Corporeality in Music for Contemporary Dance

by

Annelie Nederberg

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A warm thank you to some very special people who have worked with me, and without whose artistic, engaged, knowledgeable, inspirational, and deeply valued support this thesis would not have been possible.

Supervisors
John Young and Bret Battey

Collaborating choreographers
Ruth Dodds
Kirill Burlov
Angelica Portioli

Voic(e)motion workshop leader
Guy Dartnell

Musicians
Cathrine Fandén
Panos Amelides

All the dancers and others involved in the collaborations.
SECTION 1: THE PRACTICAL WORK
DVD track

1. **THE HUMAN KNOT**
   Choreography: Ruth Dodds
   Dancers: Ruth Dodds, Charlotte Coking, and Akiyo Ishihashi
   Music composed at De Montfort University.
   The video recording is from the first performance at LAB 10 at Leicester Square Theatre, London on 2 December 2010.
   The work was voted one of the most popular of the LAB 10 season 2010, and was invited to a second performance in 2011.

2. **GREEN**
   Choreography: Kirill Burlov
   Dancer: Edward Watson
   Animated video scenography: al'Kamie
   Music composed at De Montfort University and during a residency at Visby International Centre for Composers in Visby, Sweden in December 2010.
   Performed at The Place, London on 12 February 2011 as part of the Resolution Festival.

3. **20.12**
   Choreography: Kirill Burlov
   Dancers from Rambert Dance Company
   Music composed at De Montfort University.
   The work is never performed: the video recording is from a rehearsal.

4. **DIETRO**
   Choreography and dancer: Angelica Portioli
   Music composed at De Montfort University and during a residency at Beau Geste in Val de Reuil, France in June 2011.
   The video recording is from a work in progress showing at PACE Studio 1 at De Montfort University on 3 November 2011.
SECTION 2: THESIS
ABSTRACT

The focus of this thesis is how the body and its corporeal articulations can be used as a tool for composing for contemporary dance, with the aim of creating music with corporeal qualities that communicates on a physical level. For this purpose the author has collaborated with choreographers in a practice-based approach to examine how the body of the composer can be exploited in composition and performance, and how the voice can be exploited as a mediator between body movement and music. The body and its sensorimotor system is the foundation for our understanding of abstract concepts in music; the immaterial movement of music can serve as a foundation for a deep bodily-sensed understanding of complex concepts. By reversing this process of understanding, or rather by engaging in the action-perception loop of conceptual understanding, this understanding can help encapsulating abstract and complex concepts artistically in music. For this purpose the Feedback Instrument has been created, representing a direct way of engaging the sensorimotor system of the composer, where the intuitive body resonances are engaged in close connection with the sounding music.
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INTRODUCTION

Memory 1:


Band enters — applause, whistles! Music begins, crowd first listens attentively, after a while starts to move with the music — foot stomping, head nodding.

Stone me into the Groove — the hit song. Loud solo guitar intro. Verse: uptempo, good mood, louder foot stomp, deeper nods. Chorus: suddenly 200 people simultaneously starts wagging their heads sideways instead. Why? What in the music creates this collective movement in the chorus of this song only?

Memory 2:

A still scene described by Virginia Woolf:

As if there were waves of darkness in the air, darkness moved on, covering houses, hills, trees, as waves of water wash round the sides of some sunken ship. Darkness washed down streets, eddying round single figures, engulfing them; blotting out couples clasped under the showery darkness of elm trees in full summer foliage. Darkness rolled its waves along grassy rides and over the wrinkled skin of the turf, enveloping the solitary thorn tree and the empty shells at its foot. Mounting higher, darkness blew along the bare upland slopes, and met the fretted and abraided pinnacles of the mountain where the snow lodges forever on the hard rock even when the valleys are full of running streams and yellow vine leaves, and girls, sitting on verandahs, look up at the snow, shading their faces with their fans. Them, too, darkness covered.¹

I seem to understand the world through my body. I need to touch things to understand them, I understand movements, I understand physical sensations. I seem to understand Virginia Woolf’s words too — painting pictures replete with movement; but what is this "understanding"?

According to the multiple intelligences theory of psychologist and educator Howard Gardner, humans have a range of different cognitive abilities such as logical-mathematical, spatial, linguistic, etc. One of these is bodily-kinesthetic, which is described as ‘the ability to solve problems or to fashion products using one’s whole body or parts of the body.’

His theory has been challenged by other psychologists, but nevertheless seems to be valuable, in that it stresses that different people have different ways of understanding the world. It also expands the term understanding to be not only a logical understanding, but can also be for example a physical understanding. The body has its own intelligence and its own memory — not necessarily expressible in logic terms, or even in words at all.

This understanding is achieved among other things by kinaesthesia — the sense that keeps track of my body from the inside, from sensors in muscles and joints. This sense gives me knowledge of the position and movement of my body

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parts; this sense is what enables me to notice and reflect on how my movement to *Atomic Swing* changes in the chorus in the example above.

The information from outside is provided by tactility — the sense of touch, what my skin picks up. This, together with a more visceral feeling of the bass sounds that vibrate my entire body is what creates the stillness when *Hada Raïna*’s mix is right — perhaps I recognise the way sound vibrates when in the right balance.

My body, however, is not moving when I read Virginia Woolf — yet I can feel almost dizzy from her description of a still scene. Why?

According to several *motor theories of perception*, we imitate actions to understand them. This was first suggested in speech perception (we understand speech by how the speech sounds are produced) and later seen as fundamental to all perception. Recently this has been confirmed by the discovery of mirror neurons — neurons that fire both when we perceive movement and when we physically move. This theory only concerns empathetic movement while watching another body move, but Godøy is suggesting that the process is also active when listening to music — we seem to imagine the sound-producing movements when experiencing music. Perhaps I in a similar way imagine the movement of the darkness in Virginia Woolf’s novel. The words themselves are not moving, so whatever is moving has to be in my imagination and connected to my body: Virginia Woolf makes my mirror neurons fire.

The idea that the body is fundamental to our cognition is the basis for the field of embodied cognition. Leman, in *Embodied Music Cognition*, applies these ideas to music by describing how the body, in its interaction with music, serves as a mediator between the physical energy of sound and the experience and meaning-making of

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music, and how we imagine music as sounding objects with certain qualities, sources, intentions, etc. This is a two-way process, described as an action-perception loop or a sensorimotor system, in which music induces actions, which shape our perception of music, which induces further actions, etc.9

Leman proposes subjective corporeal articulations as a tool for music analysis with the purpose of acquiring a fuller understanding of the experience of music, what it actually means to people.10 This method of analysis focuses on describing the imagined sounding objects within each individual instead of the physics of music. For a composer, the experience of music is of utmost importance, which is why I want to investigate how this process might be used in reverse as a compositional tool, with the goal of creating music with corporeal qualities — a physical or visceral music with a strong sense of bodily presence which will facilitate a corporeal understanding of the music. I would argue that not all music is corporeal: especially electronic music have been lacking in this area, since its creation has been largely a mental process with no part to play for the body.11

However, since the 1990s there has been a growing interest in gesture in electronic music, and recently this has come to include the whole performing body.12 The movement of the body is often analysed by motion capture techniques into parameters that are subsequently mapped to sound parameters. This is based on an idea of reducibility, but like Hatten, I believe that gestures may be comprised of any of the elements of music, although they are not reducible to them: they are perceptually synthetic gestalts with emergent meaning.13 My working methods have been prompted by viewing this as applicable to physical gesture as well. Furthermore, if the body is fundamental to our understanding of the world, and

9 ibid. p.84.
10 ibid. p.83.
consequently of music, I would like to instead see the body as a valuable tool for composition, and find ways of exploiting its knowledge directly, without reduction.

By composing for contemporary dance, I am hoping to find ways of relating physical gesture to musical gesture. Much like Eisenstein’s idea that the relation between audio and image in film is based on movement, I want to find a common denominator between dance and music. I have chosen three approaches to investigate this area.

First, I have chosen to explore the use of voice as a mediator between music and physical movement, because it is both a musical instrument and a part of the body, and itself capable of moving. An artist who has worked extensively with voice and movement is Guy Dartnell. He has developed the concept of Voic(e)motion, in which he connects the voice and the body into a resonant unity based on emotional qualities. Exploring his concept might lead to a deeper understanding of the connections between voice and body, as will improvising with voice and movement with dancer and choreographer Angelica Portioli, where I also will explore other corporeal qualities of the voice. These two methods serves to answer my first research question:

1. How can the voice be used as a mediator between human body movement and music?

Whereas the focus of the first approach is on voice, the second approach focuses on finding other methods of composing music with corporeal qualities. Composing acousmatic music for contemporary dance allows me to explore the dancers’ corporeal articulations of my music, and my music as "sonic articulations" of their movement. I will collaborate with choreographers Ruth Dodds and Kirill Burlov in three choreographies to find the answers to the second research question:


15 In fact, there is a region in the brain called the Supplementary Motor Area that is responsible for controlling complex planned movements that involves both sides of the body. This area is also responsible for controlling voluntary vocalisations, which implies that there might be strong connections between the voice and (other) physical movement. See for example Libet, B. (2004). Mind Time: The Temporal Factor in Consciousness. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press.

16 Dartnell describes this approach on the website: [http://web.me.com/gdartnell/Various_Guyses/Voic(e)motion_Workshops.html](http://web.me.com/gdartnell/Various_Guyses/Voic(e)motion_Workshops.html) Accessed 23 December 2011.
2. How can corporeal articulations of movement be exploited in a collaboration with a choreographer?

The last approach steps beyond the acousmatic music, and explores how to create corporeal music for performance. This will be examined in another collaboration with Angelica Portioli, where I will also perform the music. This will answer my third research question:

2. How can corporeal articulations of movement be exploited in music performance?

The boundaries between the research questions are somewhat fluid, and often one project can cover two or three of them. However, they should be seen as different perspectives on the same problem.
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The basic ingredient of music is not so much sound as movement...
Music is significant for us as human beings principally because it embodies movement of a specifically human type that goes to the roots of our being and takes shape in the inner gestures which embody our deepest and most intimate responses.  

‘When dance is good, it transcends the body.’ Bodies cease to be bodies to instead become moving shapes. If these shapes were also audible, moving sonic forms, they are, according to Hanslick what constitutes music. Perhaps then dance can be seen as moving silent forms? From this viewpoint, both music and dance are abstract art forms.

Abstract music

Abstract art in general refers to art that is reaching beyond the literal representation of visual objects, either by abstracting these objects, or by working directly with relationships between shapes and colours. This non-representational idea is taken one step further when applied to music, in the formalist claim that abstract music does not have any meaning whatsoever. Instead this music concerns itself with abstract constructions of sound, with no references to the world outside of music itself. Especially in the case of music constructed from synthetic sounds, this seems to be relevant, but is it possible for music to be devoid of such references?

18 Young, J. in private conversation with the author 12 October 2010.
Music (and other art forms) can be more or less abstract: abstraction is taking place along a continuum between purely abstract and its opposite — whether that is termed literal, concrete, figurative or representational: abstraction is a gradual departure from reality.\textsuperscript{22} The interplay between these degrees of abstraction is what can make acousmatic music ‘mirror aspects of consciousness itself — where reaction to the physical world, language, thought and fantasy form an inextricable coexistence.’\textsuperscript{23} I would argue that the reactions Young is talking about are what we experience as moving sonic forms. I would also argue that these are a result of our embodied relation to the world.

The importance of the body in music is stressed by, among others, Susan McClary.\textsuperscript{24} She disputes the idea of a reference free abstract music, in claiming that music is never free from its context — it is created in an environment tinted by politics, aesthetics, traditions, gender and other social contexts, which are inevitably going to influence its creation and perception. While listening to music, we are always going to react bodily to it, reactions built on references to the real-world, references learnt through experience. In this sense, abstract music is not possible. However, if we embrace the art definition of abstraction, we can view music as abstract based on its concern with relations between shapes: moving sonic forms. From this perspective, music can be abstract or not, based on how it is constructed, but also on our perception. We can choose to hear sounds as referential or as pure sounds.

\textit{Abstract dance}

Is then dance an abstract dance form, as music aspire to be? According to choreographer Wayne McGregor, the answer is definitely no: ‘Dance is never abstract. The body can never be abstract. It’s inherently literal. When a man comes on the stage, us in the audience — who are meaning makers — construct some literal meaning about it.’\textsuperscript{25}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{23} \textit{ibid} p.92.
\end{itemize}
I disagree with McGregor, because our perception can choose to see bodies as abstract shapes. They will never cease to be bodies, but the way the mind creates moving images of the bodies and the shape of the space surrounding them can certainly function as abstractions. Especially when several bodies unite in shapes, they become something else, they "transcend the body", and our perception switches to "abstract mode." In these switches, music and dance might swap places, or abstract musical shapes unite with abstract bodily shapes into something third; a multi-modal fluidity, a dynamic of the senses, a movement in abstraction\(^\text{26}\).

Abstract dance was first explored by Oskar Schlemmer, who was interested in abstraction of the human body.\(^\text{27}\) The problem in, for example, his \textit{Triadic Ballet}\(^\text{28}\), is that he abstracted only the shapes of the bodies, not their movements. The dance movements therefore look like electroacoustic music sometimes sounds — stiff, not fluid\(^\text{29}\). But this was 1922. In 2008, the Australian dance company Chunky Move created the performance \textit{Mortal Engine}\(^\text{30}\), in which, with the help of video, laser and lighting, the dancers are transformed into and out of abstract shapes, shadows in a visual environment that emphasises the shapes of the bodies as much as their movement. Moving silent forms. The performance is not silent though; it is accompanied by a score composed by Ben Frost. How does his music relate to the choreography: is he composing moving sonic forms?

\(^{26}\) Zuckerkandl was fascinated by this idea that movement in music can be experienced as separate from the body that carries it. In \textit{Sound and symbol: music and the external world}, he came to the conclusion that movement is something metaphysical: 'it is precisely because there are no things and places in music, precisely because music has freed itself from all connection with things and places, that the passing over, the "between," the core of motion, can be manifested in absolute purity and immediacy.' Zuckerkandl, V. (1969, c1956). \textit{Sound and symbol: music and the external world}. Princeton. New Jersey. Princeton/Bollingen Paperbacks. p.138.


\(^{29}\) This stiffness is partly due to Schlemmer’s interest in the mechanics of human movement, so is not only a technical limitation but also a conceptual choice. Lahusen, S. (1986). p.69.

Moving sonic forms

In the promotion video for *Mortal Engine*, and in the music for *FAR* by the same composer, the music functions mainly as an environment, a space for the dancers to dance in. An emphasis of the emotional content of the choreography, and the distribution of energy in the music over time, helps to clarify the structure, or the dynamic shape of the piece. In *Mortal Engine*, some musical gestures are triggered by the movement of the dancers, but I would argue that the music in both of these performances certainly is both sounding and moving, but there are no shapes there. Frost's music is described as corporeal: as having 'an undeniable visceral presence, felt as much as heard.' I agree that the music is visceral in that it is loud and contains a great deal of bass, and it does have a tactile quality — I can feel the music in my hands — but I would argue that his music is *not* corporeal, because of this lack of shapes. What then constitutes these shapes?

