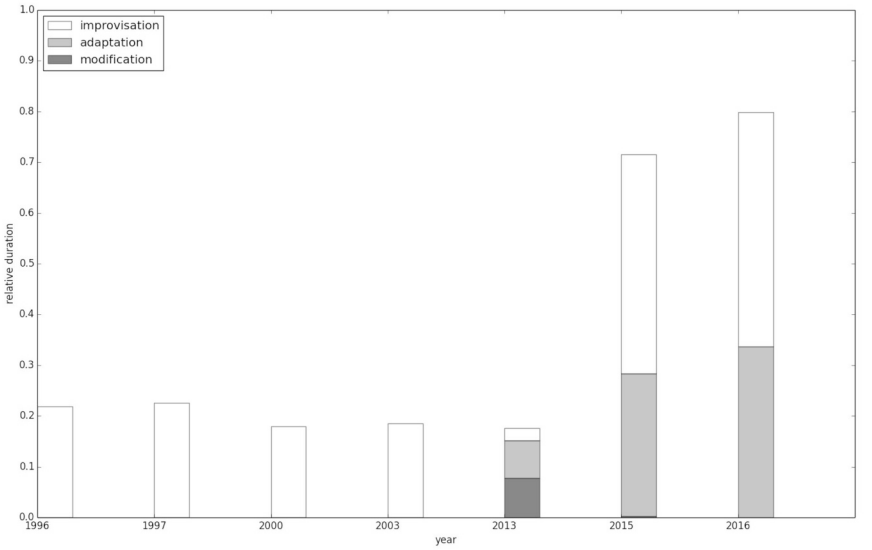


Figure 32. Graph showing duration of movement transformation in Duo *longitudinally.*



9.2.5 Conclusions

The statistical and graphical analysis of the annotations, as well as the process of making the annotations themselves, provides an unprecedented inspection of a choreography's longitudinal history, showing *Duo*'s vicissitudes of (dis)continuity. Returning to the clusters of questions and hypotheses regarding *Duo versions*, *variability* and *entrainment*, the following conclusions can be emphasized:

Versions: The analysis confirmed that despite some dancers' testimony to the contrary, I observed two predominant versions of *Duo*—the Ballett Frankfurt version (1996–2004) and the *DUO2015* version (2015–2016)—with the reconstruction in 2013 serving as an intermediary. Most dancers viewed these versions not as gendered styles but as different interpretations. In my view, they exhibited distinctions between the artistic practices of Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company; these are found to modulate with general shifts in Forsythe's work and contemporary dance aesthetics, as discussed below.

The dancers, depending on how and when they participated in *Duo*, had a different assessment of the project overall. Johnson—who was part of the original *Duo* pair and observed Watts/Gjoka performing in 2018—is particularly well positioned to make judgements. In her view:

> There aren't eras in this work. Only ongoing explorations that continually connect the infinite possibilities of the ideas within it. It's so clear that these experiences are all

> mapped onto each other, in concentric circles and networks of shared embodied ideas across time.[47]

Here Johnson models *Duo* not as a vector, but as a complex of ideas in networking, circular time. Supporting Johnson's view, one of the most surprising findings within my research was that there was more continuity than expected in *Duo*'s movement sequence. The annotation process, and in particular the data shown in Figures 33 & 34, revealed that throughout the different versions of the *Duo* project, the pairs still essentially referenced a commonly agreed upon sequence of interactions with their partner—one that has been passed down from pair to pair. Across its history, this makes *Duo* much more about negotiation and agreement upon a shared movement sequence than I had expected. In other words, an important aspect of the choreography itself is how the dyads *agree* to interpret unison sections and timing choices *together*. In performance, this is discernable in how pairs use signals to communicate and modulate their attunement. Though some strategies of signaling are passed on from pair to pair, these also vary pertaining to each pair's particular language of communication and practiced tactics.

Thus, a surprising finding was that, even though the choreography of *Duo* and *DUO2015* versions may—to outsiders—appear and sound different (with distinctive phrasing, emphasis on ballet technique, rhythm and style of breathing-movement), the dancers are in fact referring to much of the same, inherited unison movement sequence and Alignments. My ethnographic interviews also confirmed that the dancers share a great deal of common information about the movement—even with naming variation and increased explicit focus on sensation within The Forsythe Company. This shows that the *processing of choreography* by the partners (specifically, interpretation of what they have inherited) is a significant part of the development of the piece.

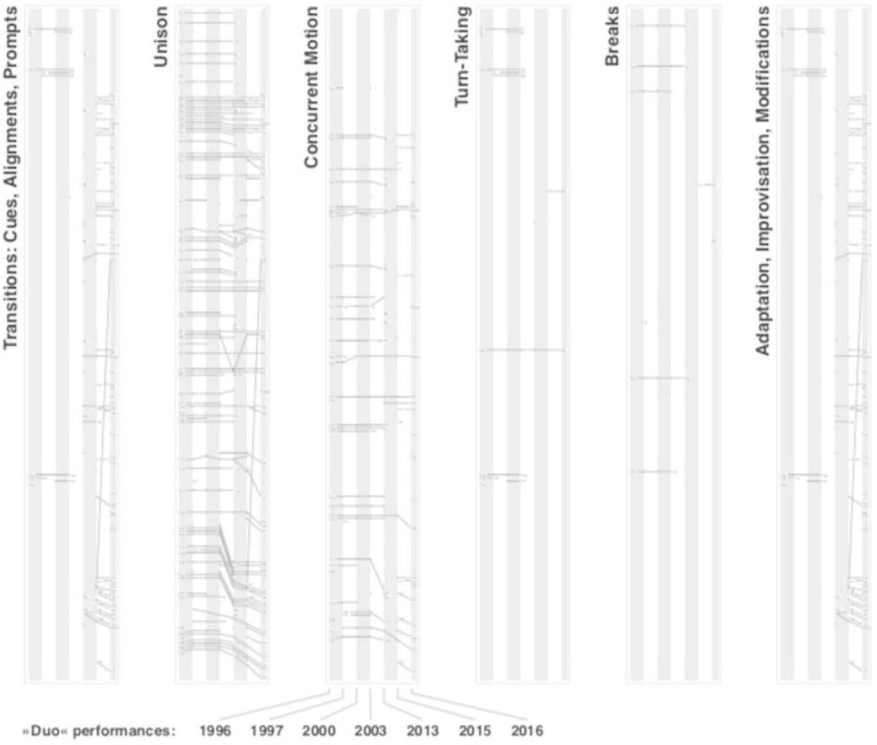
Variability. Change in *Duo* varied in degree and kind. The small changes within performance took place in part because of their 'liveness'; as *Duo* dancer Jill Johnson explained: how the structure will "play out on any given night is never the same."[48] This is because the dancers' bodies are always transforming; additionally, the audience contributes to the performance with their attention and micro-movements. Notably, the context of performance varies, leading to adaptation of the dancers' movement according to the various sizes of stages. The practice of entering into performance is never a perfect routine. In addition to all these elements, variability was also introduced because the dancers valued creativity within their practice of interpretation.

With regard to *Duo*'s variability, the dancers' changing practice of interpretation is particularly salient. The amount of flexible material (that is, modified, adapted and improvised) in *Duo* increased longitudinally: from approximately 20 percent, to almost 80 percent (see Fig. 32). In *DUO2015*, when the dancers referenced a sequence, there was interpretive freedom to adapt or develop the movement sequence—changing level, facing

47 Johnson, email to the author, September 12, 2021.

48 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, June 28, 2018.

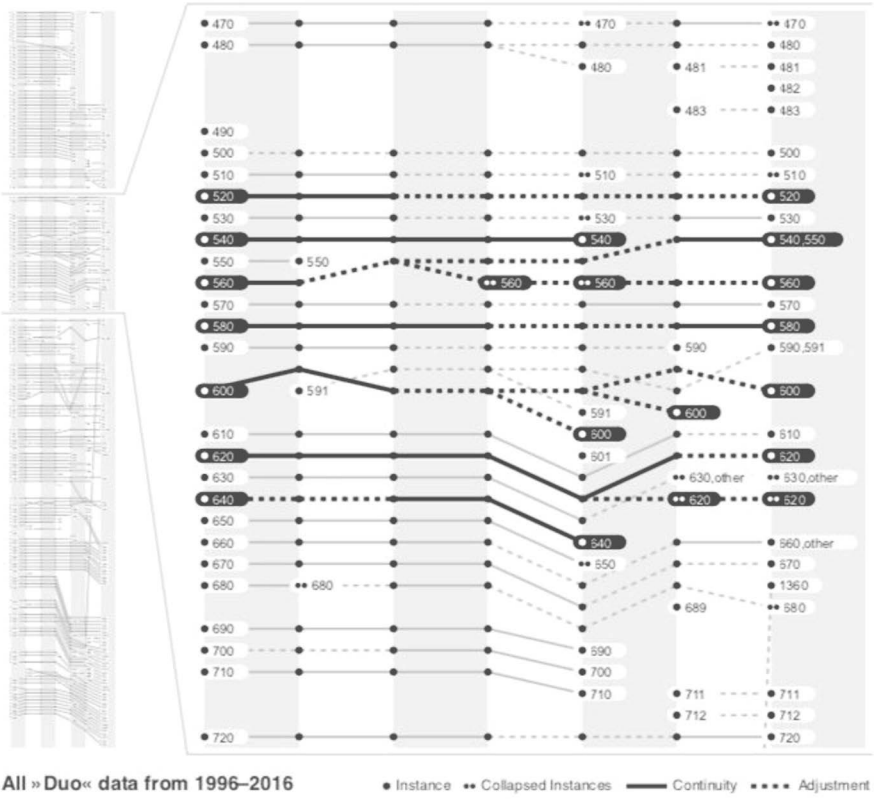
Figure 33. Overview of change and continuity in Duo *longitudinally.*



and dynamic. While the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo* had only one section of improvisation, in *DUO2015* there were more instances of task-based improvisation and also one open improvisation at the beginning of the piece. Generally, these findings are understood to reflect differences between approaches to choreography in Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company. In the latter, the dancers were less frequently performing set material and more often engaging in relational improvisation, involving real time composition of alignment. These modalities were different from the procedures of Ballett Frankfurt, which are archived in Forsythe's *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*.

Another aspect of change in *Duo* was, as one would expect, the choreographer's explicit structural revisions of the choreography. The proportions of entrainment modes are quite stable in the Ballett Frankfurt version (see Table 4; Fig. 31); they change in 2013, when Forsythe cuts the introductory section. They shift again in 2015, when Forsythe edits *Duo* for the touring program, *Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*. For *DUO2015*, a new introduction to the piece is made and many solos are added, lengthening the work. Dancers Watts and Gjoka performed the piece more frequently than any other dancers before them (in 52 cities internationally between April and December 2015), developing a fluency of partnering that enabled cues and transitions to become minimal (see Table 5). They also toured without Forsythe, allowing for the piece's emergence to follow

Figure 34. Duo *longitudinal data at a glance.*



their interpretation practice before an audience, and agency in self-directed rehearsal. Overall, the *Duo* project thus points to different conditions and phases in which the choreographer *and* performers shape a work's manifestation, usually in dialogue with one another.

The changes evident in the charts of *Duo* also reflect the revisions Forsythe made in collaboration with the costume, sound and light designers—which I have highlighted already in section 5.2. Of particular significance is the changing musical composition by Thom Willems. As I have described in section 2.4.1, Thom Willems' initial score for the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo* highlighted the dissonance between independently clocked movement, a score for live piano (which was often modified), live acoustic elements and the dancers' breath. *DUO2015* had an even more minimal musical score of extended tone intervals, and greater volume of breathing-movement. *Dialogue (DUO2015)* changed the sonic atmosphere for the piece to a background of bird calls—highlighting the stochastic sounds and their relation to breathing-movement. These contextual elements were significant aspects of the fluctuations of the *Duo* project.

Entrainment: Overall, the model of counterpoint—based upon alignment as entrainment modes—had a strong fit to the *Duo* performances, with only between one to four percent of the material laying outside this matrix (see Table 4; Fig. 31). The annotation process suggested that the rhythms within entrainment were pair specific, shifting as new dancers entered the work, and established via consensus.

The proportion of entrainment modes were found to vary between versions, with more changes in entrainment modes and less pure unison in *DUO2015* than in the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo;* that is, there was evidence of greater complexity in the structure of entrainment in *DUO2015*. Possibly this reflects the influence of *Synchronous Objects* (2009), which enabled Forsythe to look at variations in kinds of alignment and take more interest in "intermittent and irregular coincidence" of movement.[49] It may also stem from Forsythe's tendency to increase the complexity and speed of his choreographies as he comes to understand them—in order to refresh and break *his* own expectations.

The annotation process enabled study of the important movement-breaks within the choreography. In the Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo,* movement-breaks are frequently structural lulls after the dancers descend to the floor. In the 2013 key performance, they take the forms of resetting positions and shorter rests in standing (such as when the dancers catch their breath with hands resting on their knees, like winded basketball players). In the 2015 key performance, there is only one break in which the performers stand outside the light marking the stage. These movement-breaks reflect the general shifts within aesthetics of contemporary dance since the 1990s, in which still-acts and rupture have come to play an increasing role.[50] The structure of *DUO2015* also generally presents the performers as more self-aware in its coding and frame-shifts, allowing for the dancers to play with their status as performers through role-breaking shifts in dynamics.

The charts enable examination of how the modes of entrainment also changed longitudinally. Consistent with the dancers' testimony that practicing unison together was the central means of learning to dance *Duo,* sections of Alignment and unison exhibit the most continuity throughout all seven key performances; this mean that these are the elements that have remained most consistent and constitutive in this longitudinal history. My observations added to the understanding that practicing unison is the component central to the choreography, even as the complexity of the contrapuntal structure and degree to which the dancers improvise within this structure increases over time. Adaption and improvisation are more prevalent in performances from 2013 onwards, while turn-taking and breaks show up mostly in the early performances prior to 2013. Sections of concurrent motion show a similar overall proportion before and after 2013, but there are almost no connections running across this year, showing counterpoint to be a generator of change. The choreography of *Duo* thus emerges through *processing choreography*, the dancers' negotiation of movement practices passed on from pair to pair and creatively enacted in the immediacy of each performance context.

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49 Forsythe and Shaw, "Introduction: The Dance."

50 See Brandstetter, "Still/Motion"; Schellow, *Diskurs-Choreographien*, in particular pp. 154–63.

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This chapter has undertaken an in-depth longitudinal analysis of *Duo*'s movements and sequence. Overall, the chapter has highlighted the potential for new sources and methods of conducting movement analysis in dance studies, blending first-person and third-person perspectives on movement and encompassing digital tools and software to study choreographic histories.

Bringing the lens of Laban Movement Analysis into my ethnographic fieldwork and study of archival videos of *Duo*, Section 9.1 presented a matrix of 18 movement principles that outline the movement style in *Duo*. The analysis has been informed by dance scholar Cynthia Novack's synopsis of the "core movement values" in contact improvisation. My emphasis on *Duo*'s shared and common attention to dynamics has suggested how a Laban approach—which typically focuses on how movement emerges through the individual body—may be developed to look at co-movement. This rubric also specified changes in the *Duo* project's movement over time.

Section 9.2 reported on new digital methods for performance analysis. Drawing from the precedent *Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced*, I have systematized a vocabulary for the components of *Duo*'s movement sequence and evaluated how these aspects have shifted over time. The analysis considered a cross section of seven key performances of *Duo* (from 1996 to 2016). After conducting *talk-through* interviews with the dancers, my inspection assessed the project's versions, variability and the role of entrainment in the choreographic structure, building on annotation categories such as cues and alignments used previously in the project *Synchronous Objects*. My observations were visualized through statistical and graphical approaches, offering an unprecedented view of one choreography's evolution and change over two decades. In order to reflect critically upon these graphical products, I triangulated to first-person testimony from my fieldwork, questioning the extent to which these images corresponded to the dancers' memories and perspectives.

The boon of this analysis has been discovering that despite the stage elements and movement aesthetic of Ballett Frankfurt and Forsythe Company performances of *Duo* varying significantly, the sequence of movements in *Duo* has been surprisingly well conserved over its history. The partners' *processing of choreography*, that is their creative interpretation of what they have inherited, was a significant factor in the changing appearance of the dance.

A second argument supported by this modeling was the fundamental role of entrainment as alignment. I came to understand *Duo* as a structure of shifting alignment, based upon the constraints of shared knowledge of the choreographic sequence. In contrast to Forsythe's *One Flat Thing, reproduced*, in *Duo* cues were more nuanced, focusing on sensitivity rather than on cause and effect. *Duo* dancers showed great attention and care for one another, bonding intimately and emotionally. The performance videos illustrated that the dancers' interpretation of the duet increasingly emphasized dialogue and play, suggesting the value of improvisation as a means for learning to entrain.

Returning to the testimony of dancer Roberta Mosca with which I began this chapter, I would like to conclude by testing a speculative notion. This is the idea that within Forsythe's ensembles, bodies and counterpoint define "fractal" persons. According to

Chris Fowler, fractal persons come about when: "Parts of a person, and people as parts of a community, may carry the same features as the whole."[51] We have seen this in Mosca's testimony, where she describes the sequence of *Duo* as resembling a body—one possessing an anatomy. We have also discovered counterpoint in *Duo* as within bodies, between bodies and between bodies and the specific materiality of the theater. Caspersen confirms: "A company of performers and creators can be seen as a kind of body, and the work that a company creates can be viewed in the same way; as a body that is composed of our thoughts and the differing ways that our individual bodies are thinking."[52]

The entwinement of persons, bodies and counterpoint gives Forsythe's repertoire dynamic properties—changing significantly as the artists themselves learn and develop. The concept that I would like to suggest is critical to the sort of organization of *Duo*, being held together and yet plastic towards change, is creativity. In the final part of this manuscript, I turn to *creation* practice.

51 Fowler, *The Archaeology of Personhood*, p. 51.

52 Caspersen, "Decreation," p. 94.

PART III – CREATION

Introduction to Part III: Creation

> For me, the Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company was pretty much a continuum. […] I see it as one line of work. I think the more I am away from it—the more I'm doing my own projects out in the world and you know, being in charge of things—I recognize how unusual the level of (*pause*) constant re-creation is. Constant re-creation that really has a true line of work that everybody is involved in and everybody is thinking about.
> —*Dana Caspersen*[1]

When the dancers recalled the ensembles' creative process they often lapsed into compelling moments of narration—speaking with fervor, reverence and tenderness—as exemplified by Caspersen's remembrance above. They enjoyed telling me *how* pieces were made and changed. They embellished their stories, knowing that, as a former colleague, I shared their excitement. Recounting their surprises, they explained twists and turns. They laughed, sharing personal fulfillments and disappointments. The intensive labor was engrossing and open-ended. "We were working consistently toward something, with something, around something," explains Johnson: "That social contract and nonverbal research was pretty extraordinary."[2]

Their specific proclivities for movement invention differentiated Forsythe dancers from performers in other groups: constituting their perception of bodies, their sense of selves and their facility to interact. Yet I garnered from these testimonies that even more significant was a common sense of choreographic labor—as a processual and relational understanding of emergence. Caspersen calls this collective "thinking" and highlights the embodied components in her writing.[3]

In this section I will explore the practice of *creation* in Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company; I will delineate *how* the community cultivated open-ended processes of making and re-making choreographic pieces. Through this labor, the dancers learned to produce organization. They became trained to sense agency through contrapuntal emergence. From firsthand experience, I know that this very specific sort of creative labor was transformative, changing how one sensed value between people, materials and

1 Dana Caspersen, videoconference interview with the author, December 19, 2018.

2 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

3 See Caspersen, "Decreation," in particular p. 94.

contexts. By this means, the ensemble cooperatively produced dance pieces with precise aesthetic properties and bodies with special proclivities: bodies of work (repertoire) and human bodies (dancers, choreographer, team) entwining constitutively. In bringing this labor into focus in this section, I aim to decipher this activity and make seminal points clear for the reader. For dance studies, I deliver a practice-focused account of choreographic making, of which there are unfortunately few in the literature. Without trying to reduce *Duo*'s creative process to a singular narrative that would belie its genuine complexity, I aim to reconstruct the entwined perspectives of the participants and cogently draw out their meaning for the reader.

My introduction to creation practices in Section 4.5 has already highlighted how phases of *creation* interwove within the array of the dancers' institutionalized practices—infusing training and rehearsing. The term *creation* is native to these ensembles, where it is a synonym for making, choreographing or devising new dances. For example, the word "creation" designated a rehearsal in which a new work was being made; the process of being "in creation" meant making a new piece. As an American dancer arriving to join the Ballett Frankfurt in 2004, the usage of the term "creation" within this community was understandable to me, but not familiar. Within my history, "making," "choreographing," and "composing" had been more common vocabularies.[4] Dance scholars also use the terms "devising."[5]

The methodology of choreography—of making and redefining dances—is of primary interest in the field of dance studies. Lack of access to sources, to the private and often fragile process of rehearsals, makes this still an understudied field—though there is a growing abundance of new media online that provide access to choreographic techniques and knowledge.[6] The scholarship on Forsythe's choreographic practice relies extensively on interviews with the choreographer and Caspersen, the dancers' writing and Forsythe's research projects documenting his methodology.[7] The ethnographic accounts of Wulff and Vass-Rhee, based on their firsthand observations, as well as the writings of dramaturg Heidi Gilpin, are outstanding in this respect. The creative process they witness is far from linear. Wulff's study of the creation of *Sleepers Guts* (1996) in the Ballett Frankfurt describes the intensive pressure of "changes" and the contribution of technology within Forsythe's process. Wulff writes:

> The entire work process was defined by changes. Dancers, music and choreographic sections were taken out of the production by Forsythe as a matter of course, and some

4 I suspect that within multilingual European dance contexts, the term *creation* is used because of the commonality between the English (creation) and Romance languages: French (*creation*), Spanish (*creación*), Italian (*creazione*). Initially, I was hesitant to adopt this expression, which I associated with cosmology (i.e., the creation of the universe), mythology (creation myths), and religious belief (creationism). But after acclimatizing to the choreographic culture of Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company, it became second nature.

5 See Butterworth, "Too Many Cooks?"

6 See the Online Artistic Resources section of the bibliography.

7 See in particular Boenisch, "Decreation Inc."; Hartewig, *Kinästhetische Konfrontation*, pp. 51–73. Siegmund, "The Space of Memory"; Sulcas, "William Forsythe: Channels for the Desire to Dance"; Spier, "Inside the Knot That Two Bodies Make"; "Engendering and Composing Movement"; "A Difficult and Lovely Work."

> put in again and taken out again. Stuck in the creativity block that seems to be a necessary phase in all artistic (as well as intellectual) projects, the voyage from chaos to order was not over when the day of the premiere came. The production was still in progress, and it would take a number of performances before it suddenly came together.[8]

Vass-Rhee—relying on her longstanding insider position as a dramaturg with The Forsythe Company—demonstrates that the ensemble's methodology does not rely solely on methods of movement invention, but also on cultivating and choreographing the dancers' and audience's perception.[9] Based on retrospective analysis of The Forsythe Company's process making the piece *Whole in the Head* (2010), she underscores the importance of collaboration, noting the dancers' "complicity" and how Forsythe deliberately attends to communal aspects.[10] Gilpin, interpreting the creation of *Limbs Theorem* (1990), demonstrates how Forsythe's methods of movement generation employ iteration, chance and malfunction: "a process whose failures offer up previously unanticipated possibilities."[11] We can gather from these accounts that Forsythe's complex choreographic process proliferates authorship and instates a creative field of action, beyond one person's comprehension and control.

On the whole, Forsythe scholars have foregrounded the collaborative role of the dancers in the choreographic process, observing the decentralization and added responsibility of dancers within the labor.[12] Scholars have also considered the influence of Laban and architectural thinking on movement invention,[13] and the importance of practiced strategies of improvisation.[14] Forsythe is known for the complexity of dramaturgical sources that may influence the choreographic process, making the work according to Vass-Rhee a sort of "distributed cognition" involving the dancers' "danced dramaturgies."[15] *Duo,* with its focus on the microcosm of moving together, helps us in particular to look at how cooperation upon movement took place and changed over time.

My contribution to this literature is the richness of a dancer's case study analysis: adding description that follows one creation from its start until 2016—across iterations

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8 See Wulff, *Ballet Across Borders*, p. 159; following the creation see ibid., pp. 157–60.

9 Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*.

10 Vass-Rhee, "Schooling an Ensemble," p. 221.

11 Gilpin, "Aberrations of Gravity," p. 125.

12 Sulcas, "William Forsythe: Channels for the Desire to Dance," p. 55; Sulcas, "William Forsythe. The Poetry of Disappearance and the Great Tradition"; Siegmund, "William Forsythe: Räume eröffnen, in denen das Denken sich ereignen kann," pp. 13–15; see also Spier, "Engendering and Composing Movement," pp. 140–42.

13 See Hartewig, *Kinästhetische Konfrontation*, pp. 51–71; Maar, *Entwürfe und Gefüge*, pp. 47–56; Spier, "Engendering and Composing Movement," pp. 138–39; Lampert, *Tanzimprovisation*, pp. 192–95; Baudoin and Gilpin, "Proliferation and Perfect Disorder." As a dancer educated in Labanotation, I can testify that in my work as a dancer with Forsythe, I did not encounter Laban terminology, symbols or methods. Nor did I engage with the media or tasks from *Improvisation Technologies*. This is evidence of change in Forsythe's methodology and a gap in the scholarship regarding Forsythe's later methods, which have primarily been researched by Vass-Rhee and myself.

14 Lampert, *Tanzimprovisation*. See also Forsythe, *Improvisation Technologies*; Kaiser, "Dance Geometry."

15 Cf. Nugent, "William Forsythe, *Eidos:Telos*, and Intertextual Criticism," see pp. 26–27; see also Vass-Rhee, "Distributed Dramaturgies," in particular pp. 90–94.

spanning over two decades. Differently than Wulff and Vass-Rhee, I focus explicitly on the dancers' accounts of working with the choreographer, from my position of having elicited this peer-to-peer testimony. I also link analysis of the initial phase of making *Duo* with my review of the processes of *re-creation* through which *Duo* continued its creative proliferation. Recognizing that each creative process, like each piece, was unique, I carefully generalize to explicate facets of the labor and its aesthetics of production that could be useful for comparative study.

My choice to highlight *creation* is thus motivated because of its central importance to the ethos of the *Duo* project and its occupational culture; it was not because of the ubiquity of the term and its central place in capitalism,[16] which Andreas Reckwitz diagnoses as both a "wish" and "imperative."[17] In my writing, I significantly choose to position myself aside from genius clichés—understandings of creativity that have themselves already been critically worked through and re-thought in scholarly literature on creativity in anthropology, psychology, sociology and organizational studies as well as in dance and performance studies.[18] Rudi Laermans concurs about contemporary dance: "In line with the increasingly predominant collaborative work ethic, artistic heroism or an overly glorifying approach towards individual artists is generally dismissed as an out-dated remnant of modernism."[19]

The "genius" label is however common in Forsythe's reviews and the popular press. Peggy Phelan observes that it even influences theoretical discussion.[20] Though Forsythe's dancers occasionally use the word *genius*, the term did not appear once in my fieldwork notes or interviews with the artists.[21] Consequently, I wished to understand how the dancers and Forsythe worked together to create and re-create *Duo*, and how

16 Cf. Florida, *The Rise of The Creative Class*.

17 Reckwitz,*The Invention of Creativity,* p. 5.

18 Anthropologist Karin Barber writes: "The idea that innovation and creativity are necessarily the results of departures from convention by gifted individuals has also been comprehensively revised." See Barber, "Improvisation and the Art of Making Things Stick," p. 33. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi writes: "Therefore, creativity does not happen inside people's heads, but in the interaction between a person's thoughts and a sociocultural context. It is a systemic rather than an individual phenomenon." See Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity*, p. 23. In organizational studies, Neil Thompson summarizes: "Scholars adopting a relational ontology of organizational creativity have shifted attention away from a preoccupation with individual minds towards that which is enacted, emergent, shared, unpredictable and contingent." Thompson, "Imagination and Creativity in Organizations," p. 245. As developed at length in Part I, Howard Becker dispels the notion that an artifact is produced solely by the intentions of one person. See Becker, *Art Worlds*.

19 Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 352.

20 See Phelan, "Performing Questions, Producing Witnesses," pp. 10–11. For example, in a recent *New York Times* review from 2019: "On Thursday, when Mr. Forsythe came out to bow, he smiled sheepishly and had to be pushed forward. He looked not like a *genius* or a scourge but like a happy man." Emphasis (*genius*) mine. Seibert, "Review: William Forsythe Brings a New Playlist to Boston," p. 2. See also the editor's introduction in Spier, *William Forsythe and the Practice of Choreography*, p. 1.

21 Caspersen, for example writes: "[Forsythe] has a joyous physical *genius* and an extraordinarily fluid and ungrasping mind in his working, which allows both the sublime and the grotesque to move through him. He trusts himself, but he never assumes that he knows." Caspersen, "It Starts From Any Point," p. 39. Emphasis (*genius*) mine.

this understanding of their practices could give a deeper sense of what choreography entailed.

The approach I took to answering my questions about creative process cycled from my ethnographic analysis to readings on creativity within social anthropology. These texts outside of dance studies were appropriate reference for my concerns, as they consider constitutive interplays of sociality, materials, economies and ownership. These studies of creativity have dispelled the notion that creativity is one essence—significantly, creativity is shown to take many modes.[22] Overturning some lingering approaches, the process of making has been demonstrated to be far more complex than materializing a preexisting idea of form—the so-called "hylomorphic" model of Aristotle. Rather, anthropologist Tim Ingold advocates seeing making as a generative emergence, in which there is interplay of relations, forces and materials.[23]

Comparing modes of creativity across Melanesia and Euro-America, anthropologist James Leach has interrogated "how the concept of intellectual property is embedded in a matrix of Euro-American thinking, in suppositions about being and doing, subjects and objects, agency and personhood."[24] In the Euro-American understanding of creative authorship he finds there is a presumption that persons are creative and things are not—and that persons can be separated from things. In Melanesian communities, in a relational way similar to the sorts of bodies that Dana Caspersen describes, people and property are instead multiply authored and amalgamated. Ingold elucidates further: creativity is not "an internal property that *resides* at all, or that either persons or things *possess*, whence it causes 'effects' in their vicinity."[25] In my view, *creation* in Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company names a sort of process where attunement to potential contributes novelty and change. Drawing from process philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, Ingold concludes that creativity can be better understood through Whitehead's concept of *concrescence*—in which there is "continual formation."[26] Concrescence as a "growing together" and "creative advance."[27]

Whitehead views creativity as generic to every event unfolding: part of nature, life and the buzzing of its creatures. Creative is not an aesthetic adjective used to designate certain events or people as more or less creative. It is process itself, which Whitehead defines as an ultimate fact of the universe—as ultimate as the tension between the many and the one. Creativity he explicates as "the principle of *novelty*," and concrescence, as the "production of novel togetherness."[28] For Whitehead, creativity is not

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22 See Leach, "Modes of Creativity."

23 On hylomorphic thinking, see Ingold, *Making*, p. 37. Ingold writes about making a handaxe: "This is not an imposition of form on matter but a bringing out of forms, more topological than geometrical, that are latent in the variations of the material itself, in its energetic lines of tension and compression. […] to borrow the words of Deleuze and Guattari once again, it is a question of 'surrendering' to the material and then 'following where it leads'." Ibid., p. 45.

24 Leach, "Modes of Creativity," p. 152.

25 Ingold, "Introduction Part I: Modes of Creativity in Life and Art," p. 52.

26 Ibid.

27 Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 236; Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, p. 21.

28 Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, p. 21 (italics in the original). Isabelle Stengers qualifies that in the case of Whitehead: "creativity, which is neutral, is not to be celebrated." Stengers, *Thinking with*

something that people or things possess. Rather: "Each task of creation is a social effort, employing the whole universe."[29] Importantly—different than other practice theorists—for Whitehead, the social is not based on a sense of self that is ambitious or competitive.[30] Overall, Whitehead's philosophy, like the *Duo* dancers', is optimistic. For Forsythe dancers, *creation* might not always improve or evolve a performance, but their efforts will continue to spiral around and reinvestigate emergent and contextual possibilities—and they view this as a good and worthy way to live life.

Through conjoining performance and creativity, the dancers' work is performative in the sense meant by Judith Butler, as a practice that is always refashioning: repeating with difference.[31] In the article "Problematizing Performance" (1998), Edward Schieffelin observes the interrelationship of the terms *creative*, *improvisatory* and *performativity* in anthropology. He deciphers that with practice theory's focus on the regular and habitual aspects of practice as well as their contextual improvisatory character (Bourdieu), when the term *performativity* was brought into anthropology, it was advocated to examine at the edges of practice that were not just regular and habitual. In his words:

> The relation between performance and practice turns on this moment of improvisation: performance embodies the *expressive dimension of the strategic articulation of practice*. The italicized expression here could stand as our definition of performativity itself. […] performativity is located at the creative, improvisatory edge of practice in the moment it is carried out—though everything that comes across is not necessarily consciously intended.[32]

This philosophy resonates with the testimonies of Forsythe dancers and their specific sense for bodily creativity and relation, enabling improvisation. These dancers even advocate that their learned attunement to creativity can be applied not only to performance projects but to other ventures (whether conflict resolution, designing a café, or landscape gardening—to name some of the recent projects that the dancers have invested in).

