Chapter 6: The Movement of *Showerhead*

The movement of *Duo* involves the dancers' whole bodies moving—aside from a few notable moments of exception: for example, when the dancers both swing their right arms synchronously like pendulums, the rest of their bodies held upright without visible reverberation. Generally, Forsythe's movement style teaches dancers to investigate the potential to move any part of the body, to any region of space, using the breadth of imagination. The dancers practice refined articulations of movement that, as Forsythe says, can "start from any point."[1] They master details of invention: joining movements of left calf, right ear, right ring finger, eyes, left ear, penis, pinky, pelvis, etc. If one has not already mastered another dance style or other sport, understanding *what* let alone *how* this coordination is developed is difficult to fathom.

For a Forsythe dancer, even when one part of the body is locally moved, the whole body is globally sensed, in living stasis around that activity. Even when one part moves in a crafted isolation of just what this elbow or this wrist can do—or can do while thinking this, or can do while someone else is doing that—the isolation is immediately in relation to the rest of the body, space, time and other movers. For Forsythe dancers, movement is perceived as passage and relation; movement integrates. Movement is felt as constant variation of qualities of more and less—a shifting texture of bodily (dis)continuities.[2] The *whole* of *my body* is formed in the articulation of its contributing parts. And in the case of Forsythe's dancers, this partaking is learned, through a rhythm of

1 This adage from William Forsythe is a cornerstone of his movement philosophy. The preposition "at" or "from" varies among citations. See Whittenburg, "William Forsythe in conversation with Zachary Whittenburg," p. 2; see Vass-Rhee, "Distributed Dramaturgies," p. 92. The phrase is cited in the title of Caspersen's essay "It Starts From Any Point" and the subtitle of the volume edited by Steven Spier, *William Forsythe and the Practice of Choreography: It Starts From Any Point*.

2 With the term (dis)continuities, I wish to emphasize both continuation and difference. In doing so, I draw from the concept of relation as both connecting and dividing, as in anthropologist Marilyn Strathern's formulation: see Strathern, "Kinship as a Relation," pp. 54–55. I also draw a parallel to Erin Manning's accounts of process, which, after Whitehead, set emphasis: "not on the continuity of becoming, an infinitely open account of process, but on the becoming of continuity: process punctuated." Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 3.

ballet training followed by creating, rehearsing and performing Forsythe's choreography—through an organism of practices supporting, mimicking, learning and watching one another; and of course, studying the movement of Forsythe, which leads and fuels this system.

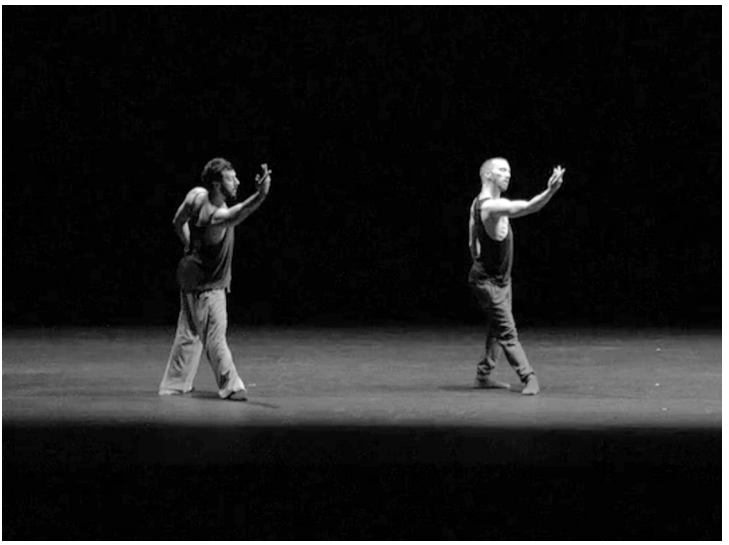
To further elucidate the movement expertise of Forsythe dancers for the reader, in this section I hone in on one movement from *Duo*: the first movement, which is nicknamed "showerhead."[3] In lay terms, this movement can be envisioned as a circular gesture of the right hand. The smooth move lasts one breath and involves an audible inhale and exhale. It's more complex in actuality. As a proliferating gesture, *showerhead* draws the whole body into action. How this propagation takes place will be revealed incrementally as this chapter develops and as I articulate principles and skills. In so doing, I define a particular *logic of practice*. For Pierre Bourdieu, a "logic of practice" is not abstract or external to practice, but a logic constituted within and through activity, "performed directly in bodily gymnastics."[4]

