

FORSYTHE IMPROVISATION TECHNOLOGIES WORKSHOP

March 2-27, 2020
P.A.R.T.S.

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Backstage Fashion Show Preparation on March 3, 2020

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Created on April 8, 2020

7-Hour Publications – by Liz Waterhouse

Workshop Description:

We would like to offer to the students of P.A.R.T.S. an insight into the wide variety of approaches from the works and working process with William Forsythe. We intend to include elements such as *Improvisation Technologies* (1994/1999), choreographic methodologies and various modalities utilised in some of the choreographic works that Forsythe has created together with Ballett Frankfurt/The Forsythe Company (1984-2015). We wish to foster in the class a platform where the students can think physically and experience the social synergies of this environment, in which ideas may unfold into creative, playful and critical territories.

**Note on Terminology from Liz:*

Technically *Improvisation Technologies* refers to the title of the online publication of Ballett Frankfurt's methodologies from 1994/1999. In this workshop at P.A.R.T.S, we used it more as an expanded term, to reflect our collective work with Forsythe up to 2015.

Official Biography of William Forsythe (from his website):

Raised in New York and initially trained in Florida with Nolan Dingman and Christa Long, Forsythe danced with the Joffrey Ballet and later the Stuttgart Ballet, where he was appointed Resident Choreographer in 1976. Over the next seven years, he created new works for the Stuttgart ensemble and ballet companies in Munich, The Hague, London, Basel, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main, Paris, New York, and San Francisco. In 1984, he began a 20-year tenure as director of the Ballet Frankfurt, where he created works such as *Artifact* (1984), *Impressing the Czar* (1988), *Limb's Theorem* (1990), *The Loss of Small Detail* (1991), *A L I E / N A(C)TION* (1992), *Eidos:Telos* (1995), *Endless House*

(1999), *Kammer/Kammer* (2000), and *Decreation* (2003)

After the closure of the Ballet Frankfurt in 2004, Forsythe established a new ensemble, The Forsythe Company, which he directed from 2005 to 2015. Works produced with this ensemble include *Three Atmospheric Studies* (2005), *You made me a monster* (2005), *Human Writes* (2005), *Heterotopia* (2006), *The Defenders* (2007), *Yes we can't* (2008/2010), *I don't believe in outer space* (2008), *The Returns* (2009) and *Sider* (2011). Forsythe's most recent works were developed and performed exclusively by The Forsythe Company, while his earlier pieces are prominently featured in the repertoire of virtually every major ballet company in the world, including the Mariinsky Ballet, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, Semperoper Ballet Dresden, England's Royal Ballet and The Paris Opera Ballet.

Forsythe has been commissioned to produce architectural and performance installations by architect-artist Daniel Libeskind (Groningen, 1989), *ARTANGEL* (London, 1997), *Creative Time* (New York, 2005), and the *SKD – Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden* (2013, 2014). These "Choreographic Objects", as Forsythe calls his installations, include among others *White Bouncy Castle* (1997), *City of Abstracts* (2000), *The Fact of Matter* (2009), *Nowhere and Everywhere at the Same Time No. 2* (2013) and *Black Flags* (2014). His installation and film works have been presented in numerous museums and exhibitions, including the *Whitney Biennial* (New York, 1997), *Festival d'Avignon* (2005, 2011), *Louvre Museum* (2006), *Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich* (2006), *21_21 Design Sight in Tokyo* (2007), *Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus* (2009), *Tate Modern* (London, 2009), *Hayward Gallery, (London 2010)*, *MoMA* (New York 2010), *ICA Boston* (2011), *Venice Biennale* (2005, 2009, 2012, 2014), *MMK – Museum für Moderne Kunst* (Frankfurt am Main, 2015) and the *20th Biennale of Sydney*, 2016.

In collaboration with media specialists and educators, Forsythe has developed new approaches to dance documentation, research, and education. His 1994 computer application *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*, developed with the ZKM / Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, is used as a teaching tool by professional companies, dance conservatories, universities, postgraduate architecture programs, and secondary schools worldwide. 2009 marked the launch of *Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced*, a digital online score developed with The Ohio State University that reveals the organizational principles of the choreography and demonstrates their possible application within other disciplines. Synchronous Objects was the pilot project for Forsythe's Motion Bank, a research platform focused on the creation and research of online digital scores in collaboration with guest choreographers.

As an educator, Forsythe is regularly invited to lecture and give workshops at universities and cultural institutions. In 2002, Forsythe was chosen as one of the founding Dance Mentors for The Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Forsythe is an Honorary Fellow at the Laban Centre for Movement and Dance in London and holds an Honorary Doctorate from The Juilliard School in New York. Forsythe is a current Professor of Dance and Artistic Advisor for the Choreographic Institute at the University of Southern California Gloria Kaufman School of Dance.

Glossary of Practice Concepts

Text from Liz's dissertation. For full references please email Liz. We did not cover all these topics in the workshop, but perhaps they help bring together some of the work and inspire your further study.

Alignment

Dance critic 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."¹

Budō (武道)

The Forsythe Company dancers (2005-2015) took annual Budo workshops with Japanese master teacher Akira Hino. These practices emphasized connection, intention and a mechanics of movement from the sternum or 'kokutsu' (Western spelling unknown).

**Note from Fabrice: For Budo I would add some important sub terms: connect (not imagine), feel (not imagine), guiding and following (a principle for togetherness, not for authority but how to listen in both positions equally), and centring.*

¹ Sulcas, *Watching the Ballett Frankfurt, 1988-2009*, p. 15.

² See Hackney, *Making Connections*, p. 194-195.

Contralateral

Coordination between opposite sides of the body, used in Forsythe's repertoire as a synonym for cross-lateral. Peggy Hackney defines cross-lateral as "a sensation of connection along a diagonal pathway through the body's core between the body's four quadrants."² Hackney uses this term to emphasize the connection, as opposed to opposition, i.e. 'contra'. She differentiates, movements can be contralateral without investigating connectivity. In Forsythe's work, 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 garners this via demanding the dancers to articulate the feet and hands simultaneously. The prevalence of cross-lateral connectivity in Forsythe's oeuvre is a key signature of its style and residue from ballet technique; it is less present in contact improvisation and other styles of contemporary dance, such as Gaga technique.

Counterpoint

Forsythe describes his work as a choreographer as taking interest and designing choreographing counterpoint, which he has defined as "kinds of organization in time" and "a field of action in which the intermittent and irregular coincidence of attributes between organizational elements produces an ordered interplay."³ Counterpoint may happen within a body, between bodies, and between bodies within a space that is organized. Within Forsythe's ensembles, counterpoint is not just a compositional concept for describing an art work but a fractal concept: counterpoint within bodies (such as in *épaulement*), between bodies, and between bodies and the specific materiality

³ William Forsythe cited in Sulcas, *Watching the Ballett Frankfurt, 1988-2009*; Forsythe cited in Shaw, *The Dance*.

of the theater.⁴ Counterpoint is a property of relational movement and movement-rest, which is constitutive of this community.