Discerning how the dancers' practice creating and re-creating *Duo* cultivates a performativity of creation—relying on conventions, beliefs and practices—will fill the following two chapters. In particular, the relationality of *Duo*'s creative process is seminal and generative. These are not relations that exist between *fixed* entities but relations contingent and emergent to processes and processual bodies, *becoming* through creative activity. The relations are also between people and things: with the stage walls, the

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Whitehead, p. 258. In this chapter, Stengers discloses Whitehead's creativity with regard to Kant, Deleuze and the question of God; see ibid., pp. 254–76. Whitehead's creativity coheres the past, present and future, and is conditioned by the past; Deleuze's view is more a break or rupture with the past. On differences between Deleuze and Whitehead's notions of creativity, see Robinson, "The Event and The Occasion."

29 Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, p. 223.

30 Compare to Goffman; See Schieffelin, "Problematizing Performance," p. 195.

31 See Butler, *Bodies That Matter*; Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution."

32 Schieffelin, "Problematizing Performance," p. 199 (italics in the original).

dance floor and the distant piano.[33] Illustrating theses relational components through my analysis of the case study should help make this cooperation comprehensible.

Notably, in the writing that follows I will distinguish between the key concepts of cooperation and collaboration. I understand collaboration to be when people work together to achieve a mutual goal, sharing interest in and ownership of the outcome. Collaborative projects, by contrast, are more democratic, involving equable decision-making, authorship and responsibility: the artists co-initiate and revise this shared goal. In my view, a dance-devising project—in which activities vary from collaboration to cooperation—is not, in sum, a collaborative project, and the discourse on Forsythe's practices has largely disregarded this. Forsythe's practice of making dances in Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company typically did not involve sharing decision-making on the final outcome of performance. It also required differentiation between the tasks of the choreographer and the dancers, as I shall show for *Duo*. For that reason, I prefer to use the term to *cooperation* to describe this project. I understand *cooperation* to be when people work together in a distributed fashion, in which their interests and responsibility within the project may be different, yet together they make "an exchange in which the participants benefit from the encounter."[34]

As noted by dance scholar and sociologist Rudi Laermans, by 2005 collaboration was an "omnipresent buzzword" within the Flemish dance world, in part because *collaboration* had "succeeded 'conceptuality' as one of the key signifiers in European contemporary dance, thus solidifying a change in the field's self-understanding, away from performance-as-text or the art-work-as-artefact to performing as collective labour or joint artistic work."[35] Studying the creation of the piece *Verklärte Nacht* by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker[36] in 1995, Laermans considers the paradoxes of the "semi-directive mode" of choreography; he observes the dancers are not docile facilitators, but rather "co-create" material for and with the choreographer, who then makes the final decisions.[37]

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33 The way that I develop the concept of *relation* here takes influence from anthropologists Marilyn Strathern and James Leach. The concept of relations pervades the language of anthropology, from the realm of relatives/kin to the broader field of social relations involving humans, animals, ecologies, things, materials and places. As noted by Marilyn Strathern generally, and pertinent to *Duo*, relations may both connect/link/merge as well as split/separate/divide; see Strathern, "Kinship as a Relation," p. 48. Relations occur not only between humans, but also materials, media and contexts. Relations may also vary between modes: from relations produced through bringing together/separating entities to relations that are constitutive of the entities themselves. Discussing the difficulty of translation of the term *relation* into English, Strathern distinguishes between marked (mode 1) relations and unmarked (mode 2) relations: Mode 1 is relations external to pre-existing terms. Mode 2 are relations constitutive of the terms themselves. See Strathern, "Re-making Knowledge," p. 11. In my writing on *Duo*, I emphasize mode 2 relations. See also Leach, "Kinship and Place," pp. 213–14. I am grateful to Leach for these suggestions and references.

34 See Sennet, *Together*, p. 5.

35 Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 20, p. 33. See also Ruhsam, *Kollaborative Praxis*; Basteri et al., *Rehearsing Collectivity*; Kunst, "Prognosis on Collaboration"; Cvejic, "Collectivity? You mean Collaboration."

36 De Keersmaeker, like Forsythe, is a contemporary dance choreographer with high international status and reputation. She has worked with her ensemble Rosas in Brussels since 1983.

37 Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 295.

He finds: "My conversations show that within the world of contemporary dance, performers expect to be given the chance to say 'I' or to singularize their potentials and to become co-authors in their own right."[38] What is paradoxical for Laermans, is how the dancers are *dependent* on the choreographer to do so.

Overall, Laermans takes a more critical view than I have of Howard Becker's sociological theory of art worlds. He radically promotes the view that scholars should not omit study of the specifics of composition and their "immanent logics," through which the core members of art worlds interact.[39] Within these logics of practice, he suggests there may be explanation of why artistic investment produces feelings of expression—particular to bodies that are singular, moments that are singular, and histories that net them in links and chains. He finds: collaborators discover "the always contextually embedded, at once partially realized and still virtual potential to co-create."[40]

The subsequent two chapters return to close review of the *Duo* case study. Chapter 10 reconstructs the rehearsals in which *Duo* was developed in 1996, studying the factors shaping the emergence of the piece and the dancers' memories thereof. Chapter 11 explores the processes shaping the transformation of *Duo* as a project from 1996 until 2016. Through interpreting the testimonies of Forsythe and the dancers and examining existing archival video of rehearsals, I show how the practice of re-creation defines the continual emergence of the choreography. The reader will finally arrive through this concluding section at a rich practical understanding of the dancers' activity and their experience of the choreographic.

38 Ibid., p. 35.

39 Ibid., p. 270.

40 Ibid., p. 387 (italics in the original).

Chapter 10: Creating *Duo* (1996)

Figure 35. Video still of the first rehearsal of Duo, *January 2, 1996. From left to right: Jill Johnson, William Forsythe and Regina van Berkel.*

Photo © William Forsythe.

The first archival video—grainy in quality and dated January 2, 1996—lurches directly into a rehearsal already in process. William Forsythe, wearing loose fitting grey sweatpants and sweatshirt, is developing a sequence of movement, repeating an action until it seems known or recognizable to him. The rehearsal setting is the theater foyer of the *Städtische Bühnen Frankfurt*, indicating that this is a makeshift rehearsal taking place outside of Ballett Frankfurt's two studios. The room is quiet, Forsythe's voice is soft.

"Wait a sec," he says.[1] Near to the choreographer, two female dancers pause: Canadian dancer Jill Johnson and Dutch dancer Regina van Berkel; at that time, both in their mid-twenties. As Forsythe resumes his movement, the women continue to catch the movements coming out of him—mimicking and repeating. Forsythe directs his gaze to the camera and asks, "Are you going?" confirming that their movements are being recorded. Together, he and the dancers form a constellation of three, all facing the same direction. Forsythe is in the center and the women flank him, slightly behind on either side. The triangular formation gives the dancers equal proximity to the choreographer so they can both comfortably see and study his movement. After a couple of tries, he seems to understand something and begins to teach: "So you go here …," he begins.

This initial introduction to the process of making *Duo* helps to orient the ethnographic reconstruction that follows in Section 10.4. My purpose is to provide—primarily for dance scholarship—a rich, chronological account of making choreographic work, foregrounding reflection upon the process of the dancers.[2] Additionally, my intent is to define aspects contributing to our growing understanding of the choreography of *Duo*, through looking at how this choreography was initially produced via *creation* practices. The cluster of concepts emerging in this section link creation, choreography and dance, with the terms: *potentiality*, *emergence*, *becoming* and *process*—which I try to make understandable through example.

The tone of this scholarship is tender, reflecting "closeness." Close implies not only near in proximity but sensitively seeking understanding of what is meaningful within these interactions, as is fundamental in ethnographic study.[3] Interpreting the records of this process chronologically, my writing brings the reader intimately into the studio and near the stage—highlighting what I can perceive, based on my years of making

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1 Citations from the Ballett Frankfurt archival video labeled: 1996 01 02 A. All citations in this paragraph from the first minute of the tape.

2 Notably, such accounts are still lacking. The public/private division of performance/rehearsal has left the *actual* process of choreographing an under studied field by dance scholars, though there are increasing formats enabling choreographers to share and document their own work: see Blades and Meehan, *Performing Process*. Some examples are provided in the Online Artistic Resources section of the bibliography. Scholarly studies analyzing the making of a specific choreography from start to finish include the following: The dancer and anthropologist team Robert Maiorano and Valerie Brooks followed George Balanchine making the piece *Mozartiana* (1981); see Maiorano and Brooks, *Balanchine's Mozartiana*. Rudi Laermans has studied choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker making the work *Verklärte Nacht* (1995); see Laermans, *Moving Together*, pp. 293–310. Using augmented video-recording apparatuses, in conjunction with ethnographic live observation, there are two pioneering studies. The first, by a team led by cognitive scientist David Kirsh, analyzed a creation by Wayne McGregor in 2009; see Kirsh et al., "Choreographic Methods for Creating Novel, High Quality Dance." The second, by a team of dance scholars and technologists, used the digital software Piecemaker to study the making of *Effect* (2019) by choreographer Taneli Törmä; see Rittershaus et al., "Recording *Effect*." A final example is Katarina Kleinschmidt's praxeological study of rehearsals—through multiple examples of contemporary dance—which focuses on knowledge production as opposed to the rehearsal/performance split, see Kleinschmidt, *Artistic Research als Wissensgefüge*. The extreme diversity of these projects illustrates that making dance is interesting to scholars in many different fields, yet it remains a young area of study, without a common foundational discourse.

3 Emerson et al., *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, pp. 1–4.

pieces in The Forsythe Company. Passing back and forth between ethnographic reflection and creative immersion, I allow my perception of the creative potential within this process to impact my writing. Points of analytic reflection expand into footnotes and overflow into my conclusion. The combination of these text types serves to reconstruct a complicated nexus of activity. My sources and process of analysis warrant further discussion for the critical reader to comprehend how this knowledge was produced, as defined below.

10.1 Sources and Methods for Studying the Creation of *Duo*

This analysis of the creation process involved in making *Duo* draws from interviews with *Duo* dancers Jill Johnson and Regina van Berkel, choreographer William Forsythe, and the study of archival videos of the rehearsals while making *Duo*. These videos were made by archivist Nicholas Champion for use within the rehearsal process, as well as in anticipation of the value of this documentation to future dancers and scholars.[4] The window that they offer onto the team's process is exceptionally rich, though the single perspective it offers misses moments outside the camera's perspective of the studio (in dressing rooms, corridors, backstage, and so on). To emphasize the restorative nature of this fieldwork, I label it a *reconstructive ethnography*.

Accuracy and attention to detail were essential to this writing process, fashioned to reflect the *logic of practice* within Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company. All citations in this chapter are transcriptions from the archival videos, or when noted, a specific interview. Because of my interest in the relational components of creative process, especially how movement and ideas might be socially distributed, my analytic process honed in on these aspects. It focusses on tracing the relations between the dancers, Forsythe, the video, their notebooks, the spaces and my body, as an active observer watching the video tapes over two decades later. I used a form of "thick description" to write fieldwork notes that were then analyzed and edited.[5] Since my view was predisposed—knowing what

4 Nicholas Champion was a British dancer in the Ballett Frankfurt (1984–1992). From 1992–2005 he was responsible for archiving the team's rehearsals and performances. He is well known to audiences for his role as the 'man with the megaphone' in Forsythe's ballet *Artifact*. Champion also took meticulous handwritten notes as he was filming, which are in storage and will be included in Forsythe's official archive. Champion recalls, "I knew that Bill's work was very, very important not just for the next premiere we were working towards, but for the development of our art form, and I thought that sometime later this material might be needed, not just by Bill. I filmed everything […] at the time, I couldn't tell what would be especially important ten years later." Nicolas Champion, email to author, October 3, 2019. The contribution of film technology to Ballett Frankfurt's choreographic process was pioneering. According to dancer Regina van Berkel, in the 1990s the company was a "highly technological" environment. In addition to the way that video was customarily used in rehearsals, van Berkel would sometimes take home the "video viewing machines" to study the footage at night. Regina van Berkel, interview with author, Zürich, May 5, 2017. While Wulff notes the widespread usage of performance video in her study of ballet companies in the mid 1990s, to my knowledge, producing daily film archives of rehearsals was uncommon. See Wulff, *Ballet Across Borders*, pp. 155–57.

5 On "thick description," see Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, pp. 3–30.

Duo would become—I practiced noticing what was occurring and trying to understand the logic of the unfolding practice, as opposed to purely looking back upon what was formative. This helped me to appreciate the plane of composition, to decipher forces in the making; I was looking not only for *what* was being done, but *why* and *how*.

The methodological approach that I have taken intermixes documentation, reconstructive ethnographic observation and analysis. My description in section 10.4 acts as a "literary evocation," drawing the reader into particular events chosen with regard to my research questions.[6] In this I draw strongly from two literary models: First, re-creating the experience of the rehearsals for the reader in the present tense *as if* I were in the room with dancers—I take this model from Maiorano and Brooks' approach to inscribing the creative process of choreographer George Balanchine.[7] Second, in fragmenting this narrative—intermixing the chronical with transcriptions from interviews with the dancers—I borrow from the style of writing developed by Loïc Wacquant in *Body & Soul* (2006). Sensuously, I evoke the activities and spaces of rehearsal, with attention to modes of sensation that the dancers have described in their memories. The documentation is, of course, selective, bringing out key episodes from each rehearsal. These highlighted instances help to illustrate the general flow or exceptions through which the work must be rethought. Drawing from the interviews, I prioritize inclusion of the dancers' memories, using the archival videos to contribute my own observations to the events they emphasize. This involves filling gaps about what the people in the rehearsals are doing, based on my knowledge of the actual spaces and prior work with Forsythe—for example, my practical knowledge of the scale of each room and location of elements such as the mirror and tech booth.

My method of video analysis involved an ethnographic practice that I named *rewind/shifting attention*. Shifting my attention toward the dancers in the video, I observed what they were doing. Rewinding and shifting my attention to Forsythe, I examined how he was engaging with the field around him, and how decisions were being taken. Rewinding and shifting my attention to the tools involved, I discerned how these objects and traces allowed *Duo* to be constructed. Pausing and reviewing my interview notes, I tried to piece together what the dancers remembered in relation to what I was observing. This iterative practice of shifting attention helped me to critically reflect upon how the participants initiated, molded, gazed upon and judged the piece taking form—deconstructing the "attention regime" with my own mobile focus.[8] In these shifts, which would be different in live fieldwork, I concurred that the creativity of *Duo* was happening within a complex social and material interplay; that the stakes were shifting within each new rehearsal with the impending deadline of the premiere.

6 On "literary evocation," see Wacquant, *Body & Soul*, pp. 7–8.

7 See Maiorano and Brooks, *Balanchine's Mozartiana*.

8 Compare to Laermans, *Moving Together*, pp. 302–5.

10.2 Between Dancers and Choreographers

Writing with an 'insider' view, dancer Dana Caspersen's descriptions of creative process in Ballett Frankfurt provide lucid examples of these complicated journeys—showing this contingent interplay of people, ideas, materials, movement, media and traces. Caspersen speaks reflectively about the roles of the dancers and Forsythe, giving insight into a number of pieces.[9] From these accounts, a general outline of the ensembles' creative process can be made, which is a useful background for reflecting upon the case study of *Duo*; three levels can be assigned from her testimony, as follows:

The first—what Caspersen calls a "traditional fashion" of making choreography—is with "Bill creating all the movement and the structure."[10] In this modus, the dancers are respected and participatory interpreters of this movement, often building partnering and group works under Forsythe's supervision. By using the word "traditional," Caspersen acknowledges an approach that is widespread in European and American practices of making choreography in which the choreographer's body is understood to be the source of invention, and his or her knowledge and vision must be transferred to the group. Within this, the choreographer has considerable authority and is the indisputable author of the work.

Caspersen names the second modus as when Forsythe's movement serves as a basis for improvisation in performance. In this case, the dancers contribute richly through decision-making and the risk of real time improvisation on stage.

The third mode that Caspersen identifies is when "Bill developed the key parameters of an event"—that is, when Forsythe devised and distributed methods for creating movement and systems for structuring it.[11] In this enhanced democratic situation, the dancers created within frames and Forsythe took the final decisions to bring the work together. Given Forsythe's position as editor, it was rare that dancers achieved co-authorship with equal decision-making on the piece's content, form and philosophy. Caspersen and Forsythe's collaborations—for example on the film *From a Classical Position* (1997)—do exemplify this, and warrant particular analysis given the overlapping of personal and professional ties.[12]

Duo's process is an example of a "traditional" creation, to borrow Caspersen's designation, in which Forsythe manifests the movement on the first day of rehearsal. The dancers' cooperation molds and shifts the movement into co-movement. Recognizing the many modes of "devising" dance and various working relationships between choreographers and dancers, dance scholar Jo Butterworth has developed a spectrum for the analysis and teaching of choreographic practice. This model designates the range from when the choreographer is the "expert" and the dancer the "instrument" (mode 1) to the choreographer as "collaborator" and the dancer as "co-owner" (mode 5). The making of

9 See in particular Caspersen, "It Starts From Any Point"; Caspersen, "Decreation."

10 Caspersen, "It Starts From Any Point," p. 27.

11 Ibid., p. 28.

12 On this project, see Spier, "Inside the Knot That Two Bodies Make." Caspersen is Forsythe's wife.

Duo tends to involve modes 2 and 3—with the choreographer as the "author" and "pilot" and the dancers as "interpreters" and "contributors."[13]

Forsythe and the dancers often switched modes in one creation—as Butterworth emphasized is common within devising practices. By naming these "traditional" methods, Caspersen recognizes that, although they are common within the ballet world, they are increasingly infrequent in a "post-control"[14] and "collaborative" process of contemporary dance, in which collaboration involves joint authorship and negotiation of shared decision-making in all stages of the process.[15] Forsythe himself recognizes this shifting within his lifespan as a choreographer. In 2006, he observes: "The next generation of choreographers don't see it as a top down practice. It's a horizontal practice."[16] With this shift, Forsythe also perceives a change in his own working methods. In scaling down the ensemble size from the Ballett Frankfurt to form The Forsythe Company, Forsythe states in 2005:

> That is why I wanted to set this company up as a workshop, literally, where we all make things. If everyone is responsible for creating material, then everyone is in charge and everyone is dependent on everyone else. It's my job still to organize the situation, to frame the material, but I'm like a gallerist. The company isn't a gang of competing dancers—it's a community of artists.[17]

This would suggest that *Duo* dancers from The Forsythe Company had different practices of devising from the Ballett Frankfurt dancers, as well as a distinctive understanding of their roles. Further consequences of this will become apparent in Chapter 11, when re-creating *Duo* is considered.

Generally, Forsythe's creative process was impacted by the context and divided into two phases: in the studio and on stage. During the studio process, the ensemble was highly explorative and distributed—generating excessively more (movement, scenes, texts, musical atmospheres, costumes, and so on) than was shown in the final performance—and generating emergently, without a blueprint for what would be made. On stage, in the second phase of formatting a performance for the conventions of theater, the decisions of what to include and exclude shifted the model more toward *cooperation*, as opposed to *collaboration*. This reduction of "the possible scope of action" was dependent on Forsythe's authority.[18] Noting this, and labeling it as "editing," Caspersen re-

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13 Butterworth, "Too Many Cooks?," p. 187.

14 Kloppenberg defines *post-control* as "a process in which choreographers work collaboratively with dancers to generate fixed choreography out of improvisational explorations." She adds: "By 'post-control' I mean that the defining moments in this kind of choreography happen just after control is exercised (by a choreographer defining parameters or dancers agreeing to participate in the explorations) and then relinquished to a collective unknown." See Kloppenberg, "Improvisation in Process," p. 189.

15 See Laermans, *Moving Together*, pp. 310–32; Ruhsam, *Kollaborative Praxis*.

16 William Forsythe, team meeting to discuss *Synchronous Objects* in Brooklyn, New York, May 5, 2006. Transcription by Norah Zuniga Shaw. Conversation between Forsythe, Rebecca Groves, Jill Johnson, Norah Zuniga Shaw and myself.

17 Forsythe, cited in Mackrell, "A New Dynamic."

18 Here, Laermans draws from Niklas Luhmann. See Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 350.

counts: "The process of editing is difficult for everyone, and becomes increasingly so as the company members take on more and more artistic responsibility." But Caspersen acknowledges that by 2000: "Bill [Forsythe] has altered the structure of things to reflect the increasing creative input from the dancers. Dancers are now paid an extra sum for their input, and receive program credit; or when appropriate, pieces are credited simply to the Frankfurt Ballet."[19]

10.3 *Marion/Marion* (1991)

When did the process of making *Duo* begin? Were there any important antecedents or starting points? *Duo* premiered on January 20, 1996, in Ballett Frankfurt's performance *Six Counter Points*—an evening of mixed repertoire, old and new works. During the Christmas holiday, dancers were chosen and called to rehearsals for three new pieces: later titled *Trio*, *Approximate Sonata*, and *The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude*. In addition, two recently made pieces of existing repertoire were planned—namely *The The* (1995) and *Four Point Counter* (1995)—as well as the piece *Marion/Marion* (1991).[20] Initially, *Duo* dancers van Berkel and Johnson were cast (that is, chosen by Forsythe) to perform a new version of *Marion/Marion*—a duet that Forsythe had created for Nederlands Dans Theater III in 1991, with music from Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho* (1960).[21] The title referenced the protagonist of Hitchcock's film, Marion Crane; the duet echoed the plot element of having look-alike sisters. *Marion/Marion* had not yet been performed by the Ballett Frankfurt, so it was a question exactly how the piece would transfer to new dancers.

The archival rehearsal tapes of *Duo*, as well as the technical cue sheet for lighting and piano, and even a heading in van Berkel's notebook, all use the provisional title *Marion/Marion*. Despite this, the artists I interviewed all agreed that *Duo* and *Marion/Marion* were separate, i.e., distinct works. From review of the archival videos of a performance of *Marion/Marion* and one rehearsal of Forsythe and the dancers, I did not find evidence of shared movement material in common between the two pieces.[22] Links to *Marion/Marion* made by Forsythe during the first rehearsal were important starting points, but then opened up new avenues of investigation. This demonstrates how in Forsythe's process, creation could involve seeds from previous works, while still taking off rapidly in new directions.

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19 See Caspersen, "It Starts From Any Point," p. 35.

20 *The The* (premiere on October 8, 1995, The Hague, Netherlands, choreography by Dana Caspersen and William Forsythe), *Four Point Counter* (premiere on November 16, 1995, Nederlands Dans Theater, The Hague, Netherlands), *Marion/Marion* (November 8, 1991, Nederlands Dans Theater III, The Hague, Netherlands). Source: Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, p. 367, p. 370.

21 Music by Bernard Herrmann, *Temptation*. *Marion/Marion* was performed by female dancers Alida Chase and Sabine Kupferberg.

22 The rehearsal video was undated. The performance video studied was of the premiere on November 8, 1991.

10.4 The Chronology of Making *Duo*

10.4.1 Foyer: Material

In the context of the Ballett Frankfurt, Forsythe mostly created new pieces for groups of dancers—a process that engendered a room buzzing with movement.[23] Intimate rehearsals between the choreographer and only one or two dancers were rare; *Duo* dancers remember being excited by this occurrence. Dancer van Berkel recalled:

> We felt that it was for him [Forsythe] a moment (*she inhales audibly*) to let his inspiration [flow] and [follow] his desire of material … movement. We were not making the phrases at that moment together. He danced in front of us—with us. He … with his focus out, and we in the back … trying. And then of course Billy [Forsythe] always turns around, "Did you get a bit of an idea, or?" And it was filmed. Our film/video man [Nicholas Champion] was there. And he filmed everything.[24]

With less than three weeks until the premiere, and with three other short pieces to make in addition to *Duo*, Forsythe plans to invent the movement (or at least some of it) on this day, and then allow the dancers to learn it from the video—saving time. Champion's notes, which he makes in addition to filming, help the dancers reconstruct Forsythe's motion.

In the archival video, I observe Forsythe combining a small arc of his right hand with a few rhythmical steps falling backwards. Like a current of water passing turbulently across the bow of a ship, the waves of Forsythe's movements are caught by Johnson and van Berkel at different rates, as they absorb and think through what they see. The deliberate use of video recording means, as van Berkel explained, that the dancers need not save this movement to memory immediately; it can remain streaming, in a flow of invention—something Berkel differentiates as "dance," as opposed to "making."[25]

The unusual context of this rehearsal is relevant with regard to how the movement emerges. Because of the shortage of space (with only two studios) and the need to rehearse multiple pieces simultaneously, the dancers work within the theater foyer. This provisional space offers novelty to rehearsal: the dancers move upon a slippery wooden floor,[26] in the place where the audience typically drinks *Sekt* (German champagne) during the intermission, admiring the nighttime view over Frankfurt's inner city. During this afternoon rehearsal, taking place in daylight, the artists gaze out across the large vista of a park where trees and skyscrapers stretch up through the cold of winter. There

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23 See Chapter 4: The Dancers' Practices.

24 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

25 Ibid.

26 On the floors of dance studios and on stage, there is a special type of vinyl laid called Marley that is smooth and nonstick. Now mass-produced and used internationally, dancers across European and American dance schools and companies work on similar floors. This is an interesting example of the influence of mass-produced material conditions, central to the development of the dance profession across many genres (such as ballet, jazz, modern, contemporary). In the case of *Duo*, the normal rehearsal conditions were disrupted (by way of a different floor, a fresh view and perhaps no mirrors), leaving its mark on the dance.

is no mirror supporting self-reflection and study—as there is in Ballett Frankfurt's two rehearsal studios, where the dancers normally work.[27] Johnson recalls that the particular qualities of this atmosphere of the foyer were important for inspiring the work, specifying that the "vastness" and "beauty" of the space left a trace in the choreography.[28] Her partner van Berkel confirms:

> I must say that, for me, space has a very big influence. I don't know how much space for Jill was influencing. I think the atmosphere, definitely, for us all three made that moment that moment in the foyer. Because that is the material [of *Duo*]. The material is simply that. There is not much changed from that moment."[29]

Not just the space, but the incidence of being together there: excited but calm, intimately attuned, letting "Billy's" movement pour through and between their bodies.

The movements appear to pass through Forsythe's body first. Forsythe attempts to integrate a small arc of his right hand with a few steps moving backwards. Bringing together the multiple small steps with the singular longer arc of his arm incites a dialogue in his body to make the rhythms align. This movement—oversimplified in my textual translation—is highly complex. Without lurching, Forsythe's body bobs, intuitively synchronizing parts; his movement is integrated but not repeatable. He tries again and again. Eventually, Forsythe tells the dancers that he will change his approach. Instead of seeking continuity, he then tries to "break up" the movements. Variations appear to become more known, but not less variable. Like something slippery, the movement is not easy to grasp—to stabilize and remember—as a movement that can be reproduced.

On the fourth repetition of his hand arcing, Forsythe discovers a way to fall into the movement and sink into dis-balance. Gesturing to the dancers to come closer to him, he moves while explaining: a trajectory of the right hand moving towards the ring finger of his left hand. Johnson and van Berkel copy this action, more or less, and then Forsythe waits—holding his pose in suspense. This suspense, different from a pose, is still animated: the thinking-feeling of where one is now, to intuit what movement might come next. Forsythe, I believe, is open to have an association, an idea or a physical impulse. Van Berkel holds her pose clasping her ring finger expectantly. Johnson releases the pose to quietly review an aspect of what she has just learned. Making a small gesture, Forsythe physically sketches an idea, which then blossoms into a new part of the choreography: a way of falling to the right, while dipping the head. As the dancers catch onto the new motion in the sequence, Forsythe switches into a mode of describing and teaching—demonstrating a movement in miniature before explaining details (such as how the dancers should place the chin down to their hands and how the head should retrace the arc previously made by their hand).

He is aware of where the camera is; he is teaching the dancers in real time, as well as making verbal note of things that he expects them to review and memorize later on. His switching between inventing, gesturing and teaching is fluid—in that someone without

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27 The studios were equipped with mirrors hung with curtains—enabling them to be hidden when needed.

28 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

29 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

knowledge of the codes might not know what is instruction and what is 'the choreography.'[30] The focused mood is undisturbed by a female passerby in the foyer, speaking to a colleague. The trio of dancers keep their eyes on one another. They are intensely focused and, as van Berkel remembers, trying to keep "calm," while cooperating.[31]

"We needed each other to make this piece come out." Interview with Regina van Berkel, April 22, 2017.

REGINA: We know there was a moment called tree and it was outside, he said "the tree." So the movement started like that, for example. You know (*she marks the movement while speaking*) it kind of starts like this. It was not so much time we were there, and he improvised material and we were in the back trying to catch it and find details and look at each other. And we tried to stay calm. Sometimes you get energies that one dancer maybe wants to know it faster or better than the other one. Sometimes, dancers have a certain concurrence [competition] in those moments.

LIZ: Yes. Did you feel that then?

REGINA: No. That is what I mean. We didn't have that. Not from the first day. We needed each other to make this piece come out. It is such a special vibration when you are with Bill alone. And we were from the first moment on—like this trying to find the movement and giving each other strength. And I found that! I see that! You see that. We will find it out later!

LIZ: How did you work together after the first rehearsal?

REGINA: Next was to have those phrases in our body to present it to him again. We exchanged with him. We were ready to show him the material. We always (*her voice lifts up*) did the phrases together! It was not that one did that phrase and practiced that phrase alone. And then the other one practiced that phrase alone. No. We went always together to: let's try this phrase! Ok, this phrase! Shall we go there, a little? (*she vocalizes rhythmically*) *Ba ga ga*! Shall we try *be ga ga yeah*! Alright. I have difficulties there. Ok I wait for you. I wait for you. We felt, um, harmonized. But unspoken. It was not that we said to each other: "Now." We want to move together onstage. No! And that's how we are going to push the direction of the piece. No. Forget that … anyway forget that with Billy. That's the wonderful element of Billy. That it stays in such a live process. So, but for us in that moment, it gave us the right energy and hold, to make this material enter us. Feeling this was created in this very nice place with the nature view there. No mirror, ah. You do not look at yourself at the moment it is made. You don't go to your own body and check what the other body … no. You are just looking at him, and he looks at us. And we build new material. But for me, it was extremely him. I was so very thankful to receive that from him. In that moment. And we looked at him constantly on the tape. It was for me, a very special gift. Short gift though (*laughs*) in

30 Thanks to Timo Herbst for this insight.

31 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

> time. I remember that it was for me like … (*she vocalizes*) *Vlunk*! We just worked one and a half hours I think.

Together, the three artists continue inventing movement after movement, concatenating a new sequence until their bodies become warm—with Johnson and then Forsythe shedding their bulky sweatshirts. Their voices become animated as the mood seems to relax and the sequence starts to flow—with laughter, jokes and questions or observations from the dancers. As van Berkel explains, Forsythe gives movement but "*we* build new material together."[32] Johnson is more vocally active, while it is van Berkel who often "catches" the movement first with her body, creating waves of similar movements, with just a millisecond delay. They are precisely attuned to one another, though not (yet) perfectly synchronized; the dancers resonate Forsythe's invention.[33] They mimic, adapt, think, repeat and question. Together, they build.

Periods when Forsythe invents a sequence and the dancers actively soak up the movement behind him are followed by phases of cooperative review. At this point, the dancers and Forsythe alternate moving, talking and moving-while-talking. Speaking quickly and referencing the movement by marking, they palpate what they have invented minutes before, exchanging equally as interlocutors with shared responsibility, taking turns. Together, they remember. When they forget or diverge, they defer to one another for help. They pose questions. They invent further, including the dancers, who sometimes give suggestions by moving first. Forsythe also catches onto them: "Right!" They reiterate the concepts related to the movement, chorusing shorthand words that Forsythe has said earlier: "match," "ball change," "expand," "hip" and "over." They sing rhythms, such as "e ah," "ke ka" and "ba ba bum," switching easily in and out of language. They are focused, but also riding on each other's sentences and laughing in one another's company. The impulse of movement coming forth this way seems to make them extremely excited. They appear to delight in talking and moving together.

