

Reflections On State Of The Art: International Symposium On Screendance 2022

Note: A collaborative document, compiled and edited by Sandhiya Kalyanasundaram, with notes and contributions from Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt, Claudia Kappenberg, Charlotte Griffin, Clare Schweizer, Diane Busuttill, Dominique Rivoal, Douglas Rosenberg, Gitta Wigro, Silvina Szperling, Sumedha Bhattacharyya, and Wesley Lim. Sandhiya transcribed from the recordings of the proceedings by Aaron Granat. The document captures notes by the speakers and presenters as well as notes and comments about presentations. It is organised chronologically by presentation.

<https://screendancesymposium.art.wisc.edu>

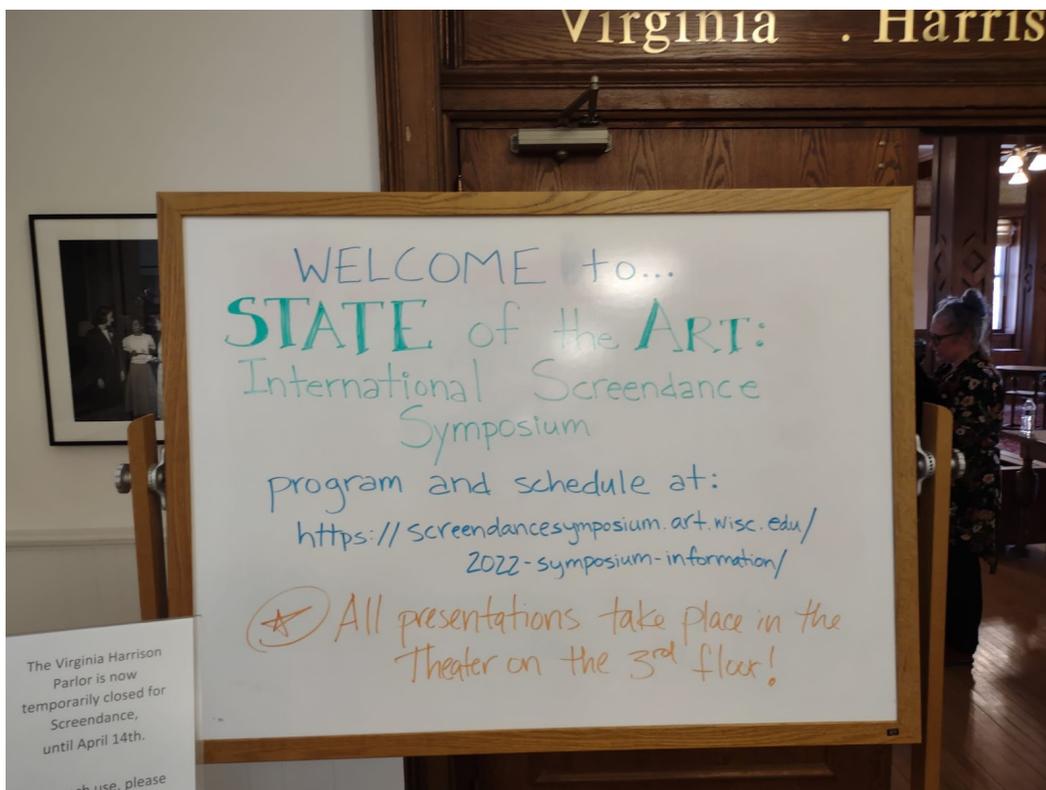


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Sunday April 10, 2022

Welcome remarks by Douglas Rosenberg

Doug welcomed participants to the University of Wisconsin, Madison, which is on the traditional lands of the Ho-Chunk nation. He shared his observations of the last 20 years of screendance, calling out the opportunity for just being in the room together, literally making space for conversation, dialog and witnessing. The first iteration of the symposium was held at UW Madison in 2000.

Doug recalled Octavio Paz' words, "What distinguishes modern art from the art of other ages is criticism", saying that those words have been prescient for those within the community who wish to see Screendance as a way to address the current condition; the condition of this historical moment and to make meaningful, relevant and articulate statements about the real bodies of real people whose commitment to real and authentic discourse through their creative process motivates a palpable sense of urgency. Criticality as in deeply considered, intentional and a part of a discourse that is larger than itself, made of a multiplicity of objects, films, literature and more.

Doug acknowledged the support of the Virginia Horne Henry Fund on the UW Madison campus for the symposium and said that his original proposal had focused on a project that would look closely at the feminist roots of screendance: "That really is at the core of this endeavor; screendance is, I believe deeply rooted in feminist art practices." Celebrating that the model of feminist curating is *curation as manifesto making*, he called for its wider use in artistic curation. Doug also acknowledged the support of the Division of the Arts and Chris Walker as well as the departments of Art and Dance for their generous support. In closing, Doug talked about the need to really share space and things and platforms and opportunities; to be generous simply as a gesture of recognition and appreciated several efforts towards inclusivity, polyvocality and diversity.

Long Table discussion // “Manifestos, Aspirations, Start-Ups: Identifying the Field/ Changing the Field/ Shaping the Field with [left to right] Claudia Kappenberg, Marisa Zanotti, Harmony Bench, Ann Cooper Albright, Litza Bixler, Katrina McPherson and (online) Marisa Hayes, and others



Video still from documentation ©: Aaron Granat

Summary of the beginning of the Long Table discussion: Claudia started the discussion, noting that the Long Table was developed by artist Lois Weaver out of a feminist impulse to address “what and who is missing from historical accounts, and what to do about it”. Claudia recalled the process, places and people, including the Screendance Network that have contributed to where we are now and to the journal. Katrina McPherson, Simon Fildes and Karl Jay Lewin led Open Source Video Dance at Findhorn, Scotland in 2006. Following this meeting Doug, Katrina and Claudia wrote a funding grant to the UK’s Arts and Humanities Council and received £46,000 to start an international Network. The idea of the Network was not to have a fixed location and to travel around and meet in different places in the US and UK; they decided to start a journal during their first gathering at Brighton. Claudia noted that UW Madison / Parallel Press supported the Network and the journal through the printing of the first issues of the journal and argued that Doug had misrepresented this history in his introductory program notes by suggesting the journal had been launched in Wisconsin - Ann added that they decided to launch the journal in a restaurant in Brighton. Claudia noted that we

need to be careful with the language we use, that we need to include the networking, the relevant people as well as diverse institutional support - Katrina asked why foreground institutions, saying that the point of Open Source Video Dance was to get away from this format and even from identifiable individuals, to make a collective endeavor, adding that this is also the question of the gatekeepers which is ongoing work. Harmony raised the point that later on attributing authorship becomes a challenge. Katrina raised the point that in Gaelic language there is no possessive pronoun.

Litza talked about open source code, structural barriers and the need to invite people in. Harmony called attention to screendance that has existed on the margins, commitment to popular dance and dance in all its manifestations, broader representation of dance forms. Lots of work to do and there are lots of really robust histories that we can draw into and draw from. Ann shared her experiences about bringing in history and pushing the field forward, she said that thinking and doing go really well together. Ann urged for the future to draw from the special energy and experiment and put into action what has been written about or discussed. Marisa Hayes raised the point of visibility of the journal and the work and outreach in non-English speaking countries. She reaffirmed the need to stay vigilant about language and communication and expressed her happiness that IJSD was willing to publish translations. Kelly Hargraves suggested that showing DIY films allows for another mode of representation.