Épaulement

Épaulement, from the French for shoulders, is a term used to describe the positioning of the upper body in ballet. It describes how the shoulders move, related to how the upper body and arms extend—part of one’s carriage of the arms, or *port de bras*. Despite the emphasis upon the shoulders in the word *épaulement*, within Forsythe’s style one’s body is felt coherently, winding and unwinding, sheering and sequencing force, in relation to space and other dancers. Forsythe has described *épaulement* as a “perceptually gratifying state” that “synthesizes discrete parts of the body with multiple layers of torqued sensation that leads to the specific sense of a unified but counter-rotated whole.”⁵

Entrainment

We are only beginning to know the neural mechanisms, social forms, and sensorimotor skills that enable the composite skill of human entrainment. Entrainment as “the process that occurs when two or more people become engaged in each other’s rhythms, when they synchronize.”⁶ Most dance and

⁴ Chris Fowler describes fractal concepts as when “parts of a person, and people as parts of a community, may carry the same features as the whole.” See Fowler, *The Archaeology of Personhood*, p. 51.

⁵ Foster, *Why is There Always Enough Energy for Dancing?*, p. 17.

⁶ William Condon, referenced in Hall, *The Dance of Life*, p. 177; see also Spier, *Engendering and Composing Movement*, p. 142.

⁷ 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.

⁸ 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 “an odd kind of sympathy” between two pendulums suspended on

music are forms of entrainment.⁷ Forsythe has taken explicit interest in this phenomenon, which has influenced his design of choreographing counterpoint.

Human entrainment, like that in music and dance, is part of a larger phenomenon across materials and living creations. In science, entrainment has been 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 in sociology and ethnomusicology. Entrainment has come to name the phenomenon whereby independent, coupled rhythmical oscillators interact and stabilize—producing synchronized or rhythmically related activity.⁸ Examples such as Forsythe and the dancers’ artistic research show a generative, aesthetic way of exploring entrainment—through the experimental setting of performing a choreographic organization in contact with an audience.⁹

Disfocus

Forsythe explains: “So if you move your head in a sort of oblique counter-rotation to the movement, it engenders a kind of physical blindness which intensifies your proprioception and causes your sense of gravity to shift [...] By discussing, and approaching this point where your ability to see your own limbs, your surroundings is severely impaired, you can no longer dance the way your body has been trained to as a ballet dancer. It’s not that you destroy the

the same beam. Huygens cited in Czolczynski et al., *Huygens’ odd sympathy experiment revisited*, p. 1.

⁹ In an interview with architect Steven Spier on March 7, 1997, Forsythe cites entrainment and the research of American anthropologist Edward Hall (i.e. *The Dance of Life*, 1983) see Spier, *Engendering and Composing Movement*, p. 142. Forsythe reiterated this influence in a pre-performance talk at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on October 2, 2003, describing entrainment as a way that music, movement and breath noises may relate or become organized in a choreographic work. From my experience as a dancer, he used the term intermittently in the studio, most frequently and explicitly in rehearsals for the piece *Nowhere and Everywhere at the Same Time* (installation premier in 2005, performed first by The Forsythe Company in 2007); in this work, there is complex entrainment between the dancers, the audience, a field of mobile pendulums and a sound score by Thom Willems.

foundations – you just end up in an opposing state of support [...] the small detail that is lost is your physical orientation. Your body gives up one kind of strength, but another kind comes into play.”¹⁰

Improvisation

There are many modes of improvisation in Forsythe’s work. The purpose of improvisation is performative and choreographic, i.e. improvisation is used as a tool to generate material for performance and also performed on stage. Improvisation is intended to appear like ‘choreography’, thus demanding the dancers to learn compositional discernment and make choreographic decisions in real-time. In Forsythe’s work, there is a contradiction between improvisation not being ‘just dancing around’ and purely ‘spontaneous’ and ‘authentic’—while also valuing achieving these qualities of improvisation, and still practicing compositional discernment. Many modes of improvisation developed during the first decade of the Ballett Frankfurt were image based and cataloged in *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytic Dance Eye*. In practice, these techniques were called “procedures”, “operations” and also “modalities.”¹¹ Forsythe also worked with ‘behavioral choreography’ and ‘states’, as well as improvisation ‘procedures’ that were not always image based. Improvisation modalities for relational and group improvisation were additionally focused upon in The Forsythe Company.

Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytic Dance Eye

Forsythe’s CD-ROM *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytic Dance Eye* (1999) is an educational tool now online and referred to worldwide. The first prototype was produced in 1994 and followed by a hard-disk version used in the Ballett Frankfurt studios. A revised edition, titled *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytic Dance Eye*, was published as a CD-ROM

¹⁰ Sulcas, *Kinetic Isometries*, p. 8. See also Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, p. 152-153.

¹¹ Discussing “operation” and “procedures” see Caspersen, *It Starts from Any Point*, p. 27-28; and Kaiser, *Dance Geometry*, throughout. On “modality” see Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, p. 25.

and booklet in 1999. At the time of writing, many of the videos from the original CD-ROM have been uploaded to the internet and are freely accessible.

This collaboration with digital artist Paul Kaiser responded to Forsythe’s wish to consolidate the techniques that the company had amassed in their choreographic projects, so that new dancers could catch up more quickly. Though these operations were no longer used explicitly in choreographic process of The Forsythe Company, and although the CD-ROM was no longer present in the studio during rehearsals or brought out to train new dancers, most new dancers had encountered the information before arriving, reflecting a sort of osmosis of their principles—having purchased, borrowed or in the digital age searched for it online.

Kaiser and Forsythe’s project responded to the challenge of visualizing choreographic thinking, and very pragmatically, the aim to help dancers understand what Forsythe was imaging while he was improvising. Kaiser recalls when he met Forsythe, the choreographer began “to explain how he goes about creating new movements. He started drawing imaginary shapes in the air, and then running his limbs through this complicated and invisible geometry. As a non-dancer, I was completely lost.”¹² To remedy this, Kaiser had the clever idea to animate lectures of Forsythe with white lines, representing the imagery that was present in Forsyth’s phantasmagoria as he improvised movement. The white lines transmit strategies of having ideas while moving. For example, Forsythe imagining a line in the space between his fingertips; extruding, bridging and matching lines with his arms; ‘writing’ in space with every conceivable body part. Forsythe explained: “The CD-ROM is a short lesson in a kind of rigor. It teaches you how to form concrete goals that are geometrically inscriptive. And the reason they are geometrically inscriptive is that I work with ballet dancers. It was easy to represent things this way—thinking in circles and lines and planes and points. That’s not so unusual for ballet dancers, this system is basically a manipulation of their existing knowledge.”¹³ Forsythe also

¹² Kaiser, *Dance Geometry*.