In this phase of the creation process, the focus is on inventing movement sequences rather than committing them to memory or perfecting performance. Attention is also on capturing and reciting details for the camera, to facilitate the next process of memorizing. The reviewing described above does not stop the motion from being made. It is a way of helping the process of invention become cooperative, serving to collectively grasp the movement that is passing through them so quickly, by sharing cognitive terms. Van Berkel and Johnson appear eager to display their knowledge and help whenever Forsythe asks, "What happens here?" When a gap appears that no one can fill, they agree to defer (later) to the video recording rather than waste precious time or lose momentum. At

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32 Emphasis (*we*) mine. Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

33 I take the metaphor of "catching" movement from the dancers. Johnson explains: "I remember Nick Champion being there filming, and Bill, I mean it was one of those things, it was just flowing through him, I mean we couldn't dance fast enough in a way, because the ideas were just pouring out and Regina and I we were behind him just trying to sort of catch everything we could." Van Berkel concurs independently: "It was not so much time we were there, and he improvised material and we were in the back trying to catch it and find details and looked at each other." Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016. Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

times, Forsythe speaks directly to the camera, addressing the future Johnson and van Berkel to guide their study: "choose a version here" or "the shoulder is way up high." The camera, powered by Champion's dedication to documentation, is a soothing token of security, allowing everyone to trust in simply following the flow of movement invention. Memorization can happen later. Humans and camera together create an apparatus for capturing movement.[34]

Though the dancers later describe the ideas "pouring out" of Forsythe, out of him personally, it is a social affair.[35] Forsythe is in the midst of the two dancers and attentive to each of them. While reviewing the first, still-fresh sequence, they come to a movement of the head, the coordination of which proves difficult. Forsythe comes before Johnson to touch her hands, explaining more of what he was thinking. From the provisional piece titled *Marion/Marion*, he had associated (in a wordplay) from Marion to marry-on, hence the idea of the ring finger (or, expanding on that, the idea to arc the right hand to grasp the ring on the ring finger). This movement would subsequently be named *goldfinger*. Forsythe then turns to van Berkel, holding her hands like he had just held Johnson's—guiding her chin and arm to launch them into an arc. In the rehearsal that follows, Forsythe addresses Johnson and van Berkel equally, including them, touching them, instructing them as the sequences come forth. He appears to be inspired both by and with them. In the short breaks they take together, the three artists clap and wiggle with excitement over the movement that they are producing. This reveals Forsythe's tacit awareness of the attention regime in place; his deliberate effort to be fair, equally generous and attentive.

As an outsider, watching these videos over twenty years later, I wonder how much the movement really comes from Forsythe? Though the movement does "pour out" of Forsythe, van Berkel and Johnson are seminal to the situation. It is because both they and the camera are there—as well as the deadline of the premiere—that the movement begins to emerge. It is also because all three, not only Forsythe, are exquisite movers, inspiring one another. Rather than compete, they all nurture the movement pouring forth. The movement is based upon their sharing and complicity, forming through the relay between their bodies. The movement is relational: through and through.

Forsythe helps the movements become known, or quasi-repeatable, by using his capacity to describe what he observes—in his own or the dancers' bodies—in words. He makes the movement graspable, helping it to endure. This is not a game as simple as choreographer moves and dancers imitate, but one where movement intention, encoded in language, must be fed forward into the flow of the three-fold imitation-game—the triangle of Forsythe, van Berkel and Johnson. Talking with abstract imagery and naming body parts seems to help, such as the arcs landing on a ring finger.[36]

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34 It might be worth emphasizing how difficult it is to improvise complex motions and remember them. The topic of movement and embodied memory is a central topic in dance studies. See Brandstetter, "Choreographie als Grab-Mal"; Siegmund, "Das Gedächtnis des Körpers in der Bewegung"; Wehren, *Körper als Archiv in Bewegung*, in particular pp. 147–59; and Bläsing, "The Dancer's Memory."

35 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

36 This is generally true in Forsythe's creations, reflecting methodology developed during the Ballett Frankfurt period. Forsythe's publication *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye* gives dozens of examples—showing how imagery of points, lines, planes and curves in space

Forsythe works with thinking-feeling abstraction. This phantasmagoria is fed by the unconscious (or the becoming conscious) without caring for psychodrama or psychoanalysis—more as *reverie*. Reverie and wordplay are modes of invention. Remember, Forsythe jumps associatively from "Marion" to "marry-on" and, to what will become a movement referencing a suitcase, he jokes in terms of a "carry-on." At the end of the rehearsal, Forsythe improvises another phrase while describing imagery and coaching execution, ending with the motion "turn on the shower"—what became *showerhead*.[37]

Within my research, neither the dancers nor Forsythe remembered references to Hitchcock's *Psycho*, a thread of the precursor piece *Marion/Marion* (1991), as important within the creative process. In my focus on the movement *showerhead*, I was the only one to fathom that this imagery could have sprung from Forsythe's imagination of the famous shower scene in *Psycho*. That this impulse was forgotten is helpful to illustrate the way that meaning-making is flexible and plural in this ensemble's creative work. The antecedents of *Duo* transformed quickly in the rehearsal chronology as the piece began to take shape—aspects forgotten and intentions found. The team's creative process is a weave of meaning-making, opening up an emergent and contingent process of cooperatively making movement.

In the creation of *Duo*, Forsythe's movement—more aptly, the movement passing *through* Forsythe—becomes *choreographic material*. Alongside this, sharing intention and communing abstractions are essential; yet dissensus also persists. *Showerhead* exemplifies this. As another example: Forsythe starts moving—swinging his right arm again, in an arc up and across his body, with greater energy than before. He describes this action as tracing the upper half-circle of a steering wheel—an association, I speculate, to the character of Marion, driving in *Psycho*. Humored by this description, van Berkel steps right up to him to grasp his shoulder and point to something she sees in the distance—laughing that she had imagined him gesturing over the visible treetops in the park. (In interviews over twenty years later, she again remembers the view as important to how the ideas were invented.) Johnson pitches in with equal enthusiasm, "I was thinking something else!"

This joke, that Forsythe's "steering wheel" can be van Berkel's "tree," is an indication of common understanding: they know that it is impossible to replicate one's inner imagination of movement intention, but they agree that it is essential to *try* and to share images. By talking about movement, they show that imagery is essential to making movement in *Duo* come alive—to turning improvisation into material for making choreography, for making the singular into something common, for making it endure. Choreography is a process between dancing and abstracting movement. Choreography makes movement a constructive tool, one that can build structures—structures that pliantly explore the borders of dissensus in consensus.

By the end of the rehearsal, seven sequences or "phrases" of movement have been produced, Forsythe generating them with increasing speed. These phrases are enough

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can be a generative means for improvising movements. Here we see another property of these abstractions: that they enable the remembering and transmitting of movement.

37 See Chapter 6: The Movement of *Showerhead*.

for Forsythe to craft nearly the entire sequence of *Duo*—making this rehearsal, focusing on movement sequence invention, one of a kind. This is why van Berkel remembers: "That is the material."[38] Gaining momentum as they work, verbal exchanges with the dancers become shorter. The last phrase of movement comes out intact in just two minutes, with Forsythe explaining his intention while he dances.[39] Finished, Forsythe walks forward slowly to sit down. He justifies, "I think it's enough. I think it's enough." His voice brightens with the remark, "I think that'll give you two days of material," to which the dancers laugh. He continues: "You know what we could do? You could theoretically … You could take … You could take the video …" The video tape cuts. The dancers remember that Forsythe asked them to take the video and review it alone in his office.

10.4.2 Office Work: Intimacy and Details

The second phase of rehearsals for *Duo* takes place in Forsythe's office, without the choreographer. This is a very unusual place for the dancers to rehearse, and there is no video record of this part of the process. Van Berkel and Johnson remember the office rehearsals fondly. In a room of approximately five by ten meters, Forsythe's office offered the dancers a place to, as Johnson described, "make sense" of the movement that Forsythe had previously invented.[40] It was, for van Berkel, also a place supporting intimate exchange about personal matters that were important to their lives in that moment—a safe space.[41] The dancers enjoyed being together. They appreciated having time to talk together, and they recognized how they needed each other to "make sense" of the complex movement recorded in the previous session.

The labor was pleasurable. Like two children, van Berkel remembers, the two women knelt closely, nearly touching, to review the videotape of the foyer rehearsal on a small viewing device. Analyzing the details of Forsythe's movement was important: Where did the movement begin? What were the complex chain reactions happening in his body? What parts of the body participated and what angles and trajectories did they take? The dancers also paid close attention to Forsythe's pedagogical explanations, about the dynamics and images helping to create the movement. Never overwhelmed, van Berkel and Johnson remember feeling curious and confident. Prepared by their previous years in the company, they had the diagnostic skills to learn this difficult movement material. And they had the security and pleasure of having one another, recognizing each other as gifted and capable artists. The work alternated between kneeling on the floor to study the video and standing up to learn the movement, checking their image here and again in the small mirror in front of them. In breaks they shared personal stories, learning more fully about each other.

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38 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

39 This is the unison sequence of *Duo* van Berkel calls *poumphathan* and Johnson *paaahhpapadum* and I call *umpadump*, after Watts and Gjoka.

40 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

41 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

Although studying movement from video was common practice in Ballett Frankfurt, not all dancers were able to learn movement as fluently as Johnson and van Berkel.[42] Learning sequentially from Forsythe's first action to the next, Johnson and van Berkel smooth the lurches between steps and make sense of the gaps, forming a set of nine sequences or "phrases." To entertain and facilitate the process, they give the phrases and steps nicknames—relying especially upon Johnson's verbal wit. Some decisions were prefigured by Forsythe, who had spoken directly to the camera in the last rehearsal, saying things such as: "That was three versions. I think the first one was good! Take one." They did not take liberties, says Johnson, but they did make decisions, says van Berkel.[43]

As an ethnographer, I was very curious how Forsythe's movement, itself brimming with multiple versions, could come to animate two bodies in unison—a synchrony with close similarity that did not exclude subtle difference. Laughing and speaking warmly during an interview in Frankfurt, van Berkel tells me, "We felt trustful together to say: well, once he does that, and once he does that, we can do this." She demonstrates figuring out how far to reach an arm: "The mirror was only there to make aesthetic decisions. Let our arm go on here, ok—yes." In the office rehearsal, both dancers started to fill their notebooks with ideas to help them learn—van Berkel in her native language of Dutch and Johnson in her mother tongue of English. These decisions enabled consensus between them that still recognized that no two people can be the same. Van Berkel concurs: "I have a very strong belief that each individual is so different, and nobody can actually be concurrent [competitive] or against somebody else. Because we are not the same. We cannot be the same."[44]

Rehearsing in "Billy's" office was exceptional in the culture of Ballett Frankfurt. More typical was the taking home of a video to review at night, working without a rehearsal director or on one's own when a studio was free, studying movement from the notes in one's notebook; these were all common supplements to rehearsals. This reflects how—in comparison to classical ballet culture—Ballett Frankfurt dancers had a different rehearsal practice, demonstrating greater autonomy and responsibility.

Expanded styles of rehearsal were paralleled by the artists significantly questioning assumptions and practices about *how* to participate in creating and reproducing choreography. One example, relevant to *Duo*, is whether the choreographer's movement must be upheld as the authority to be imitated—an original, so to say, to be modeled—or seen as a draft to be further embellished? A related question, pertaining to dancers learning *Duo* after the premiere, was whether a prior pair of dancers' movements should be learned precisely by a younger generation, or whether there was a logic for how it could transform. From my interviews and observations of practice, the dancers showed

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42 In the next rehearsal, Forsythe remarks to an observer in German: "There are some … that when I demonstrate, they can take it directly from the television: Dana [Caspersen], these two [Johnson and van Berkel], a few others. It is really amazing. It is difficult to take it from television." Translation by the author.

43 Email exchange with Jill Johnson, June 29, 2017. Interview with Regina van Berkel, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

44 All citations in this paragraph: Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

differences of opinion regarding how closely one should adhere to Forsythe's or another dancer's movement demonstration. Some dancers believed in the value of attempting exact replication, others believed in translation from one body to another, and some were confident in the necessity of letting the past be the past and finding a personal version, in the here and now. Pairs had to negotiate these differences, to find consensus.

What the dancers agreed upon was that Forsythe's demonstrations and prior dancers' work were references, to be respected and studied rigorously—that is, not to be disregarded or disrespected. They concurred that these precedents were inspiring, even when such antecedents could and should evolve. It cannot be overstated how important the process of learning from Forsythe and other dancers' movement was to the culture of the company—an intersubjective process. In the case of *Duo*, both Johnson and van Berkel were extremely "thankful" to receive the movement from Forsythe. Van Berkel described this as "good material." It was for her "precious." It was a "gift."[45]

The transmission of the movement from Forsythe's body to a dancer's body is a process that gives movement agency, or potential. The time it takes, and the time passing between original and copy, enables something new to happen—it is not immediate. Even with a "gift" like the movement of *Duo*, the dancers must take great care, to learn and reconstruct the movement, to enable it to carry on. Noting how this can be confusing to new dancers trained in traditional systems of dance education, dancer Antony Rizzi explains:

> Eventually the work comes from the dancers. […] At a certain point the work is left from Billy and now it's the dancer's. A lot of times Billy will say, you know—when something's going and the dancer hasn't developed the thing. And they've … 'specially to newer people and they don't understand, and they're like, he's like, "I've given you a skeleton. All it is a skeleton. And now you have to, like, fill it in."[46]

Van Berkel offered a different metaphor, of working with a "puzzle."[47] Puzzling for her comprised of zooming into the details—carefully examining each movement before reconstructing the whole picture or phrase. She attuned to sensations, forms, proprioception (where a limb is in space, relative to the body) and rhythm (entrainment within the body).

The practical logic of zooming into details of the movement puzzle were defined by each dancer's individual body and body logic, requiring each dancer to follow their own timing and inquiry. But critically, and this point cannot be underemphasized, they did this investigation *together*—side by side, in the same small room. They gave one another time. They looked inward, somatically, at the same moment. They looked frequently over at their partner, to find a common flow, or to learn from what they could see in the other. In my interview with her, van Berkel read sentences written in her notebook:

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45 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

46 Antony Rizzi, interviewed by director Mike Figgis: see Figgis, *Just Dancing Around*, 26:00–26:30.

47 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

"I'm there for you," "I hear you," "I will wait for you," "I see you," "I feel you," "I'm with you," "I change it with you," "I answer you."[48]

"You puzzle every single movement out in little parts." Interview with Regina van Berkel, April 22, 2017.

REGINA: We felt very … in a certain vibe in understanding the details—because that is also fascinating in Billy's work, you also analyze so many details: Where does the movement come from? And ah! It goes (*she vocalizes*) *gung gung*, there! Or it's from the shoulder and then the heel. You focus your brain every time to be very zoomed in to elements. It is like a looping eye [magnifying glass] you know? You look at the phrase not as an aesthetic outer view … You dive every time inside, which makes your view so … detailed. We were there, also, with our backpack already … You know, secure. I was already three years there and you know Jill, I think, I think a bit longer because she was already before me there. We felt trustful to go into that detail. We were not insecure. We believed that we can get these complicated movements. And that we can transform that, together.

LIZ: Can you speak about some of the details that you remember? What kind of details were important in the movement?

REGINA: That is again the puzzle situation. You puzzle every single movement out in little parts. And then it becomes a bigger part of a puzzle. And then the bigger part of the puzzle goes in the whole picture. So yes, you remember the elbow in your side (*she demonstrates "goldfinger" holding her right arm up, palm facing the ceiling, elbow attached to her torso*). And that it goes over the bow and goes into your finger and then you remember that feeling, the warmness of your elbow in the side of your body. But then at one point, it goes together and it's not so, anymore, maybe that detailed. But the process goes by very detailed. So, understanding located parts of your body. Parts that come together.

LIZ: This is another type of synchrony.

REGINA: Yeah, and details of where exactly, which angle of the head or … temperature. You know, the warmness when you have your elbow there (*she demonstrates it touching her side*). It's connected. It gives you a hold also, symbolically, it's a match-up. And also, the grabbing of the ring finger, or grabbing the foot—yeah. That's that kind of small detail in your own physic [physique]—what Jill experienced differently than me, I'm sure. But we went through all those details together. Each needed also maybe their own time a bit. We didn't have maybe straight away things, each one's so logical, but then we gave each other time: "Oh, I have to get that again." Okay, and we try it again. Or you look at each other and at how to find a way to flow the movement. I mean 'right' means harmonic for us together. There is no right or wrong in that way. And for me, that atmosphere was very special in that close, small space. I'm positive that it was

48 Ibid.

> also indirect a very special thing to be in his office. I don't know how much his office was nice place, but it felt good to be in his office, somehow. His space was for us a special place.

"Necessity was the mother of that invention because our dance company never had a lot of time to make the work," explains Forsythe.[49] In public commentary, such as this remark from 1999, Forsythe is transparent and pragmatic about needing to teach the dancers choreographic competence in order to make pieces quickly. In the case of *Duo*, there is critical time pressure to get the performance up and running in just short of three weeks. There is a scarcity of rehearsal space to do so and also a limit to the presence of choreographer, who has to be leading multiple and often parallel rehearsals. Forsythe's actions during the creative period making *Six Counter Points* demonstrate that he was adaptive and resourceful within the municipal theater system (his qualities in stark contrast to the slow, bureaucratic workings of the institution at large), harnessing spaces such as the foyer or the office. Also, Forsythe cultivated a working culture of self-motivation, offering dancers independence uncommon within the framework of classical ballet, where supervised rehearsals are the norm for all but the very highest principal dancers.[50]

Johnson and van Berkel's personal exchanges during the office rehearsals are essential to developing the intimacy which is pertinent to *Duo.* From my interviews, it was revealing to find that the closeness of bonding and studying movement in Forsythe's office will produce a type of synchrony that gives character to *Duo*. This is indicative of the type of emergent potential evoked by being creative in Ballett Frankfurt: a sort of listening to what is being produced, under and through particular conditions. The dancers are certain that *Duo* holds the traces of these rehearsal spaces—from the inspiring vastness, beauty and novelty of working in the theater foyer, to the closeness and intimacy of working in Forsythe's office space.

10.4.3 First Studio Rehearsal: Conceptual Pacts

In van Berkel's notebook, the first studio rehearsal is dated January 6, 1996—a Saturday.[51] The archival videotape jumps directly into the scene, showing Johnson and van

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49 See Kaiser, "Dance Geometry."

50 An example of a rehearsal called by the principal dancers without the choreographer occurs in Maiorano and Brooks' investigation of Balanchine's creation of *Mozartiana*. See Maiorano and Brooks, *Balanchine's Mozartiana*, pp. 146–49.

51 Keeping notes was a practice common in Ballett Frankfurt; dancers Allison Brown, Jill Johnson and Regina van Berkel all referred to their process of note-taking and the information they had recorded about *Duo*. The dancers' notebooks contained information about the steps and choreographic structures, as well as corrections and coaching from Forsythe. Additionally, archivist Nicholas Champion kept detailed rehearsal logs. *Répétiteur* David Morrow also kept rehearsal logs and comprehensive notes on the development of pieces longitudinally. The latter were kept in small notebooks that he could conveniently take on tour. Forsythe also commonly kept a notebook. In The Forsythe Company, *DUO2015* dancers Riley Watts and Brigel Gjoka rarely took notes. A software called Piecemaker was created for video archive storage and annotation by dancer David Kern, which shifted the focus and process of note-taking, centralizing and digitizing notes.

Figure 36. Video still of the first studio rehearsal of Duo, *January 6, 1996. From left to right: Regina van Berkel, Jill Johnson and William Forsythe.*

Photo © William Forsythe.

Berkel dancing in unison, Johnson to van Berkel's left—the same positions they took in the foyer, and the relationship that will become the primary constellation of *Duo*. Without Forsythe between them, they focus predominantly on each other. They are again wearing sweatpants, T-shirts and socks: van Berkel in white and sea green, with a bandana around her long neck; Johnson in black, about to put on a woolen pair of leg warmers. The back side of the ballet studio is littered with small snapshots. Broad windows and a balcony flood the room with light, offering an exquisite view over the south side of Frankfurt-Sachsenhausen.

Forsythe is off camera, heard but not seen. He sits or stands at the front of the room by the mirror—taking the usual place of a rehearsal director, aligned with the view of the audience. His role has changed since the last rehearsal he had with the dancers, when he stood in close proximity to the dancers, giving impetus to the field as the movement inventor. His gaze now becomes more important, with the dancers ready and nervous to show him what they have prepared in the office. Over the course of the rehearsal, the light transitions from daylight to evening blue to darkness; the movement phrases that Forsythe invented—and the dancers have learned and named—become a new common material that Forsythe himself can dig into. The dance progresses from sequence fragments to a growing whole—the days dissolve into the weekend.

Van Berkel remembers that it was a "delicate" moment: that they had "those phrases in our body to present it to him again" but they did not want to "look from the outside to ourselves." They did not want to break the harmony they had, or be sent off in a different creative direction—as was common in Forsythe's changing creative process. They

wished to develop the experience they made in the office, which had grown meaningful to the artists; to not lose it to the effects of different contexts or demands. It was risky but still imbued with trust. Rudi Laermans captures these stakes well when he writes: "cooperative work of the creative sort cannot do without a serious dose of reciprocal confidence: the risk that a co-creation process may go wrong is exchanged for the risk of mutual trust."[52] In this moment of palpable pitfalls, the team members know that doubt can snowball. In this *Duo* rehearsal they manage to synergize. The dancers' confidence in Forsythe increases their self-confidence. In parallel, Forsythe's confidence in the dancers enhances his conviction to make choreographic decisions. Laermans calls this: "joint faith."[53]

From the outside, this delicacy is barely evident through the medium of video: the atmosphere seems relaxed as the women review in synchrony, vocalizing a bit—with breathing and tones that help cohere their action. Their timings are comfortable and elastic: waiting for each other when one person's movement takes longer, or when someone has a glitch in memory. Such solidarity was essential to *Duo*. Working so quickly to learn this volume of material was a cognitive challenge even for these intelligent artists.

Forsythe watches, offering remarks here and there about how a movement can be accentuated or revised. He absorbs the two women intently, almost in reverse of what occurred in the foyer, when they were listening or paying attention to *him*. When the dancers pause, Forsythe asks them to continue—to allow him more time to watch and refresh his "vague memories" of the last rehearsal. Watching their movement in the stu-

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52 This, and all subsequent citations in this paragraph, see Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 339 (italics in the original). Klein also observes that Pina Bausch's creative process with her company involved fragile negotiations of uncertainty, risk and trust; see Klein, *Pina Bausch's Dance Theater*, p. 197.

53 Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 339. I concur with Laermans' critical observations on trust, based upon my experience as a dancer in Forsythe's ensembles. Laermans finds that the fragile trust between dancers and choreographer is constantly at stake and in negotiation during a choreographic process. While trust is risked from moment to moment, it is also built and forecast long-term. Longstanding trust is forged when a choreographer can repeatedly make novel performances and knowledgeably direct the dancers, and when a dancer is able to contribute consistently over many years to the satisfaction of the choreographer. In companies where relationships between dancers and choreographers are long-term investments, Laermans observes that a choreographer's decisions may involve the maintenance of trust as opposed to what is 'best' choreographically (i.e., by including contributions from all dancers equally, or not rejecting material from a trusted collaborator, and so on). Laermans also notes the complicated vulnerability and psychological complex through which dancers may feel hurt when they do not receive recognition or affirmation by a choreographer; for example, when she or he does not put their "material" into the performance, or worse, gives it to another dancer; see ibid., pp. 300–10. Laermans observes, "artistic trust generates both a general climate encouraging dancers' autonomy and a relatively non-disputed sense of heteronomous authority, legitimating the choreographer's directivity." Ibid., p. 340 (italics in the original). Some but not all *Duo* dancers, supported all the above aspects noted by Laermans. Some Forsythe dancers were also ambivalent about Forsythe's authority. As I show here, in *Duo*'s creation, delicate moments when trust could be broken and hurt inflicted were largely avoided because of polite communication, the dancers' pact of togetherness and Forsythe's division of attention equally between Johnson and van Berkel. *Duo* was an atypically harmonious and a continuous creation in comparison to other examples from Forsythe's repertoire.

dio provides a common ground and helps Forsythe presumably shift into third-person knowledge of the movement.

Forsythe has authority: "There you are different!" he calls out. "Lean over more there. Don't round your shoulders Regina." To Johnson, on a particular flat movement of the hands: "Be careful of your thumbs." Between directives, compliments: "Oh my god, you guys are really observant."

The delicacy that van Berkel remembers is the subtle, yet palpable potentiality of creation. At that special moment, no one knew where the creation was going. The dancers did not know what Forsythe would do. From the interaction I observe on the video, Forsythe also appears to be in a mode of trying out. Berkel reflects that although it was unspoken, she and her partner "did not want to be put up towards each other" or "torn apart"—they did not want one or the other dancer to be "pointed out as better."[54] Forsythe—whether explicitly or implicitly—gives attention, feedback, compliments, and touch in equal proportions. Johnson and van Berkel's friendship together with the sheer difficulty of the task facing them, was a sort of protection from competition: they needed one another to enact this difficult movement.

In their fluid mastery of the motion, the dancers show that they have come to a harmonic consensus. They do not look perfectly identical, but the coordination animates their different bodies very similarly. Steps launch and pull directly from one to the next, showing the accomplishment of a narrative or sequential memory: from steps to a *phrase*. The dancing looks new—having shed Forsythe's rhythms and groove from the last rehearsal, it acquires another form of torsional liquidity. The interior vibrations of Forsythe's body, the discontinuities of weight, have been smoothed and infused with ballet technique. (In hindsight, van Berkel remarks, what has been lost is almost a shame, even though what they found—together—proved to be so enduring and rich.)[55] Transitions have been made. Integral memory has been achieved. Some details of the movement have been forgotten or lost (such as Forsythe's rhythm, looseness and informal performance), but other aspects have been added (perfection of *épaulement*, attenuation of line and clearer flow between actions). To my eye, this *Duo* is now recognizably the *Duo* of the premiere. The previous dancing in the foyer was closer to Forsythe's body and quality of movement. The movement now is a co-movement—that is, a consensus that Johnson and van Berkel bring forth.[56]

Forsythe appears to want to get back in the middle: to direct and shape what they have made possible. Using dancer Antony Rizzi's metaphor, the flesh they have given to his "skeleton" now can be set in motion: relationally, between one another, and in time and space. A structure can be built, organizing the movement. It is already com-

54 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

55 Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Zürich, May 5, 2017.

56 This is neither strictly dialectic nor dialogic. As in dialectic processes, the dancers' co-movement involves negotiating and adapting differences, but these are not initially posed as thesis/counter-thesis, nor are they completely resolved in synthesis. Like dialogic processes, the co-movement remains in process and under negotiation. Here I develop my remarks from Richard Sennett's discussion of dialectic and dialogic conversations; see Sennett, *Together*, pp. 18–20.

monly agreed that Forsythe has the authority to make decisions about what possible movements will be chosen and organized.[57]

To do so, Forsythe needs to "grasp" the movement: to use it and build a structure with it. Language serves that purpose well, creating markers that the team can share to further engage in the material.[58] The phrases, and some steps, have been given names chosen by the dancers. Johnson and van Berkel have written them in their notebooks, in different languages and with different spellings—Johnson in English and van Berkel in Dutch. Forsythe listens to the dancers to understand the names that they have invented or remembered from the last rehearsal, asking: "What do you call that?" "How do you begin it?" "What do you call this?" "How do you spell it?" He writes bizarre titles for movements like "egyptian" and "snakedress" down in his notebook, and jokes with the dancers about the names that offer ambiguity—one phrase they riff is called "poumphathan," "pump it up," "pump a dump," "paaahhpapadum," or "papadum," and so on.

The practice of naming is highly playful and associative: rhythms inherent in the movement, or funny things that happened while they were practicing (such as a dancer walking by singing, "nah-nuh").[59] The names have many variations, given the complex rhythms and strange word play that they put together. They do not need to be singular to

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57 Compare to Laermans, *Moving Together*, pp. 350–51.

58 Dance scholar Katarina Kleinschmidt's meticulous praxeological research of concept-building in contemporary dance rehearsal argues that building concepts are generic, generative routines across many choreographic teams' processes, requiring little justification for their employment. Kleinschmidt designates two levels: naming (of movement material or improvisation tasks and qualities) and concept-building, in which principles are systematized. In *Duo* rehearsals, I observe only the former. Kleinschmidt argues that naming serves cooperation by designating an episode as material for further use and enabling discussion between people about the same phenomenon (such as the motivation, intention and what works and does not work). Naming intertwines with the movement, as a learning device and memory prompt, and also through conceptualizing aspects that may inform properties of the movement. Naming can also save energy, for example when the dancers recite names while marking (that is, moving with reduced energy). All these occur in this *Duo* rehearsal. Unlike in Kleinschmidt's examples, in *Duo* I did not observe concepts being named or exchanges about what a concept meant. In *Duo,* there was coherency of names in the pairs but not always across pairs of different generations, supporting Kleinschmidt's argument. In my view, naming in *Duo* serves: (1) the dancers' memorization, (2) Forsythe's desire to structure the performance, (3) the dancers' rehearsal, such as choosing where to start and (4) feedback. The concepts that the dancers need to make the work (concepts such as unison, counterpoint, cues or sorts of imagery and tasks) are all understood by the dancers by their prior work in the ensemble. See Kleinschmidt, *Artistic Research als Wissensgefüge*, pp. 130–63. This practice of "nicknaming" pieces and steps is found to be widespread in ballet. See Wulff, *Ballet Across Borders*, pp. 90–92.

59 As Kleinschmidt notes, naming in dance rehearsals often has the iconic function of a sign. See Kleinschmidt, *Artistic Research als Wissensgefüge*, pp. 140–42. For example, in *Duo* the term *goldfinger* represents a property of the movement in which Forsythe spoke about a ring on the ring finger. This was humorously further associated to James Bond and the film *Goldfinger* (1964). The discussion of the name *poumphathan/paaahhpapadum/umpadump* is an example of rhythmic onomatopoeia and alliteration, turning the movement's rhythm into a name. It interesting that, despite the vocabularies varying slightly from person to person, they function in practice. Also, intriguing is how the names change longitudinally. Systematic study of this variance and change was unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

function as common referents for the movement. They serve as oral shared references, or "conceptual pacts," that are close enough to function.[60]

Forsythe further directs and shapes the movement through verbal interjection and prosodic coaching of dynamics, alliterating rhythms to help create more complex polyrhythms. The dancers refine their knowledge and movement execution through dialogue with each other and with Forsythe. When needed, Forsythe steps in to show or correct a movement: walking into the frame of the camera to explain the flatness of a plane, or to touch Johnson's hands. Again and again, he is encouraging, motivating, complimenting: "Beautiful, ladies" and extending his vowels: "V*ee*ry v*ee*ry good." He honors their pact of supporting one another.

"Yes, that's how you whisper the word inside." Interview with *Duo* Dancer Regina van Berkel, April 22, 2017.

REGINA: (*referring to her* Duo *notebook*) Phrase 1 starts with the right hand on the right side. We call it "goldfinger." Then there was a phrase 2, and that was "carrying on"—we had a certain suitcase in which we moved carrying on, heel, heel. And then there is a phrase 2B, it's a continuation with the *arabesque*. Phrase 3, I have called "tree." Phrase 4 is "snakedress." And phrase 5 is "surfman Joe." And then ballet combination 1: "nah-nuh" (*laugh*). The good thing is that Jill, […] we are very different persons. Jill cracked me up! Jill is such a funny person, in her face and in her humor. Yes. Then there is ballet combination 2: "enough of that," and then ballet combination 3 is "poumphathan."

LIZ: How do you spell that?

REGINA: (*she spells*) p-o-u-m-p-h-a-t-h-a-n (*then repeats the phrase, which she pronounces in three syllables: poom-PA-than*) "poumphathan" (*she then writes it down to show Liz*).

LIZ: Ah! (*laughs*) In 2015 that word has turned into "umpadump" (*pronounced in three syllables: UMP-pa-dump*)! I am not sure how to spell that.

REGINA: (*she laughs*) Yes, that's how you whisper the word inside. Maybe there are different versions, because I am a Dutch person, so maybe Jill wrote it slightly differently, I don't know.

LIZ: Yes. It's interesting, Ballett Frankfurt dancers kept notes in their notebooks. Forsythe Company dancers less so. It was more oral.

"So, it was an alliteration." Videoconference Interview with *Duo* Dancer Jill Johnson, June 28, 2018.

LIZ: My next question is about "umpadump."

60 Brennan and Clark, "Conceptual Pacts and Lexical Choice in Conversation." See also Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*," p. 4.

> JILL: (*laughs*) I would need to check my *Duo* notebook. My recollection is that it was "paaahpapadum." (*She pronounces this in four syllables: pah-PA-pa-dum*)
>
> LIZ: Oh, this is so great! I was calling it "umpadump" because that is what I heard from Riley [Watts] and Brigel [Gjoka]. But I recognize that this is a chain. Can you tell me yours again?
>
> JILL: What is coming to mind is "paaaahhh papadum" (*She pronounces this: paah-PA-pa-dum*). Like it followed the first rhythm of Bill, or us trying to do the movement. Alliteration. Like bend: "pah" (*she marks the gestures of her arms while speaking*), then "papadum." So, it was an alliteration. So, you *plié* in fifth [position] first and then the hand that bounces off.
>
> LIZ: Oh! That is a totally different rhythm than "umpadump." On a video, I watch you riff on it. "Papadum," "Pump it up," "Pump a dump."
>
> JILL: (*laughs*)

In the second part of the rehearsal, Forsythe experiments with the music for *Duo*, asking the dancers to try the movement to a piece of what Johnson remembers was "beautiful" choral music—the voice of a woman singing, with mandolin-like accompaniment.[61] Johnson recalls, in an interview over twenty years later, the miraculous way that the music and the movement fit: the movement sequence ending at the same time as the music, as if by magical serendipity.[62] In the archival video, Forsythe also seems very pleased. But it is too early to commit; he is exploring possibilities. The dancers, trusting Forsythe, and sensing potential with him, are content to explore options.