Ann spoke about IJSD as a journal that focuses on rigor, which is about intentionality, and the thoughtfulness of a long-form essay, and argued that that is not inherently elitist and helps move the discourse in the field forward. Claudia spoke about the journal also being a platform, a collective forum and conversation between many voices; curating a journal issue is the creative work of choosing a topic and soliciting contributions.

Gitta notes: A speaker, talking about the symposium, proposed that “these events present a post-festival model”, and that “they declare screendance as a form of consequence.” This wasn’t pursued further in this discussion, but raises questions alongside other points made in the opening discussion about access and representation. Throughout the four days I was struck by the highly selective nature of the event, in which the in-person attendance was basically limited to those who were also invited speakers.

The opening discussion also surfaced new initiatives in process. Doug explained that connected to the symposium are a documentary and an open-source archive of screendance activity. Litza Bixler shared that she is working on establishing a guild for screen choreographers in line with other film industry guilds.

Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt // Screendance - a Journey for Artistic Agency and a Workshop Proposal for a Non-Binary Technological Gaze (bring your smartphone)

Ami started her presentation with her extensive thesis and footage of Suriashi, a smooth sliding walk without losing contact with the floor and a neat body balance. Two key takeaways from Ami's talk were: 1. translating the idea of 'Opacity' to the human body in order to welcome/enable the other into the space. 2. How can technology serve a slower pace, speaking nearby and kind listening. Ami led us into a delightful workshop of being aware of our mobile phones, each other, the space and the lighting with a mindful absorbance and dissolving into the space and the human presences.



Photo ©: Gitta Wigro

Charlotte notes: After engaging with this practice and other synergistic moments during and after the symposium including viewing Gabri's new film *Sheila*, I am interested in how ancestors, shamans, and lucid dreamers are absent/present in the forming of screendance histories and futures.

Ami notes: Name of my PhD thesis is *Suriashi as Experimental Pilgrimage in Urban and Other Spaces* (University of Roehampton, 2022) including 11 hours of

submitted footage of the Japanese walk suriashi through space alone or with others. At first, I did not know if I should call it screendance, but now I think it is screendance extended/expanded as well as choreography extended/expanded.



Photo: Douglas Rosenberg and Ami Skånberg Dahlstedt walk in suriashi on 5th Ave for Ami's PhD (during Dance on Camera Festival 2015)

Maryah Monteiro (Zoom presentation) // Presenting work from Pola Weiss (Mexico), Analivia Cordeiro (Brazil), and Silvina Szperling (Argentina)

Maryah transected time historically from the 70's and peeled the layers of an artistic universe constructed by 3 artists merging contemporary dance, video art, multimedia installations, performance and visual arts. She tied in the idea of transdisciplinarity (Basarab Nicolescu) to situate the feminist; a positionality that may be able to minimize bias by its inherent inclusivity. Her study of corporeality and poetics that was framed and emerged in the larger artistic universe was fascinating and revealing of the politics and pressures of the time period.

Chad Michael Hall in confluence with the American College Dance Association Panel Discussion // Dance, Film and Future Landscapes with Gabri Christa, Li Chiao-Ping, Omari "Motion" Carter, Katrina McPherson, Harmony Bench, Charlotte Griffin, Cara Hagan

<https://www.acda.dance>

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Ami notes: Hagan and Bench - Discussion on screen dance literacy/media literacy - what does one need to know? What about vocabulary? How does one understand visual arguments? Cinematic storytelling? The privilege of academia - the field inside/outside. Screendance and nostalgia. How to blow up the curriculum? Gabri talked about how young people want to wait, and are actually tired of the 'instantness' - more precarious after pandemic Tik-Tok not to be overlooked, VR-AR

Charlotte notes: I also appreciated Harmony's advocacy for thinking about "fluency."

Gitta notes: (to add to Charlotte's point above!) In a discussion of the wealth of screen experience today's students bring, Harmony noted the difference between literacy and fluency. Students are literate, as a consumer of media, but don't necessarily have fluency, i.e. the ability to create those media. We are less thoughtful in our consumption than we could be.

Sandhiya notes: Katrina talked about the clarity of intentionality in teaching. Charlotte posed the question, "How do we create pathways into screendance for students without prior access to technological tools".

Elizabeth asked the long table to talk about shifts in the field and how those shifts are paving the way for new experimentation and how that might inform education and curation?

Gitta notes: (this may have been from a different section of the day!) Discussion about students' access to work from within the screendance field and beyond, in relation to their knowledge and awareness of context and the field's existing histories. Katrina spoke about the experience of *not* having ready access to other screendance work as an emerging maker, and how that shaped her process at the time. "I was making work, for the first 6 years, when I *couldn't* see anything - no internet, online videos etc. I *read* about Maya Deren, I watched Tarkovsky, and I built from there."

Re. students' access to other work, someone commented that sometimes people do not want to know what came before for fear that they would be confirmed to be 'unoriginal'. Harmony noted that students often come with existing cliches, and/or an assumption that there is something specific that educators expect them to create/deliver.

Cara pointed out an important shift in the dynamics in the sector, "post"-pandemic: Lockdown made big companies move into making dance films, and now these big companies are also fundraising, essentially competing with

individual makers, who have worked in this field for a long time but can't command the same level of resources, for the same, limited funds.

Monday April 11, 2022

Dean Diana Hess talked about plans to start an MFA program in screendance at UW Madison. School of Education has dance/ art/ health as a combination of depts and also has the oldest dance dept in the US.

Autumn Mist Belk // Crafting a Diverse Screendance Audience with Robin Gee, Jen Ray, Clare Schweitzer, Jennifer Scully-Thurston

Panellists introduced themselves and ruminated on two broad questions throughout the discussion: What is an elevator pitch for defining screendance/dance film? How can we clearly describe the field while also being inclusive of screendance's breadth?

Autumn then posed the question: What strategies have you used to pull in new audiences? Panellists answered within five main categories: education, representation, accessibility, frequency, and meeting people where they are. Autumn has taken the path of educating people about the field and how they can get it, giving people a way in, and having lesson plans for kids in school. This gives audiences a way to understand what they are seeing.

Clare talked about the Frameform podcast. Started by Hannah Weber, Frameform frames the conversations that were started at events and continue the conversations. Each episode curates three films and discusses. Episode themes have ranged from warehouses, pop culture, tik tok and dance video episodes. Frameform is currently moving to season 3: www.hmweber.com/frameform, access through podcasts. Jen said that Frameform focuses on content that has market accessibility, relevance, and in-depth subject knowledge; a good example being the film *Uprooted* that was discussed in frameform and featured Robin.

Robin mentioned that Intersectionality, space, place, and identity are key aspects of her festival programming. Jennifer said that her personal belief is that so much goes into the making of a dance film that films need to be seen. So as a response, she created a monthly festival with a theme and has been able to screen movies such as *Taste of Night*, a cathartic movie. Harmony asked a question about foregrounding the integrity of artistic investigation. How do we find a balance between the artist on their quest and audience needs? Jen, Robin, and Jennifer talked about their festivals, the criteria for judging that ensures inclusivity; creating visibility and opportunity for artists from many different perspectives and funding issues. They raised issues of awareness and unconscious bias - what are we 'seeing'? how can aspects of seeing be surfaced and addressed?