Haga’s (2008) study of correspondences between music and body movement focused on five features where similarities can be observed:

- activation contour (changes in activity level or energy)
- kinematics (the trajectory and the changes in the speed of a movement)
- dynamics (the forces that cause and constrain a movement)
- chunking (segmentation into temporal units)
- points of synchronisation
- rhythm

What above all seems to be missing in Frost’s music is the *dynamics* and the *activation contour*. The latter concept, introduced by Stern, denotes the dynamic contour of an action, *how* it is carried out — especially in connection with an

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32 The music for FAR sometimes features vocals which I do regard as shapes, but since they contain lyrics, they also become something else, the analysis of which is beyond the scope of this thesis.


emotion.\textsuperscript{35} It is a crossmodal feature, enabling Haga to apply it to both dance and music. He sees the activation contour as a multidimensional emergent quality, formed by several features such as density of events, pitch variations, articulations, loudness, etc.\textsuperscript{36} The change in these features, the change in activation contour, is what we experience as shapes.

The kind of shapes we imagine, is also dependent on the dynamics, i.e. the changes in force. A shape needs a boundary to keep it together, a boundary affected by forces around and inside it. Forces cannot be observed, only inferred: we must imagine what caused or restricted the movement.\textsuperscript{37} This process is directly connected to our motor imagery.

The corporeality I lack in Ben Frost’s music — the sensation of sounding forms in motion — could be enhanced when composing for choreography by an understanding and awareness of the concepts activation contour and dynamics. The dynamic changes in activation contour is what influence the shape of the movement, and the movement of the shape. We shall return to shapes, but first we will have a look at forces.

\textbf{Force and effort}

In texts about both music and dance, terms associated with force are frequently used, terms such as energetic, force (Hatten, see below p.19); tensile, effort, resistance (Smalley, see below p.18); tension (Leman).\textsuperscript{38} These terms seem to be a meeting point of the two disciplines. Distinguishing between them, however, can be challenging. Haga concludes that the terms tension, energy and intensity all refer to ‘dynamical aspects of temporal phenomena’,\textsuperscript{39} but prefers to use the term activation

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{35} ibid. p.63-66.
\textsuperscript{36} ibid. p.183.
\textsuperscript{37} ibid. p.74.
\textsuperscript{38} For example: ‘Music is dynamic in the sense that physical properties (frequency, amplitude, and so on) evolve through time and generate in our perception segregated streams and objects that lead, via ideomotor processing, to impressions of movement, gesture, tension, and release of tension.’ In Leman, M. (2008). pp.93-94.
\end{footnotesize}
instead, because of its connection with motor imagery. Zuckerkandl speaks about non-physical forces within music — the dynamic quality of tone:

\[
\text{The force that gives meaning is in the tone as life is in a face; we see it, we cannot touch it [...] When meaning sounds in a musical tone, a nonphysical force intangibly radiates from its physical conveyor.}^{40}
\]

The term effort is fundamental in Laban’s Movement Analysis, LMA — he used the term to distinguish between human movement and mechanical movement. It describes ‘the origin of any human bodily movement; effort is the inner quality or source of the movement.’\(^{41}\) By including both the physical aspects of how forces are used and intentional and motivational aspects of movement, the term effort is more multidimensional than activation. Both the use of energy and the intentionality aspects make the term applicable to music; the concept intentionality will be further examined below.

## Shape

Cognition by shape is deeply rooted in human understanding.\(^{42}\) According to Johnson, our bodies are linked to our ability to think in abstract/metaphorical meaning: as children, we examine the world through our actions. The direct bodily experiences of concepts such as balance, are stored in patterns of sensorimotor experience as image-schemata. These can later be used when we metaphorically speak of balance, for example in a relationship.\(^{43}\) The flow of such experiences, needs to be divided into shapes, or chunks, otherwise the world would be an incessant shapeless stream of information.\(^{44}\) By creating shapes, it is possible to grasp the gist\(^{45}\) of what we perceive — the salient qualities or the emergent qualities


\(^{45}\) Harding et al. (2007). ‘Auditory Gist Perception: An Alternative to Attentional Selection of Auditory Streams’. In Paletta, L. And Rome, E. (eds). *WAPCV 2007, LNAI 4840*, pp.399-416. Berlin Heidelberg. Springer-Verlag. In this paper the authors argue that auditory perception functions much in the same way as visual perception in that we first perceive the gist of a scene (auditory or visual) and then become aware of the details of this scene.
as the gestalt psychologists called them. They termed these shapes *gestalts*, and saw them as complex multisensory holistic images, not necessarily visual. Damasio describes these images as ‘patterns of neural activation that result from the ongoing interaction of organism and environment’\(^{46}\) and Johnson claims that it is ‘the contours of those images and the way they flow and connect with each other that will define our experience of the music and the meaning it has for us.’\(^{47}\) The images are correlated with sensory processes, something the gestalt theorists termed *isomorphism*.\(^{48}\) Arnheim used this term to explain how meaning could be understood from another person’s ‘appearance and conduct’\(^{49}\) — today we might explain the same correlation with the concept of mirror neurons that fire when we see this person moving.

Godøy has examined musical imagery in acoustic music, suggesting that we might think of music as multimodal gestural-sonorous images that he terms *images of sonic objects* or *sonic images*. He defines these as ‘holistically perceived fragments of sound, typically with durations in the 0.5 to 5 seconds range.’\(^{50}\) By taking Schaeffer’s idea of a sonic object as a starting point, Godøy applies ecological ideas, especially a focus on what *caused* the sound, and regards a sonic image as the result of an action by a musician, a performative gesture. This idea goes well with an embodied perspective in which we interpret sounds through our bodies and the actions afforded by sounds. However, in electroacoustic music not all sounds are caused by musicians. If music for example is experienced as a changing state of weight in the stomach, this is not necessarily caused by a musician or an object, but something else, something pure motional, perhaps emotional.


\(^{47}\) *ibid*. p.243.


**Gesture**

Smalley’s concept of *gestural surrogacy* elaborates on this difference between acoustic and electroacoustic music. In electroacoustic music, sounds can be more or less connected to known gestures or sources of sound, ranging from *first-order surrogacy* where sound is just produced without a musical purpose, to *remote surrogacy*, where the sources and causes of sound are unknown to the listener, but traces of gestures might still remain, traces that can be found by referring to ‘tensile, proprioceptive properties, to those characteristics of effort and resistance perceived in the trajectory of gesture.’ So even if we don’t know what caused the sound, we can recognise a musical gesture as a muscle movement, something shaped by effort and resistance.

Godøy claims that the sonic object is a gestural object: any feature of a sound can be regarded as a shape that ‘may be gesturally rendered’ and concludes that anything that moves in music, may cause gestural responses in the listeners, depending on ‘what they know of sound-producing actions related to the sound they hear.’ In electroacoustic music, however, not all sounds, though musically meaningful, are gestural. Smalley distinguishes between *gesture* and *texture*: according to him, the slower or weaker gestures, the more textural the music becomes, and the less human physicality we experience. Textural music focuses on inner detail, instead of moving on to the next goal-point. Maybe this way of experiencing music also mimics our way of relating to the world: when we stop moving, stop reaching for the next goal, we open up to introspection.

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52 *ibid.* p.112.


54 *ibid.* p.115

The concept of musical gesture is thoroughly examined in the first section of Godøy’s *Musical Gestures: sound, movement, meaning*.\(^{56}\) but only Hatten is speaking about musical gesture as something within music itself. He claims that ‘[m]usical gesture is biologically and culturally grounded in communicative human movement. Gesture draws upon the close interaction (and intermodality) of a range of human perceptual and motor systems to synthesize the energetic shaping of motion through time into significant events with unique expressive force.’\(^{57}\) So according to Hatten, musical gesture within music, is something expressive.

**Goal-points and intentionality**

The goal-points that Smalley mentions, are what propels time forward: ‘moving away from one goal towards the next goal in the structure – the energy of motion expressed through spectral and morphological change’\(^{58}\). These goal points for Godøy are what chunks streams into meaningful units, thereby serving as the boundaries of his musical objects. His goal-points are based on constraints, that can be of a bio-mechanical, motor control or perceptual nature.\(^{59}\) For Leman, however, the idea of goal-points is connected to intentionality. According to him, the source of a sound is not as important as its intention. From an embodied cognition perspective, we are more focused on the intention of a sound, because this might help us to act in response to this sound. When creating meaning out of music, we are focused on the intention of Leman’s *moving sonic forms*\(^{60}\).

Smalley also talks about intentionality, without using the term. He instead talks about expectations, and that listening to electroacoustic music affords listening to ‘the directionality implied in spectral change’ — to where a gesture or texture is leading and how it will change.\(^{61}\)


Hatten’s and Smalley’s view of musical gesture as something within the music itself seems more relevant for electroacoustic music than Godøy’s concept of musical gesture as something that is causing the sound, whether real or imagined. Electroacoustic music, is meaningful through moving sonic forms, with or without sources, but with an intention, or some kind of "life." The source is not necessarily the main concern — it might be more important how the sound "lives" or "moves" — its intention. Nothing caused it and it might not have a goal other than to ripple, or bobble, but then that is the point. The sound is itself a living entity, now with the intention to bobble, now with the intention to extravasate; living, breathing, changing: ‘the vibrations of sound themselves issue a kind of performance and so they leave the cinders of movement as a notation of past action.’

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Voice as a mediator: Improvisation and Voic(e)motion

Leman argues that it might be possible to use corporeal articulations to describe music in a nonverbal way. This can be done in three levels of engagement with the music: synchronization, embodied attuning, and empathy. Synchronization means interpreting the intentions of the music through moving along with it, while empathy denotes attributing our own affects and feelings to the music. Embodied attuning is the middle ground, where the listener is following, through body movement or singing, a particular feature of the music.\textsuperscript{63} Bret Battey’s tension line can serve as an example of a corporeal articulation.\textsuperscript{64}

To test my idea of using Leman’s corporeal articulations in reverse as a tool for composition, I have chosen to work with voice, since it has the double function of being part of the body and controlled by body movement (of the vocal apparatus) as well as producing musical sounds. The goal was to directly interpret the gestalts of music and dance — to use the corporeal articulations in an intuitive way, as much as possible avoiding to break the gestalts down into parameters, but keep them in their enigmatic ambiguity, in order to featherbed the creation of a unified whole, a complex gestalt of music and dance.

Improvisation

\textit{Improvisation is the art of becoming sound. It is the only art in which a human being can and must become the music he or she is making. It is the art of constant, attentive and dangerous living in every moment.}\textsuperscript{65}

\begin{flushleft}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{64} Battey, B. (2010). \textit{Isomorphism of Complex Gestalts: The Audio-Visual Composition Autarkeia Aggregatum}. Unpublished conference paper. Visible Sounds Conference, Hebrew University, Jerusalem. As a method to analyse the 'complex gestalt' of an audio-visual relationship, Battey has used a line that 'indicates a relative level of my own purely subjective sense of "tension" or "instability...".' p.8.
\end{itemize}
\end{flushleft}
The purpose of working with dance/voice improvisation was to find a communication, a language or an understanding between musical and body movement, so that modalities dissolve and we become two artists in crossmodal interaction.

Between November 2010 and May 2011, I worked with dancer Angelica Portioli in five sessions of improvisations. Most of the time we did free improvisation, but we sometimes set up rules, such as ‘whatever the other does, do the opposite.’

In these workshops I tended to use synchronization and attuning, switching attention between either grasping the overall impression of Angelica’s movement or zooming in on some salient feature of it. This could be a shape of a physical gesture, that I imitated with the voice, or an interpretation of her expression, character or imagery. This interpretation was experienced as an interactive process between us — as much a recognition of a particular detail as an interpretation of it, based on my personal lived experience. I was intuitively following the "flow" or the "living moment" of the improvisation, as if we were both interacting with something third, the piece itself. My vocalisations became a necessary consequence of what had happened in the preceding moment.

Sometimes conscious choices were made that changed the course of action, for example when there was a contradiction between how the movement and the music wanted to develop. By choosing to follow the musical development, the close relation between body movement and music might dissolve. However, this slight difference in expression, can create something third, perhaps in the same way as in the McGurk effect.

Leman’s third form of corporeal imitation, empathy, was not explored but occasionally in the improvisation work. There were moments where the improvisations took on an emotional character, but we did not specifically focus on that type of expression. Emotion was however the focus of the Voic(e)motion work.

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66 The McGurk effect is a perceptual phenomenon where the brain creates a sort of ‘interpolation’ of conflicting information of sound and vision - when the information in the two modalities does not match, the brain creates a ‘third’ that is neither of the visual or the aural information. See McGurk, H. & MacDonald, J. (1976). 'Hearing lips and seeing voices'. In Nature 1976:264. 746–748.
**Voic(e)motion**

This is an approach or process created by Guy Dartnell, an artist active in dance, theatre, circus, music and film. The idea is to integrate movement and voice to create an art form that resides in between these, extending the language of both, or giving movement a voice.⁶⁷ The connecting link between voice and movement is according to Dartnell, emotion. When voice and body movement are expressing the same emotion they connect and reinforce each other.⁶⁸ This direct connection is what makes the Voic(e)motion approach interesting for my research.

During a two-day workshop in April 2011, I explored this concept with five other participants. Dartnell gently led us through exercises of making movement, vocalising and subsequently connecting the two. We used methods as improvisation, mirroring and exploring different movement qualities.⁶⁹ I was surprised to find how much emotion was brought out in these exercises. According to Dartnell, there are emotions locked into our bodies — movement is a way of releasing these, and the use of voice enhances this process.⁷⁰ From Leman’s perspective, empathy is felt when we observe emotive movement in others, but becomes much stronger when we perform sympathetic movement ourselves — thus the sensation that the emotions are released by movement. At the end of the workshop we were able to explore these emotions, from a vantage point of being “in the eye of the storm” — a position of both having “real” feelings and examining them from a neutral point of view.

Though Voic(e)motion certainly can be practiced as an art-form in itself, the value for me lies mainly in its use as a method for composing. Voice sounds can be connected to body movement, and there is a common ground of emotion connecting

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⁶⁸ Guy Dartnell in private conversation with the author 22 April 2011.

⁶⁹ We used Michael Chekov’s movement qualities moulding, floating and flying. Chekov also defined a fourth quality, radiating, which we did not explore. More about his movement qualities can be found in Petit, L. (2010). *The Michael Chekov Handbook for the actor*. New York. Routledge. p.44-45

⁷⁰ Dartnell, G. in private conversation with the author 22 April 2011.

these two expressions. The initial idea of using the voice as a tool for composition looked like in Figure 1 below.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{Dancer’s movements} & \rightarrow & \text{Voice} \\
\text{Imitation, dialogue, find emotion, quality, gestalt} & \rightarrow & \text{Deciding on relation, elaboration, complication, simplification} \\
\end{array}
\]

*Fig. 1 Initial ‘Voice as a tool for composition’ process.*

The arrow represents a transformation from one modality to another, e.g. how the voice is transformed into music.

During the workshop, I realised that this model needed to be modified. It leaves out my own body movements, which are useful in understanding the dancer’s movements. The connection between body movement and voice is happening *within me*, in a resonance between my body movement and my voice. Figure 2 shows the modified model of the composition process:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{Dancer’s movements} & \rightarrow & \text{My movements} \\
\text{Imitation, dialogue,} & \rightarrow & \text{Find emotion, quality, gestalt - other connections?} \\
\text{Deciding on relation, elaboration, complication, simplification} & \rightarrow & \text{Music} \\
\end{array}
\]

*Fig. 2 Modified ‘Voice as a tool for composition’ process.*
The implementation of this process can be visualised as follows in Figure 3.