Figures 17–18. Video stills illustrating the movement showerhead. *Figure 17: The beginning of the movement. Regina van Berkel (left) and Allison Brown (right) dancing* Duo *in 1997. Figure 18: The end of the movement. Brigel Gjoka (left) and Riley Watts (right) dancing* DUO2015 *in 2015.*

Photo © William Forsythe.

3 The dancers' naming was flexible: "showerhead" "shower" or "head." Jill Johnson used the term *showerhead* with me in interviews on October 21, 2016; December 6, 2016; and June 28, 2018. Allison Brown on September 22, 2016; and January 23, 2018. Riley Watts on January 11, 2017; May 22, 2018; and in prior work for the publication Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*." In setting the piece, Cyril Baldy used the term "head" during rehearsals with CCN – Ballet de Lorraine on April 21–22, 2015. Riley Watts referenced the nickname "shower" on April 16, 2015. On naming movement, see section 10.4.3 First Studio Rehearsal: Conceptual Pacts.

4 Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 89.



Transferred from generation to generation of *Duo* dancers, the motion *showerhead* refers to an image that has become associated with the movement: the image of twisting a faucet on. What is imagined most explicitly is the surface of the shower wall in front of the body, upon which there is a bulbous dial. The image is associated with a gesture of twisting the water on—a twist of the right hand. This image is helpful for learning the movement, but does not become loaded with meaning in a semiotic sense. The dancers do not aim to convey or communicate the object of the showerhead to anyone. Nor does the movement mimetically reproduce what they do in daily showering. The geometry of the dial, and the fun of moving around it, become a lure for moving with the image.

From discussion with the dancers, I learned that this movement was highly cared for and virtuosic. New dancers practiced it frequently, often in tandem. The movement was also enacted as a short burst of practice for dancers to get ready to dance in rehearsal—similar to the way a singer or a musician might practice a short compositional element before beginning to play the composition chronologically. *Showerhead* became a microcosm within my research and a common referent for asking questions. This helped me to pinpoint defining principles in Forsythe's movement style generally, which have been opaque or isolated in the literature. Dancing *showerhead* revealed how the practice of a movement defined the adventure of becoming a *Duo* dancer, showing how dancers' movement experience produced a choreography with a specific character. For these reasons, *showerhead* merits the close attention that I shall give it here.

6.1 *Épaulement*

"An épaulement."
Studio interview with *Duo* Dancer Jill Johnson, Boston, December 6, 2016.

> Duo *dancer Jill Johnson is wearing a black sweatshirt with stylish silver zippers at the sides, navy blue loose training pants, and black leather sneakers with white soles. We have met at a studio in Boston to discuss* Duo *and move together. I ask to make a video on my phone of her informing me about* showerhead. *The rich interplay of Johnson's language, gesture and movement, show how intertwined these are in her practice—cultivated by her work as a dancer in Ballett Frankfurt, where such studio exchanges were common.*
>
> JILL: Thinking of it [the showerhead image], as this surface (*she gestures a flat horizonal surface with her left hand*) and this part of the hand (*she touches the medial surface of her fingers*) is going (*with vocal emphasis*) around the showerhead. The bulbous ones, it's not the handle one (*she shows the different gestures of working with each, and looks at the camera and laughs*) to be specific.[5] And then, you're going along with this part of the hand around it, and then when you go to *tendu* (*she steps back*) it extends very gently, rather then it being (*she does the movement deliberately incorrectly—quickly, with no torso movement and the leg and arm very back*) this way. So, you'll be standing (*she inhales and demonstrates correctly*). If it involves sides of the body [through a series of diagonal or cantilevered alignments] it is most legible, I would say. Because it can easily (*she exaggerates to demonstrate incorrectly, by pulling her right shoulder up towards her ear and showing a unsequential isolation of her arm*) if it's just one side, so it's just this back shoulder *épaulement*. In other words, if I do it without this (*she gestures to her left*) shoulder, it can easily become a hunched-ey thing as opposed to (*she smiles and unfurls her arm*) an *épaulement*.