Duo has not yet been named *Duo*. The rehearsal tapes are still labeled under the working title: *Marion/Marion*. By the last hour of rehearsal, the piece seems to be finding identity, through the movement quality, the performers have developed and the clarity of the phrase work. After the women finish the phrase called "snakedress," Forsythe makes a declaration:

> Ok fierce: (*emphasizing each word*) I—love—that. Ok, I am not going to write that down. Because what I am gonna do […] I am gonna do the majority of the thematic, I think, as *unisono* [unison], it is so impressive ladies, it's really beautiful, wow. And then when we get to a certain point, I am going to use *snakedress*. We'll do *snakedress*, and begin to connect it to all the other themes and then just do a very brief, extraordinary counterpoint. (*the phone rings, Regina van Berkel and Jill Johnson return to marking and discussing snakedress*).

This statement does not ring with the conclusive nature of an epiphany or decision. Forsythe's tone is very friendly, and the phone interrupts. The declaration does not progress into "talking dance" in which the choreographer substantiates his decision-

61 This is ancient music from the 14th century. The CD was given to Forsythe by composer Thom Willems. In David Morrow's notes, he labeled this source the "Ars Magis." David Morrow, email to the author, July 26, 2017.

62 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

making and dialogues with the performers.[63] The two dancers return to working on their own, still intent to master the movement *snakedress*, which has unusual properties of syncopation of arms and legs. Forsythe, known to experiment extensively in creation, has expressed a possibility. (As we shall see, this is indeed what he proceeds to develop in the next rehearsals.)

After the interruption of the phone call, the dancers "run-through" the sequence of actions Forsythe has strung together during this rehearsal.[64] Timing them, Forsythe notes that the women have learned a sequence of six minutes of movement during one rehearsal. An onlooker is amazed, and Forsythe as well, because they have built so much choreography so quickly. Forsythe again praises the artists for their "brilliant" work, for swiftly absorbing so much information. *Duo* speeds forward, based on the performers' prior skill of incorporating movement and relating it between them. The first delicate moment has been passed and—attributable to the women's will to stay together—*Duo* has found form, centering on side-by-side performance of mutual entrainment.

10.4.4 Second Studio Rehearsal: Structuring *Duo*

Figure 37. Video still of the artists talking before the second studio rehearsal of Duo, *circa January 6, 1996. From left to right: Regina van Berkel, Jill Johnson, William Forsythe.*

Photo © William Forsythe.

63 Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 353.

64 A "run-through" means performing from start to finish without stopping.

"That was a beautiful communication." Interview with Regina van Berkel, April 22, 2017.

REGINA: We were not reflecting too much. There was more trying to be open for what is coming. Trying to be free … also in that studio, in that moment when Billy watched, to be free to show in that moment your experience with this. Not the energy of doubt or nervousness, or maybe an energy comes up that we are put against each other. Billy also didn't say much. I cannot remember if things were good or not. It was just there.

LIZ: […] Do you remember the next step from phrases to the sequence of *Duo*? Do you remember how it happened, that you started doing different material and then coming back in to unison? Because in the last rehearsal, you were almost always demonstrating in unison.

REGINA: That happened in that day when he structured it. But I think our desire not to be alone in that piece and each speaking another phrase was a very strong demanding/timing. I think. We didn't speak about that. That's something of reflecting 21 years later—my instinct of thinking back and putting my feelings in words a little bit. I think we went back and forth a little bit. "You maybe start" and then, ok, uhm, we do that, ok. "Maybe you go back there?" "Or can you do then that phrase Regina?" It happened quickly. At one point I just write the whole order out [in my notebook].

LIZ: When I reviewed the video, I was struck that Bill had to relearn the names, so that he could move with you—direct things. Talk to you. He doesn't get up and move very much in the second rehearsal.

REGINA: No, no, no, no, no, no!

LIZ: I hear his voice, so he's off camera most of the time, and it sounds like a pleasant exchange.

REGINA: Yeah, yes. I cannot speak for him, but my feeling was there was maybe in the moment before, maybe a little blackout or a little, let's say, a "doubt" of the order of the phrase. That was a beautiful communication.

LIZ: And opportunities presented themselves. For example, there is one complex movement (*I demonstrate an Alignment*). I watched it [being assembled] and it looked like you would follow the curves and open with one foot and Jill on the other foot—it was symmetric, not identical—and then it became: "oh, that's fine," and then you just changed legs. It seemed very organic, including blackouts and findings.

REGINA: Yes, so that's how it went. I don't know, but I have the feeling that he took that. That's a beauty of Bill, that he also really sees in those moments what's coming. I had the feeling it was a unique moment of us in that desire which I cannot define. I also believe certain things are not to be put in words, that's the magic of it all. Of course, you can try to find out, and now, 21 years later, I can definitely say: space, absolutely, the person, character, absolutely. I think if you do a cast, you almost have to look how the

characters of the people are. (*laughs*) Well, character is maybe too complex. Well, that's anyway the question! Do you want to reproduce something that had this situation? Or do you like to use the material and see what comes up with different characters? 'Cause *Duo* could also be representative of an ugly concurrence [competitive] duo piece. Or in bits harmonically, and in bits not. Or not synchronized and irritating, let's say. I don't know. Since I also choreograph, it's fascinating to not hold on to things that happen, but to believe that things are happening [because] of a very unique energy state. Of course, you can study that I think, again and again. We both wanted to be together. The basic issue was: "we want to be together." I'm here for you and you are there for me. And I'm not here for me.

LIZ: And why? Why did you want to be together?

REGINA: We […] through that we could give ourselves, really, we could be ourselves, in that form. It's a certain support to each other to be yourself in that moment. And we held on, in that way I believe we took Billy with us. And it's also, I remember—I don't know if Jill has expressed that—but in the moment structuring, there comes a little bit oh, this phrase, or now she goes there but I want to come back to her again … You know? You don't want to go too long: you alone that phrase, and I alone that phrase. Somehow you want to come back again. So, the puzzle starts, the structure starts. And, you know, we indirectly also gave tempi, by knowing we want to be together, somehow.

10.4.5 First Time on Stage: Intimate Reversals

The shift in rehearsal from the dance studio to the stage is a giant leap—the scale and context of the theater change the habitat of working and the participants' perception of the "studio-born" choreography.[65] Forecasting the audience's perception becomes critical: How might this dance be perceived? To imagine the audience's perspective, Forsythe must move away from the dancers and adopt distance. From my experience, Forsythe often chose to delay this, and this is indeed what takes place in *Duo*'s stage rehearsals. In the video documentation of January 10, 1996—the first stage rehearsal—Johnson and van Berkel are on the stage of the Opera with Forsythe, inhabiting the vast space like an intimate studio. Forsythe has postponed the final step—to move back and sit in the tech booth or in the audience. This suggests that he wants to continue to work intimately: with his body, his voice and the interaction of dancer-choreographer in the studio. There is, fortunately, still time—ten days until the premiere.

65 American choreographer Doris Humphrey notes in her manifesto *The Art of Making Dances* (1959): "One of the peaks of anxiety in choreography is that moment when the studio-born dance is transferred to the stage. Immediately space works magical and often appalling differences. Distance has weakened almost everything about the dance. Dynamics are not so strong, personalities are dimmer, timing looks slower […]. Also, there is a seeming illogicality in the fact that detail is much more apparent at a distance. One would think that small movements and inaccuracies would be easier to see at close range. Not so, in practice." Humphrey, *The Art of Making Dances*, p. 161.

Figure 38. Video still of the first stage rehearsal of Duo, *January 10, 1996. From left to right: David Morrow, William Forsythe, Regina van Berkel, Jill Johnson.*

Photo © William Forsythe.

Figure 39. Video still of the first stage rehearsal of Duo, *January 10, 1996. From left to right: Regina van Berkel, William Forsythe, Jill Johnson.*

Photo © William Forsythe.

The stage rigging is lowered, so there is no theatrical lighting—just work lights. A few chairs are at the front; Forsythe sits on a table, his jacket thrown beside him. In silence, he watches the women perform the structure that he has set in the last studio rehearsal, his left hand on his hip, hunched forward. Beside him, *répétiteur* David Morrow sits partially hidden behind a stereo. Between them is a device for communicating on the loudspeaker to the technicians. The camera zooms in and out. The women are caught in the middle of a unison phrase, both in practice clothes that make them look like harlequins: each wears a white T-shirt, van Berkel in sea-green pants, Johnson in orange. The only sound is of their bodies, folding, stepping, brushing and breathing.

They pass through the sequence with ease, without any rising action or intensity—the typical push in the middle that often occurs in Forsythe's dramaturgies. After the women finish, Johnson looks down, clears her throat and walks forward, perhaps listening to the indiscernible remarks Forsythe is making to Morrow. Van Berkel releases her arms with a flung gesture that dissipates her presence sideways into the space. She steps a bit nearer to Johnson, but also lets herself breathe; both are panting. Because of their grace, one can easily forget how difficult this movement is to execute. Forsythe rises to his feet and, with two soothing vocal waves, reassures the artists: "Very, very good. Very, very good." The women rise from their resting positions. Van Berkel smiles; Johnson responds, good-naturedly, "I was thinking while doing it, he's not going to like this." They talk and laugh, all mirroring the same posture: hand on hips, relieving tension in their lower backs. Together they seem to be satisfied with the arrival into the theater space and the potential for their current piece to take root here, in its new habitat.

The first critique is regarding the movement: Johnson and van Berkel display a professional allegiance to performing the movement with coordinative rigor, performing the movement identically. At this stage in the process, Forsythe however is interested in both identity and difference. This attention to difference is new since the last rehearsal. For example, when they ask Forsythe a specific question regarding a discrepancy in their arms, he comments that he prefers that they actually do it differently. After they try a problematic section again and miss their alignment to synchronize a motion, a conversation begins about how to perform it correctly. Forsythe runs between the two women, gesturing with both hands waving above his head, as if trying to stop a cat fight—lightly dissipating their questions and enforcing that they do not have to come to consensus here.

In the rehearsal that follows, Forsythe focuses on drawing out their differences when they perform different actions, as well as using differences to find a new consensus. At one moment, he prompts Johnson to improvise a funky version of ballet jumps (*gargouillades*), to which they all laugh, Johnson riffing that she has "hoochie class." Judiciously balancing his attention and the dancers' potential to solo in the composition, he searches for something similarly ornate for van Berkel, proposing a traveling sequence with a flurry of taps and ornamental gestures of the legs sideways and back. "Differentiate things" he vocalizes, demonstrating what he means while grooving in his black high-top sneakers. When the bustle of movement results in discoordination, frustrating her, he touches her hands, comes near and gives her time—to encourage incorporation of this way of grooving that does not come naturally. She remarks, this way of "going back-

wards and forwards at the same time" is extremely difficult. But later van Berkel shows her own prowess at another moment in the sequence—bending her body backwards while rising up from the floor. Perhaps noting the opportunity to boost her, Forsythe expresses satisfaction and asks for Johnson to try the same; "unfair advantage" quips Johnson, always quick with her sense of humor. They all laugh. This give and take, challenge and attempt, seems to be an enjoyable type of comradery. Now Forsythe builds individual elements into the dance, carefully proportioned to be fair and just.[66]

Having sketched the initial choreographic structure within the previous two studio rehearsals, at this moment Forsythe finds opportunities to increase the complexity of this structure—organizing relations of Johnson and van Berkel's movement that he expects to challenge the spectator's attention. These micro-alignments and semi-correspondences are more intricate to arrange than the previous contrapuntal sections. As such, they also require more refined skills of pedagogy and direction for Forsythe to set them in motion. Some opportunities need only to be caught—accidents or mishaps that prove advantageous. Other choreographic decisions are deliberately produced through effort. For example, grasping a chance moment where the dancers end in alignment, Forsythe yells "Good!", then both go into the next movement together. Forsythe continues to direct: "I want you [Johnson] to go forward then I want you to reverse backwards and sideways to Regina [van Berkel]." Johnson understands that she is to rewind her previous steps; she improvises a solution that Forsythe approves. Building momentum, Forsythe adds more: new reversals, a short insert (a *non sequitur*) of new, fast, isolated motions for both women, and a few intervals where one or both dancers walk backwards in curved spiraling paths. Forsythe crafts subtleties, where the performers change from pure unison to being synchronized in time, with contrast in the angle of their bodies. At one point he asks the dancers to find a way to change their places, so that Johnson is not always on the right side of the stage. These details are essential to making *Duo* essentially *Duo*, making it a dance not just in unison but one that negotiates different degrees and types of synchronicity. Forsythe's editing is far from erratic—it is part of his skill in how to refine patterns and transitions of organizations. First draft the structure, then add nuances within it.[67]

From experience, I know that the cognitive challenge to incorporate and remember these nuances is extreme. While the camera is there as backup, the dancers seem not to need it; they learn rapidly. Miscommunications arise, particularly when Forsythe conceives ideas that are difficult to explain in words to the dancers—language may be an issue, as van Berkel is not a native English speaker. At one point, Johnson catches on more quickly; Forsythe takes time, to patiently explain exactly what he means to van Berkel. But overall, the dancers seem not to remember competition or stress. The dancers' joy in moving together, their pact of support, coupled with Forsythe's frequent

66 This shows that despite withholding the effects of negative competition, Forsythe and the dancers do push and challenge one another.

67 Reversal is a strategy that Forsythe uses at large in his choreographies on many levels; that is, moving backwards, moving and then reversing the same action, moving in retrograde, changing the facing, doing things unusually, and so on.

praise and equally divided attention, keeps them optimistic. Yet the situation is still precarious.

The result of Forsythe's editing is that the structure becomes more "baroque," in the sense of being folded in compressed space and time.[68] Through repetition, and supported by his encouragement of the dancers, Forsythe composes a short insert, creating one of the most complicated sections of the choreography. (While this appears to be spontaneous, I realize Forsythe has actually fulfilled what he previously declared in the studio rehearsal: to use the movement *snakedress* as a knot in which to loop and re-loop structures.) Elsewhere in the composition, he adds repetitions, reversals, loops, changes of angle and changes of position. This makes the choreography a sort of labyrinth, with recurring branches. In sum, this knotting and folding of the sequence—growing more complex with each rehearsal—becomes a particular challenge of *Duo*. A dancer might lose track of 'where' one is in time: Is it the first, second or third repeat in the sequence?

Forsythe's edits reflect his aesthetic of counterpoint. Describing his approach elsewhere, Forsythe explains:

> What I'm doing […] is choreographing your attention. […] The timing of the actions is so constructed as to engage your predictive faculties; for example, if you're observing a choreographic situation, you might realize that there's a certain amount of controlled information coming out of it, whether dense or sparse, recognizably patterned or stochastic. What I strive to provide are contrasting structural alternations that play with your anticipation of these informational densities.[69]

In this rehearsal, Forsythe's gaze and attention become the organizational axis; his speculation about the audience is the second spindle around which the cooperation churns. Such actions do not need to be conceptualized through "talking dance" as they are basic strategies within Forsythe's rehearsals, exhibited in his process of construction for many pieces. Forsythe is forecasting, based upon extensive experience, about the "constant reduction and selective actualization of aesthetic possibilities."[70]

In the second phase of the rehearsal, Forsythe continues to speculate, testing the studio studies in the new context of the stage. He tries the *Ars Magis* recording on low volume while the dancers repeat what they have worked on thus far.[71] This time the music proves less magical, even troublesome. When they finish, van Berkel talks directly to Forsythe while walking toward him. She illustrates what she means with her body, while speaking rapidly: "In a way without music," she makes a gesture that looks like sign language, bringing her fists together "it's more one." She catches her breath. "It's so"—she brushes and twists her rib cage, then circles both elbows forward back around. "You get more …" then turning to Johnson for affirmation, "… Do you feel that too?"

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68 Here I borrow from Deleuze's reading of Leibniz. Relating this to Forsythe's work, see Maar, *Entwürfe und Gefüge*, pp. 93–96. While Forsythe also develops folding one body's movement in the space of the kinesphere, what I mean here are structural folds: how the choreographic sequence is developed in space and time.

69 William Forsythe, in an interview from 2017. See Neri, "Interview with William Forsythe."

70 Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 353, p. 356.

71 See footnote 61 in this chapter.

Supportively, Johnson says, "Absolutely."[72] They are all aware of being at a critical point. Forsythe is trying to jump into the conversation, with soft interjections, explaining his view that what worked perfectly *once*, an arrangement of music and dance as if he had planned or choreographed it, is not something that *always* continues to be efficacious. Forsythe is planning and yet still listening to the potentiality of each of his choices. The music is put on hold. The reaction of his dancers is critical.

In the final hour of rehearsal, the artists continue to explore options. Using ballet terminology for jumps (such as *sauté, jeté*), Forsythe asks whether the movement in a certain section could be more sprung. In passing, Forsythe proposes some ideas about the lighting—perhaps after the first piece on the program, he might hang the light lower for *Duo*, to emphasize that the first piece is played very close to the audience (that is, downstage), and the second piece (*Duo*) opens the space back.[73] Forsythe floats the idea of developing some *non sequitur*—part of the anomalies and exceptions that he finds necessary in his choreography of attention. Champion then turns off the camera. When filming resumes, the dancers are running in a circle, trying cross-lateral movements—a parade that never finds its way into the choreography. Though these activities do not all become part of the final *Duo*, they show that the group is experimenting. They illustrate how Forsythe assumes directive authority, while still looking to his dancers as sounding boards for his ideas, as well as people he depends upon to enact them. Some of these proposals are quickly incorporated into the structure, some provide steps on the way to other decisions.

10.4.6 Second Stage Rehearsal: "Take Your Time"

Figures 40–41. Video still of the second stage rehearsal of Duo, *January 15, 1996. From left to right: Regina van Berkel, William Forsythe, Jill Johnson.*

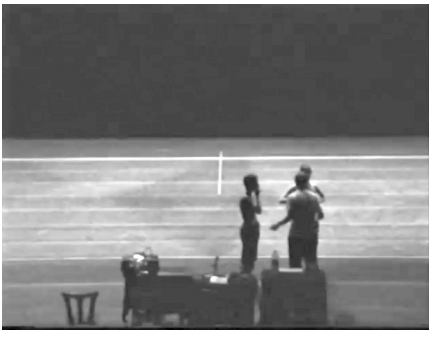

Photo © William Forsythe.

72 As this example so beautifully indicates, there is often mixing of language, gesture and dance when the artists communicate with one another.

73 While the Ballett Frankfurt program for *Six Counter Points* listed the pieces as separate works, this shows that Forsythe is also thinking of them choreographically as one continuity.

The tape labeled: January 15, 1996, (five days before the premiere) begins in the middle of the women dancing the same unison phrase—the start of the sequence. They are finding their groove—I see more subtle delays, more intricate timings, more elasticities. The unison is growing more tethered, more magnetic between them. On the stage there is a square of white tape, like on the periphery of a tennis court, marking a boundary; the women willingly disregard and cross over these limits. The new segments inserted in the last stage rehearsal, the knots and intricate reversals, appear to be fluidly encapsulated into the sequence. Forsythe is hard to see and hear, sitting in the shadows behind a table, on stage.

I observe a new section of the choreography, perhaps introduced during an interim rehearsal with no video record. Johnson and van Berkel run backwards and fall to the floor—almost as if they had been shot, recalls dancer Allison Brown.[74] After a long pause, they intermittently slide their limbs to variations of *Duo* positions, made awkward or foreign by the obstacle of gravity—certain limbs stretch gracefully while others collapse passively on the floor. In this rehearsal, the dancers break their action and assume pedestrian postures: propping their heads upon their hands, as if leisurely reading magazines on the floor. They hold this resting stance for ten seconds before returning to the mode of improvisation. Perhaps this motif is the discovered *non sequitur* that Forsythe had expressed interest in during the last rehearsal? According to Forsythe, *non sequiturs*, exceptions and "anomalies" are there to keep the audience interested in the patterns that are emerging; without exceptions, minds become bored, placated.[75]

The dancers continue. Forsythe breaths a "nice." Transitions appear to make sense. The sequence has been adjusted to have movements of more or less momentum, speed and surprise. Johnson and van Berkel are farther apart then they have danced in the studio. They finish the choreography, closing on *fifth position* and facing forward. This time there is a soft silence, in which the whole space settles—like a resonant last note of an orchestra playing. Softly, Forsythe says, "Very nice" and van Berkel beams a radiant smile, while walking forward to him. Johnson looks down. Both women move forward toward the choreographer, while smoothing their hair with their hands, presumably wiping sweat and brushing small hairs from their eyes. Van Berkel looks to Johnson.

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74 Fieldwork note, studio session with Allison Brown, Frankfurt, September 23, 2016.

75 In an interview in 2012, Forsythe says, "Counterpoint in bodies I think help [sic] keep the brain alert. It has to do with the way that movements are timed and the distribution of anomalies throughout the choreography." See Whittenburg, "William Forsythe in conversation with Zachary Whittenburg," p. 9. I remember the term "exception" and "opposite" was more common in studio parlance than "anomaly" in my time as a dancer in The Forsythe Company, used in particular during and after the creation *Theatrical Arsenal II* (2009); see Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, p. 29. In the next *Duo* rehearsal, Forsythe will choose to omit the exception described above (with the dancers lying on the floor), while keeping the slow *développés* he constructs for van Berkel and Johnson. This indicates that not just any exception will do; rather, there is a compositional art to the exception, both in its timing and mode of contrast. The sorts of exceptions in *Duo* change over the piece's history, including more frame- and role-breaking over time. In *DUO2015*, for example, the dancers stop to catch their breath with their hands on their knees like basketball players, they exit the stage light, they roll into knots on the floor, and even bend the codes of their movement vocabulary, by making subtle gestures referencing b-boying and hip-hop.

What they say in their initial discussion—the three of them clumped together in the dark side of the stage—is difficult to hear on the archival video recording. They laugh. Forsythe moves around a bit, gesturing, looking eager to move. Van Berkel asks for a short rest. Forsythe announces: "Take a break," then walks away, respecting that they are winded and need a moment for their bodies to soften. But, unable to hold back his burgeoning ideas, Forsythe turns around excitedly to talk about timings, demonstrating actions with his body. The dancers' work has garnered his enthusiasm. Much of the subsequent stage rehearsal focuses on the details of timing. Forsythe begins, "It is getting too …," van Berkel finishes his sentence, "… even." Forgetting the need for a break, they begin to work again.

Overall, the dancers are well aware that Forsythe dislikes dull phrasing. He is notorious for constructing pieces that "overwhelm" and "lull."[76] Naming his work now not as "choreographing" but "rehearsing," Forsythe develops the dancers' timing choices through verbal coaching, mixing language and prosody. A collection of his comments exemplify these exclamatory directives: "Really push your bodies, nnnneeeah!" "Use more hip" "Stay on the edge. Do not go down" "e da da e um" "e ah, eh da um" "Get that a little more sudden!" "More more more, I would say" "Increase the scales of the curves. Make them demonstrative" "That's it!" "One more time, ready?" "OK, on that thing. Turn it. The *glissades* come out of the turn. Know what I mean? You know what I mean!"

The imperatives, coupled with Forsythe's excitement and affirmatives, cause the dancers' movement to become much faster, even faster than they will ever perform this movement. Frequently, Forsythe vocalizes as they dance, becoming their music—giving a clear rhythm to work within; making accents, dynamic shifts and phrasing more precise. Johnson laughs that she is holding her breath, "You too?" she asks van Berkel, who answers "Yeah." After further work, Forsythe affirms: "OK very nice. Better, better, better. Ok, better timings."

Having caused their movement to accelerate, now Forsythe works at the other end of the range: slowing time. This is both respectful of the dancers' energy and part of his strategy to expand the dynamic range of their effort—both at the high and the low end of the spectrum. At a new place in the sequence, Forsythe stops the dancers in action, and interjects, "I want to add something." He then asks Johnson to stop and very slowly lift her leg to the side, using the ballet term: *développé*. He explains: "I want everything to stop" (meaning not only her, but also the audience). Johnson proposes some adjustments, adding an arm to shade the movement's classicism. After checking the movement in context, Forsythe crafts a similar moment for van Berkel in which she lifts one leg to an extension back (not an *arabesque*, but an "alabesque" says Forsythe, using the dancer's slang for a movement outside the classical canon, between back and side). Again, they receive equal attention from him, and likewise equal solos before the audience. Here, and again later in the rehearsal, Forsythe tells them: "Take your time."

In the second half of rehearsal, the artists take more breaks from moving. Forsythe uses gaps to banter about details relevant to the piece. He tries out a title and Johnson quips back an alternative. They try new music. They continue to work on timings

76 See Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, pp. 209–31.

and to discuss discrepancies: Johnson asks van Berkel about a specific section, "Do you take longer? Do you take more time?" Later, "We always get on the opposite leg there," Forsythe resolves, "I would not worry about it." He asks them to restart from the section called "tree" and reminds them twice, "Take your time. Take your time." They finish with four minutes left; Forsythe checks his watch. They come back into their tight huddle on the stage. Conversation is again hard to hear. They talk about the floor section, perhaps making the change to cut the *non sequitur* they introduced. Champion leaves the camera running.

10.4.7 Technical Rehearsal: Gold Costumes and a Big Stage

Figures 42–43. Video stills of the technical rehearsal of Duo, *January 15, 1996. Regina van Berkel, Jill Johnson and technicians.*

Photo © William Forsythe.

Technical rehearsal is the name of the challenging process of bringing the medial elements together on stage: the dancers trying movement for the first time in their costumes, the composer adjusting the music, and the technical team experimenting with Forsythe's vision for sound, light and stage design. Stress looms in this type of rehearsal. There is little time left to interweave the production layers.[77]

In *Duo*'s technical rehearsal, Forsythe has broken from the dancers, pulling himself off the stage and into the technical post at the back of the theater, in the first balcony. The camera is also positioned from this vantage point, capturing the sound of conversations among the crew. Nearly the entire artistic and technical team working together on *Duo* is present at this rehearsal—the stage, sound and light technicians, the pianist and the dancers. Forsythe is the pilot figure whose decisions take command.

After marking through some of the movement, the two dancers perform from the beginning, for the first time, with costumes, sound and light. They are wearing sleeveless gold ballet dresses, with skirts to their knees and flesh-colored socks. Lights are focused down onto the stage. The background is dark, the flooring light grey. The space

77 Because of the complex settings of Forsythe's choreographies, often these elements were tried out before, in the studio or first stage rehearsals.

is animated by the sparse sounds of a woman's voice speaking isolated words ("together" "two" "one" "two" "one" "suspense" "seven minutes").[78] This is punctuated by intermittent strains of live acoustics, soundings like an organ and a trumpet, adding volume and dramatic tension. These are all new conditions the dancers adapt to.

Forsythe is experimenting drastically with the lighting. He requests that all lights except from the neons coming from the front are turned off. To communicate with the dancers and everyone else simultaneously, he has a microphone. "Good, thanks ladies," he tells them as a signal that they can stop. Johnson jokes about her performance: "Fierce *développé* guys!" noting how Forsythe picked the worst moment to change the lights, right in the middle of her balancing on one leg! Forsythe and van Berkel laugh.

Everyone knows the importance and the perils of this sort of rehearsal. All the elements are being tested together. As longstanding collaborators, they are aware that these investigations might be arduous; that much change can take place until all the conditions are right. Forsythe is notorious for throwing out old ideas and finding new ones within this editing stage. The dancers face the real possibility that their work could fail—that they will not get to perform what they have rehearsed to this point, or will do so in a new manner. Practicing power, Forsythe manages these possibilities, shifting from "soft governance" to polite yet firm direction.[79]

When the video restarts, Johnson and van Berkel are performing the movement without sound, just breathing-movement. The stage appears extremely large. Forsythe is exploring the vision he has expressed in the first stage rehearsal: using the full space of the stage and finding the right light to illuminate them.

To be heard, Forsythe must give cues over the microphone. While the dancers are in the middle of dancing, he stops them. With an air of frustration, he switches to German to tell a technician with firm politeness that the floor needs to be taped as quickly as possible. The team uses the gap to multitask: the technicians tape, the pianist asks the dancers to demonstrate a cue (Johnson's slow *développé*), the dancers mark the movement together, the pianist and sound technician discuss timing. The hall reverberates with the deep banter of male technicians speaking in German and crashing noises—the sources of which are not visible in the tight camera shot which remains focused on documenting the dancers. A man walks across stage and returns with a roll of white tape. Drilling is heard and three men are seen taping the floor. Throughout this, Johnson and van Berkel continue to practice, moving forward onto the front of the stage when their space becomes occupied. They converse with Forsythe about the "spacing" of their movement on the stage—he requests the dancers to "use the whole big stage." Johnson jokingly making the sound of a truck honking as she passes the technicians.

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78 The speaker is Dana Caspersen. This is the sound score for *The The*, a work by Dana Caspersen and William Forsythe, which premiered at Nederlands Dans Theater a few months earlier (October 1995) and will be the first piece, before *Duo*, on the program *Six Counter Points*.

79 On "soft governance," see Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 354. Mutual trust is especially important at such critical inflection points. In Forsythe's creative process, the mood and judgement of whether the process was going well often had a significant effect. In the occupational culture of Forsythe's ensembles, optimism and humor were used strategically by the dancers and Forsythe to lighten up tense situations. The dancers tended not to criticize and over conceptualize, demonstrating trust of the choreographer and one another.

The camera cuts; the construction work magically disappears; the dancers restart. There is the click of a stopwatch being switched on.

The dancers perform the first few minutes in silence before the musical elements come in (piano, a woman's voice and penetrating acoustic sounds of various orchestral timbres). As the dancers perform, Forsythe and the technicians experiment with the sound levels and the lighting. A spotlight appears on Johnson. Forsythe comes on the microphone again to request the dancers (softly) to "be a little closer together" when they dance. The women strain their movement, moving valiantly across the enormous stage. They finish a full run-through of the sequence without being requested to stop. There is the click of a stop watch. "Thanks ladies," says Forsythe, as Johnson collapses forward with her hands on her knees to breath. The piece is 9:08 minutes in duration. The camera cuts off.

There is no tape of the discussion that may or may not have happened after this exploration. In my view, the enormous space challenges the movement material. Equally, the expanse and heavy acoustic layer do not support the intimacy and togetherness that has been so critical to their version thus far. The dancers are courageously doing their best but their energy dissipates without a fitting theatrical frame to hold them. Though Forsythe is calling decisions, the materials themselves (the space, movement, light and sound) are also steering the common exploration of potentiality. The dancers' exhaustion is partly a symptom of the situation not cohering with what they are enacting. Because of a "genuine cycle of trust," the team continues to follow Forsythe's piloting without resistance.[80]

When the camera turns on, the team is trying something new. Van Berkel and Johnson are separated on a diagonal, having finished the movement *showerhead*. Van Berkel is downstage on a *black* dance floor, Johnson is upstage on the *grey* one. The contrast of the different colored floors acts a new register for the composition, constructing the space. Forsythe directs Johnson to perform the "tree" phrase, and then for both the dancers to run backwards, falling to the floor. Following this, he directs van Berkel to commence her low-level floor movement and then for the dancers to rise together to standing. Next, Forsythe proposes that he would like Johnson to repeat "tree" and then for her to suggest some traveling material to move upstage, before she and Berkel repeat the fall. Johnson arranges the movement immediately.[81] Forsythe takes the affordance of the contrast of the black and grey floor to suggest a transposition—Johnson and van Berkel switching places while falling (now Johnson downstage, van Berkel upstage). I recognize, finally, what has been missing in rehearsal thus far: the prologue of *Duo*.

Exemplary of most works in Forsythe's process, *Duo* comes together through many small decisions, and many people's contributions, based on trials along the way. The team has found the beginning to the piece, but through the 'wrong' context. The black and grey floor will not be part of the final *Duo:* ultimately the dancers will perform

80 Laermans, *Moving Together*, p. 340.

81 Seconds later, Johnson forgets what she has done and van Berkel comes to her aid—illustrating the difficulty of remembering movement and their pact to help one another.

only with a black floor overlaying the apron, not using "the whole big stage."[82] The materials at hand provide a creative contingency. The dancers are able to improvise and fill in the gaps for Forsythe, as well as to frequently pose suggestions—framed subtly as questions—that respect his authority to decide.

Forsythe is still not sure of the music, asking to go back to the *Ars Magis* recording they had tried previously, on low volume. As the dancers practice, Johnson offers van Berkel a hand to get off the floor. Regina gestures to her costume. "Feels what?" asks Forsythe. Van Berkel laughs, "The costume falls totally down," pulling her top to show it sliding down her chest. Forsythe teases her: "Were they out?" Regina confirms, laughing "The breasts are out!" She appears very comfortable with her body and Johnson joins with her laugher. The costume sliding down is a minor annoyance that can easily be fixed by the costume designer after the rehearsal. They quickly return to business, running through the new sequence.