In this model, the voice serves as a mediator between body movement and music, but I am also using my own body to respond to the dancer. By sympathetic body movement, I activate my sensorimotor system, the action-perception loop, that

Fig. 3 Implementation of the ‘Voice as a tool for composition’ process.

In this model, the voice serves as a mediator between body movement and music, but I am also using my own body to respond to the dancer. By sympathetic body movement, I activate my sensorimotor system, the action-perception loop, that
gives meaning to the dancer’s movement. My body movements can then connect to my vocal movement, and by observing them, I can find wordless connections between music and motion. These are later exploited in the composition stage, where the music can relate to them in different ways — from completely ignoring them by creating an unrelated “canvas” or silence, to complete Mickey-Mousing of the gestures. By using my own body in this way, I gain a finer sense of the movement qualities and their inherent meanings and emotional content. The use of the voice emphasises this understanding, but the Voic(e)motion workshop also brought forward the idea that the voice might not be necessary — perhaps corporeal articulations can be used to create music directly: an idea that I explored with the Feedback Instrument I describe in the performance chapter.

The work with voice has shown that it can be a good tool for composing for dance, and I have identified two practical approaches to drawing on voice in this context:

1. By using the voice as a mediator between body movement and music, it is possible to gain a deeper understanding, or interpretation of the expressivity in the body movements. I call this voice-in: the use of the voice as an analysis tool.
2. By listening to the sounds made by voice, the understanding takes musical shape — a transformation between visual and aural modalities has taken place. I call this voice-out: the audible form that the movements are transformed into. These sounds can become music in an improvisation, or can serve as musical material in a musical composition.
Collaboration: the Human Knot, Green and 20.12

Although all my works have been collaborative, this chapter focuses on collaborative composition for choreography that does not include musical performance. Later I will discuss the piece Dietro as an example of a collaboration that includes musical performance.

Stiefel (2002) identifies seven types of scenarios of collaborations between composers and choreographers, based on
A) if the music is composed prior to or after the choreography
B) if the music is performed live or recorded
C) if the music or dance is improvised or not?2

He claims that the type of scenario is mainly determined by who is initiating the project — the choreographer, composer, producer or music group, with choreographer initiated projects being by far the most prevalent. The three projects described in this chapter, are all choreographer initiated. (S)he has had a theme or concept that (s)he wants to explore, and the composer is asked to collaborate on this theme. All works in this chapter have been recorded, not performed live. 20.12 was composed after the choreography, and The Human Knot was composed prior to it. Green, however, was composed in parallel with the choreography — which curiously enough is not one of Stiefel’s scenarios. He does however call this scenario ‘a more "ideal" form of collaboration’ than music composed and recorded prior to the choreography, albeit a form that is more ‘troublesome.’73 Later in the paper, he describes music composed to the choreography, although only in a case where the music is to be performed live.74 This way of working allows the music to be more tailored to the needs of the choreographer. As a potential problem in this type of

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73 ibid. p.9.

74 ibid. There is some confusion here: in the first listing of possible scenarios, Stiefel names no 3 as ‘Music composed after a specific choreography and performed live’ (p.8). When discussing this scenario, it has changed names to ‘3) Music is composed to the choreography and performed live’ (p. 16). No 4 is music composed after the choreography and recorded. This means that he does not cover the scenario that has been the most common for me: to compose the music to the choreography and recorded. I have nevertheless tried to extract his major distinctions between different scenarios.
scenario, Stiefel describes a situation where the expectations on the music are unclear, or unrealistic. There is also the problem of the "demo love", where the choreographer becomes so attached to a temporary recording of the music, that it is difficult for the composer to change it.\textsuperscript{75}

To Stiefel, the music has two main functions in a dance performance: to provide the kinetic energy that motivates the dancer and to contextualise the dance for the viewer.\textsuperscript{76} There is rarely a balance between these two tasks: music used as a motivator is easier achieved through composing it prior to the choreography. When the music is composed after the choreography, it will more naturally contextualise the dance, but it can be more difficult to synchronise the musical structure with the structure of the dance.

**The Human Knot**

*The Human Knot* is a choreography by Ruth Dodds that takes its departure in the idea of the knot as a metaphor for things in our life that are holding us back:

*We are each entangled and restricted by our own web of self-inflicted limitations, boundaries and inhibitions coupled with a constant pursuit of wanting to gain freedom and achieve more; often tying ourselves up further along the way.*\textsuperscript{77}

My music draws on the idea of an entanglement of threads that are symbolised in the music by sine tones or long voice melismas. These can then be "knotted" by frustrations sounds, sounds of tension that disturb or hinder the flow of the threads. The choreographer also requested an "up-tempo beat" and voice recordings of the dancers’ personal interpretation of what constitutes a human knot. To make these voices fit in the idea of entanglement, I present them rather separately in the beginning of the music. However, they become increasingly transformed and entangled, ending in a rather disquieting sound collage with sounds resembling signals, bells and feedback, as if giving in to the entanglement and relinquishing

\textsuperscript{75} *ibid*. p.17.

\textsuperscript{76} *ibid*. p.7. In an embodied music cognition context, one might argue that the music might also do the opposite: provide kinetic energy for the viewer and contextualise the work for the dancer.

\textsuperscript{77} Dodds, R. (2010). In email to the author 7 October 2010.
control. Only the sound of a scratched string draws a line in a frustrated attempt to control the chaos.

**Collaborative process**

The collaborative process was carried out almost entirely at a distance. Even though the choreography and music was created during the same period of time, I regard this as composing *prior to* the choreography because there was very little interaction between us, and there were only minor adjustments of the music. I attended one rehearsal only, one week before deadline, when the music was practically finished, and had only access to two short video clips of movement material.

The advantage of working this way is obvious: the music does not need to be adjusted to the choreography, but can be composed rather freely, which can lead to music that is coherent and functional even without the choreography. The music can be structured without concerns for the structure of the dance, knowing that the choreographer will find movements that relate to whatever I infuse the music with. In *The Human Knot*, there is one apparent disadvantage — the movements are often literally mimicking the content of the music — a sort of inverted Mickey Mousing. On the other hand it can be argued that the "heartbeats" that the dancers are performing are more a reinterpretation of the bass drum sound into heartbeats, not a mimicking of an actual bass drum. This kind of close connection between choreography and music — what Sawyer calls *synchronization* runs the risk of establishing a superficial relation between music and dance, instead of being concerned with the core themes of the piece. As will be discussed in the section about 20.12, this is also a risk when composing music to a finished choreography. In conclusion, composing prior to the choreography is easier for the composer, but for the piece as a whole, it might be more fruitful if choreography and music are created in parallel.

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78 See for example Appendix 3, 1. The Human Knot: ‘heartbeats’ at 4′48 and the ‘silence’ at 1′30.

79 As opposed to *opposition* and *assimilation*. Synchronization is where all aspects of music and dance are synchronized, opposition is where they are in contrast to each other. Assimilation is according to Sawyer a more complex relation between music and dance, not in synchronization or opposition, but rather a relation where both music and dance refers to a third: the core of the piece. In Sawyer, E. (1986). *Dance with the Music: the world of the ballet musician*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. pp.27-28.
Voice

I intended to use voice as a mediator in the process, but this was prevented by the lack of movement material. I improvised to the two video clips I had, but this did not result in any useful musical material. However, doing these improvisations gave me a physical understanding of the movements. For example, the way I sing in the piece is quite different from how I normally sing. The vocal recordings were made shortly after my improvisations, when I still had a body memory of the movements, which influenced the way I was singing: retaining the quality of the dance gestures in my voice.

Corporeal qualities in sounds

The main corporeal quality in The Human Knot is tactility. A knot is something that is felt by the hands, which informed my use of sounds that are created with hands, such as a pepper mill (at 1’50), cleaning windows (at 2’45) and crumpling a paper cup (at 5’30). Not only are these sounds recognisable through their first-order surrogacy and therefore sympathetically felt in the hands, but they are also expressing a sensation of touching things with some resistance. The piece deals with inner tensions - I wanted to give these a tensile outer expression. The music is generally not emotional, but by including real-world sounds like the spray bottle (at 7’02), it nevertheless expresses a sense of increasing frustration and tension. The most salient sound, the scratched string, evokes sensory memories of something unsmooth, resisting, and full of tension.

Also the abstract sounds are corporeal in that they are gestural. Since the choreography is so literal, the relations between physical gesture and musical gesture in this piece are easily observed, e.g. the little arm gesture at 2’30 synchronises with a simple sine tone that has a gestural quality in the way it changes pitch and loudness. Another example is the "back scratching" at 7’38-7’43, where the scratchy sounds in the music seem to be scratching at the back of the dancer. The gestural quality of the sound is emphasised by the gesture of the dancer. Music that is rich with corporeal gestures, affords these kinds of synchronisations or

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80 Appendix 3, 1. The Human Knot: at 5’06.
interpretations by the dancers, through source bonding. This term suggested by Smalley proposes that we relate sounds with ‘shared or associated origins’ to each other. I would argue that also music and dance can engage in "corporeal source bonding." A real or imagined source of the musical gesture connects it with a physical gesture with the same or a similar source. Composing musical corporeal gestures inspired by the movement material allows music and dance to differ in structure and timing, but yet share this gestural connection.

Green

The emotions which are kindled in the human being are stronger than the human being himself... they must at all costs find an outlet — they must take on overt form — they must be communicated or put to work.

Kasimir Malevich

I took inspiration from Malevich's 'Black Square' which [...] was placed in the holy corner, and served as an icon and symbolized a new movement for artists in Russia and worldwide. From my point of view a Green square should be placed in the corner these days, as we have to get out of the black hole which Malevich forced us to change how we see ourselves as a human beings today. I am suggesting to return care and love we borrowed from our Planet by returning it's natural colour.

Kirill Burlov

I AM Malevich Black Square - I am living the feeling. Now I need to "put to work" this feeling. How? I should use these feelings while I have them, pour them into the music. Pour despair into the Black square, pour the love into the Beauty, pour the tears into the Song of Sorrow.

Annelie Nederberg

Green is a dance performance based on an idea by Kirill Burlov, a Latvian dancer and choreographer at Rambert Dance Company. The performance is a solo

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84 Undated journal note by the author (probably in December 2010).
for principal dancer Edward Watson of the Royal Ballet with animated video scenography by al’Kamie. The piece premiered at the Place in London on 12 February 2011.

**Collaborative process**

Unlike in *The Human Knot*, this process was a close collaboration. The music was composed in parallel with the choreography, in an interweaved process. Though not synchronising the music to the movements of the dancer more than occasionally, I sought to find a close relation between musical and physical movement. This led to a result that is more concerned with physical gesture, or kinaesthesia, than tactility. The choreography explored rather grand concepts, such as Death, Beauty, Micro- and macrocosm, and Saving the world (to name a few…), so the process sometimes felt like an overwhelming challenge to compose the "ultimate music." For many reasons, the work was very emotional — among other things because of the profundity of the themes. The creative process became a journey into possible expressions of grand themes and emotions, as much as of corporeality in music.

Through an intense email discussion about ideas and concepts, we immediately found a creative spark that generated many ideas, many thoughts, and many emails. This was partly because we both have English as a second language: the frequent misunderstandings between us turned out to be a motor in the creative process — a misunderstanding of an idea created a new idea, that neither of us had thought of, but appeared in the cracks between our languages. A lost in translation, or rather, found in translation.

According to Stiefel, this kind of collaboration in parallel represents the ideal form, albeit with potential for problems. I can agree with his conclusions. The advantages are obvious — the music and dance can be tailored to each other, in terms of conceptual content, form, structure, and expression. One disadvantage is that this tailoring is more time consuming than working separately in parallel. There is also the risk of exhausting the collaborative partnership through too intense a collaboration.

The label *in parallel* must be further nuanced, since there are various ways of working in parallel. One factor is difference in closeness — which may be corporeal
and/or conceptual. By corporeal closeness I mean working physically in the same room — the dance studio or the music studio. Conceptual closeness is a mental closeness in the ideas and concepts of the piece — a discussion that does not necessarily have to be carried out in corporeal closeness.

The music for Green was mainly composed during a five week residency in Sweden, which means that this was more of a conceptually than corporeally close collaboration, where the concepts of the piece became the focus. Through extensive discussions about the themes throughout the process, we sought to find as many approaches to them as possible. Kirill encouraged completely different interpretations of the ideas from all members of the team, and furthermore discussed different themes with me and with the video animators or the costume designer. The aim of this approach was to create a multidimensional illumination of the concepts; if all collaborators create a slightly different interpretation, the piece opens up for several modes of resonating with an audience.

This type of close conceptual collaboration is stimulating and creative, and may result in pieces that are worked-through and complex. The risk, however, is that the mind overrides the body, and the music becomes attached to the choreography merely intellectually — the opposite of my idea of corporeal music.

**Conceptual or corporeal?**

In Green, the metaphorical use of melting ice might be seen as such a more conceptual idea. The piece starts with an ascent from underwater to open air, through ice (until 3’25). Since the choreography ultimately became a process of searching for the Beauty that can save the world, I wanted to, throughout the piece, use the process of melting this ice into running water, transform the dead ice into life, as a metaphor for saving the world\(^{85}\).

However, though mainly conceptual, the first section also has a corporeal quality. The idea behind it is a birth into the world: a fragility, a kind of beauty.

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\(^{85}\) I was inspired by Terje Isungset, who creates percussion instruments with wonderful sounds out of Norwegian ice. See for example: [http://home.online.no/~isungz/](http://home.online.no/~isungz/). Unfortunately, I could not find a way of creating or recording ice instruments, so the process of melting ice into water is not very clear in the piece.
beautiful form. I have chosen a metaphor of birth which is an ascent from being underwater, in an inner world, to the outer world through the ice covering the water. The memory of this surface we are breaking through lingers in the memory as a tingling of melodies from the ice shards. The sense of ascent is achieved mainly through a filtering of frequency space — a rise from low frequencies to high. This idea is corporeal because it can activate the sensation of physical movement — the sensation of ascent as well as the sensation of breaking through the surface after having been submerged under water. It is also connected to the movements of the dancer, who performs a similar ascent from a crouching position to stretching his arms upwards. Starting out in stillness, he slowly begins to move: a sort of melting from being frozen, gently trying out how he can move, how he can find beauty in his movements.

**Emotion as embodied meaning**

Emotion has been important in composing *Green*. Most of the sections are composed with a specific emotion in mind. This originates both in my interpretation of the concepts of the piece and the emotions I have interpreted in the movements of the dancer.

*The Song of Sorrow* is an example of emotion from a conceptual starting point. This section (between ca 7’25-9’41) is expressing how the Earth is crying over the environmental pollution of the planet on the macro level and over the "pollution" of the human soul on the corresponding micro level. The Earth is therefore personified into Khidr, ”the Green One”, an important figure in Sufism. The song itself is sung by Swedish singer Cathrine Fandén, who is inspired by Middle-Eastern songs of lament. The voice is chosen because it is well suited to express emotion. I have combined her song with sounds that express sorrow, for example the dragged boulders, that both feel heavy as sorrow, and evoke images of slaves pulling heavy stones. The music moves slowly, and towards the end painful metallic sounds emphasise the pain.

of the sorrow. These sounds are chosen by a process of analysing my bodily-emotional reactions to them — searching for the sound that evokes the feeling I am looking for.

In this section, the music is not reflecting the body movements of the dancer. His movements are expressing a search for a direction to choose from a position of loss, perhaps in the eye of the storm — not sorrow. The music therefore carries another corporeality than his — an emotional. In this section, music and dance perform parallel, dissimilar movement, but both are, in different ways, expressing the same theme, and therefore complement each other.