Showerhead orients around tracing the fingertips of the right hand around the imaginary shower dial—especially the medial surface of the pointer finger, the part that you can stoke with your thumb. The pointer finger curves around the shower dial clockwise, from 9:00 p.m., all the way around to 8:00 p.m. (Imagine your fingers tracing along the inside of a bowl, so that the palm turns; now make that movement in front of your ribcage and you've started to *showerhead*.)

While moving, the dancers' hands are loose and alert, fingers as sensitive as if they were moving through water. Their bodies are not locked in an upright posture of accomplishing a hand motion or gesture. Rather, more like how a clarinetist would swirl out a sound, the dancers develop the spiral potential of the circular image, the *showerhead*, through subtle shifts of their reverberating centers.

---

5 Through my fieldwork I realized that the dancers used the term *showerhead*, but imagined a round shower dial. This did not confuse them, though it did confuse some exchange partners reading drafts of this manuscript.

"If it involves both sides of the body it is most effective, I would say," explained *Duo* dancer Jill Johnson.[6] By including or integrating the left side of the body, the gesture of the right arm is consumed in a movement of the full body. Twisting the torso, the showerhead image begins an interplay called *épaulement*.

Épaulement, from the French for shouldering, is a term describing the style of positioning of the upper body in ballet—part of one's carriage of the arms, or *port de bras*.[7] Forsythe dancer Dana Caspersen explains: "In classical ballet, *épaulement* is the practice of creating specific linked patterns of complex, dynamic relationships between the eyes, head, shoulders, arms, hands, legs, feet and the exterior space, as the torso engages in rotation." (You can experience *épaulement* yourself by trying the following exercise. Stand and face a wall with a window, in a place where you can move your arms around freely. Lift your chest slightly and grow a few mm taller. Then rotate your waist so that the right shoulder moves forward towards the window; your left shoulder moves back away from it. Then twist the opposite way. Repeat this twisting motion of your torso a couple of times, slowly and smoothly. Add the alertness of your eyes, which may move to look through the window at the scene as you continue to shift your shoulders. If you like, improvise some movement with your hands and arms as you continue to twist and untwist. Beginning a dialogue of internal torsion, vision, space, and rhythms outside the window and within your body, your upper body has started to be in *épaulement*.)

Épaulement is a cultivated practice of micro-coordination, expressed in every ballet company as a style. With dance expertise, styles of *épaulement* are easy to differentiate. Generally, *épaulement* is a manner in which twists and counter-twists are coordinated within the body and relate to the space in which ballet is danced. This intuits the body not as a set of linear elements, but as a system of winding and unwinding sheering force. Forsythe has described *épaulement* as a "perceptually gratifying state" that "synthesizes discrete parts of the body with multiple layers of torqued sensation that leads to the specific sense of a unified but counter-rotated whole."[8]

As a dancer in The Forsythe Company, I was told by my peers that *épaulement* originated within the performance of imperial ballets in Russia—that deferent ballerinas learned to keep their eyes positioned upon the Czar in performance, who was seated at a special place, in the center loge of the theater. As she moved and turned, this led to angles and shading of her movement.[9] In Ballett Frankfurt, *épaulement* was explored beyond this deference, as an aesthetic, expressive and physically rich *habitus*. This coordinative potential of twisting the body and relating to space, was drawn upon in nearly all

6 Jill Johnson, studio session while dancing in Boston on December 6, 2016. She adds, when the left and right sides of the body dynamically relate, creating "cantilevered" and "diagonal" alignments, the movement becomes clearer. Jill Johnson, email correspondence with the author, September 12, 2020.