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Clare and Autumn discussed creating younger audiences and bringing in a wider community such as films from other continents including alternative forms/media/interfaces. Belk works with school teachers to show films to young audiences and to create material that can be used for teaching in the classroom. Schweitzer also mentioned films with STEM (particularly math) content as these will fill a trending need in K-12 learning objectives. Important practices found along the way towards diverse audience building included pairing conversations with screenings, being in our bodies as we consume screendance, and understanding the frame through which we view the form is fluid.

Ami notes: Discussion on the rhythm of dance film programming. How to have fun with screendance? How to make nondancers into dance lovers? Representation matters and having staff that are too white otherizes.

Gitta notes: Cara Hagan added the idea of playfulness as an important curatorial strategy. “It can all be a bit serious: how do we make it fun for the audience?”



Photo ©: Gitta Wigro

Marisa Zanotti // A New England: Filming Architecture and Community as Choreography

Marisa focusses on choreography in and around the architecture -intersecting the lives of people who work there, she is there at 4 am. In this work, she has been influenced by the writing of Syrian architect, Marwa Al-Sabouni who calls for designing spaces to enable communities to live harmoniously- cohesion- identity-healing.

Marisa lives in Brighton; she fell in love with the ugliest building in Brighton. The building rents space to small businesses, engineers, bakers, artists. Marisa noted that artists and small businesses activate the space through their work. The building is located in a gentrifying area which is economically diverse, the area has changed significantly in the last 15 years. Marisa's work moves between drama film and dance film using different strategies to understand what is and what could be. As a director she starts by looking for the magical/ fantastical in the everyday, part of it comes from being a performer and also watching a lot of dances. She observes and records movement in and around the building pigeons, and seagulls, drug sellers' movement of people up and through the building, walking through corridors and choreography through the architecture, imagining space is sentient.

Ami notes: the spatial content, space is sentient. Marissa fell in love with the ugliest house in Brighton. Capturing ghost presences - Architecture and choreography. Liminality 4.30 am regular morning photo sessions - the work of constant returning

Wesley Lim (Zoom presentation) // Babylon Berlin

Performances plays a central role in the neo-noir Netflix series Babylon Berlin. In particular, dance is thoroughly interwoven into the complex plot contributing to semiotic meaning making. Taking an intermedial approach using several performative lenses: gestural and dance movements, costuming, music, lyrics, dialogue, mise en scène, and camera work, I analyze the performance of the queer figure Svetlana Sorokina, who dresses in drag as Nikoros singing "Zu Asche zu Staub" at the in the Moka Efti club. In addition to this character's performance, four female background dancers move in costuming and choreography citing Josephine Baker's banana dance. In this scene the audience also knows the choreography and dances with the spectacle while male characters watch the performance. I aim to show how these complicated constellations of different figures involve a panoramic feel and co-presence which reflect not only the context of the late-Weimar Republic but also contemporary society.

Wesley notes: I'm still in the very early stages of the piece. There are more ideas here than there are cohesive arguments. I drew on the work of Marinetti's ideas of

futurist dance, which remain primarily theoretical with few actual instances of dance, to see if this might have been a goal in the dance scene in *BB* (through robotic movement and drawing from recent post-WWI aesthetics)...and why. I appreciated the questions regarding: more explanation of the context, the role of the women, and the role of the camera.

Extended long table in the parlor

Topics ranged from camera, style, choice, to funding and ethical use of funding.

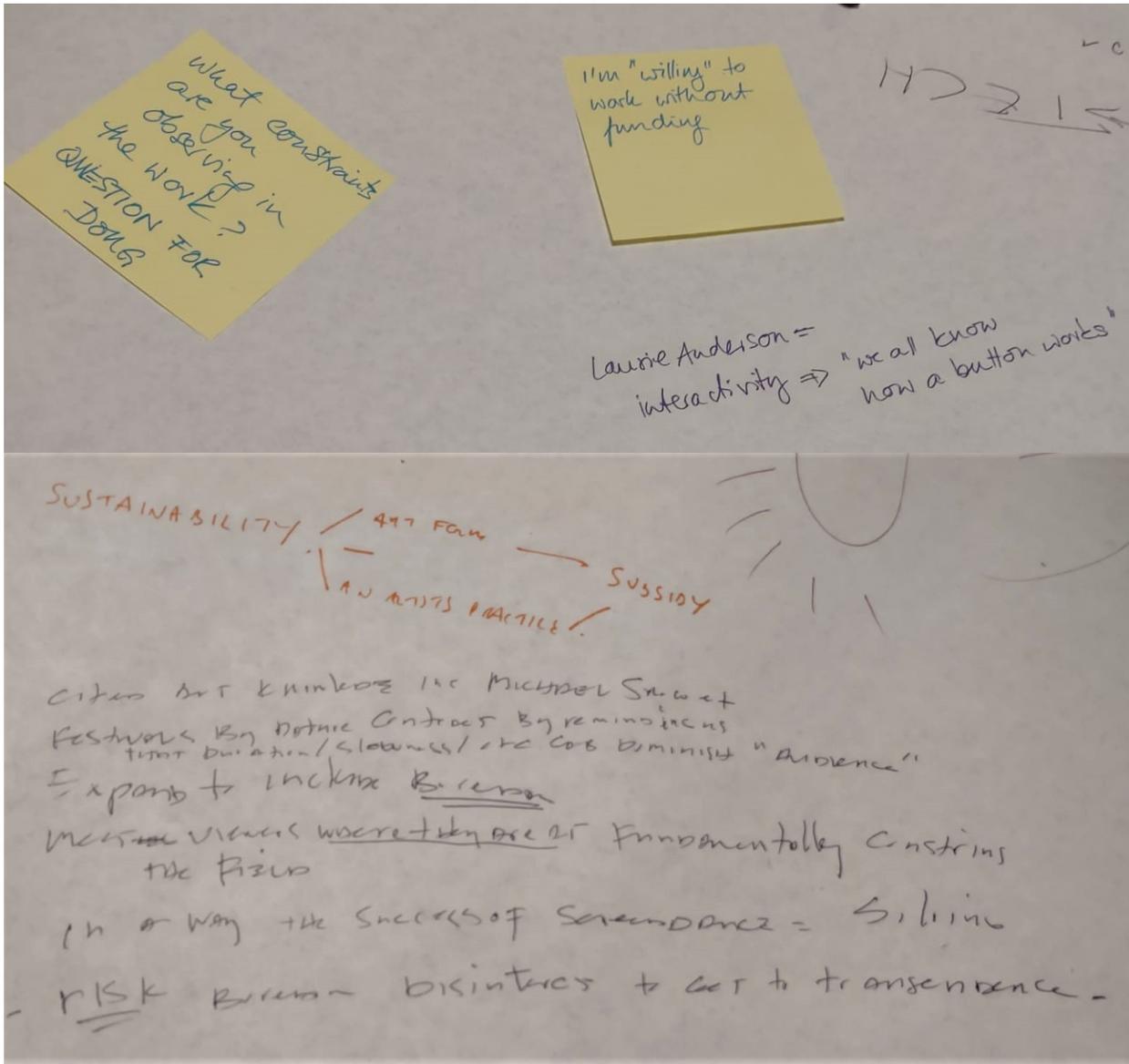


Photo ©: Gitta Wigro



Photo ©: Claudia Kappenberg

Ami notes: Do people know Baker was forced to wear the banana skirt? She refused at first. Male producers' idea. Terrible to not be able escape from that, and being quoted for hundreds of years. Fetishization of the dancing body, the female dancer. From Loie Fuller and now. I think Baker used mad humour as her bodyguard.