¹³ Forsythe, *Observing Motion*, p. 18. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

rationalized: “If you're dancing, how do you actually say what happened? The technique is one way of taking mental note of what just happened to you while improvising.”¹⁴

Rudolf von Laban/Laban Movement Analysis

Laban Movement Analysis is an analytic frame based upon the work of Austro-Hungarian dancer and dance theorist Rudolf von Laban (1879-1958). Forsythe studied aspects of Laban’s work and was inspired to invent his own exercises based on spatial reaching within a cube model of a “kinesphere.”¹⁵ An early prototype of *Improvisation Technologies* references Rudolf von Laban’s work, while the final edition of the publication does not explicitly do so.

Intra-Action

Feminist Scholar Karen Barad describes her concept of intra-action as a way of re-thinking causality and what constitutes an agent as follows. She writes: “Reality is not composed of things-in-themselves or things-behind-phenomena but “things”-in-phenomena. The world *is* intra- activity in its differential mattering. It is through specific intra-actions that a differential sense of being is enacted in the ongoing ebb and flow of agency. That is, it is through specific intra-actions that phenomena come to matter—in both senses of the word. The world is a dynamic process of intra-activity in the ongoing reconfiguring of locally determinate causal structures with determinate boundaries, properties, meanings, and patterns of marks on bodies. This ongoing flow of agency through which “part” of the world makes itself differentially intelligible to another “part” of the world and through which local causal structures, boundaries, and properties are stabilized and destabilized does not take place

¹⁴ Forsythe, *Observing Motion*, p. 16.

¹⁵ See Laban, *The Language of Movement*, p. 10; Tomic-Vajagic, *The Dancer’s Contribution*, p. 71-73.

¹⁶ See Barad, *Posthumanist Performativity*, p. 817.

¹⁷ See Katan, *Embodied Philosophy in Dance*, p. 54, with relevant discussion p. 57-59. See also Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, p. 110.

in space and time but in the making of spacetime itself. The world is an ongoing open process of mattering through which “mattering” itself acquires meaning and form in the realization of different agential possibilities.”¹⁶

Proprioception

Proprioception is sensing the configuration of one’s body in space. Philosopher and gaga dancer Einav Katan, after British neurologist Charles Scott Sherrington, defines proprioception as “the sensual awareness of movement within the body [...] responsible for feeling the relative positions of neighboring body parts, and how their strength and effort are engaged in motion.”¹⁷ Proprioception is the marrow, skin, gush of organ and cellular sense, of where a part of the body is in relation to the center or whole.

Relations (see also Relational Movement)

Relations are becoming an increasingly cited concept within dance studies and aesthetics. This momentum may come from the impact of art critic Nicolas Bourriaud’s pivotal book, *Relational Aesthetics*—a text written to grasp experimental visual art in the 1990’s.¹⁸ Noting the contradiction of these projects to modern art, Bourriaud defined relational art as “a set of practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private social space.”¹⁹ Dance scholars Kirsten Maar, Erin Manning as well as myself have designated relationality as a key aspect of Forsythe’s aesthetic. Relationality in Forsythe’s work can be understood as a team who are “continually attuned and responsive to the performance of others” as well as the ecology of materials and media in the dancing environment.²⁰

¹⁸ Bourriaud’s text, drawing from Luis Althusser to Félix Guattari, places intersubjectivity at the center of artistic production: “an art form where the substrate is formed by intersubjectivity, and which places being-*together* as a central theme, the ‘encounter’ between beholder and picture, and the collective elaboration of meaning.” Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, p. 15, emphasis (together) mine.

¹⁹ Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, p. 113.

²⁰ See Hallam and Ingold, *Creativity and Cultural Improvisation*, p. 1.

Anthropologist Marilyn Strathern observes that in some cultures relations are felt in the polarity of connecting/linking/merging as well as in splitting/separating/dividing.²¹ She distinguishes between relations between *fixed* entities vs. relations *contingent* and *emergent* to processes and processual bodies, becoming through creative activity.²² Such relations are not only between people, but between people and things. (*Not from Liz: As I understand them, this way of thinking emergently of relationality is similar to Karen Barad's intra-action, but I am not a Barad specialist*).

Relational Movement

Relational Movement is a concept from Erin Manning. In *Relationescapes* (2012), Manning draws upon many examples of dance and art, including her own practice as a tango dancer, to illuminate her concept of relational movement.

Manning, who can both lead and follow in the tango writes: “I move not you but the interval out of which our movement emerges. We move time relationally as we create space: we move space as we create time.”²³ This involves the dancers’ cooperative attunement to one another and time, sharing responsibility for the progress of the dance. When dancing in this way, Manning suggests that the ‘I’ and ‘other’ dissolve as individual subjects. The movement does not emerge from the leader, and get communicated to the follower, but comes from the betweenness captured in the concept of the “interval”. Dance scholar André Lepecki, drawing from his reading of Manning, calls the manner of moving without a prescribed leader and follower “leadingfollowing”.²⁴

Not all movement is relational; nor is all relational movement dance. Without stressing the distinction, Manning clarifies that relational movement is different than customary motions in daily life (such as office work, or walking, or cooking)

²¹ see Strathern, *Kinship as a Relation*, in particular p. 47-48

²² See, Strathern, *Re-making Knowledge*, in particular p. 11; see also Leach, *Kinship and Place*, p. 213-214.

²³ Manning, *Relationescapes*, p. 17.

in which one moves without awareness through habits. For Manning, relational movement is a sort of dance—a dance that does not emphasize form and position. When dance is relational movement, virtual components become active, affective factors. But, for Manning, not all choreographed movements are relational. In cases of reproduction of movement, she observes, the relational qualities prove challenging: “Relation must be reinvented. To dance relationally is not to *represent* movement but to *create* it.”²⁵ When choreography engenders relational movement, that involves “bringing to expression the patterning of incipient activity towards the definition of a movement event.”²⁶ Choreography for Manning is not an organization of bodies in space and time, as the knowing ahead and prescriptive disciplining of outcomes and rules, but the speculation and activism that dynamically fields incipient movement—potentializing action.

Residual Movement

Residual movement is a skill that has been named by William Forsythe to describe movement practices in the Ballett Frankfurt period. It is a skill particular to Forsythe’s workplace, giving the body a specific mechanics of coordination. The way of interpreting the proposals of *Improvisation Technologies* is through residual movement.

Residual movement can be understood as a movement idea that has a residue that reverberates the body. Forsythe explains: “We use the reflexes that we’ve learned in classical ballet to maintain a kind of residual coordination, which allows the body to acquire elastic surfaces that bounce off one another. This elasticity is derived from the mechanics of torsion inherent in *épaulement*.”²⁷ Residual coordination is not enacting a simple goal but elaborately (according to dancer Dana Caspersen) directing a “folding relational chain of impetus” to

²⁴ Drawing from Manning, see Lepecki, *From Partaking to Initiating*, p. 34.

²⁵ Manning, *Relationescapes*, p. 28.

²⁶ Manning, *Always More Than One*, p. 76.