7 Caspersen, "What *Épaulement* Also Is," p. 12.

8 Foster, "Why is There Always Energy for Dancing?," p. 17. Elsewhere Forsythe explains, "All my teachers actually tried to teach me that dancing was an astounding phenomenon. I think the teachers I had were always fascinated with the complex beauty of dancing. I just happened to have that group of people who said it was a complex form of beauty and it verged somewhat on the ecstatic." Forsythe, "Observing Motion," pp. 22–24.

9 Compare to Anderson, *Ballet & Modern Dance*, p. 101.

Forsythe's choreographies. The dancers experimented with sensing, enhancing, grooving, fragmenting and inventing *épaulement*.

As a generator, Forsythe catalyzed movement around him. But *épaulement* would be mistakenly characterized as only a top-down process—of contamination and the reproduction of Forsythe's bodily style. Forsythe also shaped the performance of *épaulement*, as is common in western dance and athletic training, through spoken "collective correction."[10] This shaped concepts and understanding collectively, as people demonstrated and dialogued with their bodies. Additionally, Forsythe's rehearsal assistants and the dancers themselves further cultivated *épaulement* in the dancers' ballet class each morning. In rehearsal, teaching and learning from one another was also fundamental.[11] As a new dancer, I discovered the style, through osmosis and doing. The affective capacity of this sharing was often "ecstatic."[12]

This illustrates how the practice of *épaulement*, a significant aspect of *Duo*, was embedded in an intricate social system and web of professional activities, producing a movement style that was communal. The dancers *shared* this practice. Yet the dancers did not view their custom as homogenization or limiting. No two dancers performed *épaulement* identically, and this in itself was significant. My *épaulement* was part of my signature as a dancer, as well as a sign of my membership within a specific group. Our *épaulement*, as Forsythe dancers, was more extended and shaped differently than that of other ballet companies.[13] We expressed form differently, because of our intersubjectivity through this practice—how we sensed the potential of our own bodies, in relation to others and space. The practice was, to name it clearly, *individual-collective*.

Épaulement is one way of manifesting the potential of collective bodies; there are certainly others, as the plethora of dance techniques makes clear. The manner in which Forsythe dancers became expressive through *épaulement* shows how choreography drew

10 Such "collective corrections" are a part of many physical practices learned in groups. For a fascinating account of training in boxing, see Wacquant, *Body & Soul*, p. 104. In rehearsal with the San Francisco Ballet, for example, Forsythe instructed: "Show me everything you know about *port de bras*." "*Épaulement* is a conversation between your foot and your hands. So make a wonderful conversation." "You are the experts in the room. Show me." See Ross, *San Francisco Ballet at Seventy-Five*, p. 107. These comments however do not reflect the broader and changing modes of dialogue between Forsythe and his ensemble dancers, which varied extensively, based upon context (i.e., during a creation rehearsal, after a performance, outside of rehearsal, etc.). Further examples of how Forsythe spoke to *Duo* dancers are provided in sections 10.4 and 11.2.2.

11 See Vass-Rhee, "Schooling an Ensemble," p. 227. Here Vass-Rhee describes such scaffolded learning in her analysis of the devising process making Forsythe's piece *Whole in the Head* (2010).