Experimenting further, different colored scrims come up and down. Music that sounds like Björk comes on, then a very spooky science fiction soundtrack with the sounds of birds, ethereal strings and ominous clangs. The dancers run through the entire choreography as all sorts of new sounds pierce and clutter the space—they are still entrained to one another. They appear very exhausted but also persistent and dauntless.

As they approach the end, Forsythe stops them, asking the women to come forward so that he can speak to them. Enacting a decision, Forsythe calls to the technicians, "*Hauptvorhang zu*" (close the main curtain). The stopwatch turns off.

He asks the dancers: "Do you think it would be possible? Do you think spacing-wise that we can do it on the apron?" Van Berkel points to the front and answers confidently "Yeah." Forsythe justifies, "I am not getting any (*pause*). It is so nice to watch you up close. But I am not getting any—it is not visceral enough. And I think it would make you work better together. I feel sometimes you (*he searches for words*) pushing through steps." The dancers' chance to react is thwarted by the sound of multiple technicians talking on stage and the black curtain coming down behind them. Forsythe says to the person beside him, "I want to see how it looks in this lighting." And then, after the light shifts, sounding positive, "Oh this is intense."

Forsythe's asks encouragingly: "Gals, just show me the beginning." They dance for ten seconds. "Good. OK, that is good. We'll try that tomorrow." Van Berkel answers brightly "Yeah." Between juggling talk with different technicians, Forsythe speaks to them: "Thank you ladies. Thank you very, very much." He offers a quick correction about one movement, and then again, another affirmation: "Thank you very much ladies, today was just a question of lighting and …" The camera turns off.

Figure 44. Video still of the dress rehearsal of Duo, *January 19, 1996. From left to right: Regina van Berkel, Jill Johnson and an unknown photographer.*

Photo © William Forsythe.

10.4.8 Dress Rehearsal: Black Costumes

The women are on stage wearing black leotards—with long sleeves, translucent mesh above the waist, individually cut neck- and leg-lines and black opaque trunks.[83] These are the chosen costumes for *Duo*. Though barer than the gold costumes, they appear to be much more comfortable for the dancers to wear. Unlike the gold costumes, the black ones stretch and stay in place.[84] Before the run-through begins, the dancers are zipping through the sequence, practicing the movement with their arms—a method of cognitive review like speed-reading one's notes before an exam. They are sometimes talking, using their names for the movements, and sometimes laughing. The pianist is playing and the sound technicians are testing sound samples. With hindsight: all the intrinsic elements of *Duo* are in place.

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82 The apron is the front part of the stage nearest to the audience. In the Frankfurt Opera House, it extended under the proscenium arch and over the covered orchestra pit, right up to the first seats of the audience.

83 From the changed structure of the beginning of the choreography, I deduce this must be after the previous rehearsal on January 15, 1996. It might be the "tomorrow," mentioned at the end of the previous tape. What I observe is in the file labeled "January 10, 1996."

84 Though I can only speculate, it is my intuition that the problems with van Berkel's costume in the previous rehearsal are what triggered the associative leap leading Forsythe to clothe the dancers in translucent mesh, exposing their breasts.

In the tech booth, composer Thom Willems has joined William Forsythe. Pianist Margot Kazimirska is backstage at the piano, playing the score that Thom Willems has given her. "We're going to try a few different starts," says Forsythe, as he and the backstage team discuss whether they should begin with piano or acoustics. With movement, stage, light and costumes chosen, the last step is the sound layer.

The piece still does not have a title. Cueing the pianist, "Margot, go," to start playing, Forsythe jokes that he will call the piece "Mar Go Go," to which Johnson makes a hilarious retort—imitating his proposal and making it sound like a parrot. The pianist behind the curtain cannot see the dancers and they realize there is no way to cue her to begin playing. Not wishing to lose time to have a technician locate and install a monitor, Forsythe decides that for today he would give her the cue himself. They will get a monitor for the next rehearsal. When Kazimirska voices a question backstage, Johnson repeats it so Willems and Forsythe can hear. Other messages pass back and forth over the intercom. The backstage crew is busy testing the pathways of communication they will need during the performance, creating a ruckus of overlapping voices.

Forsythe commands complete quiet. The stopwatch clicks on. The women dance the piece once, in the version nearly identical to the premiere. Outside of earshot of the performers, Forsythe whispers with Thom Willems while they are dancing, tailoring the sound levels: cuing sometimes the piano to rise higher in volume than the acoustics, and sometimes the swelling acoustics to become voluminous. Intermittently, the ancient music threads in. In the black space, the women's movement appears fuller, yet lighter—more uninhibited, less pushed. Their breath is not lost in the soundscape. They appear to stand closer again and to be concentrated upon one another. At the end, Forsythe cues the piano to stop and says "And, lights out!" to indicate a blackout. Without losing a beat (entrainment), he goes onto the microphone to say: "That was absolutely beautiful ladies. Thank you. That was stunning. (*pause*). That was stunning. Thank you. You were absolutely …" The camera cuts off. Forsythe affirms, from his distant position—via the only avenue he has, projecting his voice using a microphone—that he is grateful and that the work is beautiful. As a last gesture, Forsythe affirms the work as having reached a place where he is satisfied.

10.5 Analysis

The creative process of making *Duo* is a context-specific and contingent form of cooperation—a form of "thinking while making" rather than "thinking before making" that is heavily dependent on the real materiality of bodies and the situations of each rehearsal context.[85] In the timeline of creation, Forsythe moves from his role of inventing movement (being on the 'inside') to a role-shifting director (that is, 'outside' and 'distant')—arranging and editing the sequence, designing the theatrical elements, and taking the role of an outside eye. The role of the dancers is distinct from that of the choreographer in that they focus almost exclusively on memorizing and performing the designated movement together. They are not passive tools, but dancers who

85 Ingold, "Thinking Through Making."

speak with each other and Forsythe, making suggestions appropriate to their task and pact—to fulfill the movement potential. In comparison, Forsythe takes multiple views of the choreography as the piece emerges and is responsible for weaving the different threads of the work together: movement, light, sound, costumes and space. Chance and contingency, as well as the dancers' material bodies, are essential to making *Duo* uniquely *Duo*.

The production of *Duo* relies on longstanding practice creating choreographies together. It does not make something from nothing (that is, the blank page or clean slate). Nor does creativity involve one monumental decision that crystalizes a plan for making something novel. Rather, it involves bringing elements together and enabling them to change, through decisions large and small, and the contributions of many players.

The antecedent, the choreography *Marion/Marion* (1991), is a starting point that inflects ideas into the process. Forsythe's vision of the choreography (as involving unison and counterpoint) is not presupposed, but comes in the first studio session (specifically, after the foyer and office rehearsals). Finding the proper lighting and spatial context is a decision made by Forsythe in the very last minute of the technical rehearsal, after exhausting other intuitions.

Salient factors shaping the identity of the piece include the pact between the two performers to dance together and not be competitive with each other. Also, the integrity of movement material made on the first day, which remains an essence focusing the dancers' pact to support rather than compete. Thirdly, the material conditions shaped the piece: lacking rehearsal space, the artists worked in unusual contexts, and these took influence on the duet (such as the entrainment produced by intimately rehearsing in the small space of Forsythe's office). The creation of *Duo* relied on the extensive trust between Forsythe and the dancers, and their mutual tolerance and sensitivity to choreographic potential. It was also significantly impacted by Forsythe's shift from soft to strong governance over the course of the rehearsals. The above resumé shows that *Duo* was not brought out of thin air, nor by the will and decisions of one person, but through processes of bringing people, materials, contexts and practices together.

How does the choreography become known or present to the people making *Duo*? And to what extent do these people understand the choreography in the same way? Because of their history of cooperating, the team members can share understanding: exploring as the potential of their creative materials produces an event, intense and interesting to them. Rather than being confined to communication through verbal language or "talking dance," this may be felt more as an affect, intensity or emotion than a conceptual articulation. Thus, their way of thinking while making is also a feeling while making. Yet there is also one clear moment of explicit validation. This occurs at the point when all the elements come together and Forsythe publicly (that is, over the loudspeaker) praises the dancers' work after the general rehearsal. This suggests that *his* public recognition is primary for the team to acknowledge the work. Yet clearly before arriving at that point, the creation requires a web of people working in their respective mediums—artists, as well as support personnel.[86] Forsythe nets these efforts, by com-

86 Cf. on personnel, see Becker, *Art Worlds*, pp. 77–92.

municating in different languages and with different repertoires and styles of direction (imperatives, questions, proposals, dialogues, and so on).

In the end phase of the process, the dancers are, to borrow a difficult image 'the canaries in the coal mine.'[87] By this I do not mean sacrificial life forms, but sensitive creatures, who show early signs of the stage elements not providing a frame in which their movement, as practiced thus far, can be potentialized. Though Forsythe asserts authority in evaluating the intermediary stages of the choreographic process, it is also the dancers' bodies that have the ability to recognize whether the practices are suitably congealing. For this reason, they hold great power. They are also, during creation, placed at risk (a stressful and energy consuming affair). Forsythe and the dancers, I believe, are equally cognizant of this unspoken aspect of their relationship. This supports my argument that both explicit and implicit understanding of the potential of a choreography forming are highly socialized and embodied.

In the example of *Duo*, technologies and modes of inscription provide seminal memory aids: from the video camera—without which Forsythe's improvised movement would be lost—to the participants' notebooks. These inscriptive and capturing modes are tools for committing a choreography to memory. Yet the artists' practices of rehearsing and creating are equally critical to helping the choreography congeal. The *Duo* rehearsals demonstrate how talk and sociality, as well as nonverbal communication, are indispensable within the choreographic process. Forsythe and the team negotiate the powers of what are perceived and appreciated in the emerging dance: they actively risk, take chances and document all of this, in order to define a repeatable constellation of creative potential.

These observations are significant for our understanding of the concept of choreography. André Lepecki explains choreography as "not only a discipline or technology of the body, not only a mode of composition, not only a register, or archive" but an "apparatus."[88] Drawing from Foucault, Lepecki observes how making dances is a means of defining signification and perception. Choreography not only sets in motion tools for preservation, memory and iteration of dance, it demarcates, "those hegemonic modes of aesthetically perceiving and theoretically accounting for dance's evolutions in time."[89] These forces are in play when Forsythe's team creates—requiring the team members' attention to preservation and tolerance of ambiguity, as they generate and eliminate.

This ethnographic approach has shed light on some defining aspects of Forsythe's choreographic process in *Duo*, but also more generally—showing how Forsythe implements choreographing the audience's attention, drawing on cognitive ideas about human interest in pattern emergence and change. This is seen most clearly in his editing process, in which he adds exceptions, contrasts and micro-structures, in the belief that these will be interesting for the viewer. He also coaches the dancers' phrasing, to range from greater passages of "taking time" to other sections of acceleration and springing, based upon the principle that variance is pleasing and holds the viewer's curiosity.

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87 This is an English saying, which refers to miners' practice of bringing caged canaries underground with them. The birds, if exposed to toxic gases, would die, warning the miners to exit immediately.

88 Lepecki, "Choreography as Apparatus of Capture," p. 120.

89 Ibid.

The process reveals little conceptual talk about aesthetic judgement and the meaning of the work in the studio. There is also almost no direction of the dancers' breathing, which emerges as an implicit process—necessary, and yet unguided. Words like "unison," "counterpoint," "cues" and "alignments" are the most common working terms, and they are general to Forsythe's working process, not specific to *Duo*.

Based upon this study, I would describe creativity in making *Duo* as the *moving thinking-feeling while making*—that is, *the tuning of collaborators to the potential of ecologies of materials, relations and practices*. The team, throughout the timeline of the rehearsals, moves quickly—crashing and colliding and testing, without extensive time for reflection and justification. Aside from the names of the movement and phrases, the common terms used are already there, in place from other choreographies. For the participants, creating choreographies involves events emerging, differently than in daily life, in which the forces and feeling of attuning are palpable and exciting. *Duo* shows creation as *a process that tunes to an event's potential*.

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This chapter has analyzed the creation of *Duo* at the Ballett Frankfurt in 1996. Section 10.1 described the sources and methods for the reconstruction, based on study of approximately ten hours of archival videos of rehearsal as well as interviews with *Duo* dancers (Jill Johnson and Regina van Berkel) and with William Forsythe. The limitations of these sources were discussed critically. Section 10.2 has oriented this account of creation within Caspersen's overview of the range of Forsythe's processes. Section 10.3 discussed the relationship of *Duo* (1996) to its precursor, *Marion/Marion* (1991). Section 10.4 chronologically analyzed each stage of the team's rehearsal: from the first rehearsal taking place unusually in the theater foyer, to the final dress rehearsal on stage. Rich description of the labor has been interwoven with lengthy citations of interviews with dancers van Berkel and Johnson. The writing is evocative, designed to give readers the feeling of being in the room with the artists as they work.

Section 10.4 analyzed the process. The argument I build through this interpretation is that the creative process making *Duo* adhered to a semi-directive and cooperative "thinking while making" approach that was heavily dependent on the real materiality of bodies and the context of each rehearsal.[90] Forsythe's choreographic leadership involved initiating, editing and focalizing the team's shared intentionality. Having created together before was vital to the efficacy of this complex, mediated and altogether swiftly cohering teamwork—this adventure of exploring potentiality and discovering together.

In this chapter, I have shown how creation was processual: bringing something new into existence, while relying on old components and practiced methods. In the subsequent and final chapter of this manuscript, I will consider the possibility that creation was not limited to the phase of making of *Duo* in 1996, but rather sustained and continually fostered the *Duo* project throughout its history.

90 Ingold, "Thinking Through Making."

Chapter 11: Re-Creating *Duo* (1996–2016)

Duo is a "project" whose subject matter was revised over decades—illustrating a processual approach to choreography, crucial in Forsythe's oeuvre.[1] Forsythe exposed relations and continuities between his works, similar to editions and multiples in visual art: the *Duo* project, the *Detail* series, and the *Scott* complex.[2] In my interviews with Forsythe and the dancers they described their repertoire as a reservoir of interconnected and evolving ideas, stage elements and movement practices. "There's always more to find out," explained Brown.[3] "There was always some part left over," said Forsythe: "I, obviously, don't understand everything that I do. So, it would reiterate itself. On some level."[4] Each choreography generated a world and preserved methods and materials for reflection. The *Scott* series illustrates this lucidly. I shall consider this rich example first, supporting subsequent discussion of *Duo.*

Forsythe's *Scott* complex shifted dramatically across eight iterations over 35 years—what Forsythe likened to changing from a "giant film" to a "haiku."[5] The first performance, *LDC* (1985), unfolded from Forsythe's interest in the British explorer Robert Scott's perilous *Terra Nova Expedition* to the South pole (1910–1913). The thematical material served, according to Gerald Siegmund, "as metaphor for the unknown continent of ballet." Returning to these components two seasons later, the Ballett Frankfurt produced the one-act ballet *Die Befragung des Robert Scott †* (*The Interrogation of Robert Scott †*, 1986), which remained in the repertoire of the ensemble throughout the 1990s. Elements of the stage setting from *LDC* were reused in this version, placed in the periphery of the space with the dancers at the center—their movements, according

1 William Forsythe, phone interview with the author, January 30, 2019.

2 The *Detail* series: *The Loss of Small Detail* (1987), *the second detail* (1991) and *The Loss of Small Detail* (1991). The *Scott* series: *LDC* (1985), *Die Befragung des Robert Scott †* (1986), *Die Befragung des Robert Scott †* (2000), *One Flat Thing, reproduced* (2000), *7 to 10 Passages* (2000), *Wear* (2004), *7 to 10 Passages* (2010), and *Whole in the Head* (2010). On the Scott complex see in particular Siegmund, "Of Monsters and Puppets," pp. 20–29; Cf. Siegmund, "William Forsythe: Räume eröffnen, in denen das Denken sich ereignen kann," pp. 48–50.

3 Allison Brown, interview with the author, Frankfurt, November 11, 2016.

4 William Forsythe, phone interview with the author, January 30, 2019.

5 Ibid.

to Siegmund, reorganized through computer operations.[6] Over a decade later, this one-act piece was expanded into a new full-length version for the 1999–2000 season. While aspects of the prior performance were preserved, "such as the two tables behind which questioning took place or the man with the bucket over his head circling and crawling around the stage," Siegmund observed that overall: "the new version bore little resemblance to the earlier one."[7]

Working fluidly with his repertoire, Forsythe frequently expanded one-act ballets into longer works[8] and inserted existing one-act pieces within larger, new works.[9] Occasionally this process even went in reverse. From the full-length *Die Befragung des Robert Scott †* (2000), two acts were extracted and performed independently: *One Flat Thing, reproduced* (2000) and *7 to 10 Passages* (2000).[10] While both used the same tables, creating different landscapes on the stage, the music and movement material varied considerably. In *One Flat Thing, reproduced*, the industrial roar and virtuosic flurry of movements was organized within a hazardous grid of metal tables. In *7 to 10 Passages*, a line of performers was revealed between the tables at the periphery; glacially, they traversed at a snail's pace from the back to the front of the stage, precisely twisting and refracting their motion.

At the closure of the Ballett Frankfurt, Forsythe returned to the *Scott* series for his second to last production—which could be interpreted as a deliberate gesture of reflecting upon an era's process. The work *Wear* (2004) was a sparse piece for three dancers. Siegmund recalled: "If the clothes and the setting are to be trusted, they have ended up somewhere in the Polar region. But during the performance the dancers free themselves from their straitjacket-like clothes and muffled movements. Even the igloo is finally pulled down. […] A strange and curious new activity sets in that seems to produce movement playfully from the very constrictions of movement."[11]

The *Scott* history offered new potential to Forsythe's second ensemble, The Forsythe Company. After a new version of *7 to 10 Passages* (2010) was created, the dancers invested further in a movement phrase from the Ballett Frankfurt history of the *Scott* series, developing group scenes and solos that became the piece *Whole in the Head* (2010). Dramaturg Freya Vass-Rhee observed how the creation process forged collaboration between "veteran" and new company members, rekindling movement materials going back over twenty years in time and scaffolding different generational skills.[12] At the end

6 Siegmund, "William Forsythe: Räume eröffnen, in denen das Denken sich ereignen kann," p. 48.

7 See Siegmund, "Of Monsters and Puppets," p. 21.

8 Siegmund, "William Forsythe: Räume eröffnen, in denen das Denken sich ereignen kann," p. 24. Further examples include, *As a Garden in This Setting* (1992/1993) and *Woolf Phrase* (1995).

9 Examples include: *Self Meant to Govern* (1994) appearing within *Eidos:Telos* (1995), and the third act of *Three Atmospheric Studies* (2005) being combined with *Clouds After Cranach* (2005). For further examples of such modified pieces, see Siegmund, "William Forsythe: Räume eröffnen, in denen das Denken sich ereignen kann," pp. 24–25.

10 For example: the short work *Double/Single* (2002) was extracted after making the full-length work *Kammer/Kammer* (2000).

11 See Siegmund, "Of Monsters and Puppets," pp. 20–21.

12 Vass-Rhee, "Schooling an Ensemble."

of The Forsythe Company, Forsythe drew upon movement and acoustic material taken from multiple existing works, including *Duo*, to make the piece *Study#3* (2012).

These examples help to make transparent Forsythe's process of creation as reiteration, expansion and recycling—as "*re-creation*."[13] *Re-creation* was the norm, rather than the exception in Forsythe's oeuvre and was a vital force shaping the practice of choreographic labor. Understanding how these series embody aesthetic knowledge, forms and methods has been one challenge for Forsythe scholars, which I aim to make clearer in this final chapter. I will demonstrate that Forsythe's choreographies are complexly marked and re-cycled objects—defined by a performative character of being singular and plural. While Forsythe was required in his contract to make a specific number of premieres per season for Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company fitting appropriate conventions (of duration, number of spectators, number of dancers and the practical limits of the theater space) this, however, did not stop Forsythe and the dancers from, in addition, re-creating older pieces. Forsythe reasoned that many pieces are not closed and finished entities. Rather they leave aspects that are unfinished.[14]

In this chapter, I sharpen my arguments about the processual nature of Forsythe's choreography, through a final and distinct review of the *Duo* project's chronology. Considering the dancers' testimony and existing documentation of their rehearsals, I examine how they enact choreography in practice: their activities of learning, passing on, rehearsing, adapting and performing the work. I thereby show how these activities constitute an occupational culture that valued the *re-creative* components of longstanding cooperation, defining choreographies that dynamically shift over time.

These considerations also point to changing ideas towards choreographic authorship. Generally, while the creating process was intensely relational, the procedure of editing and selling Forsythe's pieces was more object- and authorship-oriented. Public recognition of authorship of *Duo* shows these changing attitudes. In programs, the choreography, stage design, lighting and costumes of *Duo* and *DUO2015* were attributed to Forsythe. After 2018, Forsythe retained the title of choreographer but ascribed the authorship of the program *A Quiet Evening of Dance* to himself and the dancers jointly; he also shared credits for lighting and costume design.[15] The dancers divided financial profit equally with the choreographer.[16] Substantiating this further, in dialogue about her biography for this manuscript, *Duo* dancer Jill Johnson described her current relationship to Forsythe—touring as a performer in *A Quiet Evening of Dance*—as a "co-collaborator," a term designating co-decision making.[17] These titles mark changing times in which dancers' contributions are receiving greater recognition, both in dance studies and in the field of practice.

The stages of learning *Duo*—in which the dancers explore *how* to practice—are very insightful. They are insightful because they show conventions of rehearsal and performance that were transformed and adapted. This gives vision into the constitutive power

13 Dana Caspersen, videoconference interview with the author, December 19, 2018, emphasis mine.

14 William Forsythe, phone interview with the author, January 30, 2019.

15 See credits in Appendix A.

16 William Forsythe, phone interview with the author, January 30, 2019.

17 Jill Johnson, email to the author, October 3, 2019.

of their choreographic practice—enmeshing practice, performativity and subject-constitution.

"There's always more to find out." Interview with *Duo* Dancer Allison Brown in Frankfurt, November 11, 2016.

Sitting together in front of a video monitor, watching a performance of Duo *from 1997, Allison Brown is dressed warmly in a bulky sweater, and I in a light blue one. Sometimes she stands to explain something to me, turning away from the computer screen to dance.*

LIZ: You mentioned before that the first performance that you saw of the Ballett Frankfurt, before you joined, I think you said that you saw people having fun, that it was sexy, that it was free, that the movements looked free, that you wanted that too. Did you feel that with *Duo*, that it gave you …

ALLISON: (*interjecting*) Later I could … Later I got there, but at the beginning I was just freaked out and just trying to get through it okay—in the sense of remembering choreography and trying to stay with [my partner] Regina [van Berkel]. Because she's very daring and demanding and, so, I was just trying to keep up with her. […] I mean basically the whole thing that I learned about working in Ballett Frankfurt is there's more: there are more questions, there are always more questions, there's always more to find out, you're never just satisfied, and kicking back with how you do things or how you are working or … You are always trying to look at things from another angle. I learnt that from Regina, from Jill [Johnson], although I didn't work so much with her, but Dana [Caspersen] … I'm watching her [Caspersen] work, approaching roles again a year later and re-taking it, re-looking at it. So, it was never like a sky opening, rainbow sunlight through "aha, I made it, I'm me, I'm free!" I never really got there … I mean, I *did* get there and there were moments, but it wasn't really like a clear path to get there and a clear staying of that in that. There were repeated moments of feeling that, but not all the time, because it's just so fucking hard work all the time. (*laughs*)

11.1 Learning *Duo* in the Ballett Frankfurt

For many companies, the process of "passing on" repertoire from dancer to dancer is a vital source of rejuvenation for a dance work. Dance scholar Gabriele Klein has examined how, as dancers question and bring their experiences to the piece, they also reflect on the work's "contemporaneity," between when it was made and the moment of rehearsal.[18] These factors enable a piece to adapt and change, while still preserving continuity of relational investment. To follow this chronology in relation to *Duo*, readers are recommended to refer to the visualization of the dancer pairs in Appendix C.

18 See Klein, *Pina Bausch's Dance Theater*, on "passing on" in particular pp. 210–22; on "contemporaneity" in particular pp. 386–96.

"I learned [*Duo*] by doing," underlines dancer Allison Brown, reflecting upon her history of dancing *Duo* from 1996 until 2003. This was not a "clear path" but years of exploring her approach to the choreography, her way of being with her partners and her own identity, amidst a lot of challenges. *Duo* was one of the first works Brown learned after joining the company; she was also the first performer to learn *Duo*, chosen by Forsythe to take on the role of Jill Johnson after she left the company.[19]

Brown was taken under the wing of Regina van Berkel to learn the role of her partner, Jill Johnson. It was standard within the Ballett Frankfurt for dancers to teach one another their own parts. Not having seen the premiere of *Duo*, nor overlapping with Johnson in the company, left Brown with a gap to define her own expectations of dancing Johnson's role in the piece.[20] They rehearsed quickly, with the support of performance video documentation, having only a few weeks to prepare. The first performance, memorable for Brown, was a Gala for her Majesty the Queen of Denmark.

Fortunately, van Berkel knew both parts well enough to help Brown acquire expertise. Brown remembers van Berkel teaching her, focusing upon the movement first, in the customary way of the Ballett Frankfurt with its rich practice of movement analysis. Brown recalls moving, studying and repeating; moving, studying and repeating:

> Every detail possible, over and over again, everything. Phrases, I think we started with phrases, and just like the detail, how the arm and the hand and the shape of the wrist and the hand. I never worked, no I did, I had worked like that before, with Saburo [Teshigawara], but just somehow it was different. And just the two of us. I think there was someone else in the room, but Regina [van Berkel] was my teacher.[21]

Comparing her prior work as a dancer in other companies, Brown emphasized that in the process of learning *Duo* one's partner "really supported you," sharing the wish to make the process meaningful and interesting.[22] The artists also shared a strong desire to make the performance successful—an achievement marked by the response of the audience and, also, importantly, of Forsythe and one's partner. This way of working shows that *Duo*'s choreography is more than just an assembly of steps. It is a mutual project in which the dancers share stakes in a successful relationship.

Rather than rivalry, the dancers showed kindness to one another—not competing, but complementing. The prior togetherness of *Duo* was so special—between Forsythe, van Berkel and Johnson—that van Berkel sympathized it could be uncomfortable for Brown to enter into this process. Van Berkel tried to be very "caring" to Brown and to give her a sense of freedom: reinforcing that they should not be bound to reproducing the previous version of *Duo*. Van Berkel insists that she did not simply "teach" *Duo*. In our interview, she explains herself by demonstrating holding Brown in an embrace and warmly encouraging: "Come on! We are going to find our way, together!" In this way,

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19 Brown had worked previously in the New York City Ballet, and with choreographers Twyla Tharp, Amanda Miller and Saburo Teshigawara among others; see her biography in Appendix D.

20 Johnson was a member of the National Ballet of Canada for three seasons in the middle of her long tenure working with Forsythe in Ballett Frankfurt.

21 Allison Brown, video elicitation, Frankfurt, September 23, 2016.

22 Ibid. See also Brown's biography in Appendix D.

van Berkel pushed Brown to take agency and situate "her desire" within the work.[23] Brown was adapting to the rehearsal practices of the Ballett Frankfurt— learning to go beyond repeating and perfecting steps, conventions she had learned in the occupational cultures of other companies that she had worked with. New to her was the focus on the social aspect of being a confident partner.

The relationship between *Duo* partners was one of *equal* counterparts ("We were both leaders, we were both conductors, we were both followers!").[24] It was inappropriate for a more experienced dancer to exhibit greater authority. At times, dancers reported difficulty in mutually agreeing to take turns leading or trying to refrain from settling into a hierarchical relationship. New dancers who came into partnerships with more experienced *Duo* dancers, as Brown's testimony shows, could be daunted by the seniority of their partner; others were confronted with the existence of a model to emulate; all recalled the formidable coordinative difficulty of the steps and remembering the sequences. In studying the archival performance videos, I see such coping in play: where the new dancer is slightly behind in tempo, or the experienced dancer makes more decisions—such as cueing, breathing or stepping first. Brown recalled it took years before she found her place with confidence in the equality of the shifting "leadingfollowing," acting and responding, surprising and being surprised by one's partner.[25] These later performances—in 2003 and 2004—resound with new musicality, a rhythm distinct to the musical way Brown found to be with her partners.

In my interviews with van Berkel and Johnson, they mention Forsythe frequently. This is less apparent with dancers later in the history of the *Duo* project. Johnson and van Berkel's sense of *Duo* appears to remain tied to the intimate practice of making the work with Forsythe in 1996. Forsythe generally stayed in the background of the early rehearsal process, waiting until the dancers had proficiency before coaching and making choreographic revisions. He trusted that dancers with prior experience dancing the work had the best competence to help someone new come into the choreography. Forsythe tells me, "I always say I am the *how* guy, not the *what* guy."[26]

The vital characteristic of Forsythe's choreographic practice at large is the processual aspect of choreography, the practice's openness as a generative and emergent phenomenon changing over time. The choreography is plastic, changing in an active process where all participants invest and explore *how* its materials can be rekindled. Forsythe engaged with what new dancers could bring out in *Duo*. This is what *Duo* dancer Francesca Harper regarded as his general strength—in letting the dancers "inspire his vision."[27] Brown remembered about learning *Duo*: "[*Duo*] It was still new for [Forsythe] too, because he had just made it a few months before, like half a year before, Jill [Johnson] had left and I took her place and so he was interested I think to get it back, and continue working on it."[28] In recollection of Forsythe's working process, Brown affirms that

23 Fieldwork notes, interview with Regina van Berkel, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

24 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

25 Drawing from Erin Manning, see Lepecki, "From Partaking to Initiating," p. 34.

26 William Forsythe, phone interview with the author, January 30, 2019.

27 Francesca Harper, phone interview with the author, September 20, 2018.

28 Allison Brown, video elicitation, Frankfurt, September 23, 2016.

Forsythe treated choreographic pieces as works in progress, taking interest in the continual revision of his pieces. This was also implicit in van Berkel's testimony: she knew that Brown must not imitate what came before—that they would find something new, through her care and Brown's investment. *Duo* was thus developed along the contingencies of each pair, with Forsythe exerting influence after the initial phase of careful transmission.

New dancers were brought into *Duo* for pragmatic reasons, such as when a dancer was injured or had left the company. Given the possibility of injuries (typically from general overuse, such as one's back being out or knee strain), it was sensible to have others ready to step in. However, for more than these reasons, Forsythe generally took interest in the process of how a piece could grow and change through the introduction of new performers—reflecting his value of choreography as a processual medium, adapting to people, locations and times. This kept the work in creation, without needing to invent something new from scratch.

In cases like *Duo*—small pieces that only few dancers enacted—passing on the choreography enriched the ensemble, giving more people access to the embodied knowledge within the work, exemplified in *Duo*'s particular movement and relational qualities. Allison Brown was given knowledge through Regina van Berkel and indirectly from Jill Johnson. Comparably, when Regina van Berkel left the company, Brown passed on that information further. This passing down and sharing was central to the ensemble's knowledge and emotional ties, reflected by Brown's alliance to van Berkel, as the person who taught and cared for her. *Duo* was a contexture of learning that was beneficial to spread within the company—to extend experience into the folds of the other dancers' bodies and knowledges.

Most dancers wanted to be recognized as good—to receive affirmation from Forsythe, their peers and the audience. Yet some new *Duo* dancers reported struggling with finding the right way to be a good dancer. Their loyalty to repeat or reproduce the movement exactly as it had been demonstrated or performed before, a value taught in many other traditional institutions of western dance education and performance, could be a problem—blocking them to the relational and creative attunement.[29] The dancers' education and prior experiences brought different values to the enactment of choreography, shaping the styles, rights and freedoms of what a dancer should and should not do.[30] In *Duo* it was not always possible for the artists to feel free from the stakes or the history of the piece. They were exposed to the possibilities of success and failure. Would they be able to perform as well as their partner? Or as well as previous pairs?

Partners Watts and Gjoka reflect—from their position now as confident dancers performing the most recent version of *Duo*—that in the beginning they had not found

29 As one example supporting this from my fieldwork, a *Duo* dancer explained: "If Bill shows something, then I have to do what he's done. […] Some people would just do something like he did. I was trying to do *exactly* what he did." Source: anonymized citation. Cf. Tomic-Vajagic, *The Dancer's Contribution*, pp. 103–4.