²⁷ Forsythe in Kaiser, *Dance Geometry*.

which the body reacts, metaphorically as in “a refraction like light bouncing between surfaces.”²⁸

Dana Caspersen calls this expertise “residual response.” With the term response, Caspersen highlights the feeling of the body responding to a proposal: such as the movement responding to the image of line or plane. This is not to say that the idea comes first and the body responds, but rather that the body thinks in its reflexes. Caspersen finds that in working with novices, there is often a “lack of coordinative reaction between the shoulders and the hips” as well as a “lack of shaped response in the upper arms.”²⁹ She describes the desired elasticity of the body as a complex reactivity. This shows the intricate ways that body and mind, thinking in motion, and control are cultivated in Forsythe’s movement coordination.

Sensation

The panoply of sensation when practicing Forsythe’s style moves beyond the classic five sense model by involving heat, skin, balance, breath and proprioception. Generally, sensations overlap and relay between modes, mixing into the feeling of moving and being moved.³⁰ They also involve sensing dancers and architecture around the body, typically foregrounding senses and other body parts than the eyes. The dancers’ practice involves attunement to peripheral and direct vision, sound location and timbre, the body’s orientation within gravity, proprioception, 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. The dancers develop their sensitivity, to be able to as well discern and act on subtle changes in perception.

²⁸ See also Caspersen, *It Starts from Any Point*, p. 27; Caspersen, *Methodologies*.

²⁹ Caspersen, *Methodologies*.

³⁰ Caroline Potter, in her ethnographic research of a contemporary dance education institution in London, similarly finds the five-sense model inadequate for describing

Subjectivity

The topic of ‘subjectivity’ is an important focus within dance studies—reflecting ample scholarly work that explores how persons are affected by choreographic and social dance activities (both dancers and spectators). Such scholarship has emerged after and in parallel to writing focusing more predominantly on aesthetic categories. In my view, dance studies scholarship expresses a generally poststructuralist perspective: opposing theories that propose a “self-enclosed, autonomous individual bound to a fixed identity with a full presence at the center of discourse”.³¹ In contrast to this vision of a fixed, solipsistic and natural subject, within the majority of dance scholarship today the subject is understood to be dynamic and socially constituted—a process of forming, deforming, iterating, interpellating, interacting, transgressing, subverting and resisting. Dance scholars view that training and choreographic practices are specific processes shaping subjectivity, influencing embodied but also social and cognitive levels. Thereby, dance scholars aim to delineate the specificity of these processes with regard to particular examples and discourse. Various theories (from phenomenology, to Bourdieu, Butler, Lacan, Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari) are sited therein.

dancers’ experience. See Potter, *Sense of Motion, Senses of Self*. Vass-Rhee highlights in particular visual-sonic amodal perception in Forsythe’s work. See Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*.

³¹ See Lepecki, *Exhausting Dance*, p. 8.

Tips for Practicing *Improvisation Technologies*

- When you work with one modality: play around with different scales, dynamics, body parts and complexity, following Forsythe's advice to try out from simple to complex, move backwards, and distribute movement throughout the kinesphere of the body.
- Rather than always looking for the 'best' way, also try to 'inventory' possibilities' and even be impartial to what you produce.
- Don't be enamoured with success, "fail and fail better" (Beckett)
- "turn your F#%^ head" (Deborah Hay)
- Step away from what you make and walk back in from another angle.
- Don't be enamoured only with force, strength, pleasure and virtuosity. Try also weak solutions, vague proposals, and dancing at the limits of what you enjoy and understand.
- Let the space pull you/pull ideas out of you.
- Try soft solutions, not just forceful ones.
- Ask why you present yourself the way you prefer to (i.e. as pretty, strong, good, sexy, funny, etc.)
- Explore the limits of the voluntary/involuntary.
- Modulate between dancing/grooving and sticking firm and strict to the task, and observe how these change as time progresses.
- Perhaps dance your way into and out of the task, or enable 'dancing around' as transitions between ideas evolving with the task.
- Try working with a sense of humour, or at the border of the task trying to figure out when it veers off course, or try not to do the task while staying at its border (taken from Forsythe dancer Esther Balfe).
- If you're legendary for being funny (you know who you are!) try also not being humorous; add or show something abstract, or profoundly intimate, or weak.
- Trust silly as well as serious solutions.
- Fake the task for a while, or invent your version of the task.
- Notice what your habits are. Then try adding and subtracting from your habits.
- Indulge your movement addictions to fertilize or immune yourself from them.
- Change your body orientation or place in the room to have a fresh start when you are lost.
- If you get frustrated, take a break, breath, or a short nap. Maybe change your outfit, the music, your perspective etc. Maybe go dance with someone else for a while, or ask for help.

Workshop Documentation

Key:

Notes by Liz in plain text.

Documentation by students.

Concepts in the Glossary in **green**.

Quotes added from Selby.

DAY 1: March 2, 2020

Welcome Talk: Teacher biographies and Forsythe biography

- Some key points about the work (reconfiguration of ballet, focus on collaboration in choreographic process, diversity of repertoire from ballets to installations to art objects, etc.)

Warmup:

- touching the body (Gyrokinesis)
- walking through the room with spatial observation and awareness
- stand and turn your head right and left, as if someone is behind you – observe what the body does, include the body, increase dynamics
- free improvisation (no task, no test): 5-min
- task: contralateral improvisation
 - Student question: What is **contralateral** movement?
 - Task: contralateral movement backwards

Internal points: 'inside the body'

- Touching the body: ankle, knee, hip, elbow, shoulder, ear
- Crossing the midline of the body, approaching the midline, a type nuanced form of contralateral movement.
- Adding the legs: step cross, like tendu, front and back [music Tricky - *Overcome*]
- Introducing grips: handshake, inverted handshake

- Importance of touching and feeling as a way for the body to learn itself: **Proprioceptive** feedback and kinaesthetic feedback
 - In duets: [music William Blasinsky - *Watermusic*]
 - first touching a partner
 - finding the sequence for both grip styles
- Freeing up the improvisation: reaching for points with any musicality, any order of points, then transporting the pair-trio in the space

(break)

- **External Points:** 'external of the body in space'
 - 'Movement Scale' 29 points in Space
 - Compare to **Rudolf von Laban** scale (Jean Pierre demonstrates)
 - Snapping (do right and left) [music Steve Reich *Drumming*]
 - Snap and look
- External Points: low-level/floor work
 - Sliding the legs on all diagonal lines of the square [music James Blake *Tep and The Logic*]
 - Repeat, now while traveling across the floor
 - Student question: What is fixed and what is free? Can I do this? Can I do that?
 - Liz: It is normal, to have trouble knowing this. Let's keep talking about it.
 - 'Excellent version': What can my body do with this task? precision with what point is reaching, big toe, little toe, heel etc.
 - 'Most Excellent Version': with students making a very strange sound while moving
 - Combining excellent and most excellent versions

Reflection from Ariadna

O P P O S I T E

Looking for contralateral movements with our extremities. In Forsythe, almost everything is with this objective, like in ballet, and we learned a specific sequence for that. This one consists in touching your bases (ears - shoulders - elbows - hips - knees - ankles) in opposite directions and be next to the other, for example: touch your left ear with your right hand while the head moves in the opposite direction of the right hand goes, that's mean looking towards the right side, then change side (right ear). Then touch your left shoulder with the right hand, etc. During these actions you need to be aware of the touch, the type of touch. Need to be precise and compact.