As Guy Dartnell stated, there is a connection between body movement and emotion. Drawing on ideas of neurologist Damasio, Johnson sees emotions as a combination of cognitive structures, brain processes and body processes: "a primary means for our being in touch with our world. They are a crucial part of the meaning of what is happening."\(^{87}\) The awareness of the body state caused by the subconscious emotion, is what we call a feeling.

The categories of emotions are often broad, such as joy or anger, which is why the psychiatrist Stern has introduced the concept vitality affects: "those dynamic, kinetic qualities of feeling that distinguish animate from inanimate and that correspond to the momentary changes in feeling states involved in the organic process of being alive."\(^{88}\) With this term he wants to distinguish between different varieties of the same emotion, e.g. sorrow. He does that through the concept of activation contour, which describes the dynamic contour of the action connected with an emotion, the how of the emotion.

The vitality affects are crossmodal or amodal in character, and therefore lead the thoughts to concepts such as isomorphism and Laban’s Effort. Haga notes similarities between Laban’s and Stern’s concepts in two ways: both focus on dynamics and both focus on how a process is characterised by a change in these

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dynamics. Stern points out abstract music and dance as good examples of the expressivity of vitality affects, and furthermore writes:

*Because activation contours (such as “rushes” of thought, feeling, or action) can apply to any kind of behavior or sentience, an activation contour can be abstracted from one kind of behavior and can exist in some amodal form so that it can apply to another kind of overt behavior or mental process. These abstract representations may then permit intermodal correspondences to be made between similar activation contours expressed in diverse behavioral manifestations.*

In the section *Destruction* (ca 5’15-7’24), I have worked with emotion based more on interpretation of the movements. Edward seems to be pushed around by destructive forces — I wanted the music to be these forces. Gestures such as at 5’46, are directly imitated from Edward’s body movement — the activation contour is captured and reinterpreted into music, augmenting the emotion in his body movements. In this example the gestures happen to be synchronised, but often they are not. Since the musical gesture and Edward’s gesture share the same activation contour, synchronisation is not necessary, but music and dance can move freely around each other.

At 6’38 Edward starts to move in a more fluid way; something is relinquished at this point. The music, therefore, becomes more flowing, but sends the dancer into a state of imbalance, as if he still carries the resistance of the earlier music inside. Gestures from the earlier music is still present in this section, creating a tension between flow and resistance, embodied in the dancer.

A close collaboration can lead to a piece that is worked through in terms of conceptual content, form, structure, and expression. I would like to distinguish between close corporeal collaboration and close conceptual collaboration. In a close conceptual collaboration like the one in *Green*, the risk is that the concepts overshadow the physical aspects. However, from an embodied perspective, also concepts are embodied. If we instead of thinking of concepts as abstract disembodied entities see them rather as bodily processes, we might be able to

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accept that also emotions are conceptual and have a crucial role in the formation of meaning of 'situations, persons, objects, and events'\textsuperscript{91}.

Emotion can be a tool for composing music that resonates with the body. These emotions can be found by analysing the composer's own bodily emotional reactions: the activation contours of her vitality affects.

**20.12**

This is a choreography by Kirill Burlov created for 10 dancers from Rambert Dance Company for a performance at the Royal Opera Linbury Studio Theatre in November 2010. Due to misunderstandings, the originally commissioned music was never finished, and the choreography was never performed. Kirill asked me to create music for the piece to be able to present it to an audience.

The main theme of the piece is balance in a relationship — it could be a romantic relationship, or relations between people and places. The choreographer and the dancers have examined what disrupts the balance into a state of imbalance, and how the balance is regained. There are also two wider themes that the choreographer has sought to express: human evolution — the balance through history, and the circular motion of the seasons — the balance of the year.

Inspired by this concept of balance — imbalance, I wanted to use it as a field of tension where music becomes the space around the dancers and is set in motion by their energies, tensions, and gestures. Another field of tension that I explored, was the one between inner and outer spaces/places. Many of the gestures in my music are visceral. I wanted to contrast that with a sense of outer reality to enable a shift in realities as if waking up from a trance, or balancing between inner and outer realities.

**Collaborative process**

The music for 20.12 was composed after the choreography to a video recording of the piece. The advantage of this method is the freedom in composing the music, but the disadvantage of not being part of the creation process far outweighs this

advantage. In some ways, the choreography serves more as a score for the music, which have proved to be an unsatisfactory way of collaborating. It is tempting to synchronise the music too much to this score, forgetting that a live performance might vary and leave the synchronisations ineffective.

Stiefel points out that composing to a finished choreography might lead to problems in matching the structure of the choreography to that of the music. In 20.12 this is certainly true: it is a highly complex piece, dealing with ten characters in five different relationships, each having their own narrative. Often the narratives are performed simultaneously, and to complicate things further, the dancers sometimes switch to another character, or become part of an abstract group movement, for example when they physically illustrate a shift of balance in space (see e.g. 3'35-3'40). Only through detailed analysis could I figure out all relations and characters. Drawing an overview of the main events (see Appendix 1), enabled me to group the short dance sections into a form based on two main events: the shift of the seasons through the year, and an emphasis on the narrative of the main couple. It seems that music often needs longer sections than the choreography, which is often concatenated of shorter sections, up to ca 2 minutes in duration. Connecting these shorter sections into a musical flow is one of the biggest challenges in working with music for choreography, especially since their order might not be determined until rather late in the process. With this form to guide me, I could start exploring the corporeality of the piece.

*Imitation*

Imitation is an important way to learn through the body, to interpret the intentions of another human being. This process can be used to analyse the choreography — by imitating the dancer, I can gain a corporeal understanding of what (s)he is expressing.

In 20.12, I noticed a recurring gesture — holding the elbow high in the air (see for example at 1'07, 5'48 [the dancer in the background] and 11'29). This gesture seemed significant to me, since it stands out as a gesture and most of the dancers perform it at some point. The choreographer was not able to explain its significance verbally, so to understand the gesture, I instead imitated it with my own body. This
specific gesture created a feeling of hanging from something, or being dragged by something or controlled by something beyond yourself, perhaps some kind of destiny, as well as something else beyond the words. This bodily interpretation makes sense in the piece: in the end where the couple joins their elbows (at 20’05), the gesture becomes a metaphor of them sharing their destinies, or joining forces against whatever is controlling them. I therefore chose to make this the point of emphasis in the final duet — the point to which the previous music leads, perhaps the point to which the whole piece leads.

**The Feedback Instrument**

I did not use my voice as a mediator in this piece, but explored the use of my body performing with the Feedback Instrument. This instrument allows the imitating body motion to also have an audible consequence — sounding objects that originate in the dancer but are filtered through my body responses into feedback sound. The initial idea was to use sounds from this instrument only in the music, but I soon discovered that the instrument is too "slow" to work well for this: it does not respond well to quick dance movement. This piece therefore had to be complemented with other sounds.

The advantage of working physically with the Feedback Instrument is that the composer is moving in response to the movements of the dancer, which influences the sound of the instrument, which in turn influences the movements of the composer, etc. The composer is physically placed in the action-reaction loop which facilitates a corporeal interpretation of the choreography, and an immediate, spontaneous, intuitive musical response to it. In this way, the body and its kinaesthetic intelligence can be used as a tool for creating music — in performance or as sound material for a composition.

In the chapter about *Dietro*, I have described how this experience can be further enhanced by working directly with the dancer, instead of responding to a video recording.
Space and place

The relation between bodies in space is part of the corporeality in this piece. During the Voic(e)motion workshop, I experienced how the air itself can feel differently depending on how you move through it, a sensation I wanted to convey through the music. Since the Feedback Instrument functions in reaction to body movement, it is a good choice of instrument for this purpose.

I have also been working with space as an expression in other ways. One has been to create a tension between internal and external space, external space being symbolised by realistic spaces, nature sounds, "people doing things" — and internal space being the rest of the music, especially the feedback sections. A shift to another place can create a shift in energy, which sharpens the senses and enables a focus on the choreography. For example at 6’57-7’28, the silence removes the coloured veil of music in front of the dancers, allowing the audience to engage with them in another relation, another place.

Another type of expression through spatiality is to separate layers of music that belong to different layers in the choreography. For example, in the "Drop Right section" (5’48-6’24), all the dancers behind the duet move across the stage from left to right, representing a shift in balance in the relation between this couple. My music is expressing this in three layers: the vocal layer that represents the tentative, nascent emotion between the couple; the downward glissandi representing a downward sliding sensation, a shift in balance between the pitches of the voice and those of the bass; and finally a layer of beats in a distant room, representing "people doing things" in the background. Maybe this is a way of expressing the intimate space of a relationship, that tends to place other ongoings far in the background.

This idea originates from my work as a sound designer with director Hilda Hellwig, who often requested the sound of people doing things in the background. I never understood at the time its significance, but it makes sense to me now in an intuitive way that is difficult to explain. Maybe it is a way of creating a context for the actions in the drama — there is a world outside this little cutout from reality — the drama belongs not only on stage, but also to the outside world. The sound can also represent a sort of safety — there are always people around, ready to help, whatever you do. Or maybe it is emphasising the fact that we are now focusing on this cutout of reality, despite what is going on in the rest of the world. We can’t separate ourselves from this world — it is always present — but we can screen it out temporarily.
There is also something about widening and closing space that is expressive. I normally favour sounds that are close to the listener, because they are intimate. However, I have found that for dance, a wide open space can provide more breathing room for the dancers. Perhaps we perceptually focus on things close to us, and if music is too close, it draws attention from the dancers who, for practical reasons, are often further away from the audience.

The music for 20.12 is not finished; I have not yet fully explored the concept of spatial corporeality. The process of creating it has nevertheless brought some insights:

1. The body is useful as a tool for interpretation of dance movements by imitation. A corporeal understanding can be intermodally transferred to music without having to be expressed verbally.

2. The spaces that dancers move through can have a corporeality, a sense of weight, lightness, fluidity, etc. that can be compositionally exploited. Even without corporeality, they are important as they influence the corporeality of the dancer. There is also a tension between inner and outer corporeal space that can be exploited in composition, where music can choose to be external or internal. When external, the closeness and distance of music has different physical relations to the dancers in the room. Music shares the physical space with the dancers, largely affecting the perception of the final audio-visual experience of the piece.
Performance: Dietro

Dietro is a work-in-progress performance of a piece that will be developed into a longer performance of around 40 minutes. It is choreographed and danced by Angelica Portioli. Dietro is Italian for behind, and the performance is based on 'our past, our memories, that makes us who we are today, and it hurts to remember sometimes,"93 how '[o]ur habits lead us and imprison us,'94 and how our '[p]rivacy is invaded by the uncontrollable frenzy of a demanding life.95

Collaborative process

The collaboration with the choreographer was done in parallel, but compared to Green, this process was more corporeal than conceptual. We improvised together for a long time to find each other artistically, and we spent a ten day residency in a dance studio to create Dietro. This way of working proved fruitful: ideas can be immediately tested and rejected or developed, and our parallel processes influence each other and so creates a closely integrated piece.

Creating the music in the same room as the dancer helps catching the "liveness" of the performance. The timing and the energy of the performance can be interpreted as it feels in the moment. This is quite different from composing to a video recording, where some sense of what is going on in the room is lost. The experience is more vividly present in the actual living performance, and it is this experience the music should relate to.

The use of my own body helped capturing this experience. With the help of a MIDI-keyboard, or indeed any other interface that allows for dynamic triggering of sounds, it is possible to extend a corporeal interpretation of the dance movements into the computer. Leman argues that empathy is more strongly felt when it is articulated corporeally than when we merely observe it.96 Perhaps this is also true about interpretation of body movements that are not emotional — by involving my

94 ibid.
95 ibid.
own body, I get a stronger sensation. This initial impression or direct corporeal experience at the time, can then carry through into the final music.

**Conceptual or corporeal?**

The differences between the conceptual collaboration of *Green* and the corporeal of *Dietro*, seem to be about working from the inside out or from the outside in. In *Green*, my task became similar to that of the choreographer — to find expressions of the concepts of the piece in (musical) corporeality. This is a process of finder outer manifestations of inner concepts. The opposite happened in the corporeal collaboration in *Dietro*. Here, I rather seemed to interpret movement into a conceptual understanding. My musical embodiment of the concepts of the piece were developed from the outside — from the physical reality of the body movements. Here the movements serve as a fuel for the process of understanding the concepts that drives the performance. Both approaches can be present in collaborations, but the balance between them shifts.

**The music**

The main sections of our work-in-progress performance of *Dietro* are the *Ritual*, a solo danced by Angelica with recorded music, and the *Feedback*, where I perform with a feedback instrument created for this performance. In the final section we are both moving in silence on stage.

My musical ideas for the *Ritual* grew from Angelica’s initial request of ‘soft music, probably a piano’\(^7\). We discussed the section as being a kind of ritual tea ceremony, with repeated movements, which made me associate to ritual bells. One of the goals of the composition was to find a simplicity that allows the work to breathe, but yet is expressive. This was quite a challenge since my music normally is quite complex. I decided to try the opposite approach to how I normally compose — reducing from an abundance of sound tracks — and instead build the music from the ground up. The bell would serve as a back bone of the piece, and nothing would be added that did not contribute to the musical expression. Many sounds were added, rearranged and removed in a build-up/tear-down process that proved to be rewarding.

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\(^7\) Portioli, A. (2010).
by developing a sensitivity for what I wanted to express in the music. For example, towards the end there is a synthetic sound that resembles a distorted feedback guitar (first appearing at 4’20 in the video, but becoming increasingly dominant). This sound emphasises Angelica’s convulsions, but only when balanced correctly with the bell and the flute, played by Panos Amelides. The flute has quite another character, a gentle, soothing quality which might neutralise the feedback sound, but, in the right balance, contradicts it in a way that highlights the convulsive quality of the movement. Instead of complexity in a multitude of sounds, I focused on creating complexity in subtle timbral changes, mainly in the bell, but also in the interplay between foreground and background in the music.

The Feedback Instrument

This instrument evolved from playing with feedback between the microphone and the speaker on a laptop. The tactile sensation of shaping the sound with the hand struck me as a powerful feature. This sensation was enlarged and amplified in the Feedback Instrument used in Dietro, which consists of a miniature microphone taped in the palm of each hand and two loudspeakers on stands. The placement of the speakers are gesturally motivated: far enough apart to enable fully stretched out arms, and high enough to enable the hands to move around the ”hot spot” right in front of the loudspeaker. A wireless system for the microphones enables me to move away from the speakers.

Being based on feedback, the system is extremely sensitive to changes in room, speaker placement, microphones, wireless system. Though awkward to handle, this feature makes the system rather unpredictable and rewarding to play — controllable to an extent, but still able to surprise. The setup is quite simple, see Figure 4 below.
The sound from the microphones is fed through a computer running the softwares Plogue Bidule and Max/MSP. Plogue Bidule handles the audio signal and its processing through a range of plugin effects mainly connected in parallel. Max/MSP provides MIDI control over parameters in Plogue Bidule — a MIDI control pedal is used to trigger changes in these parameters. The choice of which effects to use and the balance between them determines the overall timbre of the feedback. For example, pitch shifters are used to affect the timbre, by added pitch shifted versions of the feedback to the sound.