12 Caspersen, "What *Épaulement* Also Is," p. 2. Forsythe, "Observing Motion," p. 24.

13 Supporting these claims, *Duo* dancer Allison Brown described: "I think it has to do with the sensing through them, through my arms. Like I'm always, like reaching through them. In my Balanchine-days I was like that (*she places her arms in fifth position, circling above her head*). And then more working with Bill I became more like that (*she changes pose, the stretch becomes more extreme and the quality emphasizes more awareness of the feeling of her body and the space around her*). […] When there's like a group I can tell which one is me just by how I'm holding my arms. So my arms have kind of always been my how I can find myself." Allison Brown, interview with the author, Bern, January 23, 2017. Forsythe also concurred about the ensemble style: "And we're very arm conscious. I think that's, for us, the key to our style. One *tendu* is perhaps someone else's *tendu*, but our *port de bras* is really indicative of what we do." Driver et al., "A Conversation with William Forsythe," p. 91.

upon relational practice. This is true in Forsythe's choreographies generally, providing further substantiation for why ballet practice was so central. *Épaulement* was a practice critical to making *Duo*, what Forsythe named as, "the crowning accomplishment of great ballet dancers."[14]

6.2 Residual Movement

In *showerhead*, the dancers intuit movement residue around the start of the image—the shower dial. Meaning, *showerhead* is not like the pedestrian motion of twisting a key into a lock, with a posture oriented on getting an action done, an object manipulated, a problem solved: door open! Rather, this movement brings the rest of the body into relation with the twisting of the hand. Forsythe's term for how this takes place is "residual coordination." It can be understood as a movement idea that has a residue that reverberates within one body. The residue is reflexive: a learned and perfected habit. Forsythe explains: "We use the reflexes that we've learned in classical ballet to maintain a kind of residual coordination, which allows the body to acquire elastic surfaces that bounce off one another. This elasticity is derived from the mechanics of torsion inherent in *épaulement*."[15] In *showerhead*, Jill Johnson describes this sensation as "a series of diagonal or cantilevered alignments" smoothing the arm into the contrapuntal interplay of the body's reverb.[16]

Dancer Dana Caspersen calls this expertise not just coordination, but "residual response." With the term response, Caspersen highlights the feeling of the body responding to a proposal, such as the movement evoked in response to the image of a showerhead. Caspersen finds that in working with novices, there is often a "lack of coordinative reaction between the shoulders and the hips" as well as a "lack of shaped response in the upper arms."[17] This is not to say that the idea comes first and the body responds, but rather that the body thinks through its reflexes. The complex skill of residual response accumulates with ample practice.

6.2.1 Improvisation Technologies

Developing residual motion is a key aspect conveyed in Forsythe's CD-ROM *Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye* (1999), an educational tool now online and referred to worldwide.[18] This collaboration with digital artist Paul Kaiser acted upon Forsythe's wish to consolidate the techniques that the Ballett Frankfurt had amassed in their choreographic projects, so that new dancers could catch up more

14 Forsythe in Kaiser, "Dance Geometry."

15 Ibid.

16 Jill Johnson, studio session while dancing in Boston on December 6, 2016.

17 Caspersen, "Methodologies."

18 The first version was produced in 1996 for use within Ballett Frankfurt, and titled *Improvisation Technologies (Self Meant to Govern)*. See Vass-Rhee, "Schooling an Ensemble," p. 225, footnote 14. At the time of writing, many of the videos have been uploaded to the internet and are freely accessible. See the Online Artistic Resources section of the bibliography.

Figure 19. Video still from William Forsythe's Improvisation Technologies: A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye.