Charlotte Griffin (in person) with George Ellzey (in person), Meredith Webster (Zooming in) and Waeli Wang (Zoom) // Emerging Perspectives

Ideas from the screened films:

Meredith; slow movement, looks like northern Sweden, disparity income rich-poor, erasing the native population, Wyoming, high income vs low - nonviolent ways of working with dance on screen and dance in space

George; regain power, Iphone, experimental graduate class, DIY, social media activism, black communication - nuts and bolts, the reappropriation of the n-word, triptych, rhythm, new artistic energy

Wang; kinzugi, Japanese mending with gold, chasms, pan ethnicity

Charlotte notes: The questions I posed to the artists were:

Nuts and bolts-- How did you construct and realize your vision for this work?

Bells and Whistles-- What makes this work particularly special to you or to the trajectory of your work?

Heart and soul-- What inspired this creation and how does it connect to the heart and soul of your personal story and the ideas you aspire to bring into conversation with your audiences and the world?

Mountains and molehills-- What challenges or hurdles did you overcome or do you continue to face in the process of creating and/or exhibiting this work?

Leaps and bounds-- Where is this work heading and what is next for you in the realm of screendance and artistic pursuits? How might universities and arts

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organizations better support artists such as yourself through education, production, curation, and presentation?

Ami notes: Lovely speakers -friendly framing by Charlotte G

Book Launch and Recognition - 1st Floor Parlor (light refreshments served) // Cara Hagan's Screendance From Film to Festival; and Harmony Bench's Dance: Digital Cultures; also Katrina's 2018 edition of Making Video Dance

Harmony's book is open access: read online at <https://manifold.umn.edu/read/perpetual-motion/section/699edd3c-b14f-4201-b0a6-92c5426a8cb4>

Doug shared the first version of IJSD with handwritten corrections and approval seal. Harmony brought in the printed version of IJSD Vol 12: This Is Where We Dance Now.



Photo ©: Claudia Kappenberg

April 12

Welcome/Announcements by Katrina McPherson // Changing the Lens - Thoughts on Documentary Theory Applied to Screendance

Marisa and Katrina held a conversation on how their practices are parallel and diverge. Applying Cela Bruzi's theory (New Documentary, 2016) to Katrina's work: "A documentary will never be reality nor will it erase or invalidate that reality by being purely representational. Furthermore, the spectator is not in need of signposts to understand the documentary is a negotiation between reality on the one hand and image, interpretation and bias on the other. Documentary is a negotiation between filmmaker, subject and spectator.

The second key idea was also from Cela Bruzi's writings on Performative Documentary where she defines performative as a way of being more sensic. Presence and engagement of the filmmaker with the performer is central to the film making. Marisa started the discussion by commenting that in watching the 2 films, the way they describe space was in almost opposite ways. In the first one space explodes and there is a multiplicity of spaces, and in the second one, there is an extraordinary intimacy and implosion of energy.

Katrina said she wanted to use that and through reflections she landed on the question: "What are my stories that I want to tell, the story inside me is one of my family. The story that needs to come out is one of my body, my mother, my grandmother and my children".

She had only met her grandmother through the photographs and used her grandmother's gestures to understand who she might have been and how she is inside of Katrina as she starts to assume her grandmother's gestures. Katrina then tied back to her original point about the negotiation between reality and fiction.

In *Paysages mixtes*, she talked about allowing the camera to witness the first moments and process of engagement and working together with Harold after 18 years. Claudia asked about editing and being taken to another place by the camera with each edit, potentially entering a different relation each time. Katrina answered about using a formal approach to editing and agreeing to score only what they had remembered filming. The conversational style of presentation-discussion between Marisa and Katrina worked extraordinarily well and brought out several levels of engagement and understanding of a work between two established artists and scholars.

Claudia notes: Katrina's work and research challenge the binary of documentary and fiction; what if we drop this distinction? An exciting opportunity for creative exploration.

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Ami notes: Subject-spectator - “performative” - being ‘authentic’ - acknowledge the camera and the very situation of documenting. Ami noted that the new documentary theory with its focus of being never representational could be brought to working with family (ancestors!) Ami asked if the energy of this way of working comes from resistance, saying no to certain paradigms and defending vulnerable ways of working? (Resisting the film industry)



Photo ©: Claudia Kappenberg

Long Table//Representation in screendance; Setting the table with (left to right, above) Gabri Christa, Sandhiya Kalyanasundaram, Omari “Motion” Carter, Cara Hagan, Li Chiao-Ping, Silvina Szperling (online) and others

Ami notes: Lois Weaver's long table format. A discussion on ownership and representation in screendance, abolitionist practices, an eye in cage vs a cloak to step out of.

Silvina notes: I talked about the networking being done by Latin American festivals of videodanza since 2005, which has evolved from a 3 festivals partnership into 25 festivals from LatAm (plus Spain and Portugal) at @rediv.official (IG). I consider this a successful (ongoing) process of *inclusion*, which is a word that I prefer over *representation*. I find representation too flat as a tool of power, because it addresses a political system that has proved to have its huge failures. We discuss curatorial, artistic, academic, and political issues that of course are all related. We do practice collaborative curation and are there to support each other, in order to *not need the Northern Hemisphere* (laughters from the audience).

Sandhiya notes: Gabri Christa talked about the importance of invitation for the notion of representation. She also addressed the problem of writing to publish in English for those whom English may not be a first language.

Sandhiya noted that the meaning and interpretation of representation is non-uniform. She asked, what does representation do for us? In answering she cautioned that while representation informs us, gives us knowledge, influences our perception, representation also has potential to obscure and fragment. So, what actions do we then need to be mindful of when we create and watch screendance? She also raised questions about internal and external representation. In thinking about representation, she brought small everyday aspects to attention: How do we present ourselves; how do we take in the world and what do we want to say to the world?

Omari talked about induction in London Contemporary Dance School and counting only a handful of people of color. He quoted Alvin Ailey saying “black dance came from white writers” and no matter what work he created, it would be seen as black. He was representing by just being there, just being himself.

Cara talked about the separation that is always there. To the question, “Is screendance feminist?”, she answered, “Maybe it is feminized, but absolutely not feminist”. She raised the issue of nudity in screendance. Cara recounted the experience of seeing for the first time, in 2022, frontal nudity of a black woman presented as an ideal of beauty.

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Li Chiao-Ping said that she was excited to see things changing. Being a first generation Chinese American, she was taught to erase herself and to merge. She resonated with thoughts shared at the table.

Silvina considers herself English-fluent but finds there are linguistic, political and geographical borders. Silvina is the only Latin American in the room (virtually!)

Gitta notes: Cara talked about expanding the canon: “What films do we consider our canon? What is currently not centralised because it is not considered ‘mainstream’, but it *did* influence the field, such as the cakewalk, the Nicholas Brothers.