What is difficult to achieve in this kind of setup, is short, rhythmical sounds. The feedback tends to have a slow build-up, unless the sound is very compressed. The grain streamer plugin is the closest to a rhythmic sound I have come in this incarnation of the instrument. To develop this side, and to add more timbral possibilities, the instrument can be further developed, for example through incorporating triggers and exploring multiple speaker setups.

The sound artist Nicolàs Varchausky has created a similar instrument with a microphone in each hand and 6 or 8 loudspeakers\(^{98}\), but his music is quite different from mine — more drony noise. In my version, the emphasis lies on responsiveness to hand gestures and a bigger dynamic range. A carefully balanced compression is important in this context, because too much decreases the responsiveness of the instrument, while too little makes the system less stable.

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Both when creating it and performing with it, the Feedback Instrument provides a direct physical contact and constant dialogue with the sound itself — a sensation of touching the sound and being able to mould its timbre with my hands. Furthermore, the instrument applies the action-perception loop to electroacoustic composition, allowing a resonant relationship between the dancer’s movements, my movements and the music.

The performance

The relation between the characters in the performance is reflected in the relation between foreground and background in the Ritual music. Angelica’s character is enjoying the rituals of daily life, but becoming increasingly entangled in them and stifled. My character is her shadow or guardian angel or dark side — empowering her, but also controlling and impeding her. This is reflected in the music where the flute also has a “shadow” — a recorded reverb, that sometimes appear before the flute sound, as if to guide it, and sometimes behind. The flute becomes increasingly soaked up by the background and finally completely swallowed by the reverb. The bell also has a shadow — a sound that is derived from the bell sound, but smoothed out to a granular texture. This texture forms many of the harmonies of the music, and so has another relation to its “mother sound” — perhaps a more free and supporting relation.

At the end of the Ritual section, my character starts to control Angelica’s character, by playing the Feedback Instrument. My performative gestures are mixed with gestures used only to convey this sense of control, not affecting the sound at all. When performing, the gestures needed for sound production, naturally become extended into the rest of the body, in postures, head movements, and moving closer to or further away from the speakers. This interaction forms a relationship with the loudspeakers — one might even say that the loudspeakers are the third character in this performance: black, still, monolithic, but in no way silent. Hands are used expressively to caress, to stop, to control, to slap, and these gestures are remembered when playing the instrument — evoking the feelings and sensations connected to them. It is therefore quite emotional to perform with the instrument —

sometimes feeling gentle and caressing the sound, sometimes controlling or resisting. Furthermore, the instrument is not entirely predictable and can potentially run amok, which creates a sense of danger, caution and focus. At other times, the sound becomes the breath of the speakers. The most intimate relation with the loudspeakers is when I share their breath with my breath and sing to them, sing with them.

At the end of the Feedback section\textsuperscript{100}, Angelicas character leaves me from having lain by my feet during it. I try to control her but she gradually stops obeying. In a final attempt to gain control of her, I leave my space, the place between the speakers, and led by my now unamplified voice approach her mid stage. This is a big switch of relations, a crossing of an agreed border, since I am not only leaving my designated "musicians space", but also leave my speakers to which I have a relation. During rehearsals we intuitively felt that it was good to let the echo of my voice ring in the speakers while I leave them. Maybe this is because it emphasises their value as characters in their own right, or maybe it is because a part of me is being left there, while my character and Angelica's dissolve into each other, a symbol of reconciliation or acceptance: through embracing her shadow, Angelica does not have to fight it anymore.

In performance, the human body changes the relation between music and body movement simply by sharing the same space as the dancer, inhabiting it with another living character and thereby changing the energy of the space. Performing the music instead of presenting it recorded, allows the composer to activate her sensorimotor system in resonance with this energy and shape the music based on the interaction with the dancer and based on the experiences, emotions and memories this awakens.

The work with Dietro was a collaboration based on corporeal closeness, which resulted in a process from the outside in. Instead of expressing concepts in music, I interpreted corporeality into music to understand the concepts. This process benefited from being able to work in the same room as the dancer, allowing a direct physical connection with her.

\textsuperscript{100} Appendix 3, 4. Dietro at ca. 13'00.
The Feedback Instrument allows performative gesture to be both sound-producing and directly expressive as physical gesture. Physical interaction with objects such as the loudspeakers can animate them into a third presence on stage.
CONCLUSIONS

I approached the research of corporeality in musical composition from three perspectives: the use of voice as a mediator, corporeality in collaboration and corporeality in music performance. The overall aim was to find methods of composing that involved the body of the composer and, in consequence, led to music with corporeal qualities, communicating on a physical level with the listener.

Through extensive exploration of voice, through improvisation with a dancer and through the Voic(e)motion concept, I have found that the voice can serve as a mediator between music and body movement. As has been shown in the Voic(e)motion chapter, there is an emotional connection between body movement and voice, which can be found by performing both simultaneously. This method also helps a corporeal understanding of the movements of the dancer — by imitation of, or improvised responses to the movements, their musical meanings can be sensed by the body of the composer, and later utilised to compose music.

Music with corporeal qualities is usually more gestural than textural, since the gestures are conveyors of physical movement. The body of the composer can be a powerful tool in creating such music: it can serve as an instrument of analysis to understand the movement of the dancer, not only through vocal imitation but also through resonant body movement. Music can be corporeal in several ways: not only emotional as in *Green*, but also tactile as in *The Human Knot*, spatial as in *20.12*, or directly physically performed as in *Dietro*. Corporeal understanding goes far beyond emotions — the body and its sensorimotor system is the foundation for our understanding of abstract concepts in music; the immaterial movement of music can serve as a foundation for a deep bodily-sensed understanding of complex concepts. By reversing this process of understanding, or rather by engaging in the action-perception loop of conceptual understanding, this understanding can help encapsulating abstract and complex concepts artistically in music. In this context, *The Feedback Instrument* represents a direct way of engaging the sensorimotor system of the composer, where the intuitive body resonances are engaged in close connection with the sounding music.
Word count: 12.706
APPENDIX 1:
THE HUMAN KNOT
PROCESS NOTES

Apart from a rehearsal and a voice recording session on 20 November 2010, the whole process was carried out at a distance, communicating with the choreographer Ruth Dodds only through email, and sending sound and video files to each other. The following is a compilation of excerpts from this email conversation.

Annelie to Ruth 11 October 2010

[…] I don't think I can get something together for the 16th, but I'll do it as soon as I can. It feels a bit awkward for me to compose without having seen your movements - I usually react to them in my composing. But I can put something together to start the process going, and hopefully there will be an opportunity for me to come and see how your work is coming along. […]

[…] I like the idea of found sounds, but can you explain some more why you want those sections? Is it just a feeling you have, or are they there to express something special?

Ruth to Annelie 21 October 2010

The dancers were very impressed with what you have done and I tried to communicate your ideas to them as best as I could!!! In terms of going forward.... I recorded some of them (need to do the rest) on my phone- probably wont be good enough quality and editing, talking about what there main frustrations, restrictions in there lives. I'll try and send it to you you may decide it's not the way you want to go. and it will definitely need editing.

I like the knotted frustrated sounds falling apart Idea […]

I filmed a bit of what we did on Sat. and our next rehearsal is next Saturday as I'm away this week so I'll send you everything at once next week.

Annelie to Ruth 21 October 2010

One thing first: Please dont record the rest!! I can't use your recordings because of the low quality anyway, and what is more - when you ask people to talk like this they usually do it best the first time when it's spontaneous. If you ask them to do it again they will usually try to copy what they said before, which is not as 'real' or they tell about something else that is not as engaging to them, which is better, but still not as good as the first associations. So if you don't mind it would be so much better if I can record them with good quality the first time they speak. I'll see what I can do in terms of studio and when we can arrange this!

Ruth to Annelie 22 October 2010

Ok I wont record them again. The only problem being is that I'm using their ideas for movement but I'll work round it! In terms of recording them would that mean they have to come over to you? That may be difficult...as they all work different hours etc. If recording them is going to cause extra problems we can re think about using voice- what ever you think.
Annelie to Ruth 23 October 2010

Of course we can rethink the whole voice idea: what is your idea behind that you want to use recorded voices? Maybe there is another way the same idea can be expressed? […]

I do understand that you use the ideas of the dancers for your work, I should've thought about that, sorry. It would be good to record them as soon as possible for that reason then. Just need to find a space for it.

Annelie to Ruth 27 October 2010

[…] I can come down to London and do the recording and hopefully see some of your choreography too?

Do you think you could send those films of it? If they are very big you could use filedropper or yousendit. It would be so inspirational for me to see your movements!

Ruth to Annelie 27 October 2010

I've attached the recordings that we did the other day. I like the rhythms of Akiyo's voice the recording 001 maybe some of it might be good enough quality to use and save you recording them I don't want to compromise your accompaniment, however because of what you said about recording the dancers properly. I like the organicness of this, however it can be cut and edited with the knots sound sporadically over the top maybe???

Annelie to Ruth 28 October 2010

Oh, and I just thought of another way to use the voices - if each dancer have his/her recording in a mobile, they can place the mobile on stage and play the recording back from it. The audience might not be able to hear exactly what they are talking about depending on the size of the venue, but might catch enough to get the essence of their stories. It could also make a nice 'composition' if all the voices were played at once. Of course the music will need to be silent at that point, but it might work out quite nicely.

Ruth to Annelie 28 October 2010

The idea about the mobiles I'm not so keen on only because it could potentially get messy and interfere with the choreographies. However I like the idea of possibly distorting the voice as you have sent me however maybe not quite as much if possible?

This week I'm hoping to record you some footage however on Sat out of the 5 dancers only 3 will be there because of work commitment and an injury that the other dancer has had. It's difficult at times getting everyone together!!! So I'll do the best I can.

Annelie to Ruth 28 October 2010

Yeah I can distort it less and make the distortion softer, but my idea here is to bring out and focus on the rhythm, so the words won't be audible. I'll send you a new version tomorrow.

Thank you, I really appreciate you filming the dancers. I am interested in what kind of movement you are using, so I don't mind that I don't get to see all the dancers or all of the dance - it's just to get a general idea and some examples.
Ruth to Annelie 1 November 2010

Here is some of the footage from what we did on Saturday. Some of it did not
record so there is not as much to send you as I thought I had but at least it should
give you some idea.

Had an Idea about overlapping voice recordings like a conversation/expressions
of feelings. Starting with Akiyo's recording which is distorted and becoming
clearer and more audible with the better quality recordings of the other dancers.
You are welcome to come along to a Sat. rehearsal.

Annelie to Ruth 7 November 2010

This is the state of the music right now, if you'd care to listen to it. The dissolution
of the beat is not the way it is supposed to be yet, so what comes after there is just a
sketch. There is also sounds missing here and there, and sounds that will be taken
out in other places. And the vocals are also just a sketch, will redo them (I know
they are frightfully out of tune... =) but just to give you a general idea.

What I would like you to consider is if the whole shape of the piece seems right -
should things start earlier/later or last longer/shorter. I would also like to hear what
you think about what I've done with the voice recordings.

Ruth to Annelie 8 November 2010

Wow! How clever are... you that is fab! The vocals are great too - let go!! If you
can build them up to a piercing scream!!!!! I've had lots of ideas listening to this
and from working with the dancers at last rehearsals about structure and here are
some of the small ideas that we have discussed. […]

2.5mins -4mins Akiyo's voice about "the past experience" etc.... (we decided the
distortion is not really ideal either we could layer it or like what you've done with
the end but the voice being louder her) However keeping what she's saying in clear
is quite important as the movement is being developed form this. Maybe we could
re-record this when you come down if your not happy with this.

Annelie to Ruth 8 November 2010

[…] I like the idea of some kind of scream at the end of the beat section - maybe
it's the scream that makes everything fall apart? […]

Yes, if the words are important, I want to re-record them. As they are now, they can
function if 'hiding' behind other sounds, but the more on their own they are, the
more important the quality gets.

Ruth to Annelie 9 November 2010

Yes, I definitely think the Scream could make everything fall apart!!! great! […]

I like the spoken text hiding behind other sounds at the end, I'd like this to stay in
at the end but I'd like it to be clearer earlier on. […]

In terms of recording there is lots of space and there are 3 dancers to record and
possibly me (I'm still deciding if I am going to dance in the piece) The piece is
being performed on the 2nd Dec. in a central London venue in Leicester Square
and so the 29th is our last rehearsal so the voices will be the absolute last thing
to be included.
Annelie to Ruth 20 November 2010

Thank you - I really enjoyed meeting you too! And it was very good to see how far you've come with the piece - I am sure it will be very good, it already is!

Annelie to Ruth 21 November 2010

Good news - a very nice man at a store in Nottingham (!) did something so my old computer works again!! Hooray!

So I've made you a mix of the music with (hopefully) the right structure. Let me know if I need to change anything. The new voices aren't in there yet, but I'll work on that tomorrow. Hope you like it so far!

Annelie to Ruth 24 November 2010

Here is another mix with the voices in - tell me if you think it works or if I should change them around. Actually, when I listened now again to the mix, your voice has disappeared! Sorry about that - I'll fix that tomorrow. This isn't the final mix yet, so still time left to do some things. =) I'll send you a new mix as soon as I find your voice! :-S

Ruth to Annelie 25 November 2010

I bet you feel really pleased with that! It's great. I've listened to it a few times and it has so many different levels to explore. I think this weekend is going to be hard work as there are a lot of changes I want to make to help it all fit together! Look forward to the finished product!
APPENDIX 2A: GREEN PROCESS notes

The process for Green came to a large extent to revolve around the idea of Beauty: what is Beauty and how do we find inner and outer Beauty? Both the piece and the process became a search for Beauty. The following excerpts from emails and journal notes aims to give a sense of this search as well as of the underdeveloped collaboration with al'Kamie.

Kirill to Annelie 29 October 2010

Choreographically I didn't get that far, just think would be good to have the right balance of beauty that naturally comes with Edward's movements, and the way it comes out of that distorted broken lines he can force himself to. The journey of one dancer which could save the world>!? :)

Annelie to Kirill 30 October 2010

I like the idea of 'the journey of one dancer which could save the world' - a journey that goes from the dark to the light (or indeed as you say from black to green). That sounds more like a process than sections to me, even though there of course could be 'stages' or sections in a journey too…

Kirill to Annelie 4 November 2010

But good news are Brian and Robyn from Alkamie joining our team, I am going to see the abilities of what can they do with projection programme this Saturday at 9pm. […] we going to do next joint rehearsal dedicated at early December, hopefully altogether. Please check them on www.alkamie.co.uk and please let me know what you think.

Rehearsal notes 8 November 2010

Difference between destructed beauty and distorted beauty? I mean how do you distort beauty to bring out the beautiful in it? Have a beautiful melody in a sound that distorts to bring out the overtones, then fade away the original, leave only the shimmer? Beauty? And Happiness? Spiegel im Spiegel?
I think to me beauty is something surprisingly simple (or do I mean happiness?) Beauty can be quite grande and powerful, moving to a tiny vibration. Sigh. How do you move away from the clichés? Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, the beholder of the beauty of a loved one. A loved one which is a bit scruffy and torn. Doesn’t that make the beauty more heart-warming? As if time has polished the wood to beauty, or weathered a face to beauty, or rust? Glass piano. Bells are beautiful. I like sonorous sounds that are distorting. Is that why cellos are beautiful, because they have a certain resistance? […] Beauty is powerful. Beauty is slow. Beauty has to have a content, a reason, otherwise it becomes superficial.