The intention of the part of the body that we are touching is kind of "pushing". The idea is to bring this part to the center of the spine, towards to the middle of the body. After that we can explore and focus a bit in the way of touching, like the "ordinary" way of do it or inverse, etc. And then play with this.

We did it also with a partner, looking for the same way and intentions and also mixing the order of the sequence. Also adding a pause when we can feel the partner and decide to move our bodies, keeping the positions towards one point in the space, with the idea of start to travel with this task.

D I R E C T I O N S

We can imagine that we are inside of a box, so from this box we can touch and set points, this ones with specific directions in the space.

We start with the basic version, just point it with the hand in the different directions: in front, backwards, sides, diagonals (up and down), frontal plane (in front and backwards), center up and center down to finish with both hands in the middle.

And also, you always will do the opposite in this exercise: If you start front, the next one will be back, if you do diagonal front and up (right) the next one will be diagonal back (left).

Then we worked with timing and snapping. We start to play with these last tasks, for example: start with the direction, when your hand arrive to the point you make the snap, and just then you can look towards this point. Then you continue with the next point, keeping the look / head until the next snap and then you change the look / head towards the next point and etc., like that with each point.

DAY 2: March 3, 2020

Notes from Ola:

Warm-up – based on gyrotonic practice, eastern cultures
“massage” of the body, using fists, rubbing
+ exercise on the floor, legs in first position, upper body relaxed on the elbows; rotating and lifting one leg with doing half circle (rotation starts by foot, squeezing the pen with toes)

Forsythe exercises – ears, shoulders, elbows, hips, knees, feet;
CONTRALATERAL MOVEMENTS, spirals
the way of touch – hand and body part are magnetized to each other; the whole hand is engaged. We did front and back.

exercise in pairs – pushing and pulling hips, elbows – it creates space, breath, range of movement and smoothness

Right side front, left side back + the opposite way – find continuous.

Exercise on the floor – feet, knees, hips, elbows, shoulders, ears;
front touch + going around each body part with “normal” touch
starting point – laying on the back; organize the rest of the body in natural, useful way, then in the sitting position in our own order

Couples – the same as before, but with partner hands on them or on my body
Playing with the rhythm (music) and trying to keep the rhythm without music.

Then we added some variations – sharing weight, giving directions with the touch, organizing the body in various way

Solo – based on memory of the movements, feelings from the duo without music.

Then creating the duo with two soloists without contact.

REMARKS: The Forsythe practice is based on contralateral movements; they use a lot of inwards rotations. Music is important in creating process – it can help with challenging ourselves. From the ‘basic’ exercises (adding, dropping, changing the rules) new ideas just come out.

Internal points:

- Spiral with pushing the points front to back [music – Norah Jones *Don't Know Why*]
 - Emphasize the spiral of the spine by working in partners: partner stands behind the dancer and brushes the torso and the hips, forward and back, leading them
 - Differentiate between spiral in one piece (Liz demonstrates wrong) and sequentially spiraling from the hip (Macarena does right)
- Reaching from behind [impossibly fast, music - Eminem]
- Forward and back
 - Discussion of the knee and ankle points: add backwards approach version from Selby
- Laying on the floor [music –Glenn Gould, Bach Prelude in C Major]
 - Grasp and then circle around the joint
 - Follow don't force
 - Follow up with partner

(break)

[music –Glenn Gould, Beethoven/Liszt transcription, Symphonie No. 6, V. Allegretto]

- Repeat partnering task with and without the music
 - Emphasize the constraint being on beat –i.e. **entrainment**, coordinated rhythmic activity
 - Try also turn-taking with your partner
- Develop ‘memory’ of the material as a solo in silence
 - Keep group musicality/connection
- Perform duets as solos, separately in silence
-



Watch Video: William Forsythe's *Solo* (1997)

DAY 3: March 4, 2020

"put your focusing into your hands, into your partner"

– Liz

Per: Why does he see Liz moving her body backwards when she touches a point?

Liz: Deliberate retraction of her body moving away from the points.

Detour: Exercises to learn retraction/moving backwards

- Budo Exercises (context, The Forsythe Company Budo annual workshops with Akira Hino), **relational movement**
 - Handshake: move without revealing to your partner in your touch that you are moving
 - Internal points grips: move without showing your partner, retracting the hips, creating space between you and your partner, moving backwards
 - Discussion of intention, consciousness, 'ishchi' (spelling?)
- Points in Cube: Forsythe Series
[music –Fiona Apple, *Extraordinary Machine*]
 - New Snap Sequence:
 - [1-4] up, down, R side, L side,
 - [5-8] front R diagonal, back L diagonal, back R diagonal, front L diagonal
 - [9-12] front R high diagonal, back L low diagonal, back R low diagonal, front L high diagonal
 - [13-16] repeat last four with 90 degrees shift
 - With body moving: collecting strategies
 - Visualize points and play, keep the first one clear, change the level of virtuosity, feel the points magnetizing you to them, delay and tease the points, feigning indecision

(break)

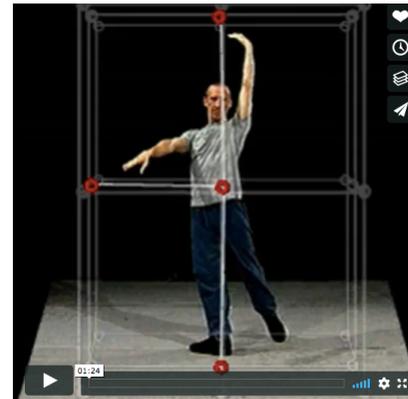
Notes from Selby: In regards to the work with partners in relaying the same weight through touching one part of their body, trying to be as undecipherable as possible in movement-
distance: more sensitivity, more momentum
- what weight, texture, and intentionality can be put into certain parts of you body? what can you fill your limbs up with?

Watch videos:

Prototype of *Improvisation Technologies* [<https://vimeo.com/2904745>]

Prototype – Forsythe in Laban Cube [<https://vimeo.com/2912642>]

Extrusion and extension [<https://vimeo.com/2912617>]



Physical Practice:

- *Improvisation Technologies*
[music – Thom Willems, *One Flat Thing Reproduced*]
 - Lines internal and external the body, rotate, transport, match, bridge, extension, extrusion, use of various dynamics to inscribe the lines
 - Shearing

DAY 4: March 5, 2020

"follow the physics, listen to the geometry"

– Liz

Notes from Charlotte:

WARM UP: touch

- hand touch with the palm on the opposite arm, exploration of the slide.
- passing the touch sliding from one arm to the other one, in a relay going from the sternum -> elbow -> hand -> other hand -> other elbow -> shoulder -> sternum -> etc...
- one side / the other one.
- experience with legs (keeping the touch from the hands to other parts of the body)
- adding the head, we experiment now with arms / legs / head, trying to keep the caress going with the two hands at the time.
- adding the flour, trying symmetry and asymmetry.