Representation gives information; it can also fragment. Discussion about writing from a perspective that isn’t your own -representation vs. fetishization. Being able to talk to each other without needing to be the same.

(I think this bit is Cara but not sure:) We are complex; “when do we claim certain identities to make a particular point, and when do we reject, complicate, refuse certain identities. No one shows up in a space as only one thing; and we are perceived in single or multiple ways (which may or may not align with our identities.

Ami notes: The white savior

Cara: What about cakewalk - a north-American dance genre?

Cara: Feminized or feminist screendance?

The table was empty upon arrival, what to do with that moment? Ami tried to show an embodied comment by lying on the side ON the table. Representing bodies without words, and trying to process what was said about how we are perceived matters -for example the Saami choreographer Ola Stinnerbom who “looked more Saami than his parents and siblings” -and how this experience of being othered made him start researching the forbidden (by Swedish church) Saami dance. It felt weird lying on the table after a while - but Omari lay/ stepped up on the table as well. Taking care of spaces, talking talks with and through our bodies. Screendance community.

(Also acknowledging Maya Deren’s banquet table in 1943 Meshes of the Afternoon) Representation-non-representation, visibility-invisibility, empowerment, vulnerability, sitting, lying down and collaborative curating.



Photo ©: Gitta Wigro

Charlotte Notes: I was initially drawn to screendance because of the possibility of seeing and engaging with a multiplicity of persons, places, ideas, and aesthetics within a single program or artistic event. This continues to be inspiring, but I appreciate the collective resolve and energies shared during the symposium to transform practices and to move away from monocultural dominance, especially white supremacy in American cultural institutions, toward multicultural preservation, transmission, and innovation. Cara’s book and curatorial practice give us markers and models to consider as do the workings of many in attendance. Omari described a friend explaining that any dance he creates will be seen by the white dominant culture as black dance no matter the aesthetic nature of the work. George shared the challenge of being pigeonholed and needing to make a certain kind of “black film” to get a place at the table and feeling like there are quotas that programmers fill. Once the black artist box is checked, there is no more room. This line of the conversation circled me back around to the ACDA panel and the discussion of how screendance manifests in higher ed dance curriculums. How does reshaping curricula from a restorative justice lens reshape the field, and as Cara pointed out, “How long does it take to revise a curriculum?”

Multicultural, biracial, and passing identities are part of this story- and while we tend to the pressing needs of racial justice, how are we also tending to the multiplicities of the human experience and its representation.

Priscilla Guy (Zoom presentation) // Collaborative Curatorial Practice

Priscilla notes: This essay proposes collaborative curation as both a political and artistic gesture. Using Haraway's theoretical model of the string figures, as well as her notions of situated knowledge, response-ability and non-innocence (1989, 2016), I aim at excavating a sense of community inherent to screendance making, and apply it to curatorial practices. Taken as an engagement towards collectivity, curation can be envisioned as a tool to challenge dominant images and hegemonic modalities of body representations on screen. A tool to cultivate curiosity and responsibility towards each other. Through two different case studies, I illustrate how such collaborative curation can have a transformative effect on individuals, as well as on their practices. I like to call it an act of radical love, one that is in no way innocent: to love each other consciously through our ability to build places and imagine spaces for each other.

Sandhiya notes: <https://www.regardshybrides.com>

Priscilla talked about the 2019 Festival: Collaborative curatorial practice as string figures.

Curation as a tool to challenge hegemony- body representations on screen

Case studies illustrate the conscious effort to reimagine spaces. Echo some of the ideas from Jennifer/Robin/ Jen- long table

Ami notes: Expanding the scene

Gitta notes: From Priscilla's presentation: "In a collaboration your relative position and power changes as the work progresses." I was also really struck by Priscilla's comments about accepting (perhaps embracing) the 'inefficiency' of working collaboratively: she spoke about the group's "inability to do things in a timely manner. I am used to being efficient - but this made us rethink success; working in a spiral form not a linear path." This sat in contrast with one of the issues raised in the higher education panel, that interdisciplinarity and cross-departmental collaboration need an investment of time (and other resources). It was welcome to see an example of this investment of time in an 'inefficient' yet highly productive collaborative process.

It also raised the question how (western?) languages usually fail to capture collective, collaborative labour [or make it] visible, harking back to the opening discussion of the origins of the screendance journal.

Clare Schweitzer // Lone Mountain College San Francisco Dance Festival

Clare notes: Over the course of this presentation, Clare aimed to track the history and development of Lone Mountain College's San Francisco Dance Film Festival, aiming to situate the festival within the context of the histories of the San Francisco dance community, the West Coast Experimental Film movement and interdisciplinary collaborations between the two.

Clare tracked the history of Bay Area experimental film, referencing the Art in Cinema Series presented through the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art from 1946 to 1954. These screenings not only created an audience for experimental and avant-Garde cinema in San Francisco, but also laid the groundwork for similar work to be created in the San Francisco Bay Area. Interdisciplinary collaborations emerged between dance and film artists and featured collaborations such as Anna Halprin and James Broughton as well as Welland Lathrop and Padgett Payne. One notable team mentioned was experimental film artist Sydney Peterson and Mills College dance professor Marian Van Tuyl, who collaborated on films such as *Horror Dream* (1946) and *Clinic of Stumble* (1947), the latter of which was screened as an excerpt in the presentation. The presentation then referenced video collectives such as Video Free America & Camera Obscura as well as interdisciplinary initiatives such as the KQED Experimental Project which was later known as the National Center in Experiments for Television Initiative, which produced experimental works for television. The work and tenure of dancer/choreographer/historian Lenwood Sloan at the San Francisco Arts Commission eventually led to the San Francisco Dance Film Festival Program. One of the editions featured an event called the Meta-Kinesis preserve, (on Saturday, February 4th, 1978 as a part of the 1978 Dance Film Festival), which presented one of the earliest uses of the term "videodance" and featured experimental film installations that pushed the boundaries of what video dance could be. The conclusion of the presentation was a call for preservation and a reminder of the precarity of historical records, as festivals may be seen as institutional but their dependence on external factors do affect their operations and by proxy, their curation. Each one is a reflection of its time and place. [Link to Source material.](#)

Ami notes: important to acknowledge more filmmakers, act of historiographical activism

Doug ended the talk by acknowledging the point with Jewish art; we live in a sacred world and everything glistens with meaning.



Jananne Al-Ani, *Timelines*, 2022, Panoramic Video Installation, 9 minutes 7 seconds. © Jananne Al-Ani. Installation view. Photo: Rob Harris. Courtesy Towner Eastbourne UK.

Claudia Kappenberg // In the Face of War, a Historiographic Turn in Screendance

Sandhya notes: Claudia used the work of Jananne Al-Ani to explore the question, “How do artists use moving image and Screendance to interrogate and reflect on historical narratives, war and violence?” Claudia referred to Kafka's parable suggesting that the past moves us forward, the future pushes us back. She screened a film by London-based, Iraqi-born artist Jananne Al-Ani which traverses extreme close-ups of a brass tray from Iraq from about 1918, with engravings of the British occupation of Iraq, guns, a plane, a man being hanged... with voice over by her mother remembering scenes of her life. It was a very beautiful film where the brass tray literally transforms into a landscape and the narration adds to the imagination of the agonizing events.