Annelie to Kirill 11 November 2010

If I remember correctly this is sort of a summary of the overall structure that we talked about last Monday:

- Birth (one kind of beauty)
- Destruction of this beauty
- Signals from the Earth
- Solution
- Beauty/happiness
I know we discussed a lot of other 'sections' or 'parts' or whatever, but could the above serve as a thematic structure that we could work within? And of course within each of the sections above, one could develop several methods/approaches/ideas.

Let me know what you think - suggest something else, if it doesn't fit your thinking right now.

To me it's very good to have a structure to work with so I know where my music 'is going'. […]

Another thing that is on my mind (apart from the idea of beauty that I'm constantly pondering...=) is if we have a lot of time for rehearsals with alKamie to mold the piece together at the end? In my experience, the more technical stuff you have, the more rehearsal time is needed.

Kirill to Annelie 22 November 2010
Edward is rehearsing with us on Saturday that is confirmed. Nothing is confirmed for Sunday, as we find out about the studios on Saturday.
Are you staying in London on Saturday eve, have you booked the tickets for Sunday to come?
That is because Alkamie people can do only Sunday, preferably eve...? Lot of people lot of problems..

Kirill to Annelie 23 November 2010
Here's how it is going to be with Edward, moves, not music :)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63oBG3TUaKU

Annelie to Kirill 23 November 2010
Thanks for the video - that is beautiful! I heard Mats Ek on Swedish radio today - he was talking about memory in the body. Quite interesting. Is this the way you see Edward in the beauty section at the end?

I also heard a Swedish physics professor saying exactly what you were saying about beauty: nature likes symmetry, but not perfect symmetry. If it's just a little off, it makes the whole thing so much more interesting. He spoke about matter and anti-matter, and why it is that there is more matter than anti-matter. I think it's almost the same idea I have with beauty being ALMOST perfect - there has to be a little human glitch in there somewhere to make it truly beautiful.

Kirill to Annelie 24 November 2010
Yes, beautiful lines it is about dancer I think in this case, I love Mats ek, and was just checking Cullberg.. :)
Exactly, sounds like a very good idea for the movement..hopefully it makes sense in terms for music, as well. What you think actually about beauty in your music?

Annelie to Kirill 24 November 2010
We could listen to the music I am making for this other choreographer - the first part of that is beautiful to me. I could use similar ideas for our piece.

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101 A video of Sylvie Guillem performing Wet Woman by Mats Ek.
Rehearsal notes 27 November 2010
Beauty=water
Wash your hands in running water
But larger
Hi-pitch water song?
Slow!!
He is looking for a kind of pure beauty, without complication. Harmony. To me beauty is always flawed — but I think Ed needs to not have that otherwise he'll start to behave flawed! Simplicity — pure, simple lines. Slow movement, but music like running water. Big, deep, sighing breaths. Noise? I think lyrical and poetic are key words here. Rather light, fairy…?! No bass.

Meeting with al’Kamie 28 November 2010
During this meeting we discussed and decided on a structure to work with, and al’Kamie showed drawings of their ideas for the piece. They had reinterpreted the black square into a cube, and wanted to use Conway’s idea of Game of life to create ‘The way to a brighter future.’ Their ideas made me feel I had to change the beginning into something more abstract to go with the visuals, but how could I do that when I wouldn’t be able to see them until very late in the process? It also gave me the idea that ‘The way to the brighter future = it isn’t one dancer that changes the world, it is what people do together.’

Annelie to Kirill 5 December 2010
I am so glad to be here in Visby - the studio here is excellent, and the surroundings are so calm and beautiful that I am feeling very inspired... [...] This I did today for the Beauty section — let me know what you think. My initial idea was to layer loads and loads of voices and wind/waves/other noisy sounds, but when I heard these on their own I really like the fact that they are simple and a bit flawed but very sincere.

Kirill to Annelie 5 December 2010
it is very beautiful.
And maybe if we have a lot of intense voices before in the piece that ‘ll be a great resolution! :) I did not find much difference between two tracks you have sent to me, but I'll try it out tomorrow with ED. [...] Thank you, impressive

Annelie to Kirill 6 December 2010
Yes, my idea is that there is a lot of noise (sorry, I know you don't like noise, but this will be reasonably BEAUTIFUL noise!!!) before the voice(s) as a contrast, so at the end the voices will seem pure and simple in an everyday life way. There might still be other sounds mixed in (like water, glass, bells etc.) but I have to try that out. Sometimes it's best not to complicate things.... =)

Annelie to Kirill 6 December 2010
[The piece] is based on sounds of noise and voice (and of course I will put other, pitched sounds in there as well, but they don't have the leading role. I am basing this on some research I read about what people consider to be the most beautiful sound/the most beautiful word in Sweden and in the UK. People seem to like words that contain fricatives, i.e sounds like f, v, s, sh, th etc... and sounds that are actually just noises: wind, waves, water etc. Of course this has more to do with the situation and the associations (and perhaps the movements?) than the actual sound, but still. So it makes sense to me to search for beauty among noises - there might be a wind hidden in there or a wave or...actually, do you know which sound the British found to be the most beautiful? The sound of wine poured from a bottle! Never would have guessed!

102 Undated journal note.
Kirill to Annelie 8 December 2010

Anyways, I worked with Ed today, lovely, Gabriela was photographing us. Music wise all good, tried two beautiful voices you sent first time, very good, but I like it better without Ed, so that's something to think of, maybe to add something(as you can't take anything away) so Ed can fit in..That's just an idea, to see what you think about it. I find the very first voices you sent to me very beautiful, simple and nice, but perhaps, as we still in process, would be nice to compare with something, mean if you have any other ideas, would be great to try them out.

Annelie to Kirill 8 December 2010

I'll add anything you like, but I need you to communicate to me what it is you are missing...! I can make a few guesses, and if something strikes you as maybe right, please let me know! Or if you can find any word to describe what you want!

-Are you missing rhythms that Ed can dance around?
-Are you missing a more developed, 'full' music? I mean if the beauty is the 'finale' of the whole piece, maybe the music should be not as simple?
-Do you really want something more 'purified' and not so everyday?

Since in my eyes the music is working, it's important that you tell me why it isn't in your eyes (ears). =)

Annelie to Kirill 13 December 2010

Here's a few suggestions with different combinations of sounds added to one of the Beautyvoices. Let me know if there's anything in there that fits with what you are hearing/seeing. Or if it doesn't - tell me why! Just tell me the feeling you get from them, and I'll figure out how to change them...

Journal notes 28 December 2010

Listened to Maja Ratkje yesterday and was very inspired! In order to do some NEW beauty, I must mix my 'Bach choir' with extended techniques (vocal) and my own electronic sounds. That way I can create a synthesis of human-technology-nature.

A theme through Black Square where the ice is reappearing and finally melts in the Beauty? The dry ice sounds for percussion becomes sustained in the beauty.

Annelie to Kirill 3 January 2011

I have some sketches for other sections of the piece that I could send you, but I don't know if you had time to listen to the music I sent you before Christmas yet? No point sending more music until you listened to that.. =)

Annelie to Kirill 4 January 2011

I'm back on Thursday, and I think we should meet up and talk about/listen to the music as soon as possible. I am feeling a little held back right now, since we should make some decisions to allow me to move on. I have suggestions for most of the sections that we can listen to, and also some suggestions for the beauty sections that we need to discuss.

Journal note 5 January 2011

Is the Beauty a steady-state like Bach, or is it a build from one voice to many? Oh yeah — the melting. Then I guess voice and ice? Dry ice —sustained ice — melted ice — water. Persistent voice — shorter, looped? Maybe the ice crackles as it melts? Drips, streams?
Annelie to Kirill 6 January 2011
We seem to have some kind of communication problem: why don't you reply to my
e-mails? Why don't you want to discuss my music? What can we do to resolve this?
If I have offended you in some way, I apologize.
If you think my music sucks, please let me know so I can compose it in some other
way...

Kirill to Annelie 7 January 2011
You did not offend me in any way and your music is great, just what I need for
these project.
Of course we will have the communication and I will try to do my best in the time
left, but don't take it personally if I can't reply on time.

Rehearsal notes 8 January 2011
Beauty: Start with ice, mix in voices (fricatives). Then as the ice melts, the voices
go from fricatives to watery notes. Are there any more extended techniques I could
use? Can I do the whole melting with voices only? The end is the continuation of
the beginning. The water: we must become what we are — that is peace, love,
beauty, hope and fragility!!

Annelie to Kirill 10 January 2011
The concert was very nice, thanks. Just ice and voice. Very beautiful. I so want to
use some icesounds in my music, but it is quite difficult to get them to sound right.
I am working on it though.

Annelie to Kirill 19 January 2011
Just a general reflection: when listening through the whole of the music, I feel that
maybe there is a bit too much darkness there? Maybe we should cut down the
Central section to two minutes after all? Or/and can the beauty sections be longer?
What do you think? You did get the music right?

Kirill to Annelie 20 January 2011
Well yes it's always better to have two versions, so yes it's a bit darky but not sure
need to see how works with Ed.

Kirill to Annelie 20 January 2011
I just listen to it again, lot of work. I think it would work, I think pretty much
everything, like how it develops towards the end,great.

Kirill to Annelie 30 January 2011
How do you feel about the last section? I did not have a certain ending yet, he just
spins into the wings.. with Alkamie we come up later on yesterday to try out and
project the green dot on his soul which would make him open the chest and start
the last section.. I dunno how to finish yet. What I am trying to say in the end is to
make audience think that all of them are same as performer, to feel that they have
their black square and only they know how to deal with them..
What do you think?
Annelie to Kirill 30 January 2011
I love the idea of projecting the green dot on his soul! (do you mean his chest? at least that's how I read it) that is a very strong image!

In my mind pops up the idea that perhaps Ed can hold the green dot in his hand and give it to the audience? And they can decide if they want to take it or not. But they do have the option.

Or can the audience also turn green? project the green dot on the audience (one at a time) too? Give it to them?
(I seem to be much into giving...)

If I get some other ideas, I'll be sure to pass them on to you.

Kirill to Annelie 30 January 2011
:) Great,we understand each other. Yes, it is into his chest. I also suggested that to Brian, to project to the audience, don't want to switch on the lights as have seen that too many times.Green dot is not possible to rotate the projection, so we have to come up with something else :) think we might call the piece green, do we need dot??? :) How were you planning to end your music material?

Annelie to Kirill 30 January 2011
Yes - I like Green! We don't need the Dot - it is better without it. […] The music can end either by getting 'thinner' - just using higher and higher frequencies, until it ends in a shimmer (hopefully). Or it can just end at the end of an abstracted song phrase (what I have done in the music is to 'melt' or 'dissolve' the voice into just floating frequencies. The melody can still be heard vaguely in these frequencies, but in a sort of transcended form. At the rehearsal I kept the transcended melody in the music, but it can be taken out to leave just the high frequencies. Depending on the end. Upwards movement seems more appropriate than downwards at least.

Yes, I thought it would be difficult technically to rotate the projection, but it was worth a try. Also I feel it can be quite aggressive pointing the light at the audience, at least if it's white. Green could work better. Can we go all 'hippie' and give flowers to the audience, hahaha. They could rain down from above, hehe. Maybe not. We should give them little black squares that they can open up and find mirrors of themselves inside... Mirrors? (I'm just brain storming now...) That's been done too, hasn't it? Can we film the audience before the performance and project them on Edward? (hahaha, Brian is going to hate that idea). Or do we ask the audience to sing along in the melody? Nah...better stop now, ideas keep getting worse...

Annelie to Kirill 30 January 2011
actually, if Ed has a mirror he CAN turn the projection around and point the green dot to the audience....just a thought.

Kirill to Annelie 30 January 2011
thats a great thought, not sure when + how we'll get a mirror though,good thought
Kirill to Annelie 30 January 2011

yeah, last section I think you should start, maybe with the green dot appearing, but def before Ed. Also if you consider to do the end depending from what we do, would be great tp kind of get into crescendo, as we hav found the solutions in the end, problem is in us and we know how to deal with it .. bit of silence is always good i made a poster can't attach it to you, hotmail sucks. silence rules.

Annelie to Kirill 30 January 2011

not sure whre you want the crescendo - the way I see it, the transition before the final beauty is the crescendo - that is the last struggle, or resistance before you find the solution. When you find the solution=the Beauty you just enjoy it and float along in it...

I fully support the last silence. The beauty should start in silence. I like that. We'll get there.

Get a Gmail account!

Annelie to Kirill 30 January 2011

or do you mean that the crsecendo is because we are increasingly happy in the end? Perhaps I could add stuff to make it a crescendo then? Don't know what to add though, have to think about that…

Kirill to Annelie 30 January 2011

i meant crescendo as progression as he developing the choreography of change of the world..? it could go diminuendo..either way, not sure??.

not on the same level..is it clearer

Annelie to Kirill 30 January 2011

no - do you mean that the last section, the beauty section should be a crescendo? Or the whole piece?

The beauty section could go diminuendo by going higher and higher in frequency, leaving out the transcended voice - if that could work? ending in the shimmer?

alKamie to Kirill and Annelie 31 January 2011

Hi Kirrill & Annelie

Thanks for ending ideas… so here are ours based on what you two have said… we would like to be able to do some of Annelie’s suggestions but time constraints really stop us… same with a lot of Kirrill’s suggestions… we could do them but not in the time available…

[…] the ivy would start to grow from the centre of Ed as if it has come from the melted blocks…. as Beauty section starts… then it continues with ivy growing and Edward moving…. Perhaps ending could be Edward moving off stage by going down stage and into audience (through audience & out front of house doors) as ivy continues to grow… (or as ivy shrinks to green dot)…

Kirill to Annelie and alKamie 1 February 2011

If Ed is going away into the auditorium,I am starting to think about the bow as no bows at all.. it could invite people to see what is happening in theatre ’s foyer which they meet themselves only maybe this way they will understand our message>>!?! or it could be something very artistic in the foyer continuation of the performance...!??
Annelie to Kirill 1 February 2011
Also the Finale - I don't really have any material to build a crescendo there, and also it goes against the idea that the Beauty is simple and obvious (when you've found it).

Annelie to Kirill 8 February 2011
I have tried to put the melody back into last section, but it just doesn't work. It would mean I have to redo the whole structure, and there is not time for that. I'm sorry that I can't give you what you need, but I guess we just have very different ideas of beauty... =) The section is beautiful to me, and I don't think I can do more than that...
I'm sure the end will be beautiful anyway. =)

Kirill to Annelie 8 February 2011
Which section is beautiful to you?

What about the beauty section, we talked about it a little bit, are you changing/adding anything to it?

Annelie to Kirill 8 February 2011
The last section = the Beauty section is the one I am talking about, that is beautiful to me. That is the one that I tried to add the melody (that was the Beauty section before) but it just doesn't work. So I am not adding anything to it, but I am making the transition clearer (I hope), so that it will go from percussive sounds to flowing sounds, in what in my head is a 'melting of the ice'. I am adding as much crescendo as possible, but a melting isn't really a crescendo, so it goes a bit against the whole idea. If I had known earlier I could've made a crescendo, but in my mind the last section has always been a resolution, a coming home, a release, so i haven't thought like that at all…

Kirill to Annelie 8 February 2011
Ok coming home is great, we just need to find where is the home for Edward and try to make the audience to believe it..? if he'll go into the foyer it would appear as the bar's alcohol would solve the problems and it is the necessary change required'! :)) i'll think of something

Annelie to Kirill 8 February 2011
I see what you mean... we don't need to tell the British to search for the solution in the bar do we.... =)

Home is where the heart is, but I sort of like the idea that he wanders off into the world to change it when he has found his inner beauty. If it could be clearer that the beauty comes from within Edward somehow? (reminds me of a quote from le petit prince: "One sees clearly only with the heart. What is essential is invisible to the eye."
Only it's not that easy to make people see with their hearts...