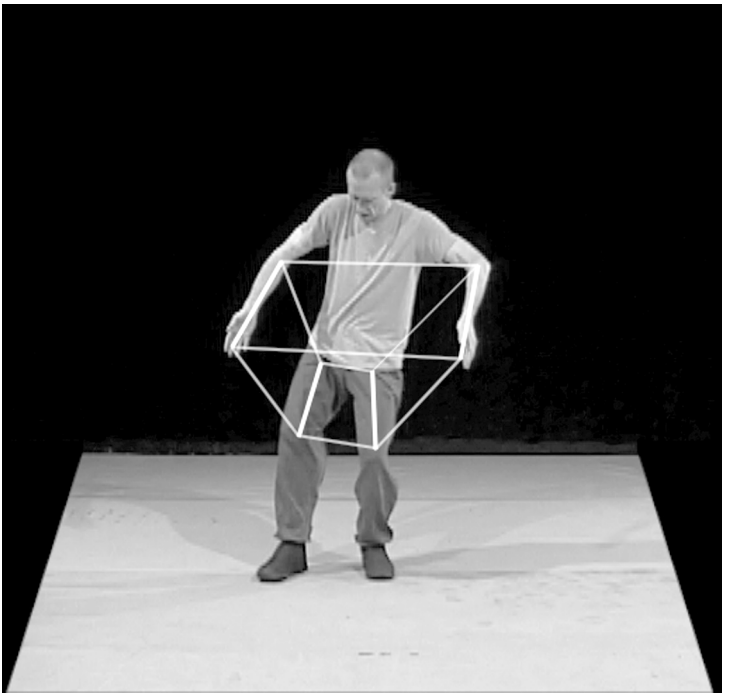


Photo © William Forsythe.

quickly.[19] Though these operations were no longer used explicitly in the choreographic process of The Forsythe Company, and the CD-ROM was no longer present in the studio during rehearsals or brought out to train new dancers, I can testify that most new dancers had encountered the information before arriving—having purchased, borrowed or found the instructional videos online.

Kaiser and Forsythe's project explored the challenge of visualizing choreographic thinking with the aim to help dancers understand what Forsythe was imaging while he was improvising. Kaiser recalls:

> I first met choreographer William Forsythe in his kitchen in Frankfurt in 1994. The first thing Bill did was to try to explain how he goes about creating new movements. He started drawing imaginary shapes in the air, and then running his limbs through this complicated and invisible geometry. As a non-dancer, I was completely lost.[20]

19 In practice, these techniques were called "procedures," "operations," and also "modalities." Discussing "operation" and "procedures," see Caspersen, "It Starts From Any Point," pp. 27–28; and Kaiser, "Dance Geometry," throughout. For references to "modalities," see Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, p. 25.

20 Kaiser, "Dance Geometry."

To remedy this, they had the idea to animate lectures of Forsythe with white lines superimposed on the video, representing the imagery that was present in Forsythe's phantasmagoria as he improvised movement. The white lines made visible Forsythe's strategies of having ideas while moving. For example, Forsythe imagining a line in the space between his fingertips; extruding, bridging and matching lines with his arms; "writing" in space with every conceivable body part. Forsythe explained:

> The CD-ROM is a short lesson in a kind of rigor. It teaches you how to form concrete goals that are geometrically inscriptive. And the reason they are geometrically inscriptive is that I work with ballet dancers. It was easy to represent things this way—thinking in circles and lines and planes and points. That's not so unusual for ballet dancers, this system is basically a manipulation of their existing knowledge.[21]

Improvisation Technologies not only developed ballet dancers' "existing knowledge" to imagine the geometries of their bodies. Forsythe was also teaching them strategies to change their *habitus* by enlarging the possible range and dynamics of their movements: to use all parts of their bodies and reach to any place in space and, in particular, to practice the awkward moves of going backwards and down. Unlike other styles of dance in which mimetic and mirroring processes are primary, the improvisation and compositional aspects of Forsythe's movement laboratory meant that dancers had to learn skills for developing their bodily tendencies. The procedures were not routines intended to be repeated verbatim, but rather as Forsythe's description suggested, *A Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*. Through training the dancers' analytic and creative competences, Forsythe advanced the speed and quality with which they could invent movement and opened up the tender territory between imagination, flesh and invention.

Residual response is a way of studying the physics of the body moving in the gravitational field and changing one's habits to maintain balance and equilibrium. An "authentic residual response," for Caspersen, allowed "the rest of the body to respond in an accurate way, i.e. with physical mechanics that are functional and not extraneous."[22] Through the practice of residual response, the dialogue between voluntary and involuntary could be felt with increasing intensity. Residual response adds potential to movement following a choreographic design. *Showerhead* progresses through the enabling constraint of the image, and reverberates the potential of movement moving the imaginary.