30 For a related consideration of talent, body type and mentality of work in classical ballet, see Wulff, "Experiencing the Ballet Body," p. 132.

their way, finding the movement material technical, even old, and just not right for their bodies. Unlike van Berkel and Johnson, who had created *Duo* and who felt a sense of innate belonging, new *Duo* dancers had much more varied experiences. Some new *Duo* dancers struggled with feelings of inadequacy in filling their predecessors' shoes; others took to *Duo* with ease, such as *Duo* dancer Cora Bos-Kroese. For her: "This [*Duo*] felt really like home."[31]

Many of my field notes could be cited for evidence: *Duo* dancers and the wider company culture of Forsythe dancers were resources for one another. *Duo* was vitalized through dancers reflecting upon their practice *together*. The dancers agreed that their interpretation should continually and curiously question the piece. To substantiate this claim, when Jill Johnson returned to the Ballett Frankfurt in 2000, she had the opportunity to dance *Duo* with a number of new partners. She stressed that each time this required development:

> There was an adjustment every time, 'cause you get so used to someone else's timing and just their being. And then, when your timings are based on that—you know, it's a partner—there was always a period of adjustment and I wanted to remain curious. And it was different for Allison [Brown] and I to get used to each other and create from what it was for us together. And then also with Natalie [Thomas], and Cora [Bos-Kroese]—it was fascinating every time. I learnt more every time.[32]

Like van Berkel, with whom she had created *Duo*, Johnson understood that *Duo* has to be created from what the two partners are *together*.[33]

Through these examples, defining aspects of the occupational culture of Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company can be brought into focus. First, an experience and understanding of choreography as in-process, relational and plastic—not as an organization reproduced, without novelty entering into the process. Secondly, knowledge of *Duo* is understood by the dancers to be mobile; the dancers value the speculative aspect of imagining, experimenting and mobilizing one's point of view. Lastly, the professional environment invests in practicing as labor, inviting risk and uncertainty into this process. Processual, relational, speculative and risk-taking—the choreographic logic is creative at its core.

"Yes, I did switch roles." Interview with Allison Brown, Frankfurt am Main, September 23, 2016.

LIZ: You switched roles?

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31 Cora Bos-Kroese, phone interview with the author, September 20, 2018.

32 Jill Johnson, videoconference interview with the author, October 21, 2016.

33 Interestingly, when one compares the first pair of *Duo* dancers to the subsequent generations, the relational and creative approach to interpretation is not automatically embraced by the new dancers—especially those espousing more traditional ballet values about replicating a movement exactly.

ALLISON: Yes, I did switch roles. 'Cause I did originally Jill [Johnson]'s role, after Jill left the company. And then when Regina [van Berkel] left the company and Jill came back, I switched to Regina's role. I felt like I had learned so much from Regina and we look a little bit alike and some people actually mistake us for each other, so I felt like more connected to Regina's role and just Regina in general. 'Cause Jill, I didn't really know her and I didn't think I tried to be Jill, when I first did it. So I was more like leaning towards Regina, the Regina way than the Jill way, and so when I actually got to do the Regina role it felt more like me, I guess.

LIZ: And can you describe the difference between the Jill way and the Regina way for you?

ALLISON: They are different people! There are differences in the movement quality and coordination.

LIZ: And musicality!

ALLISON: Yeah, for sure. I also experienced it in the alignment of the movement sometimes, whether the torso was more horizontal or vertical. Maybe it's 'cause Jill comes from a strong classical background, and Regina more contemporary.

LIZ: When you teach *Duo* do you try and teach these ways?

ALLISON: No.

LIZ: Why?

ALLISON: I think that's not really … I like to leave whoever I'm teaching it to … I like them to be their person, and find their way at that specific time or that teaching of it. But of course, at the same time, the original people, their individual physicality of course has influenced the material, so it's also embedded, integrated, ingrained in the material anyway, but I usually don't try to have them be like Jill or like Regina, no.

LIZ: I would say that I see these qualities also in Riley [Watts] and Brigel [Gjoka] [the dancers performing *Duo* since 2013].

ALLISON: Mm, wait, so Riley does Jill, and Brigel does Regina? Yeah? Okay. Right, yeah of course, all that is passed on.

LIZ: Riley even studied with Jill when she was teaching at Julliard!

11.1.1 Roles, Heritage and "Jill-i-ness"

In rehearsals of *Duo* that I observe in 2015, the rehearsal director sometimes refers to the "Jill-person" and the "Allison-person" to give instructions (that is, the names of the dancers in the archival video studied in this rehearsal).[34] This illustrated to me the fluid

34 Cyril Baldy, fieldwork observation of *Duo* rehearsals at CCN – Ballet de Lorraine, April 21–23, 2015.

way that persons could infiltrate into the bodies of the newest dancers, even when—in this case—the new *Duo* dancers had never made contact with Allison and Jill.

By the time of performance, however, the spectral nature of these forbearers should be subsumed in present dancers' embodied interaction. For Forsythe, the "history for me is *really* not the piece."[35] Forsythe notes that when the audience sees his choreographic work, years after it has been created, often it is no longer the original dancers performing; instead a new person is "giving his all." For Forsythe, the work is its present moment of performance. But in rehearsal, there are multiple realities in the room: sometimes calling up 'original' or earlier dancers, and sometimes focusing extensively on the presence of live enactment. As I studied *Duo*, I began to see these layers of history within the present—I saw how the past lingered.

The dancers learn through a lineage of passing down the dance. There is a twofold (and for them, not contradictory) obligation in this: to respect originality and value plasticity. Thus, taking on a role is a fascinating process of negotiating the choreography and exploring where it goes—how their interpretation can inflect the movement form, dynamic and timing. Reviewing archival performance videos with the dancers, I observe their extensive self-criticism as artists—always noting what did not go well and what could have been better—as well as their delight in watching each other, particularly their partners' movement. In a video elicitation with dancer Allison Brown, she laughs as she watches herself and partner Roberta Mosca, explaining to me that the manner in which they just performed a sequence is very "Jill." Brown describes Jill Johnson's movement quality as "finding all the possible movements in just that little bit. How you can break up, move the joints as much as possible—especially in *showerhead*." Brown suggests "I must have kept this 'Jill-i-ness.' Then Roberta learned it from me."[36]

Most dancers pause and search for words when asked to describe their partner's particular special qualities; most smile. Some point out that this is ineffable and that is why dance is their medium. Others react more affectively, telling of what they sense, and how they are inspired through them. I gather that their partners assisted them to stay present, to feel their bodies, to learn, to develop their coordination. Their partners helped them to find confidence, to feel comfort, to get out of their habits, to find inspiration, to feel the desire to play. Their partners supported them, confirming after a show that what they just created was not just ephemeral but was real and may endure. Their partners enabled them to dance *Duo*, to do something that they could not have done alone.

The significance of the body in choreographic practice has been explored by Leach and deLahunta, in an ethnographic study of dancers in Wayne McGregor's contemporary dance company in London. In this work, the authors articulate how movement is not just the shape-shifting of the body. Rather: "There is a quality to bodies that we feel, and in that feeling, a kinesthetic as much as an emotional response is central."[37]

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35 William Forsythe, team meeting discussing the project *Synchronous Object for One Flat Thing, reproduced* in Brooklyn, New York, May 5, 2006. Conversation between Forsythe, Rebecca Groves, Jill Johnson, Norah Zuniga Shaw and myself. Transcription by Norah Zuniga Shaw.

36 Allison Brown, video elicitation, Bern, January 23, 2016.

37 Leach and deLahunta, "Dance 'Becoming' Knowledge," p. 464.

Similarly, within *Duo*, each dancer offers his or her body movement, which elicits his or her partner socially—and if we listen to Leach and deLahunta, also morally and politically. The work of professional dancers involves feeling the dispositions of "desire, shame, imposition, power, politeness, domination or facilitation."[38] In the context of *Duo*, the dancers desire to experience the potential of intimate co-movement. At times, they feel shame about their bodies, or their performance. They question the sensitive signals they receive from their partner. Rather than dominate, they explore how to listen to one another and the audience, and to creatively respond through breathing-movement. They learn to facilitate the experience of *Duo* for one another and the audience. For Erin Manning, "Facilitation aligns to the field of relation, to its tastes, its feeling, its immanent shapings, and it carries this differential potential across the productive abyss of nonconscious and conscious experience."[39]

11.2 Reconstructing *Duo* in The Forsythe Company

In 2012, Allison Brown was invited by Forsythe to work with dancers in The Forsythe Company to help reconstruct *Duo*, which had not been performed since the end of Ballett Frankfurt in 2004—a gap of seven and a half years. These rehearsals included male dancers Riley Watts and Brigel Gjoka, both new to the piece, as well as female dancers Parvaneh Scharafali and Roberta Mosca, both of whom had performed *Duo* before but not with one another (Scharafali in Nederlands Dans Theater and Mosca in Ballett Frankfurt). The rehearsals ignited different perspectives and memories of the piece, making apparent some of the gaps in practice between Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company.

11.2.1 Riley Watts: Learning *Duo*

Duo dancer Riley Watts described his learning process as happening on many registers, in different phases.[40] Reflecting Allison Brown's own learning process, he was instructed to place attention on the movement first, to copy and memorize the sequence. In Watts' own words, he began a process of "translation"—transferring what he saw in seasoned *Duo* dancers' bodies into his body. He explains:

> It seems to me that the process of learning *Duo* went into different levels that overlapped with each other, but happened at slightly different times. Initially I think that we relied on visual input from the video and the *répétiteur* Allison [Brown]. It was necessary that I focus my attention onto observing and memorizing sequences of movement done by other bodies, either on video or in the studio with Allison. Very quickly after the initial observation of either the video or Allison, it was necessary to "translate"

38 Ibid.

39 Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 164. On facilitation of communication and the poetics of autistic communication, see ibid., pp. 158–64.

40 *Duo* dancer Riley Watts provided me with my first impressions of learning *Duo*. See Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*."

> what I saw into my own body. Allison acted as an aid in translation, based on her own experience performing the piece.[41]

Watt's description of learning moving as an act of "translation" suggests the manner that movement becomes adapted, from one body to another. Like the linguistic passage from one language to another, each person dancing *Duo* has his or her body history and *habitus*, changing the manifestation of *Duo's* movement. Initially, there was an effort to replicate the movement and perform it as "identically" as possible.[42]

Watts explained how his approach then evolved: to focus purely on the form of movement was "incredibly boring" for him and, he also realized, incorrect. Watts emphasized that he and his colleagues discovered, "only copying the shapes of the movement would not be enough to do the piece well." *Duo* was not about a sort of unison that *appears* identical, but about sharing intentionality, focusing initially on "sensation of form."[43] Not only did sensual intentionality change how the movement appeared, but it merged the dancers into their shared project of simultaneously feeling breathing-movement. Watts described *Duo* not as a reproduction of movements, but as a "process of attention to sensations that the dancers are experiencing simultaneously."[44]

In The Forsythe Company studios where Watts was working there were no mirrors—Forsythe did not think they were necessary.[45] Without a mirror, it is difficult to correct outer appearance but easier to concentrate on the feeling of motion, the feeling of movement-moving. Watts remembered being directed to observe sensation by means of all available sensory modalities: tactile, acoustic, visual, kinesthetic, proprioceptive. The dancers attuned to their bodies—winding and unwinding, rebounding off the floor, moving through dynamic states of (dis)equilibrium. Watts felt the sensation of his skin and tissues stretching. His kinesthesia extended into his partner's movement: co-felt. Through rehearsing *Duo*, he became tied to his partner empathetically through learning a new sense of movement with him—through sharing "sensation of form" and feeling that his own sensations were tied to Gjoka's motion. For Watts, this was a change in his perception of what movement was: both his understanding of it, and how he enacted and performed motion.

Their breathing congealed this. Watts described the use of breath in *Duo* as a "song-like" description of the motion that helped him to remember the complex sequences of choreography. This "breath-song" was co-sung with his partner, and was also influenced by Forsythe, vocalizing in rehearsal.[46] It helped to recall the movement, which, without counts or music to follow, could be tricky to remember. On stage and in the studio, their audible breath helped the dancers to keep track of each other in space and time, like echo-location. The breath-song provided a sonic envelope, within which the two dancers could nest themselves intimately and engage "in conversation" with each other,

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41 Riley Watts, email to the author, March 3, 2014.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*," p. 9.

45 Van Berkel also remembered not needing a mirror for making *Duo* in the Ballett Frankfurt studios. Regina van Berkel, interview with the author, Frankfurt, April 22, 2017.

46 Riley Watts, interview with the author and Bettina Bläsing on January 14, 2014.

aligning their motion.[47] They took this envelope from the studio to the stage, learning a mode of listening and feeling one another.

Already in these initial rehearsals, the dancers are acquiring a specific *Duo* practice. They are not just repeating and perfecting movement, though repetition is involved. They are finding out *how* doing and understanding *Duo*'s movement has to shift with their entry into this choreography.[48] They question, with their partners, what it means to share. In doing this, the dancers learn that there are multiple perspectives in *Duo*: their own, the choreographer's, the rehearsal director, other *Duo* dancers and, in time, the audience. Through the project of having—and communicating about—movement and sensations, the pairs bond and develop their *Duo* microcosm.

11.2.2 Archival Rehearsal Videos: January 19-21, 2012

The archival video documentation of *Duo* rehearsals is unfortunately very limited—with only videos of The Forsythe Company rehearsals in the period of January 2012 in existence.[49] During the three days actually documented, the pairs learning *Duo* worked on the stage of the Bockenheimer Depot. As is common in Forsythe's busy rehearsals, they work amidst other activities: other dancers rehearsing different pieces in the back of the space, warming-up happening on the sides, all accompanied by the technicians preparing for the afternoon rehearsals ahead. The dancers have memorized the Ballett Frankfurt sequence of *Duo* and are working to acquire fluency to perform it in unison. What seems to be at issue in these rehearsals is achieving movement mastery—the right timings and confidence, and of course doing this synchronously.

Talking to one pair intermittently as they dance, Forsythe stands up to demonstrate detail of the hands, an essential focus for him. He also encourages nuances in the timing through prosodic coaching—singing along with the artists as they move. He uses rhythm, intonation, tempo, stress and lulls in his voice to co-phrase the dancers' movement. His enthusiasm appears to help:

> When you turn around, watch your right hand. Right! The hand looks too ornate. (*He demonstrates the hand like a claw*.) Too ornate. (*The dancer repeats*.) Yeah, much better. Longer longer longer. (*He demonstrates a longer hand*.) Longer hand line. Longer. It's a little bit like this. (*He demonstrates incorrectly again*.) So longer. Right. Better. Better. (*The two dancers continue in unison. Forsythe synchronizes with them, speaking*:) Eeeeee—go!

47 Citation of Levinson and Holler in Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*," p. 10.

48 I understood Watts to be speaking out against other forms of movement transmission, as can be the case in the field of ballet, when movement learning involves the reproduction of a standard set of forms. In such a method, each individual is responsible for his or her actions. Wrong appearances are corrected by the rehearsal director or choreographer. Discussing intentionality is less a part of rehearsal. This relates to other examples I found in my fieldwork, of dancers wishing to reproduce movement perfectly or exactly, until there are no more corrections. Cf. Tomic-Vajagic, *The Dancer's Contribution*, pp. 102–5.

49 Documentation exists for rehearsals held on January 19–21, 2012. In these, the audio is often ambient, making voices on stage difficult to hear. This reflects that Forsythe often did not document rehearsals reviving repertoire; instead, documentation focused on archiving performances and creation rehearsals.

> Bah ee. Yeah! Right. This is where the body wants to hang behind. So have a game with your body! Go annnnd. (*One dancer says audibly, "Yeah!" They continue. Forsythe multitasks, doing some work with the technicians. Then he turns back to them*.) Right and. Da da. Whoo! That's good. That's right. Eee ah! Ya dum, baaaa! That's right, good. Ha ha. Perfect, perfect, perfect, perfect. Wee (*rising in pitch*)!!! Ya da da da kum. Ka. And we are getting to the end—de da da da da da (*rising in pitch and slowing down*) dhhh (*lowering in pitch, releasing air*) ha ha (*laughter*). Ahhh right! That was good. Yeah! You can have a little longer pause. You can go. (*He sings a short melody*.) That was much nicer today.[50]

In the sunny rehearsal, the dancers perform well and confidently. Praise is ample.

On the next day, the rehearsal appears tense—with the dancers expressing doubts and making gestures that suggest stress. Working without Forsythe, the rehearsal director gives constructive feedback to the dancers, focusing on dynamics. She demonstrates "a balletic placed position that then gets *full*," corrects movements that were too long or too short, and emphasizes with her breath and gestures how the dancers can proceed now to "be more in the flow."[51] The eldest and most experienced dancer, who has already performed *Duo* in the Ballett Frankfurt, is the most vocally engaged in the rehearsal, articulating her questions about the movement and rehearsal approach. She asks the rehearsal director about the dynamics of one motion, and then uses that example to bridge to a larger issue. For her the *creativity* of the rehearsal process seems to be at issue, as well as finding out how to best approach the practice more generally. She asks:

> I don't know how to make the choice about of what is flexible and what is fixed. Because many things have to be one way. You see what I am saying? But I think it is important to ask this question: When are these things fixed? And when is there the possibility (*pause*) of changing actually or finding these things? And I understand certain things don't have to have the same specificity of this dynamic. […] It is a system also of rehearsing, and of fixing things, and trying to fix those points. And then, those things that are fixed, you try to accomplish them, and you create more tension [*indecipherable*] I am just wondering of ways to approach this. That's all.[52]

While the artists do not resolve this matter in the rehearsal, the question of the correct "system of rehearsal" is one that they continue to think about. The rehearsal director emphasizes that it is not a matter of dancing individually, but dancing *together*.

In this phase of rehearsals, the stakes of what it means to be together surface. At issue is the power of who can decide and communicate what is "right" in *Duo*, whether from the inside or outside the event of dancing. The dancers are vulnerable to this assessment. Watts testifies that, together with Gjoka, the rehearsal process became about

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50 William Forsythe speaking as Roberta Mosca and Parvaneh Scharafali rehearse *Duo*. The Forsythe Company archival rehearsal video, January 20, 2012. Forsythe is wearing a microphone, enabling accurate transcription.

51 Allison Brown speaking as the rehearsal director; archival video documentation of The Forsythe Company rehearsal, January 21, 2012.

52 Roberta Mosca, The Forsythe Company archival video, January 21, 2012.

finding "consensus."[53] That consensus was predominantly an embodied philosophy, enacted in doing *Duo*—one forged between phases of critical reflection and discussion. The cooperation in rehearsal shows that choreography is negotiated, both implicitly and explicitly, and that perspectives within these intercessions are multiple. What was troubled and at stake, given the plasticity of the choreography, was the authority of who decides what is correct and incorrect about the practice. Choreography provides organization that changes with the artists' negotiation. *Duo* becomes an event of collaboration, achieved through rehearsal, via the medium of choreographic work.

11.2.3 Canceled *Duo* Performances, 2012

Forsythe's decisions to cancel the performances of *Duo* in 2012 are a challenging phase in the project history for the dancers. In place of *Duo*, Forsythe chose to assemble a different program interweaving new works and pieces of existing repertoire in which the dancers were already fluent.[54] These precarious moments illustrate how the ensemble might halt or suspend performing troubling pieces, resuming them later under different conditions. The ensemble was committed to open-ended rehearsal, and compliant to Forsythe's authority to make difficult decisions that would keep change alive in the process. There was no public apology or significant energy spent transitioning when *Duo* was cut; not only must the show go on, but it was not part of the occupational culture to view change as failure.

Throughout the rehearsal process, and particularly during the difficult phase of 2012, the dancers' "symbolic capital" is at stake.[55] Yet 'failure' in Forsythe's ensembles is understood and accepted as part of the choreographic process; it is deemed constructive, not negative. One member of the team notes: "It's needed. If you avoid failure, you will never get anywhere."[56] Although Forsythe canceling performances is an emotional

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53 "When learning this piece, we had to synchronize and agree on how we thought we wanted to do it based on what we had learned from Allison [Brown]. We were given the information and then we would come up with a consensus between the two of us as to how we felt the best way to do it was." Riley Watts, email correspondence with the author, September 2, 2014.

54 The Forsythe Company forecast a production featuring new and existing repertoire for a run of eight performances in the Bockenheimer Depot, February 3–12, 2012. They rehearsed *The The* (1995) and *Duo* (1996), while preparing two new works (*Stellenstellen* and a piece under the provisional title *Trio*). One week before the premiere in Frankfurt, Forsythe chose to change the program to *Whole In The Head* (2010) and the new piece *Stellenstellen*. The *Duo* dancers had however another performance opportunity. For the tour to Brescia on April 20–21, 2012, what was proposed and prepared prior to travel was a new work, titled *Study#1*, followed by *The The*, *Duo*, and *N.N.N.N.* During the two days of rehearsals before the performance, Forsythe chose to again change the program: omitting *Duo*. The performance involved *N.N.N.N.* followed by *Study#1*.

55 Cf. Wacquant, *Body & Soul*, p. 79. Here Wacquant draws upon Bourdieu's concept of "social capital" to analyze the practice of novice boxers.

56 Forsythe's production assistant Julian Richter, cited by Glentzer, "'William Forsythe: Choreographic Objects' Tricks Bodies and Minds." See also discussion of failure by Heidi Gilpin, in Gilpin, "Aberrations of Gravity," in particular pp. 114–15; linking this to the *Robert Scott Complex*, see Siegmund, "Of Monsters and Puppets," pp. 27–28. In particular Forsythe's works *Die Befragung des Robert Scott †*, *Decreation*, *Human Writes* and *Yes We Can't* explore varieties, aesthetics and the ethics of failure.

letdown for the dancers—specifically disappointing, embarrassing and stressful—their status as dancers is not injured. There is no need for the *Duo* dancers to 'save face.'[57] Onlookers (including myself) showed empathy in support of the dancers and assured them of their continued value to the team and the process of choreographic re-evaluation.

The challenging rehearsals in 2012 are a telling and significant phase in *Duo*'s project. Changing partners and contexts, Mosca (who had danced *Duo* in Ballett Frankfurt) and Scharafali (who had danced *Duo* in Nederlands Dans Theater) are in a complex knot of obligations: commitments to one's history and former partners, to one's current partner, to the novices learning with them (Watts/Gjoka), to the rehearsal director and to Forsythe. The multiplicity of these views proved to be confusing for the dancers, as well as challenging to their idea of rehearsal. Discussions questioned who has the authority to decide what is flexible within the choreography and what is not. It becomes clear—through tough rehearsals—that choreographic interpretation is not a matter of the *individual* choices of one dancer but choices made *together*. Successful *Duo* dancers find a "consensus" in their dyad and affirmation from Forsythe.[58] In hindsight, Watts/Gjoka stressed they did not take agency in the initial rehearsals. For these reasons, Watts/Gjoka understand *DUO2015* to be based more on their partnership, not the original qualities of the *Duo* movement material.

In summary, there was excitement but also friction in reconstructing *Duo* in 2012. Given the shift in repertoire and practices between Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company, it is not surprising that rehearsal and performance practice changed, and therefore *Duo* had also to change. Brown observed that during the subsequent rehearsals with Forsythe, the piece became something new. Not only did the choreography appear and sound different from what she had performed but, compared to her memory of rehearsals in Ballett Frankfurt, the dancers were also more active—voicing their thoughts, asking difficult questions, framing goals within the parameters of the choreography. The dancers' understanding of rehearsal shifts with this process, as well as what it means to be a "good" dancer. What gives *Duo* its unusual presence in performance is sociality shaped in rehearsal, helping partners attune together.

11.3 Becoming *DUO2015*

In 2015 a new opportunity arose for the *Duo* project. Forsythe was asked by French ballerina Sylvie Guillem to include the piece on her farewell tour, *Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*. The dancers chosen, Watts and Gjoka, were excited when the work became revised and retitled, to honor the contemporaneity of the context. Gjoka explained: "*Duo* was created in 1996. And he [Forsythe] is also in a different position today. […] What it is, is a work in progress. It's today, *Duo* today. It is the relationship of *doing Duo* today. *DUO2015*."[59]

57 Cf. Wacquant, *Body & Soul*, p. 79. Drawing from Goffman's concept of "corrective face-work."

58 Riley Watts, email correspondence with the author, September 2, 2014.

59 Brigel Gjoka, interview with the author, Dresden, March 6, 2016.

Retitling the work underlines the artists' transformation of their own conception of *their* project—signaling a new iteration. This is substantiated in the artists' own words, in separate interviews with the dancers and Forsythe, reproduced below. These clarify how *DUO2015* afforded Watts and Gjoka extended reflection and prolonged discovery of the appropriate strategies of rehearsal and performance. Forsythe also considers the particular problem of how to adapt choreography to the expertise of performers who had worked with the medium for *years*. These artists take the occasions presented to enable *Duo*'s becoming—through burgeoning relational expertise and revisions.

"Because *Duo* had also to do with us." Interview with *DUO2015* pair Riley Watts and Brigel Gjoka, Bologna, October 25, 2017.

This interview takes place in a dance studio, with the dancers sitting together on a couch, opposite myself and the video camera. Having taught DUO2015 *all afternoon to dance students, now at the end of their workday, the dancers have changed into their street clothes. Gjoka, who directs this dance school in Italy, is wearing designer sunglasses, a black down jacket and dark jeans. Watts, who has flown in from Maine, USA, is outfitted in a rust-color flannel shirt, a black Forsythe Company T-shirt, burgundy pants and a camouflage baseball cap. They appear to enjoy reflecting together, while often looking to one another to finish sentences or supplement the thoughts they have.*

LIZ: What made *Duo*, *Duo*? And when you think back upon your experience, from the beginning until now, with *Duo*, can you narrate a bit—five, ten minutes—how the phases of the process went, perhaps some high points and some low points?

RILEY: In the beginning we learned it from Allison [Brown], so really her version. And we were trying to do it as good dancers—so do just the material as it was taught to us, as well as we could, with the information that was given to us. We didn't really have time or the opportunity, or we didn't *take* maybe the agency to let the material and let the dance transform through our own personal experience between the two of us. […] And then we got to stage, and Bill didn't want to do [*Duo*] in the program that we had intended to do it for, which was good, I think. There's the video of that one rehearsal that we did on stage and it was like … it just didn't look good. It really wasn't good.

BRIGEL: It really didn't go well.

RILEY: Yeah totally. It was very disappointing at first. And then we thought that we would never dance it again and then, only because of the tour with Sylvie Guillem, the *Life in Progress* tour, was there an opportunity to re-develop it. Though before that, we did have the opportunity to try our own version of it in Darmstadt, and then Weimar.

LIZ: The two gala performances in 2013.

RILEY: Yeah. But in those we didn't feel so free. I watched the video recently and it looks very chopped to me. We just looked nervous—it's like we're dancing in relationship to the material only and not really to each other. It's not musical at all. And then because

of the Sylvie tour [*Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*]—that Sylvie [Guillem] asked Bill for this specific piece *Duo*, and we were the only people in the company who did it at that point and who had really been working on it. […] It came at a good time because we had been using the material from *Duo* as part of *Study#3* to improvise bits. It was very legible to Bill, so he could see the material transforming itself […].

So, then we made a *Life in Progress* version of *Duo* in the studio, which had still the beginning that was more similar to the original version, but excluding the laying on the floor parts that we don't do anymore. The dress rehearsal did not go well. We were nervous. It didn't feel good. […] And we went back to the studio, up in the theater in Modena and Bill said: "Let's just mark it. Just show me what it's like in a marked version." So, we did it, and you know, it felt so much better, somehow, […] I liked it. We felt good about it. We felt like it was the right, at least the right place, to start. And then we just kept going with it. With every show I think that it gradually grew. So, in the beginning as it was more upper body—the legs didn't do a whole lot. But gradually motion started to come. We didn't consciously decide to say, like: choreographically, let's do this. It just kinda came out of, not even really necessity, but just it came out of the repetition of having, of doing it in that specific context so many times, I guess […].

It really transformed from almost only the performances—not from preparing, ahead of time in rehearsal in the studio, but only from the work that was done on stage, which I think is interesting. It's a very strong and specific circumstance to be on stage, performing for thousands of people. And not knowing exactly what's going to happen, which is different from what most dance companies do—where you have your ideas and you have the choreography and you try to perfect it in the studio and then bring it on stage as best as you can, as close to the perfect version that you think it should be from rehearsal. Instead of [that], we found a different idea of what a rehearsal was.

BRIGEL: I think we flipped the process. For years we did the normal process, what Riley said now: that you would rehearse, you'd try what would be the best and then bring it out on stage. […] Then we started to do the opposite and to actually *understand* that the opposite was maybe what was needed. Because *Duo* had also to do with *us*. We were incorporating, or I'd say incarnating the material in a way that was not about the material actually, it was about *finding*. We had the material, but we didn't find each other. […] There is no need to rehearse steps, because this is not the way we wanna do it. And also, if we wanna keep it fresh for fifty-three shows, then how do we do this? What is the process? […] You have to find a way to develop your own way of being creative every day—to not get bored, not get annoyed. I never felt one moment with him, even when we were rehearsing, that we got annoyed.

RILEY: It was never boring.

BRIGEL: No, never boring, yeah. What should we do? Anything!

RILEY: It was never boring! 'Cause like every moment is different. It's a much bigger idea of movement that I think comes, came, from The Forsythe Company—being able to think about dance as every moment. It's so Buddhist, you know? Every moment is different from the last. And why would that not be true on stage? Like it seems ridicu-

lous to try to pretend like we're in a studio in rehearsal, or in front of more than 5000 people at the Herodeon in Athens. It's a very specific circumstance and the only way that you could practice this is just to be on stage: it happens because we happen to have this material, and also five-plus years of working together in the Company, and also dancing with everybody else in the company, and working with Bill and stuff that all collected as part of who I am, and who he is, and then together we're on stage, wearing sweatpants. (*laughs*) That's so, that's just, the material is like secondary, almost.

"A nice balance between my ideas and their skill and structure."
Phone interview with William Forsythe, January 30, 2019.

LIZ: One thing I wondered about … You've been working with dancers for so long. Could you tell me about *how* working with *Duo* dancers has changed? From maybe the Ballett Frankfurt version to how you work with Riley [Watts] and Brigel [Gjoka]? And on what do you work, also?

BILL: Well the difference with Riley and Brigel is that basically they rehearsed it for five years. That's the big difference. They rehearsed it for a very long time. They only did fragments. And every time they did fragments, I asked them to spontaneously grasp a point of reference. So they developed this very entrained, very accurately … There is acute perception of each other and it became a way of being, with someone else and a work at the same time. So they held each other and the work in their minds and bodies, and constructed the piece themselves—according to what their opinion or their analysis of what was happening in the moment. And having watched them do that for several years, knowing what they were capable of doing with material, I tried to find a structure that would adapt to that particular skill set. […] A nice balance between my ideas and their skill and structure. And that was the interesting difference. I could have done the same with Regina [van Berkel]—or easily done the same with Regina and Jill [Johnson], because they were so immersed into the material. For example, Jill [Johnson] could jump in and replace Brigel or Riley without a blink. She knows the material so well. There would be a few little structural differences, but there would be absolutely nothing in her capacities that would not allow her to enter that structure with ease.

11.3.1 Rehearsing *DUO2015*

Gjoka remembers that in The Forsythe Company there was not enough time to rehearse, he was always stressed by performance. With *DUO2015* there was the possibility to go deep into something and to relax, to "just be."[60]

Watts and Gjoka incubated their own rehearsal process, working on tour, without Forsythe there to direct them. The dancers watched with awe how Guillem warmed up and rehearsed dutifully before every performance—rehearsal as performance, showing consistency of achievement. For Watts and Gjoka, emulation of Guillem's mode of

60 Brigel Gjoka, interview with the author, Dresden, March 6, 2016.

rehearsing did not make sense for *DUO2015*—a choreography which required experiencing every "minor gesture" as being ripe with potential to vary. Manning's concept of the minor gesture captures the "living variation" of nuanced events such as *DUO2015*: a choreography with the potential of improvisation, tucked into the folds of the structure.[61]

Watts and Gjoka discovered that rehearsal needed to support a mode of performance, linked with spontaneity and creativity. This required cognitively having a strong memory of what the sequence was so that they could adapt it, riffing playfully in the show. Watts and Gjoka explained: when they rehearsed "as performance" right before the show, it was counterproductive.[62] Watts describes: "If we were comparing it to what happened two hours ago or whatever, the other day or whatever, it wouldn't feel so authentic as if we had just really jumped in without any kind of recent precedence of what it might be."[63] In Gjoka's words, in *DUO2015*: you cannot "force the outcome" on a perspective or expectations that you previously rehearsed. "If you rehearse, and expect to reproduce what you have rehearsed, the choreography of *Duo* is dead."[64] To be "authentic" meant to negotiate the choreography in real time with one another, not to repeat what had previously happened. It meant not to be habitual—rather, to feel the "minor tendencies" possible in performance.[65] To feel alive. To feel "free."[66]

The dancers did not stop preparing. Instead, they shifted how to do so. What the dancers describe is a change in their concepts of rehearsal and performance, even use of a new word suturing these—what Gjoka calls *entrainment* ("a form of progressive work").[67] What did this entrainment entail? When the dancers were provided time to rehearse on the stage, they would "mark" quickly through the order of the sequence to refresh their memory.[68] The dancers deliberately moved more swiftly than what they

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61 Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 72.

62 Watts specified that if there had been a long time since the last show (that is, more than a few weeks), they might perform in rehearsal, but otherwise it was not needed. Riley Watts, interview with the author, Bern, January 11, 2017.

63 Riley Watts, interview with the author, Bern, January 11, 2017.

64 Brigel Gjoka, interview with the author, Dresden, March 5, 2016.

65 Manning writes, "The challenge is to make these minor tendencies operational, thereby opening habit to its subtle multiplicity and exposing the fact that habit was never quite as stable as it seemed." See Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 89.