Claudia notes: Thinking about how we devise history I came across Walter Benjamin's proposition that “[...] every image of the past that is not recognized by the present as one of its own concerns threatens to disappear irretrievably.” (*Illuminations*, 1999:247). In other words, histories are dependent on the present for being recognized and written, and what is written or not written depends not on the past, but on how it is seen in the present. He wrote this in the 30s,

concerned about the rising extremism, but today the situation is similar in that much becomes normalised which is not (or no longer) considered a state of emergency. The work of history therefore, is to challenge the process of normalisation. By asking, how do we screendance history, I am also posing the questions as to how do we challenge normalisation?

Ami notes: The thought of Trinh T Minh-ha that speaking close to moving images allows more listening and less claiming of space - reflect on historical narratives, as not to reproduce violence when speaking nearby violence; We should stop using the verb 'shoot' in film-making.

Dominique Rivoal (Zoom presentation) // Somatic Relational Filmmaking Practice

Developing a somatic relational filmmaking practice by Dominique Rivoal
Dominique presented a project titled, "The shared space of Hackney Marshes"- in which dancer Claire Loussouarn and herself as filmmaker meet every month to film in the same spot of the Marshes for a period of four years. Dominique emphasized that it helps filmmakers to have a personal movement practice to shift the focus from the eye to the body and limb and increase awareness and receptivity to the space. In her project, Dominique explores the 'dyad' format between mover and filmmaker acknowledging that their relationship remains situated in space and time. This encounter is intercorporeal, inter-subjective, interpersonal as each participant of the dyad comes in with their own cultural and personal experiences, but the lived experience of the encounter always exceeds the camera's audiovisual field, what is felt within the relational encounter is not necessarily seen within the frame but it leaves a trace.

Dominique cited the anthropologist MacDougall, 2006, "Corporeal images are not just the images of other bodies, they are also images of the body behind the camera and its relationship with the world" and questions, "Holding a camera give a certain protection, an agency to come closer and take a better look. How can I temperate this "authority" with sensibility, noticing the difference between what I am taking versus what is offered to me? Dominique overcomes the divide highlighted by Christopher Lewis Smith between the performer and the filmmaker by considering that they are performing equally in the space. Citing Jeanette Ginslov's work, Dominique suggests non representation methodology as a way of paying attention to the emerging relational movement and to escape the ocularcentric dominance of the medium.

Ami notes: dyadic relationship btw mover and filmmaker, non-representation

Dominique notes: Developing a somatic practice of filmmaking means privileging the experience of this process instead of the end product. Dance phenomenologist Sondra Fraleigh points out that 'somatic practices are autotelic; their values lie in the doing, not the showing' (Fraleigh, 2019 p95).



Photo ©: Claudia Kappenberg

Gitta notes: at this point in the conference, after 18 talks, presentations and addresses in two and a half days (as well as the informal conversations and social events), my brain was at capacity; it seemed to be the same for a few attendees. The afternoon saw some attendees fan out into other spaces - the lounge downstairs, the lakeshore, the pier, the university quarter's main street and its cafés; singly or in small groups. Basically, a bunch of introverts taking a breather! Harmony pointed out in conversation that 'we are not used to this anymore' -after two years of no or few gatherings, little (if any) travel, we are different. It prompted me to think about the space and spaces of an event like this. Main spaces, side spaces. Room to work, room to think, together and alone.

Hannah Fischer // HOLD: Scoring Screendance

<http://www.fischerdance.org/about>

Drawing on the work of Isabel Sandoval, Katrina McPherson, bell hooks, Jenny Odell, and Joey Solloway, a practice and theory has emerged: the Intuitive Gaze In this lecture, Hannah will detail researching a feminist and decentralized approach to embodied cine-dance making. Hannah developed this approach while creating the large-scale, multi-channel screendance, HOLD, which serves as the primary creative research. Surprising outcomes of this approach have been

comprehensive scoring at all stages of creative practice, agency for performers, and new approaches to editing.

Ami notes: scores - shaping the space

Diane Busuttil (Zoom presentation) // Together We Dance, a collaborative dance film project

Diane notes: In this talk I focused on the social engagement aspect of creating a dance film using a Zoom format. This project was initiated through a funding body to curb isolation in seniors during the Covid-19 lockdown in Sydney, Australia. I spoke about the process of meeting with these women over sixty-five years, once a week on zoom; some were previous dance students and some were from another senior dance group called “Agile not Fragile”, all participants were dancers.

The sessions were split into two sections; a dance class and then a creative session whereby we tried out filmic ideas and movements that would specifically relate to forming movement patterns specifically for the confines of the multiple zoom frames. We entered and exited the frame, wore different colors executing similar choreography each week. We played with props and filmed movements that would then be reversed for the final film. As I facilitated the creative outcome, the participants were actively engaged with the overall process as well as allowing ourselves to be spontaneous and playful when needed. I found that break out rooms were a wonderful creative tool that allowed the participants to get to know each other through movement tasks and shared choreographic patterns. The social element of this zoom film was imperative to the overall success of the project. Linking people who were isolated in their own homes, unable to see family members and, in some cases, unable to leave the house due to the restrictions of people over eighty years of age. The Together We Dance project allowed people to connect and share their experiences of the pandemic and express their frustrations and joy through dance and movement.

In terms of the creative process, I had the editing semi-planned before engaging with the participants. Many of the scenes were planned to link into and/or overlap with other elements of the film. There was a lot of transparency with my intended experiments, which invited the group to embellish ideas as they went along.

Inspiration and research for *Together We Dance* was gained through Miranda Tufnell’s books *A Widening Field, Journeys in body and imagination* (2004) and *Body Space Image* (1993). Both were useful resources for using various materials and creative stimulus to generate improvised movement. I also looked at many dance and new zoom films, the most inspiring one being Phenom, a zoom 10 music video clip by Thao & The Get Down Stay Down, as well as the works of

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Maya Deren, Barbara Hammer, Miranda July, Pipilotti Rist, Tracey Moffatt, Miranda Pennell, Darren Aronofsky and Mike Figgis



Photo ©: Claudia Kappenberg

Wednesday April 13, 2022

Welcome/Announcements by Douglas Rosenberg // Topic TBD

Doug screened Sally Banes' reading of her paper, "Making Tharp Baryshnikov"

As a writer and historian/theorist of dance and performance studies, Sally Banes was deeply engaged with the most canonical movements of the 20th century, from the Judson Church Group, through postmodern dance. Her book, *Terpsichore in Sneakers* virtually created the framework for discussing dance in a postmodern context. Her subsequent book, *Dancing Women: Female Bodies on Stage*, moved beyond the binary understanding of women in performance as either victims or liberated heroes, to excavate a more nuanced understanding of the multitude of representations across female bodies on stage and by extension, on screen.

Ami notes: Doug also acknowledged Nuria Font - who defended dance on camera as radical productions with a good audiovisual level.