- What is moving the hand on the body? The hand itself? The body? Experimentation on the different possibilities.
- The flour is as much as the body a place to explore.
- Contralateral gives more space between the different places of the body that are touching.

- Become more playful: adding throwing as a continuity for the sliding. Throwing into space, giving impulse and new places for the hands to be.
- Make stops. Analyze the hand on the body, drop the body part, and put another body part in the hand to continue moving.



IMPROVISATION TECHNOLOGIES: videos – Collapsing points, Dropping Points, Dropping Curves

Questions around the volunteer action or the reaction to a given momentum, direction of the movement.

Research / Improvisation around those 3 different assignment.

Notes from Selby:

bringing up the topic of being intentional when you improvise/ being aware of what you're doing/ where your trajectory is while moving freely - an acuteness to the likelihoods. Also: rates of being intentional, power of moving before you think.

(break)

Video viewing: Excerpts from Forsythe's works

Artifact (1984)

Second Detail (1991)

Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude (1997)

Eidos:Telos (1995)

Kammer/Kammer (2000)

Sider (2011)

Decreation (2003)

N.N.N.N. (2002)

Three Atmospheric Studies (2005)

Quiet Evening of Dance (2017)

Choreographic Objects

Note from Charlotte: Forsythe enjoyed creating set phrases looking like improv or improvisation looking like a written/choreographed dance.

DAY 5: March 6, 2020

"engaging with criticism and critique until it becomes exactitude"

- Tilman

Notes from Eleni:

Today in class we gathered with the other two groups and we did a fashion show-catwalk under the same instructions of what the Forsythe dancers had to do at the end of a piece (*The Returns*, 2009).

The instructions were the following:

- Take props (clothes-material-or whatever you can wear or have with you at the catwalk)
- With these props invent a character/costume
- Translate what you are wearing into something physical, be your costume, really invest on the physical approach of your catwalk
- Your performance can be collective or individual

The day ended with the fire extinguisher and everyone cleaning the pink powder from everywhere.

Notes from Selby:

Using an inner criticism or questioning to propel your work forward, as well as your understanding of the work around you, the context being formed and forming you



Monday, March 9, 2020

Warmup:

- Gyrotonic abdominals series

Moving from the spine improvisation

- Visualizing feet as tiny balls
- Adding shearing of arms
- (more tasks...)

(break)

Watch excerpt Act 3, William Forsythe's *Three Atmospheric Studies* (2005)



Program Photos: © Lucas Cranach the Elder, Lamentation Beneath the Cross (1503) Bavarian State Painting Collections, Old Pinakothek, Munich / © Reuters/Athar Hussein (15 November, 2005)

Improvisation Exercises based on Act 3 of Forsythe's work *Three Atmospheric Studies* [with sound from the piece]

- State 1: 'duck and cover' in an emergency, visualizing sound of avoiding, exploding etc.
- State 2: startle reflex, suddenly collapsing points, visualize something flying towards/near you and collapse towards the floor, freezing before your collapse fully
- State 3: horror, winding contortion, (taken from Forsythe Company dancer Roberta Mosca), with mouth winding to the left and right, finding an extreme behavior in contralateral movement

Tuesday, March 10, 2020

“rates of being intentional, power of moving before you think”

-Selby Notes

Warmup

Internal points: with grasping, circling

Cube:

- Pure with snaps
- Looking opposite and snap
- With all forms of hand approach
- Approach and look, retract the body and snap
- Approach and look, retract any point, snap and look

(break)

Improvisation exercises based on Forsythe’s work *Three Atmospheric Studies*. Construct manipulation duos: with all sorts of grips, all sorts of rhythms, level change, clear definition of actions and interactions, cause and effects.

Introduction of ‘inventory task’: studying all the grips that you touched or were manipulated in, so that you could perform a spoken lecture

Notes from Macarena:

We started the class with a warm-up full of energy. We stood in the first position and began to release energy accompanied by breathing. Then we went to the ground and massaged different parts of the body (legs, back, face, etc.) to wake up the muscles.

Then we did a partner work which consisted of putting one in front of the other. We placed our hands together. One was the leader and the other was carried away by the movement made by the leader. Then we switch roll and later we replaced the hand for the finger. This exercise consisted of observing

how it feels being lead, and also to be conscious of the parts that are on contact.

Then we continued the class with the exercise of the square and the snaps.

- We started moving by looking in the opposite direction and later going to the same side. “There are a million ways of going to the direction that you want to go. Also be conscious of the many possibilities that you have with your body to approach that direction and to see which part of the body is approaching and why”. Later we change our attention to the hand and the body followed.
- The second part of the exercise was to approach, retract and snap. For example: see how the shoulder works by rotating the arm and how that affects the body.
- The third part of the exercise had the same structure as the second part. But now we have the choice of where you want to approach, retract and snap. You have the freedom to choose where you continue and where you stop. We had Magda as an example, where we saw how she made several movements with her shoulders, taking her time to see how far the movement can go and then she performed the snap.
- The fourth part of the exercise consisted that it is no longer just the torso that retracts but it can also be another part of the body such as the hip, foot, shoulder, etc.

After finishing this exercise, we did partner work which consisted of doing a small piece of 20 seconds more or less manipulating each other using pushing and pulling and the consciousness of the touch.

Last thing we did was The Inventory which consisted of knowing where is the grip and how is located on the body and what is grabbing. And after analysing it carefully we set out to explain it in words. We had to talk about every action we did at the same time. We spend some time investigating these two tasks and then we “perform it”.

Wed, March 11, 2020

Handwashing, at least 20 seconds, COVID-19

Notes from Magdelaine

1st Part :

We started the class with an introduction on the Japanese martial art, Budō. As most of the Japanese martial arts, it asks the participant a lot of focus because the exercises require a lot of repetition in order to make your technique better.

First exercise :

We had to imagine a point in between the breast and the (upper) middle of the ribcage called Kyokotsu. The point of the exercise was to see how far back or front you could bring the point in space.

Then we did the same exercise but with the help of a partner that applied a soft pressure on those two points. Helping you direct their hands and your body into space. We could imagine that the ribcage was like a ballon. The point was to open the chest and the upper back without putting pressure on the neck.

Second exercise :

Alone, we had to take a loose posture, then connect the movements of the chest with the arms, by twisting them inside or out.

The second part was with a partner. The one not doing the exercise had to take the others's elbow or shoulders with her hands and lightly assist the twist of the arms. Which helps the one doing the exercises to open or close more.