66 Riley Watts, interview with the author and Brigel Gjoka, Bologna, October 25, 2017. Allison Brown, interview with the author, Frankfurt, November 11, 2016.

67 Gjoka, "*DUO2015* Workshop Description."

68 By "mark" or "marking," the dancers mean intentionally practicing the movement without using full effort, to improve one's cognitive grasp of the sequence and movement details. Marking is an under studied phenomenon in dance studies. Typically, marking is a rehearsal practice not exhibited in performance. But in the case of *DUO2015* the dancers also perform marking on stage. My previous remarks in section 7.1 on the movement material of *Duo* also describe the practice of movement to include various levels of abstraction, in accordance with David Kirsh's study of marking. Kirsh writes: "When marking, dancers use their body-in-motion to represent some aspect of the full-out phrase they are thinking about. Their stated reason for marking is that it saves energy, avoids strenuous movement such as jumps, and sometimes it facilitates review of specific aspects of a phrase, such as tempo, movement sequence, or intention, all without the mental and physical complexity involved in creating a phrase full-out. It facilitates real time reflection." See Kirsh, "How

would in performance, to challenge their minds to work fast—also, to have fun and turn the rehearsal into a game. Watts found that thinking-together and getting his thoughts to become fluid was better than sensing his body or taking note of how it happened. Social connection was important, in an unscripted manner. Watts explains: "Now in terms of the things that we did privately on our own, we would work out together. Or we would just spend time together. Or warm-up. Or fool around, actually that was a really important thing that we would do." In lightening up, Watts and Gjoka were able to access their fluid creativity and relational connection, bringing "magic" into the process of dancing *Duo* once more![69]

11.3.2 Performing *DUO2015*

"The state of mind was just totally different for me." Interview with Riley Watts in Bern, January 11, 2017.

> RILEY: I remember a few moments [when I was in The Forsythe Company] when I realized, wow, this is really something: I don't know how to be focused on stage when I'm improvising, in the same way that I'm finding myself focused in rehearsals or in creation process. The state of mind was just totally different for me. I actually think I never really figured that out in the [Forsythe] Company. I really don't think I did my best dancing on stage. I think I was better in certain moments in rehearsal. […]
>
> I like being on stage. It's just a different set of mind; it's a different thing. You know, because [in The Forsythe Company repertoire] you come on stage you have your scene, and then go off stage. Also, the way I was often used [by Forsythe] in pieces [was this]: I was very fast, so I'd have to come in very very quickly and like get things going. Very often I just couldn't keep up with myself! Like my body would be going, but my mind would be like trying to … I ended up relying on adrenalin instead of like—really, really in depth, in the body, in concentration. […] So I remember that was a real key for me: [I realized] I don't know what kind of focus I need to use here [on stage]. I don't know how to harness my way of thinking, my way of focusing during this type of improvisation—the type of work that we're doing and the questions that we're asking as a company really requires me to have … you know, that's why I teach now. I try to figure out what that is, through teaching. That's the kind of environment I try to make when teaching, where it is that kind of concentration.

Performing *Duo* on stage, in front of a large audience, involves dealing with stage fright: sensing nerves, stress, risks, challenges and excitement. *Duo* dancers learned how to perform in this high intensity environment. As one dancer described it: "Bill [Forsythe]'s work cannot be performed at 100 percent, but it has to be 160 percent."[70] Further fieldwork with the dancers helped me to understand how this is acquired and even mod-

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Marking Dance Constitutes Thinking with the Body," p. 183. See also Kleinschmidt, *Artistic Research als Wissensgefüge*, pp. 131–38.

69 Riley Watts, interview with the author, Bern, January 11, 2017.

70 Cyril Baldy, conversation with the author, Nancy, May 12, 2015.

ulated by longstanding performers, who seek to evolve their performance beyond the adrenalin of movement mastery, to achieve a deep state of concentration. The pace and frequency of performance take a role in this. On the *Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress* tour of *DUO2015*, the dancers are seasoned professionals. Through their years of experience in The Forsythe Company, they have cultivated the capacity to perform intensely. In fact, they seek a respite from the high intensity of pressure described by Baldy and Watts in the citations above: a state of positive eustress rather than negative distress.

Gjoka described this in his own terminology as shifting to be "living" the choreography as opposed to performing it.[71] The distinction he perceives as a holistic investment in his project and partnership—one affording the thrill that comes through relational attunement. It was also a practice of being present, and not trying to reproduce the past. He explains:

> So, when we rehearsed it so many times and we would feel like, damn … we rehearsed it too much. I was like, how can you rehearse it too much?! Because we, in dance, we practice to rehearse. We practice to be perfect. But sometimes, we are totally going around it. It is not about practicing, how to say, a certain technique. Of course, you absolutely need to have the knowledge of it, but if you want to go beyond, then you do not allow yourself (*pause*) to build this trust, that you can give (*he dances*). Take it and go: let's go! And in the moment when you do it, (*he dances and vocalizes whhoaa!*) you are living it. But you are not thinking: "I'm performing." I'm living it.[72]

Watts uses different terminology to describe the fluidity between living on and off the stage:

> On the tour we had done so many shows of it [*DUO2015*], that the work became really what you saw on stage, and it didn't make sense for us to rehearse it ahead of time. Now … Just check in, make sure that it's in peak-performance, or whatever. The work that we did was really the work that everybody saw.[73]

Watts observes that because of new frequency of repetition of performance on the world tour of *Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*, it became even more necessary to allow performance to be a sort of "work" without rehearsal; meaning the choreography had to stay alive by changing, in work that the audience could see.

Practice, performance, work and life—all intermix for Watts and Gjoka. Western dance education foregrounds practicing—in the sense of repeating to be perfect—as a value in itself. What occurs in Watts and Gjoka's approach to *DUO2015* is a thriving enactment that carries the rigor of the project's history of practice, coupled with creative speculation on what the project might become. With each performance, this is mediated by singular conditions.

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71 Brigel Gjoka, interview with the author, Dresden, March 6, 2016.

72 Brigel Gjoka, interview with the author and Riley Watts, Bologna, October 25, 2016.

73 Riley Watts, interview with the author, Bern, January 11, 2017.

Drawing extensively from interviews with the dancers and Forsythe, as well as review of archival videos of The Forsythe Company's *Duo* rehearsals in 2012, this chapter has examined the dancers' phases of learning, rehearsing and performing *Duo*. My aim was to comprehend how notions of practice, rehearsal and performance were understood and enacted by the dancers, as well as how and why these changed over the piece's history. Individual sections have focused on the dancers' process of learning *Duo* in Ballett Frankfurt (11.1), reconstructing *Duo* in The Forsythe Company (11.2), revising the project for *DUO2015* and the specific practices of rehearsing (11.3.1) and performing (11.3.2) involved in this. Through this examination, I have illustrated that the force of creativity is central to *Duo*'s practice. Rehearsal and performance were generative processes in which the team explored what *Duo* may become today. I have also shown that the regime of practice was influenced by what the dancers believed was relevant to being a "good" dancer and finding the "right" mode of rehearsal. Consequently, the aesthetic of *Duo* reflected the dancers' achievement of a common framework for these values, furthering my claims that choreography is more than a formal organization of movement, but a complex nexus with the social plane and moral sphere.

This investigation showed various modes and purposes of rehearsal across the project's history, which changed together with the aesthetic of the piece. The Ballett Frankfurt version of *Duo* demanded balletic virtuosity and endurance. *DUO2015* required greater facility in joint improvisation; not over-rehearsing was important, to stay spontaneous. Throughout the history of *Duo*, developing rapport, connection, musicality and trust with one's partner was essential. The dancers stressed "learning by doing." Their testimony underscored the ongoing journey of the piece, in continuing to expand the enabling constraints, always questioning what more and what else the work could be.

The choreographic process thus continued to be *re-creative*. Instead of rote repetition, or nostalgic reproduction of the past, the dancers' testimonies have delved into the processes of creative reenactment, situated within the specific materiality and context of the theater space. This re-creative process was close to their constitution as persons, which they described as a sort of "living" on stage. Continually finding rather than repeating, negotiating rather than complying—dancing together was a journey that afforded personal growth and fulfillment.

Conclusion: Choreography as Creative Organization

The point of departure of this dissertation is the *Duo* project (1996–2019) of choreographer William Forsythe—a short dance performed by pairs that has taken various titles and forms over the last two decades. Looking back on the recent past, this manuscript also probes my special vantage point as a former dancer from The Forsythe Company, to critically reflect upon an experience of choreography that, to some extent, I share although I have not performed *Duo* publicly. My aim was to give the *Duo* dancers' voices and accounts of their practice a focal presence in this analysis, while also critically examining their practice within this finite microcosm of one project. A second aim was also to question and develop how my competences as a dance practitioner could be incorporated into the field of dance studies and writing theory. This meant not only adding systematic, discursive and critical methodology to my way of interpreting this case study, but also bringing forth an appropriate writing style. The resulting manuscript provides dance studies with a 'dancer's reflection' within this field.

The approach chosen for this research challenged disciplinary methods. The initial two axes upon which I framed my research interests were the fields of practice theory (Bourdieu/Wacquant/Schatzki/Reckwitz) and process philosophy (Whitehead/Manning). The pillar of practice studies, on one hand, opened the avenue of ethnographic empiricism—participant observation of activities in which meaning was understood to be situated in contexts of repeated, embodied doing (as opposed to in external structures or rules). I took from this field concepts such as *practice* and *habitus* to examine the generative nature of routine and patterns constituting dispositions. One the other hand, process philosophy more strongly eschewed subject-object divisions. Foregrounding passage and creativity, people and things were 'of time' and 'in transition.' From this theoretical approach I borrowed concepts such as *creation* and *relational movement* to examine a mode of dancing together in *Duo* in which a 'we' emerges and a work in progress continues. For the task of studying a duet—in which moving together was central—and examining this longitudinally, these perspectives helped to articulate an initial hypothesis. My preliminary thesis was that the *Duo* project would only weakly fit a traditional concept of an artistic 'work'—that is, a work produced by one author's labor, a work existing purely in performance, a work nostalgically recalling the 'original' presence of the premiere, a work that ideally reiterates without change in time

or context or a work constrained by the notion of choreography that operates through discipline and rules, as the force of what dancers 'must' do.[1] Rather, my view was that the *Duo* project was an emergent and relational nexus of practices anchored by passing down embodied knowledge and artifacts, in which there were multiple perspectives. *Duo* was not a very simple singular evolving entity, but rather a dynamically changing organization (multiplicity)—which I aimed to trace along its history, as a process of emergence and change.

To explore this hypothesis further, I drew a practical research question that shifted the aesthetic or theoretical problem of assessing the 'work' (a traditional concept that has long been critically overturned in dance studies) to focus on a praxeological one: what the dancers do in practice. I chose to foreground the terms *choreography* and *choreographic*. Slipping away from a defining question, such as 'What is the choreography of *Duo*?' I asked the processual one: *How is the choreography of Duo enacted and understood by the dancers in practice? And how does this change over time?* I also added onto this question the doubled perspective of a reflective turn, by asking: *How do I enact and understand Duo as a dancer-researcher?* I chose methodology to synergize with the available sources and traces that I could grasp of this enactment. This became a research architecture merging the approaches of reconstructive ethnography and detailed micro-analysis of a cross section of *Duo* key performances on video. A third layer was my continual self-reflection upon my memories and embodied knowledge as a former Forsythe dancer.

The results of this investigation developed along clustering themes, which grew into a three-part text, falling under the headings: Art World, Movement and Creation. Each part highlights a related aspect of the *Duo* project's *choreo-logic*—delineating the institutional framing and occupational culture of Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company, the lasting impact of movement and dancing together upon the dancers' intersubjectivity, the role of longstanding practices of rhythmical relation and the importance of creative experience within this community.

The main conclusions of the research are as follows: First, the dancers' enactment and testimony demonstrate that *Duo* is a processual and dynamically changing entity, richly multi-perspectival and plastic—a process of emergent, enduring organization. Secondly, in contrast to concepts of choreography foregrounding that which results from explicit planning of the dancers' movement by the choreographer and culminating in ephemeral performance, I develop the argument that the choreography *Duo* is a rich nexus of people, im/material practices, contexts and relations—an *emergent* organization, in which the artistic participants process, expose and expand its constraints.

Hence, instead of a choreographic piece as a static site of meaning, ideally reproduced by the performers for the audience (that is, the work of dance that reproduces the author's original and singular intent, or an enacted organization of dancing with strict

1 André Lepecki captures many of these aspects in one account of choreography (that he also problematizes): "Choreography demands a yielding to commanding voices of masters (living and dead), it demands submitting body and desire to disciplining regimes (anatomical, dietary, gender, racial), all for the perfect fulfillment of a transcendental and preordained set of steps, postures, and gestures that nevertheless must appear 'spontaneous'." Lepecki, *Exhausting Dance*, p. 9.

and static rules) the study presents the dancers' perspectives of choreography as an active *site* of thinking and doing and as a *process* continued before and after the event of performance. *Duo* enables practices of dancing together, blending singular and plural. The concrete example of *Duo* shows how a choreography is distributed between people and contexts, and thereby linked to the social plane. The attention to detail and expanse of evidence gives this assessment richness, ideally providing the reader with a palpable understanding of how this is the case. Since these chapters have been summarized individually in the text, here I aim to further sharpen overarching points.

First, it was impossible for me to describe the longitudinal changes in the *Duo* dancers' practices and understanding of choreography without recourse to the changing organizational frames and occupational cultures of Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company. This investigation revealed that, despite *Duo* being a microcosm for development of the pair's sociality, the teamwork of the ensembles defined routines of practices—as the team shared labor upon the choreographic pieces. Moreover, I found out how the reality of dancing *Duo* was constrained by the pragmatic requirements of the economic and municipal constraints of distributing public performances. This defined many aspects of working choreographically according to conventions and the theater's specific materiality.

Forsythe's choreographic works were not just made and then distributed but, as my writing shows, the distribution process impacted the development and changes of pieces and projects like *Duo*. For this reason, I drew upon Howard Becker's notion of an *art world*, which emphasizes the manner in which art works are brought into existence through interlacing chains of cooperation. Like Becker, I emphasize how my case study shows influencing conventions, pressuring markets, routinized contexts for working and retention of useful skills and materials over time. My position is not, as Becker's also was not, to discredit 'the' authoring artist and the special power they are given in 'their' network. Rather, like Becker, I conversely try to include all the activities, small decisions and participants that enable a work of art—such as *Duo*—to be performed at all. As Forsythe said himself in 2004, his name no longer belonged to himself alone: "William Forsythe has in the meantime moved away from me. […] William Forsythe is a collective of people."[2]

While the phrase 'the choreography of *Duo*' is often used by the dancers and Forsythe to mean the planned sequence of steps that they enact in performance, this does not mean, in practice, that the choreography is synonymous with danced movements, nor that it is epitomized in performance. Rather the choreography is also clearly contextual and materially built, involving many more moments and elements than the scaffold of performed steps. While my informants did not contest Forsythe's authorship of the choreography of *Duo*, they also understood choreography to be a matter of teamwork, in which Forsythe serves as a leader. While a choreography is titled, sold and performed as a unit of production, it is also a living, flexible and changing process. It endures and moves. As the longitudinal lifespan of the *Duo* project demonstrates, a choreography in-

2 Translation by the author. This citation is from Forsythe's speech on receiving the 21st German Dance Prize in 2004. Forsythe cited in Harteweg, *Kinästhetische Konfrontation*, p. 62.

terweaves a shifting interplay of people, practices of working, and contexts—as *creative organization*. Here I speak about *Duo*, but also generally about Forsythe's choreographies.

What is enacted and understood by the *Duo* dancers as 'choreography' is equally the steps, as a way of *being together* and *laboring*, on stage and in rehearsal. To work choreographically is a manner of communicating with one another, based upon histories of dancing together and the meaning accumulated in small gestures and signs. It is also a mode of exchanging and materializing movements. This intermodal practice is enacted through a rich sensorium of movement, communication and concepts—evident in the dancers' testimonies, where they fluidly interweave words, gestures and sounds. The choreographic process is not about achieving perfection; it includes study of the minor varieties of change and difference with which a created work may vary in practice. The process also involves continual reflection—both explicit and implicit—on whether the choreography is still 'right' for the people and the times. In this regard, I share some aspects of what Gerald Siegmund has characterized in Forsythe's choreographies, regarding the manner in which the performers develop "agreements" of how to act—also that a choreographic plan is never fulfilled in perfection, and in so doing, the dancers experience negotiation and take liberties.[3] I also share Siegmund's idea that the symbolic realm is important in forming this common sense and subjectivity. Yet I differ from his view that choreography operates as a "machinelike" order separate from practice, as "text" and "law" that produces sociality.[4] In my view, choreography is much more a site where practices and organization merge.

My observations concur with comparable longitudinal studies of the choreographies of Alvin Ailey and Pina Bausch. Dance scholar Tommy DeFrantz has provided an insightful volume on the biography and work of African American choreographer Alvin Ailey (1931–1989), foregrounding study of changes of the piece *Revelations*. Through his close readings of this work in performance, DeFrantz describes how Ailey "rejected traditional concert dance conventions of 'fixed' choreography for a more fluid, generational model that not only accommodated but *expected* changes in performance standards." He argues that this "paradigm shift" to the roles and representation of dancers allowed for an Africanist aesthetic and working process to thrive.[5] We have observed this also in *Duo*, in the way that dancers brought forth their talents and allowed for the generational rebirth of the piece. This suggests that an Africanist perspective on play and creation may also be fruitful for understanding groups—such as Forsythe's—where western models of the artwork and performer are under question.

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3 Siegmund, "Negotiating Choreography, Letter, and Law in William Forsythe," p. 213; see also p. 206.

4 Gerald Siegmund defines choreography in one essay as follows: "Choreography appears to be a machinelike structure of relational differences, an inhuman symbolic language that, together with the bodies' manifold possibilities of movement, produces a choreographic text." Siegmund, "Negotiating Choreography, Letter, and Law in William Forsythe," pp. 203–4. He also writes, "[…] choreography [functions] as a syntagmatic structure that the dancing body must follow. It must not be understood one-dimensionally as suppressing 'the body' or the freedom of movement, but as the very act of making subjectivity possible. […] This enables the subject to escape from its solipsism and to become a social subject by attaching itself to a network of signifiers that *relate*." Ibid., pp. 211–2 (italics in the original).

5 DeFrantz, *Dancing Revelations*, p. 81 (italics in the original).

A second study reinforcing the findings and methodology here is the research of Gabriele Klein on choreographer Pina Bausch. Through her concept of a "praxeology of translation," Klein's research of Pina Bausch's ensemble looks at the many interactive junctures in which passing on, adoption and transfer take place within this company's choreographic work. Emphasizing process, practice and betweenness with her concept of translation, Klein writes:

> A dance production is thus a *permanent, complex process* of translation: between speaking and moving, moving and writing, between different languages and cultures, between various media and materials, between knowledge and perception, between company members developing a piece or passing it on, between performance and audience, between piece and dance review, between artistic and academic practice.[6]

With greater regard of the gap between audience and performer than I have considered in this study, Klein has similarly uncovered the multiple time layers and intercultural rifts negotiated in any one performance. Through my production analysis of *Duo*, showing it to be relational and changing, I come to parallel conclusions.

Within my investigation of *Duo*'s movement, I have revealed the way in which bodies, subjectivity, rhythm and relation intertwine in choreographic process. From my position, the choreographic movement of *Duo* is not held together through a force of organization 'prior' and 'external' to bodies, as some prescribed and imposed organization of obligated movements and fidelity. Nor does movement exfoliate from each dancer, from the 'inside' out—as if each individual would move through their historically acquired *habitus*, while reacting to the other. Rather, I show how movement in *Duo* is produced through mutual attunement to *relational* potential, which makes that movement different from how it would be if one dancer performed it alone. The choreography is enacted through the support of an array of practices (such as studying videos, marking movements, entraining, making notes, and so on), which require conceptualizing and sociality to decide together the right modus of work. This shows that choreography emerges through bodies that are individual-collective—shaped on the level of the individual, the dyad and the ensemble.

While *Duo* dancers experience relation profoundly in dancing *Duo*, my fieldwork showed that they are also artists who have a strong sense of their own individual bodies. Their bodies and embodied knowledge set them apart from other, non-Forsythe dancers. They also set themselves apart from one another, in a mutually beneficial way: a 'Jill' is not a 'Regina.' A 'Brigel' is not a 'Riley.' Their bodies place them at risk: if they are injured, they experience pain, and they may not be able to perform. While they engage in relational movement in *Duo*, they still carry histories of being western selves (having emphasized their bounded bodies, their coherent biographies, their roles as competitive workers and consumers, and so on). They also, of course, carry on with their activities as persons and citizens outside of the workplace. This makes their subjecthood a complex mixing of modes of relational constitution and modes of western individualism.[7]

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6 See Klein, *Pina Bausch's Dance Theater,* p. 13, emphasis mine.

7 Chris Fowler writes, "Our contemporary conception of the individual as indivisible is an influential construct […]. However, there are still times when more relational personhood is brought to the

It for this reason that I see the choreography of *Duo* as a nexus of practices (including the dance movements that the dancers would call 'the' choreography), in which there is friction as well as enmeshment. The sustainment of *relational movement* in *Duo*, as I develop in section 7.2, provides the dancers with a new understanding of their selves, for it suggests that one is 'brought out' through other people: one's partner, the choreographer and the audience.[8] Each *Duo* dancer is grateful to the difference between subjects that supports their partnership.

The movements of *Duo* are not expressive in the sense of linked to communication of stories, narratives and feelings; rather, they are—as some dancers told me—expressive of forms and qualities. These movements are cultivated through pictures and geometries, as well as insider-jokes, names and references. It is well known to Forsythe and the dancers that the inner experience of a dancer is relevant to performance but not communicated to the audience (that is, there is a disjunction between the aesthetic experience of the dancers and that of the spectators). The dancers generally do not focus or understand their work as communicating to the audience, though they understand that the gestalt of a performance must communicate something beyond their, and even Forsythe's, control. Dancing *Duo*, and other works by Forsythe, is thus tacitly loaded with 'inner' experiences and feelings that are not discussed among the dancers, and perhaps not even articulable. The dancers take pleasure in their work, but also face an enormous athletic challenge when dancing *Duo*. In return, they receive affirmation from their partner, peers, the audience and Forsythe.

The high stakes of performing as a member of Forsythe's ensembles were a central topic of discussion in my fieldwork, in terms of the anxieties and stress involved in performing. Burnout and exhaustion were common. The stakes of *Duo* were expressed in nerves, sweat and fear, as well as the development of strategies to overcome such anxieties so that one could enjoy the work. Most *Duo* dancers appreciated what they became in their partnership and through longstanding *Duo* experience, which also enabled them to better bear individual consequences of success/failure. The upshot of this was that the psychological and personal aspects of choreography are significant. One limitation of this study was the difficulty as a native ethnographer to critically report upon this psychology, as well as to find language for talking about desires that generally were unspoken in the company culture.

Impact and Limits of the Study, Further Work

To close, I would like draw out of my conclusions a few simple remarks that clarify what the current manuscript has contributed the field of dance studies. The aim of this study has been to examine and model a case study of longitudinal choreographic practice, and

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fore when individuals recognize their debts to others and the effects that others' actions have on them, or the conflicting forces within them, or the way that an experience provides a new and unexpected understanding of things." Fowler, *The Archaeology of Personhood*, p. 17.

8 I believe this is true at large for dancers in Forsythe's ensembles, and that *relational movement* is practiced throughout the repertoire.

thereby to enrich the theoretical discourse with a practical example. My aspiration has not been to model or to define choreography generally on the basis of this case study, nor to situate the example in a comprehensive review of the current dance discourse on choreography. It has effectively developed methodology to include the dancers' voices and analysis of their practices in an investigation of a choreographic project, and to chart longitudinal change—both aspects of which are not new but still novel within dance studies.

Two difficulties within case study analysis are that they can be dismissed as singularities, or easily become obscure within their idiolect. Through my research I have strived to preserve a critical view and to intermingle 'native' and scholarly language. I have also aimed to clearly note what aspects may be extended more broadly to Forsythe's choreographic work at large, or to the field of western contemporary dance. For example, within the Forsythe scholarship, my work has questioned the term 'collaborative,' showing how dancers were respected partners rather in 'cooperation' and illustrating how the model of authorship corresponded with a style of leadership. It has also demonstrated how choreography impacts the daily lives and subjectivities of dancers.

It is my hope that the general matrix that I have used in this analysis would be applicable to other studies of dance in which matters of choreography and subjectivity are the focus. My way of understanding choreography has emphasized the following interrelated layers:

- Dancers' practices (training, rehearsing, learning, creating, performing)
- The organizational, material, economic and cultural context of institutions and the choreographic market
- Processes of embodied subjectivity, relations and personhood
- Components of choreographic structure in performance

I believe that this framework would be applicable to studies of most occupational dance forms in western contexts. This balanced approach shows the complicated and intertwining factors that produce choreographic works and labor. These entwined operations may be missed by scholarship that foregrounds performance analysis or relies on testimony from only one or two positions within the team.

The picture of choreography brought forth by this study is a processual and relational one: choreography as a sort of enduring and creative composition of organization. *Duo* does not eschew all the 'traditional' features of choreographic practice—including the primacy of dancing bodies—though it does present these bodies as articulate and relational, not inarticulate and solipsistic. In the current world however, the term choreography is changing to mean new things. Outside of dance, it is being used to name the complexity of interaction and organization in political campaigns, teamwork, even social networking as choreography. This "expansion" according to Rebecca Groves, involves "borrowing from dance new ways of conceiving their own disciplines in terms

of organizational complexity and the relational, affective, and perceptual dimensions of embodiment."[9] My view of choreography has also emphasized these aspects.

Forsythe—with his essay and also his term "choreographic objects,"—further adds to our discourse. He espouses, as I do, that choreography is not a static practice but a perpetually shifting one. He asks: "But is it possible for choreography to generate autonomous expressions of its principles, a choreographic object, without the body?"[10] By situating "choreographic objects" in the field of visual art, as works that render the movement and interaction of the spectator central (that is, a choreography without a trained dancer's body or the resources of dance practice), Forsythe engenders another sort of relational choreography in which sociality is emergent. This is based, as I have suggested within the body of this manuscript, on Forsythe's longstanding experience of crafting the conditions for creative interactions—in which dancers learn to value the relational potential of projects that perpetuate creative ways of repeating, assembling, investigating, reversing, attempting and moving.

The *Duo* project shows and reverberates with the tension between 'traditional' notions of choreography, tied to the practices of dance and the bodies of the dancer/choreographer, and the current 'expanded' approaches—in which relations, materials, affects, practices, concepts and complexity become composed. By proposing the notion of choreography as *creative organization* linked with experimental investigation of subjectivity, I wish to suggest that choreography is more than logistical procedures of dance planning, and thereby has great potential as a concept outside of dance studies. From my analysis, it is clear that even in *Duo*, a dance project, the choreography is not confined to the steps or the rules for action. Nor is choreography the power behind what the dancers must enact. Rather, the choreography is the entire organizational apparatus and network of people that enable and encounter the artwork. The choreographic is an unfolding nexus of practices, materials, concepts, beliefs and people.

One challenge with thinking like this is that the definition of choreography also begins to sound very general—as a big bundle of things happening together. With this case study, I have endeavored to demonstrate how a choreography (such as *Duo*) takes form because of the specific trajectory of collected elements and the particular history of practices merging. The *Duo* project was developed because of the distinctive movements (such as *showerhead*), the communication structures of each *Duo* pair, and the singularity of *Duo*'s structure (of entrainment, cues and alignment). Within this, dancing is essential: dance training, transnational dance histories and acquired dance *habitus*.

My approach has given testimony and terms to show the complex ways that bodies and subjectivities are produced in organized professional labor upon choreography—a choreography of choreographies. Two limits of this study are that I remain focused on production, without speculating on the reception of *Duo*, and also that I do not engage in comparative case studies of other choreographic works. The latter would surely have

9 Groves, "William Forsythe and the Practice of Choreography," p. 118. The term "expanded" has been brought into the contemporary dance scene by Mårten Spångberg, who borrowed it from art critic and theorist Rosalind Krauss's essay, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field" (1979). See Manson, "Interview: Mårten Spångberg."

10 Forsythe, "Choreographic Objects," p. 90.

helped to define categories and terms for the theory of choreographic process more generally. It is my hope that this study might inspire dance scholars to further incorporate ethnographic methodology into their research, to include the voices of the dancers in our studies of what dancing *is* and what choreography might *become*.

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5. Online Artistic Resources

Projects by William Forsythe:

Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye, (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvzEl4d5_SdUe3B6ElTEFSA)
Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced (https://synchronousobjects.osu.edu/)

Further Dance Projects:

Dance Engaging Science (http://motionbank.org/en/content/dance-engaging-science.html)
Everybodys (http://everybodystoolbox.net/)
Motion Bank (http://motionbank.org)
Sarma (http://sarma.be/pages/About_Sarma)

Appendix

A. *Duo* Performance Credits

Duo
Choreography: William Forsythe
Music: Thom Willems
Stage, Light, Costume: William Forsythe

DUO2015
Choreography: William Forsythe
Music: Thom Willems
Stage, Light and Costumes: William Forsythe

Dialogue (DUO2015)
Choreography: William Forsythe
Lighting Design: Tanja Rühl and William Forsythe
Costume Design: Dorothee Merg and William Forsythe
Sound Design: Niels Lanz

B. *Duo* Dancers

Name, (years in Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company), Nationality, Gender
Regina van Berkel (1993–2000) Dutch ♀
Allison Brown (1997–2004) Canadian ♀
Bahiyah Sayyed Gaines (1996–1998) American ♀
Brigel Gjoka (2011–2015) Albanian ♂
Francesca Harper (1991–1999) American ♀
Jill Johnson (1991–1996, 1999–2004) Canadian ♀
Cora Bos-Kroese (2001–2003) Dutch ♀
Roberta Mosca (2000–2013) Italian ♀
Parvaneh Scharafali (2008–2012) German ♀
Natalie Thomas (2001–2004) American ♀
Riley Watts (2010–2015) American ♂

C. Visualization of *Duo* Pairs

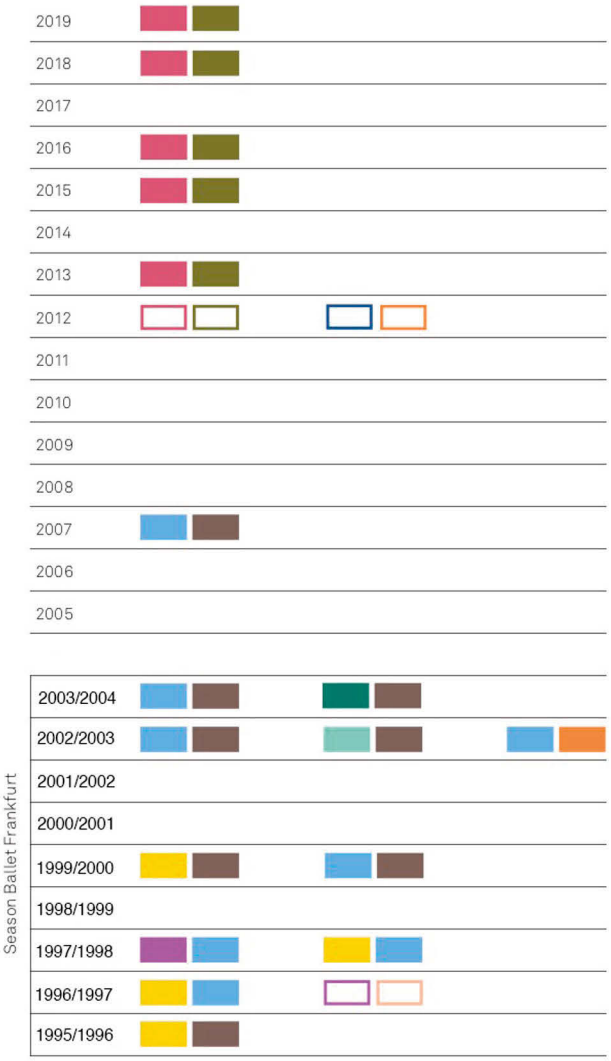


Diagram by Karin Minger

D. Artist Biographies

1. *Duo* Dancers[1]

Regina van Berkel was born in 1969 in The Hague (Netherlands) and received her dance training in the former young talents class of the Nederlands Dans Theater under the direction of Ivan Kramer, and at the Rotterdam Dance Academy. Van Berkel danced with Djazzex in The Hague, Jan Fabre in Antwerp, Saburo Teshigawara in Tokyo and William Forsythe at the Ballett Frankfurt, where she danced from 1993–2000. Together with Jill Johnson she was half of the original cast of *Duo* in 1996, performing the work from 1996–2000. For the last twenty years van Berkel has worked as a freelance choreographer and costume designer in close collaboration with the set designer Dietmar Janeck. This has given her the opportunity to work with wonderful dance companies such as the Nederlands Dans Theater, The Göteborg Ballet, Ballett am Rhein, ballettmainz, Gulbenkian Ballet, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet and Introdans; as well as festivals such as the Holland Dance Festival, Steps Festival, Heiner Goebbels Festival, NJO Muziekzomer Gelderland Festival, and Reinbert de Leeuw Festival. Apart from her little living room in the train, Regina van Berkel has been based in Germany since 1993.