Excerpt from ***Making Tharp Baryshnikov*** by Sally Banes (2000)

"In 1977, Twyla Tharp's Making Television Dance, an hour-long videotape made in collaboration with director Don Mischer for WNET's Television Laboratory, was aired nationally on PBS. This paper is an analysis of a small portion of Making Television Dance — Tharp's brief solo, which ends the screendance event. I will argue that in this solo, Tharp seems to recorporealize herself as Mikhail Baryshnikov, even a Baryshnikov with enhanced powers. Watching the dance now, and thinking about the historical context of the piece relative to the emerging feminist movement of the 1970s, one wonders if she does this partly to assert through her screen-choreography a feminist political stance of women claiming equal rights with men, perhaps even claiming superior powers — as if to say, in this case, "Anything you can do, Misha, I can do better." Yet paradoxically, through her assertion of what one might call masculine "privilege" in a complexly layered gender-bending screen choreography, she also seems to argue for an inclusive androgyny that expands dance roles for both men and women.

Making Television Dance is also very much a piece of the 70s in that it expresses certain feminist values — one of which is a brand of liberal civil-rights feminism, claiming equal rights for women on the dance stage and in the dance profession, as well as in the television studio (where very few women worked as directors) and in intellectual life. Tharp (and other women choreographers of the 70s) claimed equal rights for women by creating dance images of women as intellectual powerhouses. Tharp's work at this time parallels that of "liberal feminism," which sought equal opportunities for women in the workplace, at home, and under the law. In Making Television Dance, part of what we witness in the process is that Tharp is very much in charge of the project and, although experimenting with a new form, well on top of her learning curve in terms of dealing with television technology as well as the television crew. Her voiceover commentary, especially, signals her position as a woman who is confident and authoritative, an expert in her profession. In this respect, she claims equal rights with men to be in charge — to direct not only a dance company, but also the making of a television program.

Yet I would say that in Tharp's work of the mid-70s one can also see other feminist strands, including a playful commitment to confusing gender codes and appearances, for other reasons than equal rights feminism — for aesthetic as well as moral purposes.

Tharp recorporealizes herself as Baryshnikov, but she becomes a super-Baryshnikov, with augmented powers — powers heightened not by the "magic" so

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often associated with dance, especially with ballet and its fairytale themes, but by the down-to-earth, assertively feminist, harnessing of science through modern technology, which makes television dance."



Photos ©: Claudia Kappenberg



Sumedha Bhattacharyya (Zoom presentation) // Duet with Camera: From an Instagram Space to a Community of Screendance Practice and Pedagogy in India

Sumedha notes: In this sharing, I traced the entangled journey of personal, fragile moments that began during the pandemic, leading of a year-long practice based, interdisciplinary, arts research project based in India : *Duet with Camera* that became an An archive of/for/with coping and chorus thriving during times of radical uncertainty and crisis. Initiated as a social media page to enable dialogue and educational awareness around dance and cinema in India, the project found its way from a local, accessible and democratic space of the Instagram page, to conversations with cinematographers, movement practitioners (theatre, dance, visual arts etc), enabling series of collaborations and virtual residencies , towards a shared community of creative practice leading to India's first artist-led International Screen(ing) Dance Festival and Seminar 2021 . I also shared my decolonial, transnational and critical approach to pedagogy for the university classroom that is built on liberation, solidarity and radical care, which arose from my creative process and curriculum designing of Screendance as a cross-registered Expressive arts elective at a Liberal arts institution in India.

Sandhiya notes: Sumedha drew historical references to Ray, Pramod Pati and Uday Shankar- brief turnbacks to experimental cinema in India. Gabri asked about how sonic images of Ray/Uday Shankar connected with Sumedha's personal practice. Sonam, an online attendee commented that she loved the idea of Camera as God; personifying the agency and mocking the power of camera.

Ami notes: Embracing Death as a teacher, letting go Movement - Migration Grandmother's journey Bangladesh -India

Sandhiya Kalyanasundaram // Ranbir Kaleka: Man and Cockerel, Time and Symbol



Still from Ranbir Kaleka's *Man and cockerel*, 2001-2002.

Sandhiya positioned Ranbir Kaleka's *Man and cockerel*, 2001-2002 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_7LGGqBoxc) within screendance and analyzed the various performative elements in the video artwork. She centered the work's power in its ability to influence and play with audience perception through the elements of time and multiple symbols. She also highlighted the role of architecture in human experience and described Kaleka's extension of the 'Haveli' architecture beyond space and soundscapes into layers of memory and the politics and paradox of everyday survival. She made a case for a dialogue between screendance and neuroaesthetics and used the Vienna Integrated Model of Art Perception by Pelowski et al., (2017) to bring in points of discussion about both audience perception and artistic intent.

Katrina referred to the work of Karen Wood in employing kinesthetic empathy as a lens to analyze choreographers' intentions and audience responses to watching screendance.

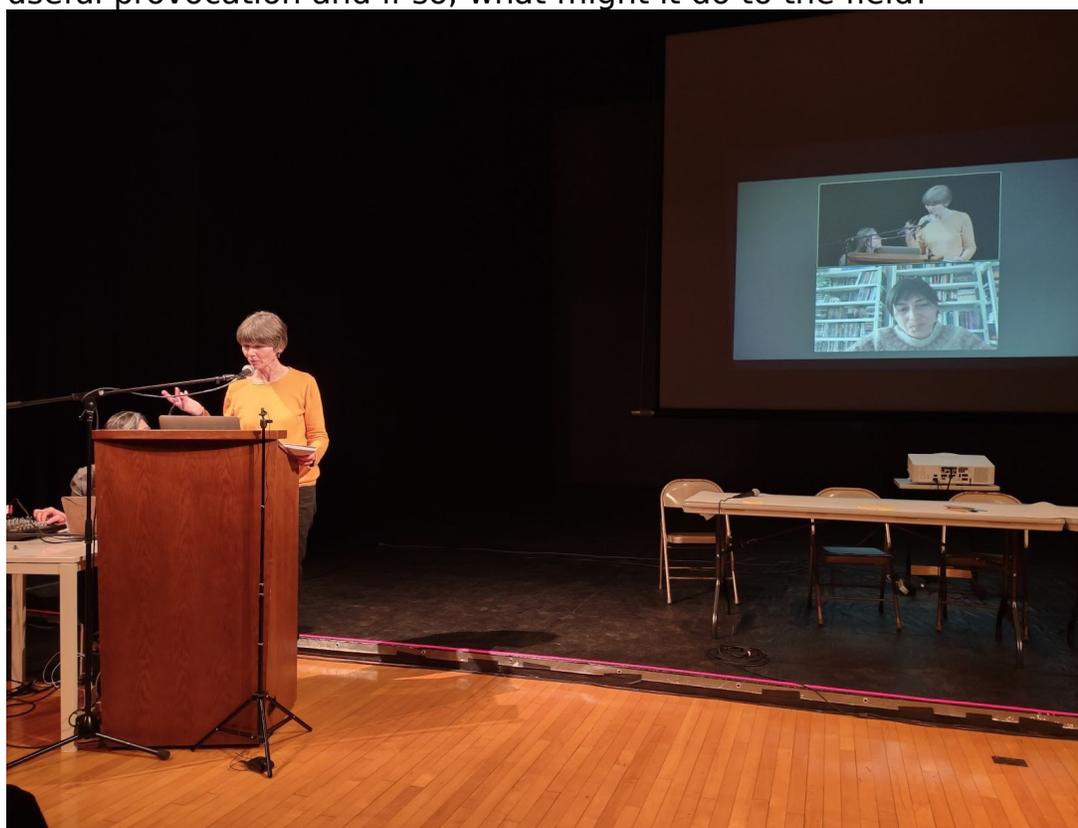
Claudia notes: The courtyard as an audio-visual space in which scenes are repeated and impressions layered, a space of memories transposed into a video loop. Architectures affect our experience, how we read things, how we remember things.