---

21 Forsythe, "Observing Motion," p. 18. Forsythe also explained another aim: "If you're dancing, how do you actually say what happened? The technique is one way of taking mental note of what just happened to you while improvising." Ibid., p. 16.

22 Caspersen, "Methodologies." In addition to the word "authentic," I remember dancers also speaking of natural residual response. Thanks to my education in feminism and cultural studies, both these terms were irritating for me when I was a novice in Ballett Frankfurt. The natural for me was a constructed category. But through my practice in The Forsythe Company, I came to understand something about what my colleagues meant. One had to un-learn a lot of habits for holding the body up, to let the body fall and adjust in the gravitational field—in a residual way.

6.2.2 Skills, Strategies and Potential

Showerhead is a complex curvilinear motion that relies on practical understanding—sensing movement as it progresses. The movement cultivates its own logic. Forsythe has observed the challenges in moving this way, noting generally: "I think the biggest difficulty in the kind of improvisation we practice is not consciously shaping your body, is actually letting your body fold and to develop a more reactive and a many timed body as opposed to a shaped body."[23] Sparked by a potent initiation, willed and practiced, the dancers doing *showerhead* must follow the residual movement through their confidence in *épaulement*. In rehearsing, one then judges the passage, and repeats it again; one iterates trying and incorporating feedback into a series of repetitions. Mis-actions are controlled: the dancers remind me "don't hyperextend your right elbow" and "back your hips up more."[24] Reflection is not omitted from practice, but interspersed within its pacing.

Though not a ballet movement of the *dance d'école*, the accomplishment of *showerhead* relies on mastery of many ballet skills. Using the affordances of balletic training, the pelvis twists accommodatingly, letting both legs rotate into a turned-out position. Rolling through the feet, the steps are quiet, and the weight transitions are smooth. Moving through a soft bend in the knees, or *plié*, the legs unfold with renewed potential to straighten. The right ankle and toes extend into a balletic stretch, or *tendu*. Dividing the body into multiple efforts, one leg provides support, while the other gestures; one arm reaches, while the other reverberates with residue. Stabilization and mobilization intertwine. *Épaulement* brings the spirals that pull throughout the body into balanced counterpoint. *Showerhead* is a proprioceptive panoply, supported by bodies trained in ballet. To perform this virtuosic movement, extensive ballet training is helpful.

Sensorimotor skills are dancers' muscle memory—the habits, good and bad, that influence their decisions. Yet in *showerhead* (as well as many other movements of *Duo*), the movement mechanics and style also diverge from ballet, and these divergences must be practiced. For example, take the usage of the "ass."[25] The ass is rarely named and called upon in classical ballet technique, which focuses more demurely on the hips and the property of turning out. But generally, within the movement style of Ballett Frankfurt, dancers tried out and were encouraged to move their rumps, down and back, finding turn-out with new freedom to maneuver their tails. Pragmatically, this tendency afforded a means of shifting the center of mass away from a gesture. This brought dancers outside the habitual control of the familiar bodily center within ballet, into a realm for experimenting with new ballet tendencies and adaptions. One might call dropping the "ass" a strategy: an invention that cultivates disorientation.

---

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

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

25 Allison Brown, studio session dancing in Frankfurt, September 23, 2016. Notably, in my interview with Forsythe Company dancer Riley Watts, he described the "hips" and "pelvis" moving backwards-forwards. Riley Watts, studio session dancing in Bern, January 13, 2017. While dancers in both ensembles communicated using rich jargon specific to their knowledge, in The Forsythe Company there was less profanity and sexual slang.

Let's follow the motion again: you start to *showerhead*, unfurling a spiral forward, through the twist of your right hand. You simultaneously step back on the left leg, following the curvature started by your pointer finger. Stepping back gives space for your right arm to extend—letting the spiral develop into a longer arc. Moving backwards-forwards, and reaching the arm: "It's as if the skin of your right hand could stretch forward" one dancer reminds me.[26] Not naturally, yet easily, the movement unfolds a logic from a cultivated thought.