No, I don't have any good ideas. I'll keep thinking - let me know if you have any random ideas that might trigger some other thoughts in my mind!

Kirill to Annelie 10 February 2011
I don't know how to finish, all versions discusses doesn't feel right..

Annelie to Kirill 10 February 2011
The ending: is it possible to put into words what you are looking for, or what isn't there, what's missing?
Kirill to Annelie 10 February 2011

What is missing there is no justification for him to go to the floor
stay on the floor
come up from the floor and do his last dance.

Only question i have why>?

As to last section itself it is very plain and measured, but not harmonic and balanced. Basically boring we are missing some sort of sparkle!
I will try to change spacing tonight with him and add something. But the best thing would be just before the end to collapse the whole thing! Lights on, full lights or just projection lights on him, music sharp off. The idea the whole thing went back into his chest shrunked back! and pulsating..? tell me

Annelie to Kirill 10 February 2011

No I agree, the why is missing. To me it seems like he isn't struggling long enough. The way you did it when we rehearsed at the Place, it was a longer 'final struggle' and then it makes sense that he is giving up - that's why he is going down to the floor in my head. The way I see it, the whole second transition is about this resistance to change that you have just before the real change is happening. Both the music and the visuals are quite powerful, so maybe he could just fight against it and then give up? And as any change it doesn't change until it changes. I mean it makes sense for him to wait for the change to happen lying on the floor. I still miss the green dot on his chest, to make clear that he isn't changing because the music is changing or the visuals, but because he is changed on the inside. If we can't do the green dot - is there another way to make that clear? I also feel that the last section should be in sharp contrast to the struggle - to me the ivy is growing too quickly in the beginning, it should be more gentle, like it is when sprouts are starting to grow. Small changes, slow changes. I think all three of us are doing different things, that's why the end is not harmonic. I like the slow pulsating - can the ivy dissolve into just pulsating green light?

The music already is collapsing at the end, but if there is a distinct cue for it, I can cut it suddenly too. Risk is that it will sound as something gone wrong, and it is a bit sensitive as where we cut it - it should ideally happen at a peak moment, not at the 'breathing points' in between. We can try it though.

I also like the idea of shrinking/growing - we haven't used that a lot - different zoom levels or scales of things.

What do you think?

I'm sorry it's too late to change the beauty music now, but I think it would work with the pulsating idea.

Kirill to Annelie 10 February 2011

Yes, we;ll be good, thank you if you can help. Not sure I can add struggle, but make sense, maybe he'll go on the floor like pushed.

End,already better even if to simplify what we have as ivy, at least to get a last dot. Agree if we cut should be very clear, peak and then lights on a silence for a sec and then//? some sort of action dont' want to make him run or bow..just spread the arms wide smiling?
dunno sounds better already

Annelie to Kirill 10 February 2011

I like that - pushed down to the floor, trying to get up but being pushed down again and again until exhausted...
We are talking about a cut in the music before the beauty right? Because the beauty music doesn't make any sense to cut - it ends the beauty abruptly which isn't the idea. Ideally the beauty music should never stop! (yeah...in my dreams, lol)

When the ivy has started growing, maybe Edward can see that and see that it comes from him, smile about it and then dance his final beauty dance? The spreading of the arms is nice too - maybe he ends it that way? Or sits down to watch the beautiful word he has created?

Kirill to Annelie 10 February 2011
confusion. I am talking about the last section, finally, last thing, just to cut everything and switch projector lights on himmmmmmm?
rest is clear

Annelie to Kirill 10 February 2011
Ok, now I understand. It doesn't make sense to cut a music that has almost ended anyway - there aren't any peaks in the last beauty music, it is a state of mind only. There will be no other effect of that other than sound like it went wrong. And even if it is timed with lights and stuff - why kill the beauty we created? To show that it isn't possible to change the world? It was all a joke? It doesn't matter what we do? No, I disagree to that!

Kirill to Annelie 10 February 2011
ok, how would you suggest to expand the beauty then? show the endless opportunites/ please! :))

Annelie to Kirill 10 February 2011
Hahaha, you're too grand! I am satisified with the simple things in life - too see beauty in the small things. It doesn't have to be expanded! In my mind I have had an image of sitting by the water dipping your feet in it in the sunset - and that is perfect beauty to me. It doesn't take grande gestures for us to change the world!! =)
I have thrown out a few ideas, but I can keep thinking. But my feeling is that you want something completely different from how I am imagining things - as simple and pure, perhaps naive.
APPENDIX 2B: GREEN SKETCH OF BEAUTY SECTION, 3 VERSIONS

Beauty section version 1: the first sketch.
Beauty section version 2: sketch from the residency in Visby.
Beauty section version 3: the final sketch.
APPENDIX 3A: 20.12 PROCESS NOTES

20.12 was composed to a video recording of the finished piece. I only met with Kirill once to discuss the music. All other communication was done on Facebook, from where the following excerpts are collated.

Kirill to Annelie 28 June 2011

Ok, about the piece it started off as the piece about balance in relationship, but end up else where as not finished. So therefore let me redirect this question to you, what did it tell you, what is the obvious line in the piece?

Annelie to Kirill 28 June 2011

Yes to me the piece is about relations too - between people and between couples and perhaps between densities and energies... hmm, perhaps I mean some kind of spatial balance... difficult to say in words it is abstract. I see the odd chap who is trying to fit in, I see how people are drawn to each other and repelled by each other - forces between people that you might or might not be aware of. I see the guy on the floor who is following his sexuality, mindlessly and very funny. To me there is no one narrative, because there are so many things going on at the same time [...]

A question back to you then, that I surprisingly not have never asked you: what do you want from the music in your choreographies? Why is it there? I know the obvious answers to this, but I think it is individual between different choreographers. I also know you said once that sometimes the choreography is better without music (and I do agree). So IF you choose to use music - why? In general - and why in this piece specifically?

Kirill to Annelie 2 July 2011

yes, so I started off as the balance in relationships, relationships with anything and how balance affects it, but I didn't get a chance to rafinate it in the end so some bits aren't clear.

Annelie to Kirill 2 July 2011

agree - it isn't always clear, but I don't mind that, as long as I get images that spark my imagination, and I do, as I told you
what is tricky for me is when there are many things going on at once on stage - if I add music too, there's an additional thing going on which might confuse more than clear up. That's why I asked what do you want the music to do for the dance.
...apart from make it look good... =)

Kirill to Annelie 2 July 2011

you mean why do I choose to use music in this piece? Coz it meant to be with the music from the start, we just get into misunderstanding and stuff. Therefore you can see that some of the movement is dependent and something is missing. Then I can see that there is some lyricism missing, which, especially at this stage could be filled with the sound and melody, maybe a line of melody that broken and then opening again, but no, I want you to tell me what you think the music should be, I just think that there also should some melody coming out, maybe some old tracks.
Another thing from how I see the structure is whether seasons change Autumn Winter Spring and Summer.. or few seasons only, that's what I wanted for the lights, or maybe development in human society, starting from 11 century to present days, basically taking few signature melodies from each century or what could be associated with it finishing with Lady Gaga (only joking)
Annelie to Kirill 2 July 2011

[...] as I understand it you want music to be
1. support for the dancers, like cue points or 'energy take-offs'
2. bring lyricism
3. mood as in the different seasons
4. a sense of time, as in which century, where in history we are.

it is main things like that I want to know - how the music can help the choreography. Can you think of more (let's talk about this piece specifically)

What's the connection between the seasons and the balance in relationships idea? Do the different seasons have different 'weights' to signify shifts in balance? Or what is the connection between the development in human society and the balance idea? I think there need to be connections, if the piece has too many disparate ideas, it will be unclear.

Kirill to Annelie 2 July 2011

ok seasons has a natural balance as soon as one season dries out another replaces it, organically. To show as opposition to disbalance in any human relationship and question why is it so different! 1 example: i thing it should be something at the begining just before the scream, which breaks the balance of whatever you were doing with the music and it could be nothing for a while, or slow build up to the next point. Yes, I think the main thing is bring some action in places where is 'boring' or fill the gaps! 2 lyricism I think one line( like I thought with the lights) that goes throughout the piece is missing something that going to unite and make and understanding of that being one thing. Just thinking that melody could help that changes and develops, like humanbeings did. Or maybe a first couple filipino girl and curly guy they also finishing the piece maybe to attach some lyrics to them

3 mood, colour is changing, right 4 sense of time is understandable by the costumes already =) but I think i meant more progression, like once the balance is broken it is getting worse, like pushed by pendulum. or in relationships once you start fighting or being upset its getting worse till something resolves.?

connection between development and balance. Its inevitable, the piece performed by humans and it is about their relationships, the balance of it. And we cannot escape unescapable, 1 we are growing older, the whole society is developing somewhere, time, we not controlling it;2 our life is dictated by the change of seasons, whether and some unknown nature powers.. so that would bring more reality

so basically balance in relationship in humans life, how they interacting between themselves, what is affecting them, what they scared of...?

Annelie to Kirill 2 July 2011

Hmmm - I don't think there are any gaps! Perhaps you have a different energy than I have, but I rather experience your choreography as lacking in resting points - it is always on the move to somewhere else, in my perception. So it is difficult for me to fill in gaps, because I don't feel them. But I can choose which parts I emphasise and not.

And no, I can't see that some movement is dependent on the music and some is not. How close a relationship do you want between the music I am making and the choreography? What I did with the Global Contest piece was a very close connection. Or it could be totally free. [...] 

I understand your thinking about the melody. I don't always use melodies in my music, so I'll have to think about something else with the same function.
The key word is balance then - balancing between people and their feelings, balance between the circle of the seasons, and a shift in balance between different historical times. This sounds to me a lot like the Green ideas of different zoom levels (or microcosm, macrocosm) - the same processes but on different scales.

**Annelie to Kirill 2 July 2011**
by the way, is really the change in seasons that different from changes in balance in relations? maybe it feels like that in the moment when you are in disbalance, but in the long run - isn't there a dynamic in relations too, similar to that of the seasons? What feels like a breakdown in a relationship can be just a phase in the circle? the difference being that we can end a relationship and choose another 'circle'.

**Kirill to Annelie 2 July 2011**
[...] Good you already developing the choreography with your comments about seasons, well done@!started!

**Annelie to Kirill 2 July 2011**
Oh, I do feel really inspired now -thank you for that! It will take quite some time though, since there is a lot of music to compose, and I am involved in other projects. But hey, what's the hurry right? [...] But actually - do you want the feeling of the music to be more connected like Spring in the plain or more free?

**Kirill to Annelie 2 July 2011**
i am not sure, perhaps a bit of both, or it all can come together in the end. But certainly it has to complement each other in one way or another... and unfortunately I can't be much help there, as this time I am done my bits already :)))

**Annelie to Kirill 2 July 2011**
yes, you're probably right - a bit of both is good. Yes, I know - it is very interesting for me to compose to something that is already finished, as a contrast to developing something together. In some ways it is easier, because I can have an overview of the whole piece, which i can't when starting from scratch. In other ways it is more fun to work together... but I'm sure we can do that too, some other time. We should get a residency somewhere - that was an amazing way to work with Angelica, I want to do that again.

Can I decide for myself where the changes between the seasons are, or have you decided on those already? Would be good to know where if you have.

**Kirill to Annelie 2 July 2011**
well its just blends naturally yes you can, if you can't decide let me know –i'll come up with a plan.. exciting, new breath!:))

**Annelie to Kirill 21 July 2011**
I am going to be at Rambert on Tuesday the 26th, and wonder if you fancy meeting up for a coffee or so? I can play you some (very rough) sketches of music for the Linbury piece if you want to, or we can just have a chat (I like to talk, as you well know... =)

**Annelie to Kirill 27 July 2011**
Hey - just wanted to say thanks for meeting up with me! It was good seeing you, and your comments on my music were really useful to me. I feel I'm back on track now with the music. =)
Annelie to Kirill 24 October 2011
Here's the link to Experiment 20.12 with the not quite finished music, but as it is right now:
[…]
Let me know if there are places that you don't like, and I'll see how I can change them. There are also four seasons in there - can you tell where they are? =)

Annelie to Kirill 23 November 2011
Did you listen to the music I composed for he Linbury piece?
It is too late to change it for my masters now. But if I have time later I can perhaps change it if you have opinions on it. I don't feel it is finished yet.

Kirill to Annelie 29 November
Hi Annelie, yes I watched it, now this is my second time. But I am not sure, correct me if I am wrong there are only like two places where is the music playing for a while, the rest are just sounds? Or something is not working? From my perspective, I would add some sounds progressively widening and overweighing the choreography 5 minutes from the begining all the way almost to the end, (when the 1st +last couple start to form/thom=estela/, that could be something like crescendo or escalation of one particular sound and opposite idea when the same couple are dancing in the end), then starting from 8minutes from the top, music could help to understand the changes of people coming in and out of stage.But this is just an opinion—if that is how you see it, great, the bits you added sounds to were perfect placing+sound quality and quantity. What you think about what I think?;)

Annelie to Kirill 29 November
Hehe - the 'just sounds' - that is my music! I make music from sounds - I guess you mean they don't sound musical to you. fair enough. I would be very interested in hearing which bits you hear as music!

My basic idea is that the sounds (at least the abstract ones - not the outdoors scenic sounds) represent the air. This air/sounds are set in motion by the dancers and their different energies. I was inspired by a movement workshop I did once, where I felt the air could feel totally different depending on how you move. Maybe it is a daft idea, because maybe it doesn't help the dancers at all? I'm not a dancer so I don't know - that's why I need your opinion.

What I have done to tackle the complexity of the choreography is to focus on Thom and Estela - their sections all have voice in (except for the Estela's first solo). The voice is there to make the scenes more 'human' and to (hopefully) express the stages of their growing relationship (like for example when they are just standing - that to me is the winter, where their relation is dead and frozen. I have made music there that to me is cold and still.

I do have a big problem (as perhaps you have too?) with the section from say 14'30 to 18'30 (when Thom and Estela come on stage). There is so much going on there, that it is impossible for the music to follow it all. I guess this is the place where you would need help from the music? But I don't know how to do that. Any suggestions?
The sections with scenic sounds (or outdoor atmospheres) are there because they make a contrast to the other sounds (what I call music) in that they are concrete and external, while the other sounds might be the air, or might be internal sounds, but very abstract. I also feel that they work without quite knowing why... It's something about relations between places too, isn't it? And perhaps between inner and outer space?

Overall to me, the music is lacking in dynamics and spatialisation - it is too flat both in terms of loud and quiet and in terms of close/distant sounds. Do you agree?

Kirill to Annelie 30 November 2011
Haha, no sounds are perfect with this work, music wouldn't work there. Good idea about air, but would be gr8 to feel the difference between the nothing and air, so we are understanding it, not guessing..:)well in this piece maybe..?
yes, suggestion just put some sounds on, I love the begining once, something distracting and confusing!:) 
Yes, dynamics and the line going throughout the piece!, but it makes much more sence now that you have explained the basics, cool

Annelie to Kirill 30 November 2011
best suggestion ever: just put some sound on - hahaha! I'll remember that when you ask me for advice with your choreography: just put some movement in, lol...