Ami notes: childhood = watching life happen - events in a courtyard
Neuroaesthetics + screendance, kinaesthetic empathy - all aesthetic experiences
are actually specific!

***Alma Llerena (Zoom presentation) // Narrative and Non-Narrative
Screendance***

Alma looked at screendance festivals in Spain from 2000- 2018 and looked at films that have been curated in these festivals over the years. She has Identified differences and categories by studying narrative and non-narrative screendance, how the body is portrayed and the structural work. Common characteristics between narrative and non-narrative screendance are hybridization of audiovisual and choreographic languages, music over and movement itself.

The main differences lie in duration, shot sizes, editing patterns and styles, time ordering, use of effects and choice of locations. She found that audiovisual language of narrative screendance films is similar to narrative film genres while non-narrative audiovisual language is similar to video art. Claudia commented that classifications can be problematic because they close things down. She asked if instead of nouns, verbs were used, how would that change what Alma is proposing? She also cautioned about the use of binaries; perhaps they can be a useful provocation and if so, what might it do to the field?



Photos ©: Gitta Wigro

Ami notes: Alma Llerena discussed her analysis of narrative and non-narrative screendance works from 2013-2018 - 5 years to identify from over 200 categories of classification/preferential styles of making. Alma described her PhD journey - serving the film industry, Alma originally desired to study magic realism and looked for screen dance films that may involve magic realism, but pushed to be more analytical, she started asking about duration - why was duration always short in most screendance festivals?



Photos ©: Gitta Wigro

Omari "Motion" Carter // 'What is Urban Dance on Screen?'

Omari introduced the video essay format to talk about his work. He talked about his sense of responsibility in educating himself and others about the layers underneath.

Cara Hagan asked if urban dance is inherently site specific?

Ami notes: Academia is a drag show -work to include more drag, present research through film and rhyme, talk with specific rhythms -part of the research

Claudia notes: great to see the video essay outside the strictly academic/institutional context. Omaris' video essay is both playful and critical, taking the

long view whilst also being specific. Talking about screendance through screendance.

Gitta notes: The infrastructure screendance uses / works within (e.g. dance, film, visual arts institutions, theatres, galleries, etc.) “filters out” certain practices because of their respective conventions, biases, histories.

Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof (Zoom presentation) // A Duet Between the Organism and Technology”: Amy Greenfield’s Screendance

Izabella discussed the screendance works of Amy Greenfield as hybrids of dance and experimentations with cutting-edge motion picture technologies. She argued that Amy Greenfield’s works not only articulate the turning points of developments in electrotechnics and in shifting conceptions of the self but also retrieve and weave into their fabric the forgotten or omitted by history women—real and mythical. Izabella took a deeper look at ‘*Dervish*’, focussing on Greenfield’s kinetic energy and video as electromagnetic energy and ‘*Wildfire*’, made by post-production analogue technological methods with a special focus on its ‘communicating free female intuitive energy’.

Ami notes: ethereal video, off stage since 1990, but continued - 44 works, “free intuitive female energy”, self-reflective, kinetic/electromagnetic energy, experimentation in defence of the analogue, turn the knobs in non-standard ways



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Caroline Ferreira Mota da Silva (Zoom presentation) // The Body of the Urban Black Woman Who Dances

Caroline talked about her personal experiences and her belief that Body is memory, body is a lived experience and cannot be divided in the contemporary here and now.

When we look at the interaction of body with technology, we need to ask about what is the body we are referring to, the responses of self and young black women who have the opportunity to see representations of themselves on screen. This visibility on screen allows for accessing memories from deep within hidden under layers of resistance to the messages received by society and situations, allows the expression of their truthful selves and emerge the powerful affirmative meanings. This call for change is actually a manifesto to access and assess black people in a different way. Caroline also talked about how religion affects the woman's body and the belief that dancing truthfully to oneself is a spiritual journey. She talks about being a black mother, the chores of everyday living and still coming out and occupying the place and creating art and the role of the art in turn affecting the black woman's body.

Ami notes: My body, my dance, we are beautiful. Selfcare as a strategy. Working mother, Bahia, African dances in the university - recognize oneself in a place of power. God dances as well. How art affects the body.

Pamela Krayenbuhl // TikTok & Vernacular Screendance

TikTok algorithms and the choreographies that it forces.

Pamela argued that Tiktok was less about the freedoms of the platform and more about its constraints. Tiktok centralizes its own alchemy of personalized content recommendations.

TikTok has one billion active users in 4 years while facebook has 3 billion in 16 years. What does this visibility mean for screendance? Pamela asserts that tiktok makes it easier to create and share what she frames as vernacular screendance, a personal performance created to preexisting or remixed audio. Vast majority is made by everyday users where users skew young. Viral dance challenges to create original dances and copied and performed by non-professional dancers are a typical scenario. Many seek to be professional tiktokers with the aim of generating revenue, finding agents and seeking more professional opportunities. As a dance media historian, Pamela notes that one criticism about Tiktok is the apparent lack of credit where due and racial politics especially in American Tiktok. There is a homogeneity of frame and movement: The screen space has shrunk down, the portrait orientation reducing the width of the frame, 'entrapping; the performer in an upright, body-sized frame with little space or context. Predominant choreographies are firmly rooted in hiptop dance, body hit the edges of the screen, this Pamela sees as a performance of entrapment. The popular

format is the tight frame with limited choreographies of constraint regardless of the performer's abilities. Ethos of these choreographies continues to remain home-bound and pandemic related home-bound scenarios.

Harmony asked about remediation and the emergence of platform specific videography, and noted that instructions are similar to dance games.

Ami notes: vertical cinema, young people's intro to screendance, stuck in a frame, claustrophobic, all happens in the same place by design, self-policing and community-policing, audiovisual turn, media modules/models, many from dance, few from film. @lizzo has more followers than @ABT

Really great to get both statistics and examples of how Tik Tok builds performative responses - embedded in the app. I showed Pamela my master alumni choreographer Eva Svaneblom who has her glocal gallery on Tik Tok: <https://www.tiktok.com/@glocalgallery>



Photos ©: Claudia Kappenberg

Ximena Monroy (Zoom presentation) // Choreocinema: Map of Transmedia Notions

Ximena's talk focussed on choreocinema as a weave of transmedial notions and as a living network of enunciation and composition for the creation, study and experience. She positioned choreocinema as a field that involves mutual contamination and enrichment of choreography, movement and film-video where they can be transformed at their intersections and new relationalities can be proposed. She referred to the works of Maya Deren and Talley Beatty while

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positing choreography and kinetics as writings of movement and writings of the body. She referred to a set of terms available in Spanish that she used at her visual art exhibition with a performance art piece.

Marisa wondered if she was thinking about who she was opening the doors to as she was parsing the terms. Ximena answered she felt a need to open screendance to experiences that were not necessarily screendance but found applications of the notions she proposed in a much wider artistic ecosystem.

[ends]