Allison Brown was born in 1967 in Morocco and is of Canadian citizenship. She trained at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and The School of American Ballet, before dancing with the New York City Ballet, Twyla Tharp and Dancers, Pretty Ugly Dance Company and Saburo Teshigawara's company KARAS. She danced with the Ballett Frankfurt from 1996–2004, dancing *Duo* from 1996–2004. Since that time, she has worked as a choreographer, teacher and ballet master—setting the work of William Forsythe internationally. She has taught since 2011 at the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Frankfurt am Main. In 2019, she was appointed Professor of Ballet for contemporary dancers at the Center of Contemporary Dance at the Hochschule für Music und Tanz Köln. She currently lives in Frankfurt am Main.

Cora Bos-Kroese was born in 1967 in Amsterdam and began dancing in South Africa at the age of seven. She studied dance at the Lynne Harisson School of Dance in New Zealand, the Royal Ballet School of London and Het Koninklijk Conservatorium in Den Haag. She danced for Nederlands Dans Theater II (1986–1988) and Nederlands Dans Theater (1988–2001) and returned there as a ballet master from 2005–2007. Bos-Kroese was a member of the Ballett Frankfurt from 2001–2003, performing *Duo* in 2003. Since 2004, she has also produced her own choreography within the platform C-scope, co-founded with photographer Joris-Jan Bos in The Hague. In 2003 she also co-founded the summer arts festival BIARTECA together with *Duo* dancer Roberta Mosca in Piemonte, a project

1 These biographies were developed in dialogue with the artists, based upon text from the archival programs of Ballett Frankfurt, the 2019 online program for the presentation of Forsythe's *A Quiet Evening of Dance* at the Shed, and the artists' websites. The material has been revised and cited with permission of the artists. See "A Quiet Evening of Dance." https://theshed.org/program/66-william-forsythe-a-quiet-evening-of-dance.

which continued until 2017. She currently produces her own choreography under C-scope projects and sets the works of Jiří Kylián internationally. Bos-Kroese lives in The Hague.

Brigel Gjoka was born in Albania and started dancing at the Tirana Ballet School. In France he studied at the Ecole Superieure de Danse de Cannes-Mougins and danced with Cannes Jeune Ballet. He was a member of Le Ballet de l'Opéra national du Rhin, Staatstheater Mainz and Nederlands Dans Theater before dancing in The Forsythe Company from 2011–2015, where he learned *Duo* in 2012. Gjoka performed *DUO2015* in the international farewell world tour of *Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress* and William Forsythe's *Quiet Evening of Dance* (2018–2020), both produced by Sadler's Wells Theatre of London. From 2014–2020, he was artistic director of Art Factory International based in Bologna, Italy. As a choreographer, dance teacher and professional stage dancer, for the last decade Gjoka has travelled the globe, performing in the most renowned dance festivals, but also creating new projects for dance companies and festivals and teaching dance workshops. Currently, Gjoka resides in Germany.

Francesca Harper was born in 1969 in New York City. She trained at the Joffrey Ballet School, The School of American Ballet and with Barbara Walczak. Her mother, acclaimed dancer Denise Jefferson, directed The Ailey School and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Francesca attended Columbia University for a summer before joining the Dance Theater of Harlem's junior company and then the main company. She danced in the Ballett Frankfurt from 1991–1999, learning *Duo* in 1997. After the Ballett Frankfurt, she returned to New York City. There she performed on Broadway in numerous musicals, appeared on film and on television, and established her own company—The Francesca Harper Project—and continued making her own work (from dances to films and theater productions). Harper enjoys her appointment as a professor at the Juilliard School in New York City and continues with The Ailey School, and Fordham University's BFA program. Harper is also Artistic Director of the Movement Invention Project® (MIP®) of New Jersey, where she encourages young artists to explore beyond their extremities and enhance their creativity.

Jill Johnson was born in Toronto and is a graduate of Canada's National Ballet School. She was a soloist dancer at The National Ballet of Canada from 1987–1991/1996–2000, and a dancer in Ballett Frankfurt from 1991–1996/2000–2004. Regina van Berkel and Johnson were the original cast of *Duo* in 1996 and Johnson performed the work from 2000–2004. After Ballett Frankfurt closed, Johnson moved to New York City, where she created her own work and served on the faculty at Princeton University, Columbia University, The New School, the Juilliard School and NYU, among others. Since 2011, Johnson has held the position of Director of Dance, Founder/Artistic Director of the Harvard Dance Project, and Senior Lecturer of the faculty at Harvard University. Johnson has set William Forsythe's ballets worldwide, including *Duo*, for the past two decades and also choreographs for film, television, theatre and opera productions. She is a collaborator and performer in Forsythe's newest production, *A Quiet Evening of Dance*, which

premiered in London at Sadler's Wells Theatre in 2018, and is since touring worldwide. Johnson is currently based in Boston, Massachusetts.

Roberta Mosca was born in 1974 in Biella, Italy. She trained at the Scuola de Teatro alla Scala Milano and the John Cranko Schule in Stuttgart. Before joining the Ballett Frankfurt, she danced with the Vienna State Opera, in Florence with Eugene Poliakov, in Liepzig with Uwe Scholz, and in Reggio Emilia with Amedeo Amodio and Mauro Bigonzetti. She was a dancer in Ballett Frankfurt from 2000–2004, dancing *Duo* in 2003, and a member of The Forsythe Company from 2005–2013, reconstructing *Duo* in 2012. Mosca, in partnership with *Duo* dancer Cora Bos-Kroese, established and directed the festival BIARTECA in Piemonte, Italy from 2003–2017. In 2015, she founded the independent space AUTOBAHN–WILLIAM WILLHELM CAFFEE–DALLAS in Rosazza and, in 2018, the B-Yoga studio in Biella. From 2016–2018 she was a member of the artist group HOOD. Since 2013 Mosca has lived in Rosazza. She additionally works as a freelance artist, performing and teaching internationally.

Bahiyah Sayyed Gaines (also known as Bahiyah Hibah) was born in 1974 in New York City. She trained at the Baltimore School for the Arts and received her BFA in Dance from The Julliard School. Before joining the Ballett Frankfurt, she danced for Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Donald Byrd/The Group and Creative Outlet Dance Theatre of Brooklyn. She was a member of Ballett Frankfurt from 1996–1998, performing *Duo* in 1997, and thereafter a dancer in the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater from 1998–2004. Since that time she has worked primarily as an artist on Broadway, performing in *The Color Purple*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Pal Joey*, *Rock of Ages*, *Memphis*, *Chicago*, *Evita*, *After Midnight*, *On The Twentieth Century* and *Moulin Rouge!* She currently lives in New York City.

Parvaneh Scharafali was born in 1978 Tehran, Iran, and grew up in Germany where she began studying classical ballet at Dr. Hoch's Conservatory in Frankfurt am Main. She studied classical ballet and contemporary dance at the Hamburg Ballet School and became a member of the Hamburg Ballet under the direction of John Neumeier. Scharafali was a dancer with Nederlands Dans Theater from 2000–2008, during which she and her partner were nominated for a Golden Swan award for their interpretation of *Duo*. She was a member of The Forsythe Company from 2008–2012, reconstructing *Duo* in 2012. Thereafter, she returned to Nederlands Dans Theater from 2012–2017. Scharafali currently works as a freelance performer and teacher worldwide. She is a collaborator and performer in Forsythe's newest production, *A Quiet Evening of Dance*, which premiered in London at Sadler's Wells Theatre in 2018, and is since touring worldwide. She currently lives in The Hague.

Natalie Thomas was born in 1979 in Crescent City, USA and was raised in Santa Cruz, California. She trained at the Santa Cruz Ballet Theatre, University of North Carolina School of the Arts and the Pacific Northwest Ballet School. Thomas danced with Nederlands Dans Theater II and Komische Oper Berlin before joining Ballett Frankfurt, where she danced from 2001–2004, performing *Duo* in 2004. After the close of Ballett Frank-

furt, she moved to New York City to study acting at the Maggie Flanigan Studio and to work with The Wooster Group. She then worked as an actress for film, television and theater, including playing the role of Lady Macbeth for one year in Punchdrunk's hit theater show, *Sleep No More*. Thomas's film highlights include *Everything's Gonna Be Pink*, directed by academy-nominated Roni Ezra, *Rover: Or Beyond Human*, directed by Tony Blahd, and *Any Other Normal*, directed by Brock Labrenz (formerly of the Ballett Frankfurt). Television credits include *Blindspot*, *Law and Order*, *Law and Order SVU* and *The Guiding Light*. In 2019 she finished her studies in screenwriting at the International Film School Cologne. Thomas currently lives in Köln and writes for the Netflix show *How To Sell Drugs Online (Fast)*.

Riley Watts was born in 1985 in Bangor, Maine, USA. He began his training in competitive gymnastics and later in classical ballet at the Thomas School of Dance under Ivy Forrest. He studied dance at the Walnut Hill School for the Arts and received a BFA in dance from the Juilliard School in 2007 where he won a Princess Grace Award. Watts danced with Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Bern Ballet and Nederlands Dans Theater II before joining The Forsythe Company, where he danced from 2010–2015. Watts learned *Duo* in 2012 and performed *DUO2015* in the international farewell world tour of *Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress* (2015) and in William Forsythe's *A Quiet Evening of Dance* (2018–2020), both produced by Sadler's Wells Theatre of London. After the closure of The Forsythe Company in 2015, Watts moved to Portland, Maine. There he currently acts as a dance curator, advisor, and producer, and created Portland Dance Month in coordination with several local arts organizations. His creative work focuses on the intersection of embodied consciousness and dance improvisation, ranging in mediums from live performance installations to video and sculpture.

2. Other Cited Informants

Cyril Baldy was born in Woippy, France in 1980**.** He studied at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris from 1993 to 1997. After this, he joined Le Jeune Ballet de France, his first professional company. From 1998 to 2002, he danced for Nederlands Dans Theater II and Nederland Dans Theater I under the direction of Jiří Kylián. In 2002, he became a member of Ballett Frankfurt, continuing with The Forsythe Company from 2005 to 2014. Since 2014, he works as a freelance choreographer, teacher and dancer. Baldy is co-artistic director of SAD and, from 2016–2018, was a member of HOOD. Baldy also sets Forsythe's works internationally, including *Duo* at CCN – Ballet de Lorraine in 2015. He currently lives in Frankfurt.

Dana Caspersen was born in Minnesota, USA in 1964. She studied and performed at the Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis, and subsequently trained with Maggie Black, Kim Abel and Erick Hawkins, among others. Her first company was the Duluth Ballet (now the Minnesota Ballet), and she danced for three years with the North Carolina Dance Theatre before joining Ballett Frankfurt in 1988. She was a dancer, text author and choreographer in Ballett Frankfurt from 1988–2004 and in The Forsythe Company from 2005–2015. Caspersen received an MFA in Dance from Hollins University

and an MSc in Conflict Studies and Mediation at the Woodbury Institute at Champlain College. Her choreography and installations, frequently in collaboration with William Forsythe, have been shown internationally. Her current work integrates practices from conflict engagement and choreography. In 2015, she published *Changing the Conversation: The 17 Principles of Conflict Resolution*, which has been translated into eight languages. Caspersen is based in Frankfurt, Germany, and Vermont, USA.

David Morrow was born in Rhode Island, USA in 1952. He studied at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, and then worked as a freelance musician in New York City, engaged as a pianist at New York University, the Martha Graham School and The Ailey School. Morrow joined the Ballett Frankfurt in 1989, working until the close of The Forsythe Company in 2005 as a répétiteur, composer and occasional performer. He has composed and performed the music for Forsythe's pieces *Woolf Phrase II*, *Decreation*, *Ricercar*, *Three Atmospheric Studies* (Part I), *Clouds after Cranach* (Part II), *Fivefold* and *Yes We Can't*. Additionally, Morrow has collaborated with diverse choreographers and artists within Europe—including choreographers Stéphane Fléchet, Verena Weiss, Xin-Peng Wang, and most recently Paula Rosolen, with whom he developed the biographical piece *Piano Men* in 2013. From 2015–2018, Morrow was a répétiteur at the Hochschule Mannheim. Morrow currently resides in Rüsselsheim, near Frankfurt am Main.

3. Choreographer and Composer

William Forsythe was born in Rhode Island, USA in 1949, and has been active in the field of choreography for over 45 years. He is acknowledged for migrating the practice of ballet from classical repertoire to a diverse range of discursive platforms. Forsythe's deep interest in the fundamental principles of composition has led him to produce a wide range of projects, including visual arts installations, films, and web-based knowledge creation. He was appointed resident choreographer of the Stuttgart Ballet in 1976. In 1984, he began a 20-year tenure as director of the Ballett Frankfurt, after which he founded and directed The Forsythe Company until 2015. While his balletic works are featured in the repertoire of every major ballet company in the world, he consistently focuses on works of varying scale that model his continued interest in the economies of public presentation.[2]

Thom Willems was born in 1955, in Arnhem in the Netherlands. He has collaborated with choreographer William Forsythe on over 60 ballet scores. He studied at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague: composition with Louis Andriessen and electronic music with Jan Boerman and Dick Raaijmakers. Willems started working with Forsythe when he became director of the ballet of the Frankfurt Opera in 1984. Sixty-six companies in 25 countries have performed Forsythe/Willems ballets, including The Mariinsky Ballet, the Bolshoi Ballet, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, Paris Opera Ballet, Teatro alla Scala Milano, The Royal Ballet at the Royal Opera

2 Official biography provided by William Forsythe.

House Covent Garden, the Vienna State Opera, the Semperoper Dresden and Le Ballet de l'Opéra de Lyon, among many others.[3]

E. Fieldwork Overview

1. *Duo* Performances Attended

Title	Location	Date	Program/Context
DUO2015	Rome	2 Apr. 2015	*Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*
Duo	Nancy	12 May 2015	Opera National de Lorraine
DUO2015	Paris	17 Sep. 2015	*Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*
DUO2015	Paris	18 Sep. 2015	*Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*
DUO2015	Paris	5 Sep. 2015	*Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*
DUO2015	Paris	6 Sep. 2015	*Sylvie Guillem – Life in Progress*
DUO2015	London	6 Oct. 2018	*A Quiet Evening of Dance*
Dialogue (DUO2015)	Paris	9 Oct. 2019	*A Quiet Evening of Dance*

3 Official biography from Thom Willems. In: https://www.boosey.com/pages/cr/composer/composer_ main?composerid=100187&ttype=BIOGRAPHY.

2. Interviews

Artist	Location	Date
Brigel Gjoka	Dresden	5 Mar. 2016
Brigel Gjoka	Dresden	6 Mar. 2016
Roberta Mosca	videoconference	13 Sep. 2016
Jill Johnson	videoconference	21 Oct. 2016
Jill Johnson	Boston	6 Dec. 2016
Allison Brown	Frankfurt am Main	23 Sep. 2016
Riley Watts	Bern	11 Jan. 2017
Allison Brown	Bern	23 Jan. 2017
Allison Brown and Cyril Baldy	Bern	24 Jan. 2017
Cyril Baldy	Bern	25 Jan. 2017
Cyril Baldy	Bern	26 Jan. 2017
Regina van Berkel	Frankfurt am Main	22 Apr. 2017
Regina van Berkel	Zürich	5 May 2017
David Morrow	Rüsselsheim am Main	25 Jul. 2017
Brock Labrenz	Bielefeld	28 Sep. 2017
Roberta Mosca	Bielefeld	28 Sep. 2017
Brigel Gjoka and Riley Watts	Bologna	25 Oct. 2017
Kora Bos-Kroese	phone	19 Sep. 2018
Francesca Harper	phone	20 Sep. 2018
Thom Willems	phone	21 Nov. 2018
Dana Caspersen	videoconference	19 Dec. 2018
William Forsythe	videoconference	30 Jan. 2019
Bruni Marx	phone	7 Feb. 2019

3. Talk-Through Sessions

Artist	Location	Date	Key Performance
Allison Brown	Frankfurt am Main	23 Sep. 2016	1997
Allison Brown	Frankfurt am Main	11 Nov. 2016	2015
Jill Johnson	Boston	6 Dec. 2016	2015
Riley Watts	Bern	11 Jan. 2017	2015
Riley Watts	Bern	15 Jan. 2017	2016
Allison Brown	Bern	23 Jan. 2017	2003
Allison Brown	Bern	23 Jan. 2017	2016
Cyril Baldy	Bern	25 Jan. 2017	2002

4. Data Review Sessions

Artist	Location	Date
Roberta Mosca	videoconference	27 Apr. 2018
Allison Brown	videoconference	8 May 2018
Riley Watts	videoconference	22 May 2018
Regina van Berkel	videoconference	21 Jun. 2018
Jill Johnson	videoconference	28 Jun. 2018

5. Studio Sessions

Artist	Location	Date
Allison Brown	Frankfurt am Main	22 Sep. 2016
Allison Brown	Frankfurt am Main	23 Sep. 2016
Jill Johnson	Boston	6 Dec. 2016
Riley Watts	Bern	13 Jan. 2017
Riley Watts	Bern	14 Jan. 2017
Allison Brown & Cyril Baldy	Bern	24 Jan. 2017

6. *Duo* Rehearsal Observation

CCN – Ballet de Lorraine, April 21–23, 2015

7. *DUO2015* Workshop Observation

DUO2015 Workshops
Arts Factory International, Bologna Italy
Oct. 23–27, 2017, & Oct. 28–29, 2017
Taught by: Brigel Gjoka and Riley Watts

8. Feedback Session

Dancing Together Workshop
University of Bern
Oct. 24–25, 2018
Participants: *Duo* dancers Allison Brown and Riley Watts, and Forsythe dancer Katja Cheraneva

9. *Duo* Dancers Interview

The following topics were explored in the semi-structured interviews with the *Duo* dancers:

- describe how they came to join the Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company
- describe what was important to them in *Duo*
- narrate their experience of creating, rehearsing and performing the piece chronologically
- compare, when possible, different versions of *Duo*, and differences between dancing *Duo* versus other pieces
- describe and compare working with different partners
- describe their experiences teaching *Duo*
- tell what, if anything, can go wrong in doing or teaching *Duo*
- describe and reflect upon their interactions with Forsythe in making, rehearsing and performing *Duo*
- tell more about their professional history, their reasons for joining the company and their first year in Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company
- describe key aspects of the culture of Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company and how it compared to other workplaces
- describe an aspect (i.e., the movement, setting, light, music, costumes and breathing) of *Duo* from the 'inside'
- describe the choreographic structure that they interpret or an aspect of that structure
- reflect further upon *Duo* (i.e., Does gender matter in *Duo*? Why did the choreography change over time? Who is the author of *Duo*? etc.)

F. Archival Videos Studied

1. Archival Sources of *Duo* Creation Rehearsals

File Name/Date	Contents and Rehearsal Location (duration in minutes)
1996 01 02 A	first rehearsal in the foyer (60 min), followed by rehearsal in studio (110 min)
1996 01 02 B	excerpt of the first day rehearsing in studio (58 min), followed by the second day rehearsing in the studio (84 min)
1996 01 06	second day rehearsal in the studio continued (70 min)
1996 01 10	stage rehearsal (80 min), followed by rehearsal in black costumes, projected to be from between January 16–19 (101 min)
1996 01 15	stage rehearsal (80 min) followed by technical rehearsal on stage in gold costumes (125 min)
1996 01 19	dress rehearsal on stage in black costumes (16 min)
1996 01 20	run-through on stage without costumes, day of premiere (16 min)

2. Selected key performances of *Duo*

Date	Location	Dancers
January 20, 1996	Frankfurt	Regina van Berkel and Jill Johnson
May 8, 1997	Frankfurt	Regina van Berkel and Allison Brown
March 9, 2000	Frankfurt	Allison Brown and Jill Johnson
June 29, 2003	Cologne	Allison Brown and Roberta Mosca
September 12, 2013	Weimar	Brigel Gjoka and Riley Watts
date unknown 2015*	London	Brigel Gjoka and Riley Watts
August 6, 2016	Paris	Brigel Gjoka and Riley Watts

* Sadler's Wells did not date this archival video. The performers believe it was a performance in London in summer 2015, placing it chronologically after the version I saw in Rome in on April 2, 2015, and before the second set of performances I watched in Paris in September 17–18, 2015.

3. Duration of *Duo* key performances (in seconds)

Duo	***DUO2015***
January 20, 1996: 770s	(date unknown) 2015: 899s
May 8, 1997: 832s	August 6, 2016: 1009s
March 9, 2000: 741s	
June 29, 2003: 756s	
September 12, 2013: 561s	

G. Employees of Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company

The table reflects data from the Ballett Frankfurt (2002) and The Forsythe Company (2006), denoting full-time employment, part-time employment, short-term contracts and guest contracts. [4]

	Ballett Frankfurt	**The Forsythe Company**
Artistic Director	1	1
DANCE		
Dancers	30–40	16–18
Ballet Master/Rehearsal Director	2	1
Ballet Trainers	short-term	short-term
Physical Therapist/Masseur	0–1	short-term
Sports Scientist/Trainer	0	0–1
ARTISTIC PRODUCTION		
Composer	guest	guest
Répétiteur	1–2	1
Artistic Assistant of Forsythe	1	combined with tour management
Dramaturg	1–2	1
Artistic Consultation/Special Projects	0–1	0
Costumes and Dressing Rooms	3	1 plus short-term
Makeup	2–3	short-term

4 Ballett Frankfurt data source: Program, *The Vile Parody of Address, Duo, N.N.N.N., Quintet,* November 21–29, 2002, Frankfurt Opera House; The Forsythe Company data source: program for *Human Writes*, September 8–15, 2006, Festspielhaus Hellerau).

	Ballett Frankfurt	The Forsythe Company
TECHNICAL PRODUCTION		
Technical Director	1	1
Producer	0	1
Coordination	1	0
Stage Manager	1	combined with tour management
Sound Design	3	2 combined with video design
Lighting Design	1	1
Technical Production	1	2
Tour Manager	1	1
Video Archiving	1	combined with video design
ADMINISTRATION		
Administration Director	1	1
Press/Public Relations	1	1
Marketing	1	0
Administrative Assistant	0	1
Personal Assistant of Forsythe	0–1	1
Subscription Service	1	0
Assistant in Press/PR/Marketing	0	1 part-time
Multimedia/Web Master	1	short-term

H. Nationalities of Dancers in Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company

These statistics were compiled based upon study of official programs from Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company and communication with the individual artists. The nationalities of dual citizens are listed twice.

Dancers Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company	
Total Members	155
Men	75
Women	80
Dual Citizens	11
English Native Speakers	87

Europe	**Citizens**	**Dual Citizens**
Albania	1	
Austria	2	
Belgium	2	
United Kingdom	9	2
Denmark	1	
Netherlands	5	
France	10	1
Germany	14	5
Greece	0	1
Hungary	2	1
Italy	7	1
Russia	2	
Spain	5	1
Sweden	1	
Switzerland	3	2
Turkey	1	

North America	**Citizens**	**Dual Citizens**
USA	58	5
Canada	6	
South America	**Citizens**	**Dual Citizens**
Argentina	1	
Brazil	1	
El Salvador	1	
Venezuela	0	1
Middle East	**Citizens**	**Dual Citizens**
Kuwait	0	1
Asia	**Citizens**	**Dual Citizens**
Japan	2	
Korea	1	
Tibet	1	
Philippines	1	
Australia & Oceania	**Citizens**	**Dual Citizens**
Australia	6	1
New Zealand	1	

I. Calendar for the 1995–1996 Ballett Frankfurt season

Tokyo Tour (Oct. 4–8) — *ALIE/N A(C)TION*
Montreal Tour (Oct. 13–14) — *Eidos:Telos*
Frankfurt Opera House (Nov. 18–26) — Premiere by Saburo Teshingwara
Frankfurt Opera House (Nov. 30, Dec. 1–3) — *Eidos:Telos*
Reggio Emilia Tour (Dec. 8–9) — *Eidos:Telos*
Guest Production: TAT (Dec. 15) — Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker/Rosas
Frankfurt Opera House (Jan. 20–28) — Premiere: *Six Counter Points*
Frankfurt Opera House (Feb. 2–4) — *Eidos:Telos*
Guest Production: Frankfurt Schauspielhaus (Feb. 9–11, 14–17) — Nederlands Dans Theater
Rennes Tour (Feb. 20–23) — *Firstext, Enemy in the Figure, Of Any If And*
Frankfurt Schauspielhaus (March 1–4, 8–10) — *Limb's Theorem*
Bregenz Tour (March 15–16) — *Six Counter Points*
Guest Production: TAT (date unknown, March) — Michael Simon

Munich Tour (March 22–24) — *Limb's Theorem*
Tokyo Tour (April 4–9) — *Eidos:Telos*
Frankfurt Opera House (April 26–May 1) — *The Loss of Small Detail*
Paris Tour (May 6–11,14–18) — *Limb's Theorem, Six Counter Points*
Mulhouse Tour (May 22–23) — *The Loss of Small Detail*
Frankfurt Opera House (June 6–8, 10) — Balletabend
Amsterdam Tour (June 20–23, 27–29) — *ALIE/N A(C)TION, Eidos:Telos*
Rome Tour (July 3–6) — *Six Counter Points*

J. Annotation Categories and Symbols

The annotation takes the form of compound variable names noting three types of information: first a symbol for the primary mode of entrainment (section 2), followed by a symbol for the subcategories of entrainment (section 4) and ending with a symbol for the mode of transformation (section 5).

Notation:
primary mode of entrainment + subcategories of entrainment + mode of transformation

When the dancers' activity differs, the dancer variable names can be added to specify who is doing what.

1. Dancer Symbols

Duo dancer on left (i.e., stage right) — B
Duo dancer on right (i.e., stage left) — W

2. Modes of Entrainment

Primary Modes of Entrainment

u unison
c concurrent motion
tt intermittent motion/turn-taking
o solo
br break
z other

3. Transitions

Transitions or modulations occur between changing modes of entrainment. To notate these, the notation takes the form of compound variable names listing three types of information: the style as prefix, followed by the sign and relationship between partners as suffix. For readability, an underscore is used between the first bit of the information and the second and third.

Notation:
Type_signrelation

Type:

cue	an indication to begin
align	alignment: a moment of connection in which the dancers relate signs to stay in sync and affectively connect
prompt	an articulation

Sign:

i	inhale
e	exhale
m	the same movement
mn	different or related movements
p	short pause, same pose
pq	short pause, different or related poses
ps	extended pause/stretching/fermata, same pose
x	stomp – sound of hitting the floor
h	hit – sound of hitting one's body
v	vocalization in language (i.e., a spoken word or phrase)

Relation:

W	dancer W initiates and dancer B listens-responds
B	dancer B initiates and dancer W listens-responds
Wb	dancer B actively following dancer W
Bw	dancer W actively following dancer B
t	together
Q	unknown (when a cue is heard but the speaker could not be identified)

Examples:

cue_mB	movement impetus initiated by dancer B
cue_imW	inhale and motion impetus by dancer W
align_pst	a suspension of the same pose, by both dancers
prompt_vQ snake	one of the dancers, although it is not clear which, says "snake"
cue_eWmB	an exhale impetus by dancer W and a movement impetus by dancer B
align_xWb	a call and response stomp, with W starting and B following
align_pBw	dancer B influences the timing of the shared pose
align_pqWb	dancer B influences the timing of the related pose
align_mnt	different movement aligned in time together
align_xt	synchronized stomp

4. Subcategories of Entrainment

There are both simple and complex subcategories of movement entrainment. The primary mode of unison (u) without any subcategory, implies unison facing the same direction, typically side-by-side

Simple subcategories of unison:

us unison with spatial development (i.e., different facings)
ur unison with mirror symmetry
ul unison with level development
ulu partners change level together, level change up
uld partners change level together, level change down
uf unison with falling development

Complex subcategories of unison, with combinations of spatial development, mirror symmetry, level and falling:

usr unison with mirror symmetry and spatial development
ulus unison with level change up and spatial development
ulds unison with level change down and spatial development
ulur unison with level change up and mirror symmetry
uldr unison with level change down and mirror symmetry
ulusr unison with level change up, spatial development and mirror symmetry
uldsr unison with level change down, spatial development and mirror symmetry
ufs falling unison with spatial development
ufr falling unison with mirror symmetry
ufsr falling unison with spatial development and mirror symmetry

Simple subcategories of concurrent motion:

cn canon
cns canon with spatial development
cnr canon with mirror symmetry
cnrs canon with mirror symmetry and spatial development

Simple subcategories of solo:

oB solo for dancer B
oW solo for dancer W
oWb solo for dancer W with dancer B improvising framing
oBw solo for dancer B with dancer W improvising framing

5. Modes of Transformation

These categories describe *how* the movement is performed in relation to the choreographic sequence. They may be applied to any primary mode of movement alignment, with the exception of break and other. When no mode of transformation is listed, it is implied that the movement is repeated similarly to the previous historical record (i.e., the steps are 'set'). When only one dancer is listed, it is implied that the other dancer is performing that entrainment mode as choreographed, without transformation.

Primary Modes of Movement Transformation:

m modification of sequence
a adaptation of sequence
I improvisation of sequence

Subcategories of unison:

um unison with modification by both dancers
umB unison with modification by dancer B
umW unison with modification by dancer W
ua unison with adaptation by both dancers
uaB unison with adaptation by dancer B
uaW unison with adaptation by dancer W
ui improvised unison by both dancers
uiB unison with improvisation by dancer B
uiW unison with improvisation by dancer W

Subcategories of concurrent motion:

cm concurrent motion with modification by both dancers
cmB concurrent motion with modification by dancer B
cmW concurrent motion with modification by dancer W
ca concurrent motion with adaptation
caB concurrent motion with adaptation by dancer B
caW concurrent motion with adaptation by dancer W
ci improvised concurrent motion
ciB concurrent motion with improvisation by dancer B
ciW concurrent motion with improvisation by dancer W

Subcategories of intermittant motion/turn-taking:

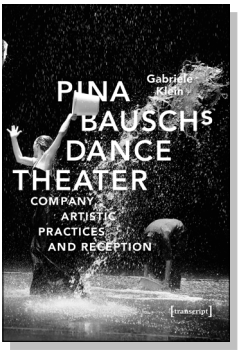
ttm modification of intermittent motion/turn-taking by both dancers
ttmW modification of intermittent motion/turn-taking by dancer W
ttmB modification of intermittent motion/turn-taking by dancer B
tta adaptation of intermittent motion/turn-taking by both dancers

ttaW adaptation of intermittent motion/turn-taking by dancer W
ttaB adaptation of intermittent motion/turn-taking by dancer B
tti intermittent motion/turn-taking with improvised movement
ttiW improvisation of intermittent motion/turn-taking by dancer W
ttiB improvisation of intermittent motion/turn-taking by dancer B

Subcategories of solo:

oBm modified solo for dancer B
oWm modified solo for dancer W
oBa adapted solo for dancer B
oWa adapted solo for dancer W
oBi improvised solo for dancer B
oWi improvised solo for dancer W
oWb solo for dancer W with dancer B improvising framing
oBw solo for dancer B with dancer W improvising framing
oWbm modified solo for dancer W with dancer B improvising framing
oBwm modified solo for dancer B with dancer W improvising framing
oWba adapted solo for dancer W with dancer B improvising framing
oBwa adapted solo for dancer B with dancer W improvising framing
oWbi improvised for dancer W with dancer B improvising framing
oBwi improvised solo dancer B with dancer W improvising framing

Cultural Studies



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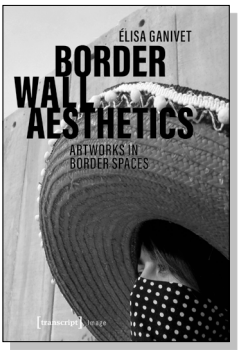

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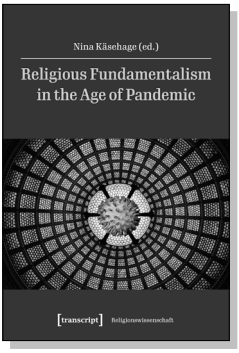

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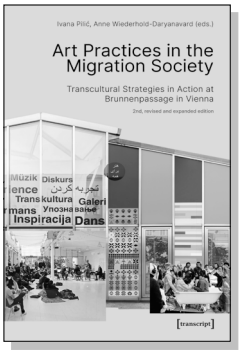

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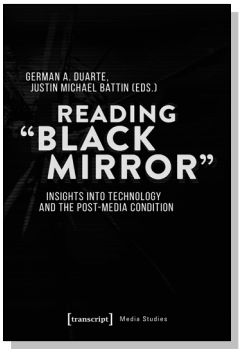

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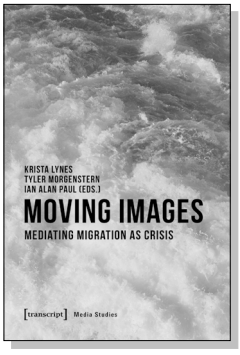

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