Hmmm, how can there be no air? this is why I have problems putting in silence - if the sounds are air, the dancers will suffocate if I take it away... Or do you mean that the outdoor sections are the nothings? and they should be clearer? if so, yes I agree. maybe I should also make Thom-Estela sections more like music? I remember you wanted something lyrical - I guess it's in those sections?

what about the line going through the piece - is it the dynamic line you mean? or is it some other line you are missing - some kind of development?

Kirill to Annelie 30 November 2011
I meant air is very abstract, especially if you trying to make us hear it, so therefore maybe an idea is to give us a comparison, as to loud noise/ lot of action and nothing..
The line going through the piece I meant something that unites the whole piece, whether you choosin it to be a theme, a sound, a base something that makes people think that it is the same piece throughout the piece..

Annelie to Kirill 30 November 2011
Ah, ok, I understand - yes. It might be just a question of dynamics - the air is too loud now (ha - I like the idea of loud air though...) Maybe more contrasts too is good.

I think I do have a line through the piece - the air sounds are reappearing and the voice ties the Thom/Estela sections together. I am sure I can make it clearer though.
APPENDIX 3B: 20.12 FORM SKETCH, 2 PAGES
APPENDIX 4A: DIETRO PROCESS NOTES

Unlike the other collaborations, the work with Dietro was discussed very little over email, in fact discussed very little at all. The process notes therefore consists mainly of my notes from rehearsals, meetings and the residency. The work-in-progress performance of Dietro is made up of the intro movements and the Ritual and Feedback sections rearranged into this version of the piece.

Rehearsal notes 12 March 2011

For the Dietro project Angelica wants something that is more set and more based on a beat than the improvisations we have been doing so far. I think we can find a middle way between beat based music and free improvisation, where there are cue points to guide the performance through its shape, and maybe also a background sound track where we can orient ourselves. Perhaps we work with the idea of rooms? Combined with gestures and improvisations?

We discussed the use of computer and Angelica wanted loop-layers, which I also want to a certain extent. But I don’t want it ‘hard-looped’ into a beat, because I feel very restrained by a beat like that. We decided to try with my random-voice-sample patch and rhythmical sounds. It worked quite well, but the patch needs some modifications: I would like to be able to control delay time and feedback, so the pulse can be varied and so that the layers can be faded out. We decided to try this next time.

Rehearsal notes 11 April 2011

[…] We then worked on the last scene of Dietro, where Angelica wants me to manipulate her while singing at the same time. It was very difficult to sing and do movement at the same time - it seems to me like the singing became too simple because I couldn’t focus on it. I think in the performance I have to have a structure for the ‘song’ - know where I am going, because I can’t do both things at once.

Movement is more emotional than singing! It seems to me that feelings are tied up in the body, and when you do certain movements, you automatically connect with the emotions tied up in them. This then sets off an emotional process, that does not happen when I am singing at all. It was really useful to have this experience of doing movement, to understand the process of the dancer, which is totally different from the musician’s. At least to me. Can I find the same sort of process in the singing? Does this mean that I can’t use the voice as a mediator between body and music? […] The point is of course how I can draw on this experience in my work as a composer and as a performer. Do I have to dance my music?

Notes from discussion of the music for Dietro 12 May 2011

1. Carpet of sounds + voice recorded (Nothing?)
   Light melody, long note, internal atmosphere
   Poem (live? Word improv while walking onto stage)
2. Frrrr-disturbing (flashes) a sound rhythm more pure (like sines?) beat?? Pulse. Voice part of the rhythm.
   Pure and clear from the beginning. Strobo music synced? Or noisy?
   Fade-in noise. Comes alive. Flashes as photo flashes - people are in Big Brother..
   Want to be watched, people can’t be themselves.
   Accellerando in the flashes not in the music. Development of the reality TV show.
   People want to be seen.
   Build up the dance frame by frame. People watching. Sense of sound of people.
3. Intimate dance, ritual (tea ritual), tender, gentle, soft, positive, slow pulse, repetitive not melancholic - HAPPY! Tea ceremony. Goes into Feedback music. During the ritual I place speakers in a circle. Spectral drone
4. Feedback play around brings the circle alive - creates the wheel. Happier. Brings the speakers to life with voice? Breath voice into the speakers? How????????
5. The wheel Happiness grows into roller coaster happiness. With the speed of movement the sound distorts. The voice will be distorted too. Voices - surround. Mot vinden - violin distorted. Metal sounds. Happiness goes astray. Builds until it collapses.

6. Duet - just voice
   Ritual - repetitive
   Sound effects archive photo flash! Maybe not…. =(

Perhaps the internal atmosphere changes into a people atmosphere - the voices, our voices are sampled and treated and layered into the internal atmosphere, as memories stored inside. These voices can then come forward from the shadows and become the people that are watching the flashes. People who can’t be themselves - how do they sound? Artificial? Autotuned? Oh - that soundtoys effect when the pitch is always the same? Maybe the whole flashes music is appearing from the shadows - a front layer and a back layer, where sounds are switching between front and back?

Ritual with two tempi? One of the NMG2 and one of the bells? Two layers. Is it always two layers?

Ritual - one repeated note. ‘trip notes’ D#-E and F#-G. Think of a development - perhaps towards density and away from it, with a simultaneous spread in pitch or rise or fall?

Residency diary 1 June 2011
First day in the studio. Setting up and creating of the Ritual. Technical problems - noise in the speakers, computer crash due to power dip - iiiiiiiiihhhh!

I did find sounds to work with though - rusty bells created in Logics Sculpture, gestural feedbacky sounds from Nord Modular, and a layer of spectral drone. None of these sounds are especially unique (perhaps except the rusty bells) so I need to work on them to make them special. Maybe add something or process the sounds. […]

I worked totally from the concept only - the bells from the association from the ritual, tea ceremony. The gestural sounds because they are gestural and ‘dancy’ and the spectral drone because I had had that idea some time and forgotten why. But I tried it and I think it can work out very nicely, if I make the drones come alive. One way is to choose pitches that interact with each other - another way is to add some kind of modulation and perhaps distortion. What about some gentle amplitude change and a distortion? Or so? […]

In general, this is the optimal way to create music with dance - dance studio, dancer improvising, me improvising and testing sounds in a great sound system….ahhhh!! I am going to enjoy this as much as I can!

Residency diary 2 June 2011
[…] I also started working on what is to become a energetic beat in the end. This section is a crescendo and accelerando, but I want the accelerando to be in the movement and the light, not in the music. I think I can work with subdivision and added intensity instead to create the same feeling of accelerando. I want to create the beat out of high pitch sounds, voice sounds, and then finally towards the end bass drum and bass to give it extra energy. […]

I am not clear what this section is about - but it is very repetitious and seem to be about getting trapped in daily routine. Also en element of not being allowed to be who you are, vanity to be someone else, perhaps longing for something else? […]

If the Ritual is about tension, this section is more about energy. The repetition I am not so sure that I want to emphasise - I am not keen on repetition as a structuring model myself, but how do I relate to it?
Residency diary 4 June 2011

Yesterday we worked on the intro - me and Angelica doing voice to a background of internal sounds. Angelica is speaking very low so it has to be something that doesn’t interfere with her voice. Today I think I found the sound I need - just one sound (! Oh how not Annelie!) very moving actually! I am pleased! The sound carries all qualities: the internalness, the cylinder feeling, the wound, the fragility. It uses a lot of random formant filtering, so it will work well with voices, and I think that also gives it some kind of human voice quality, along with how it moves. Great sound. Just need to put it together now into how long? Perhaps six minutes. […]

One of the beats, or beat parts I found was a light and happy beat that I think I can use in the Wheel section. This section is a bit quirky, because it is supposed to start out in a happy mood, but then go astray and freak out and collapse. That is difficult to do. Angelica is also talking about metal sounds - I tried to find something good in both NMG2 and Alchemy but failed. I think I have to go back to the Human Knot and search for sounds there. I think I had some metal there. Or record some. Also need to think about how I get from the ritual to the wheel….

Residency diary 6 June 2011

Day off yesterday which was a good choice - I am much more focused today.

Started working on the Wheel, but Angelica is injured, so we did not get very far. But I did get a general sense of the movements she is making - round, circular. Being trapped in the wheel, even if it starts out happily. I do have a problem finding happy sounds, but did get some accelerando, ritardando knotted sounds and some happy whistling that might work. Maybe I should check which of my voice sounds make Angelica spin? I think there were some in the feedback rehearsal too, that were sort of round. The upward spirals are sort of round. Check how I made them and see if they can be used for the wheel.

What about the knotted sounds turning into bouncing glasses? Yes, and they fit with the feedback too - high pitch glasses. Hmmmm. How to connect it though, if I’m doing the feedback live? Well, cheat and do some of the feedback recorded… =).

Residency diary 8 June 2011

Didn’t write anything yesterday - was very tired and it was a difficult day. I had big problems with the intro and misunderstood what Angelica wanted. I also felt that the whole intro was wrong and it made me nervous that I would have to do something I don’t want to do. Also I couldn’t get a clear picture of what is going to happen in the intro, and the transition to the Flashes. Angelica wanted a silence in the transition which is really not what I feel is a good idea. I had wanted to continue the music and gradually build up the flashes. After long discussions, we settled on a good compromise, where the music makes an ‘active, living’ silence and we make something of the transition - it is where we separate from each other. I have realised that the two layers in the music is Angelica and me - I am the shadow, the ‘background noise’ that sometimes steps forward and intervenes.

We are still working on the Intro - it needs to have a clearer development from very short sounds to the poem. It also sounds timid in the video - we need to find some kind of security in what we are doing. The transition involves me doing movement, which is fun but difficult. I need to practice and just get in shape physically… =(.

Today we spent half the day sorting technical issues - I’ve had to sample rate convert the whole session to 44.1kHz, because my MBP doesn’t seem to be able to cope with 96kHz. Then the video camera... sigh. I SO do not want to do video. It is a mess!!! Get someone to do the filming if it is to be properly filmed. Emma?

I do however have a sketch of the Ritual now - except that the beginning should be with just C5 notes for quite a while (I can record that with the video) and that it needs restructuring to dramatise Angelicas choreography. And don’t make endings! The sections should lead into each other, not end!!!! The darker sections should be denser, lower in pitch, perhaps more complex spectral drones (made by pitch shifting one of them) and perhaps the sine tones could be more like electric guitars with more distortion there? And is the whole section too sleazy? What do I do about that?
Residency diary 9 June 2011
Oh so many other things - this was a long day. And with the tiredness came a creative crisis: what am I doing? Why am I making sleazy music and singing, when I really want to make sharp music and voice sounds? Is it that the I is getting in the way for the Art? Yes, I have a certain way of expressing myself, and there will be a conflict when art demands that I express myself in a way that I can’t, or am unfamiliar with, or uncomfortable with. But how far can I go away from myself? That is the big question I guess…. All of this brought about because Angelica thinks the beginning is too aggressive. Perhaps it is, but I didn’t feel it was. I’ll have to listen again - perhaps she is right. But my expression is aggressive. Would you ask a noise musician to do something a little less noisy? Maybe it is just a nuance, but I still feel Angelica wants me to be more nice and girly than I am. I just have to resist that. Listen to Maja Ratkje, who also has an aggressive, noisy expression. I think she does something a bit softer though? Which piece is it where she is doing voice only - long notes? Heard it recently….hmmm…..

Think I need some alone time to think through this…. 

Residency diary 10 June 2011
Thinking about the structure of the Ritual. I would like the single notes to go on for as long as possible, but the whole piece is about 9-10 minutes, which means that the three parts are about 3 minutes each. It seems too long to sustain the single notes for 3 minutes, even if I do variations of them. But if the first section is single notes and then added other notes, still with only Sculpture, in the second section I add the shadows and in the third section I add the Strange World, and the darker notes? Hmm, I don’t think Scratchy bells alone will be enough. What elements do I have:

- Scratchy bells, with or without scratch, single note
- Scratchy bells added notes
- Scratchy bells lower pitch
- Scratchy bells higher density
- Strange World, soft or increasingly hard
- Shadows following scratchy bells
- Shadows going off in pitch
- Shadows being bent upwards

I think the piece should start with a bell sound in lower pitch than C5, because it will more give a feeling of ritual. Test the limit for how long one note can sustain interest, before start adding octaves and scratches. Possibly there could also be added high frequency loops? After the Ritual comes the Feedback section, so there should be increasing amounts of feedback in the music. The mood goes from an intimate, repetitious ritual to something that is not nice anymore, something you are fighting - hence lower pitch and more Strange World gestures. How is the second section different from the first? Perhaps the second section is the one with really high pitch? So it goes from middle pitch - high pitch - low pitch. From sparse - denser - sparser but more texture?

Variations on a single note:
Scratch, no scratch
Length
Timbre
Amplitude
More or less noisy
Spatial placement?
Maybe I vary the attack portion? Sine tone, different kinds of clubs, strikes, what?
Perhaps a vibrato or another modulation on the sustain portion?
A subtle rise/fall in pitch?
That thing in Sculpture where it ‘boings’ due to loose string?

When there is no way of sustaining interest for the single note anymore, look for a reason to bring in the shadows. Probably a scratch can become a shadow.
Residency diary 13 June 2011

Worked on the Ritual today - think I found a good structure, with the one C3 as a backbone through the whole piece. It is quite set with the movements now - hope that is going to work with Angelica. I think she does want to set the choreography with the music though. What I need to do next is to remove everything that is ‘ugly’ and sticks out. Might also have to add some more deep notes, but as it is now, the section ends in high notes and I really feel them. Darker notes for more pain is quite a cliche, so I hope this is going against this (even though painful high notes are a cliche too, I guess). I am following the three parts of the section quite strictly now - hope that works. I like that when Angelica is getting convulsions, the music emphasises this with the feedback notes - there is definitely a connection here. The feedback feels like her tension.
APPENDIX 4B: DIETRO ORIGINAL PROPOSAL
(WORKING TITLE DERRIÈRE NOUS)

Derrière Nous (Behind us)

SYNOPSIS

"Behind us" is an idea based around the rhythm that reflects every our action, every movement, every sigh, a beat inside, this rhythm that slowly fades.
Privacy is invaded by an uncontrollable frenzy.
The habit leads us and imprisons us, as within a wheel, such as small guinea pigs that run continuously, with an awareness of the emptiness and oblivion of reason.
Then suddenly everything stops.

SCENIC ROUTE (in creation)

The show will start in the room without light, two performers reached the stage slowly and the public will follow only their voices to the stage. A light at the bottom enhances the silhouettes dancing slowly, without music, with smooth and precise movements.
Black ....
Fragments: sighs, the movement of an arm, a hand striking a shrill cry, jump, intermittency of light (shorts cuts ... ... ... ...). This light more and more jerky will leave glimpses the movements suggests of a photographic way, these same movements previously hidden by darkness.
The music chosen will be minimal and heady.

The rhythm of the light accelerates until a permanent full light.

Soft music (probably a piano) accompanies a ritual dance.

One dancer remains on stage, the music accelerates its pace and the sound goes, well the voice of another performer mixes with music and electronic sounds, gestures becoming hysterical little by little....
The movements are repeated endlessly, until the light and sound make a clean break.

Laughter.

Then the sound of a wheel, the light casts its shadow, I’m inside her, I run, I sit, I sketch the dance steps, euphoria overtakes me and I realize that the wheel is tightening but I do not stop, despite the fatigue and loss of the wheel as well (sounds of violins).

Light, after a silence the other interpreter advance and get’s behind me starting singing, my movements mechanically follow her voice, then laughed, and she disappears.
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