Third exercise :

In pairs. One of the two outstretched her arms by making a fist. The other takes her partner's wrist (just after the wrist) and just under the elbow with her hands. Then starts twisting her partner's arm like a towel until the twist reaches the shoulder and it is not possible to go further. The one who receives

then tries to undo the spiral little by little starting by the top, which means the chest.

Then we did the same things with the legs. One of the two starts twisting the bones of the legs of the other until it cannot go further. Then, the receiver tries to undo the twist by starting with the chest, then hips, then the rest little by little.

Fourth exercise :

This exercise is also by pair. Both of us are down on the floor mirroring each other. Our legs are laid on the floor, feet touching each other on flex and the back is straight and off the floor. Then both legs off the ground we were to agree on one follower and one leader. One leading the other with her legs, feet and attention and the other following with care and attention. We then noticed that it takes more effort for the leader than for the follower.

2nd Part:

For the second part of the class, we started by remembering the duo that we had created. Then we added different timing and dynamic. Then we put our focus on the action of our hands when on the partner. In order to know exactly what we were doing.

Then with the partner we had to explain by using our voice what we where doing during the duo by also showing it on our own body. With as much details as possible, for example : « With the inside of my right palm, I will take the left elbow of my partner. Then I will apply pressure which will push her arm into the diagonal and make her turn ... »

Then we had to present our talk in front of the class. We had 3 minutes each. During the talk our goals where to :

- Be able to perform and include the public by making eye contact.
- Include the voice with the movement
- Keep an homogeneous timing with our partner

Wed, March 11, 2020

Talk with Jonathan Burrows.

Notes from Selby: In terms of **dust & traces** - the dust being the substance in which the dance is made, the leftovers being scraped together to resurrect an idea. This reminded me of Forsythe's work because of the lenses, filters, tools, etc. that he uses to distil an original substance down into another original substance; potentially discarding of grandeur or abstractions/ vice versa. This idea came from citations of Mette Ingvarsen's words and works, and drew parallels to Forsythe's work for me because of the distinct connection of extracting and combining elements on different ranges of transparency to produce a unified whole.

Thursday, March 12, 2020

Notes from Nina: (Handwashing) Warmup, Budo (14:15 – 16:30)

1_ Playing with the « kokutsu ». Feet open, one in front of the other. Move that middle point from front to back.

2_ Add arm coordination. Rotate outward when the movement is forward and vice versa, rotate inward when projecting the middle point backward.

3_ Play with the position of the arms by coming to rest the fingertips on the shoulders, mobilize the shoulder blades and keep the elbows aligned with the shoulders.

Create a spiral with a length: Point your fingers at the ceiling and let your arm reach up and do a big circle. All the way around creating a spiral with a length. (Try with the two arms at the same time)

Connecting at cellular level with your partner: Place yourself face to face, one foot in front of the other and make contact with the palm of your hand. Two roles: a leader and a follower. The leader guides the movement in the space of both hands and the follower follows. The contact that is created at the beginning (the pressure, position of the hand) must not change. The leader must get the circle going to the center of the other person.

- How I mobilize my center to allow movement and contact with the palms of my hands?

Link this work to previous research around the « kokutsu ». Keep it moving circles. The leader doesn't just design. The leader's hand leads two bodies.

Micro level: **sensation** and **sensitivity**.

Choreographed duets (16h15-17h30)

1_ Go back to duets: the originals.

2_ Go back dancing and to the lecture.

Precisions : describe the gaze, the relationship with the floor, keep in touch with the audience.

(break)

Change of teacher (Fabrice comes)

1_ Doing the lecture of the duo with more implication of the body. Include directions, changes in levels, movements in space.

2_ Both dances: ours and our partner's. Trying to be as precise as possible. Especially on the holds between body parts. Don't hesitate to spend some time on a moment and use your hands to put two parts of the body in relation to each other.

3_ Dance the real duet.

New duet

1_ Find a new partner.

Doing to you what you were doing to the other one. Doing to your partner what we were doing to you. Experience the impossibility of the task. Try to be as much precise as possible. This exercise makes it possible to realize a duet in which the audience can see the performers in difficulty.

- How to keep the presence alive even know it's super hard to perform?
- How to deal with failing?
- What type of failure is available to show?

Friday, March 13, 2020

Group Meeting: Discussion of school policy due to COVID-19.

Review 1: [music – Norah Jones *Don't Know Why*]

- Crosslateral patterning
- Pas de bouree on the beat with the points
- Adding turning backwards
- Adding turning backwards and walking backwards
- Circuits
- Launching
- Space-hold
- Scratching
- Low – level: placing the body
- Points in space

Review 2: *Improvisation Technologies*

- Lines in space, extrude, match, bridge, transport, fold, use any dynamic
- New: can find lines by observing a partner
- 5000 ideas, let the ideas flow through the body

(break)

All three classes come together.

Task: Make small trios and quartets: at least one student from Liz's class, one from Tilman's and one from Fabrice's. Start by teaching one another what you have been learning/working on. Then build a short synthesis to share with the group

Informal sharing/showing [music from Fabrice].

Conclusion: Thanks and introduction of online assignments.

Digital Learning

March 17-27, 2020

Homework

Timeline/Submission We would like for everyone to complete the homework while the workshop is still fresh in your bodies. We strongly encourage everyone to complete the movement research and make the videos by the end of next week (April 6, 2020). If you cannot upload the videos because your internet connection is too poor, then you can deliver/post the videos later, once quarantine has been lifted. This way your work will be included with everyone's in the google drive, as a reference for yourself and your fellow students!

Questions

If you have questions on a content level about the assignment, please email your teacher (Fabrice/Tilman/Liz) directly.

If you require an extension, for health or personal reasons, please email Manon.

Task 1

Please learn and practice 2-3 new modalities from William Forsythe's *Improvisation Technologies* (new meaning beyond what you have explored with Liz/Tilman/Fabrice). These videos are publically available on YouTube, just search. If your internet is too weak to watch videos online, then please download the file 'Forsythe_ITbookEnglish.pdf' from the google drive. You can read the modalities and then try them out.

Outcome

After you have practiced, please make a short 2-3 minute video of your work. Most students have submitted longer videos, but we prefer 2-3 minutes. Feel free also to journal and share notes about your practice. You can upload these to the google drive or send them via wetransfer to Steven. See notes above regarding the timeline and submission process.

Task 2

The next proposal for movement research is based on The Forsythe Company's piece *I Don't Believe in Outer Space* (2008).

Task 2a

Choose a room or a part of a room in the place you reside at the moment. The size of the room is optional/your choice. Notice what you notice when you explore and memorize the content of this room while blindfolded (to remove the sense of sight and increase kinaesthetic response). For increased kinesthetic awareness, put in a pair of ear plugs if you have them.

Notice yourself in the situation of memorizing the architecture around you, while blind. What gets noticed? What is the difference between experiencing and constructing movement? How can the narrative become the environment? How can you create a memory of the environment? Is that which is unnoticed learned or remembered?

[This task comes from Liz's notes from The Forsythe Company (September 25, 2008) during the making of the piece *I Don't Believe in Outer Space*.]

Recommendations (applicable for tasks 2a-2e):

- Try using a blindfold (a scarf, a sleeping mask or anything that takes away light and blinds you well enough) and also earplugs if you have any.
- Spend extended time in the assignment. Maybe try setting an alarm for 30 minutes to one hour.
- Either write down what you notice afterwards, or make a *short* video (2-5 minutes) in which you share what you experienced and upload it to the drive.
- Safety: Wash your hands thoroughly before and afterward and avoid touching your face ;)
- Safety: Remove any dangerous objects or things that might fall, break or hurt you while performing this task. Task 2b Archive once again the trajectory and architecture of your “room exploration” with attention to memorizing, to the extent possible, details such as: height, weight, distance to/between, pressure, temperature, feeling, angles of your body in relation to the furniture/objects you’ve contacted, angle of approach etc. This is a means to make a more concretely embodied sequence of your sensory exploration through your apartment, living space, office, bedroom or wherever you are held up at the moment. This will make the foundations for your dance(s). Task 2c Once Task 2b is clear, go on to use any material you have developed these two weeks with us in order to explore your

sequences through your rooms again. Meaning instead of being neutral, use whatever body part (as in exercise 2a) incorporate what you have learned. For example: Try employing the grips from how you touched each other in the duets in Fab/Liz’s groups. Or, the movements or body parts from your solo material in Tilman’s group. Or try the 12 points (ear/shoulder/elbow/hip/knee/ankle), or a particular cube sequence. In other words, utilise the ways of placing those specific body parts, angles, types of pressure, sliding, pushing, caressing, pulling and so on to create different ways of contacting or working through your original room sequence. This is a way to explore the material with different modalities, creating a hybrid of the kinesthetic exploration of your room with the tasks we worked over the past week. As you continue your exploration this week, try making at least two new versions. So, you would have your original theme, and two variations mediated by the modalities you’ve learned. Task 2d After practicing for a while, you should be able to recreate this sequence/dance/series of actions in a different space (a different room, a park, a dance studio etc), enacting the exploration of your apartment. If possible, try this out, by going to a new room or (if still possible) reserving a studio or dancing in a park!

Task 2e

You can then use it to improvise, changing the sequence as you do so. (ex. table-to-chair-to-rug becomes chair-to-rug-to-table), creating smaller or larger versions of the original room, using any technology/modality that we’ve worked on to create different iterations/versions of your apartment dance.

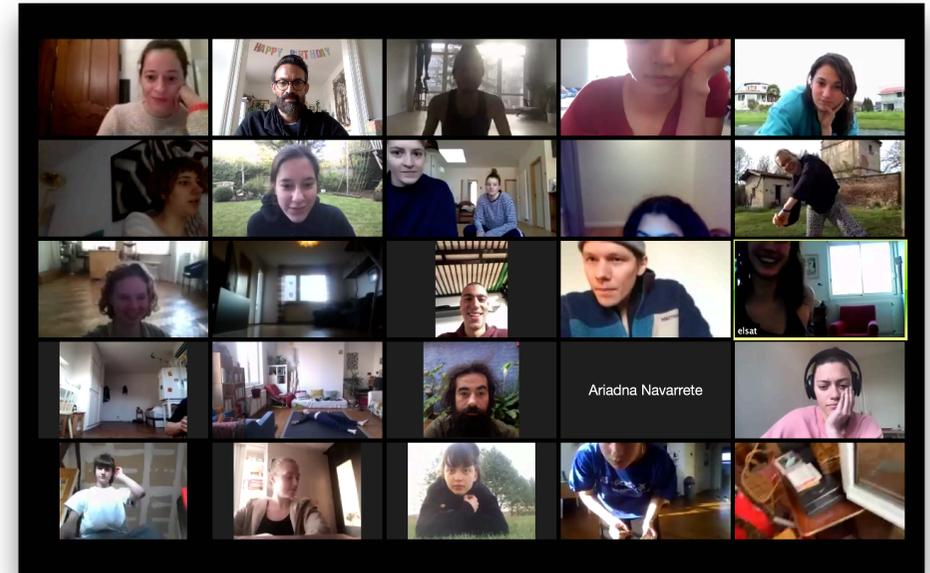
Outcome:

If you are able to participate in the sharing on March 27, 2020 at 17:30h via Zoom, then this counts as your video submission. Here will have a 'sharing' of our room material discoveries, in the form of a 20-minute improvisation, wherever you are! It will be a 'communing' and 'processing' and 'celebrating' of our work together.

Otherwise, please make a short 2-3 minute video of your practice. Most students have submitted longer videos, but we prefer 2-3 minutes. Feel free also to journal and share notes about your practice. You can upload these to the google drive or send them via wetransfer to Steven. See notes above regarding the timeline and submission process.



March 27, 2020 – ZOOM SHOWING



20 minutes of synchronized dancing:
Everybody shares a synthesis of their homework studies.

Further Reading Tips

Some students have said they were eager for more reading materials related and at the fringes of their work in this module.

Related to the apartment study, we recommended the following readings:

- Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*
- Berger, John *Ways of Seeing*
- Menke, Christoph *The Power of Judgement*
- Pallasmaa, Juhani *The Eyes Of The Skin*

Tilman's Tips:

"My body, the Buddhist" D. Hay

"Re-Perspective: Deborah Hay" catalogue for Tanz im August

"Authenticity is a Feeling" Jacob Wren

"Artificial Hells" Claire Bishop

"CHOREOGRAPHIC Objects" W. Forsythe

Liz's Tips:

Anthropology of Art:

- Ingold, Tim. *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013. (excerpt on google drive)
- Ingold, Tim. "Thinking While Making." Lecture, 2012. In: [<https://youtu.be/Ygne72-4zyo>].

Sociology of Art/Dance:

- Becker, Howard S. *Art Worlds*, 25th anniversary edition. Berkeley & London: University of California Press, 2012.
- Laermans, Rudi. *Moving Together: Theorizing and Making Contemporary Dance*. Amsterdam: Valiz, 2015.

Sociology of Boxing

- Wacquant, Loïc. *Body & Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Philosophy & Movement

- Manning, Erin. *The Minor Gesture*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016. (on google drive)

Music

- Keil, Charles. "Defining 'Groove'." *PopScriptum 11 The Groove Issue* (2010): 1-5.

Forsythe:

- Figgis, Mike. *Just Dancing Around*. Film/DVD. Kultur Video, 2007. [<https://vimeo.com/31326678>]
- Spier, Steven, ed. *William Forsythe and the Practice of Choreography: It Starts from Any Point*. New York and London: Routledge, 2011.
- Spier, Steven. "Engendering and Composing Movement: William Forsythe and the Ballett Frankfurt." *The Journal of Architecture* 3.2 (1998): 135-46.
- Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing, reproduced, [<https://synchronousobjects.osu.edu/>]

Drawings by Ching-Shu Huang

Drawings in response to the Improvisation Technologies Workshop.
Pastels on paper.