In *showerhead*, the dancers begin the motion together and then readily bend their knees and softly retract their hips (that is, drop and move their pelvis backwards). Trying the movement with the dancers in the studio, I experience how this action becomes layered with more timings and trajectories—polycentric and polyrhythmic. This polysemy makes one center hard to define. The body dis-places. One singular thing is not happening, but rather multiple processes seem to take over the body. As I negotiate sensing and shifting my body weight, I gain losing control of what transpires—a gain that can be felt as a sort of play. Following the curvature of my arm unfolding its spiral, the ride of weight displacement takes my mind away from a concrete grip on what is happening. In *showerheading*, the dancers' astute skills of proprioception are challenged: proprioception as the marrow, skin, gush of organ and cellular sense of where a part of the body is in relation to the center or whole.[27]

Polyrhythmic and polycentric, the movement *showerhead* is not merely moving the hand forward, like the voluntary gesture of handing over your keys. It is a gesture involving the whole body—sensing the potential of the entire corpus. As a dancer becomes more experienced and fluent with the movement, control is enacted by sensing and following as shape unfolds. The dancer acts and re-acts, in the "in-act."[28]

Learning to drop the hips and move backwards are practiced strategies that enable residual movement and *showerheading*. These are strategies throughout Forsythe's repertoire, not only in *Duo*. In them, the dancers cultivate spatial attitude, neither direct nor indirect, but plural—progressing backward-forward.[29] Recognizing how a contemporary culture of forward action (such as walking forward, driving forward, taking food from the table in front of you, and so on) has choreographed pedestrian action, Forsythe cultivated this backwardness strategically, motivating his dancers to unlearn

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

27 Einav Katan, after British neurologist Charles Scott Sherrington, defines proprioception as "the sensual awareness of movement within the body. As a body sense it is responsible for feeling the relative positions of neighboring body parts, and how their strength and effort are engaged through motion." See Katan, *Embodied Philosophy in Dance*, p. 54, with relevant discussion pp. 57–59. See also Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, p. 110.

28 The "in-act" of experience is a central component of Manning's activist philosophy, recognizing experience as in-movement and in-the-making: "variously commingling with the limits of the not-yet and the will-have-been." See Manning, *The Minor Gesture*, p. 47. Her differentiation of act and in-act is made to emphasize the real processual, relational, ecological and virtual aspects of experience.

29 I take the terms "direct" and "indirect" from attitudes of Laban effort in space. See Maletic, *Dance Dynamics*, pp. 14–15.

their habits. The dancers frequently go-forward-while-going-backwards. In *Improvisation Technologies*, he reminded his dancers to move behind themselves and to have "fun" with this increased range of motion.[30] In rehearsals, he asked dancers to sense the skin on their backs: back of their shoulders, back of their necks. All this is to open up the potential of movement, enabling the dancers to pay attention to kinesthetic response and repattern their habits.

In *showerhead*, the connection of the upper and lower body is also typical of the ensemble style. The body hinges. The fingertips stay nearly where they were in space; the lower body *retracts* back. By stretching the lower body backwards, the right arm is given room—unfolding and addressing the space in front of the body. In Labanotation, this fixation of the hand in space would be notated as a *space hold* if it were more precisely enforced and rigid.[31] But in *Duo,* space is created and felt rather than held. It is addressed three-dimensionally, through a body that is responsively relaxed: subtly alert.

"Moving backwards" and "dropping the hips" are repeated efforts within Forsythe's movement apparatus, causing refraction of movement, already reverberating and multiple.[32] To choreograph movement is thus to gain access to practices that enable perception of movement's nuance and micro-variations—to have more experiences at the conscious fringes of movement control. *Duo* dancer Riley Watts names "disorientation" as essential to his process of becoming a dancer in The Forsythe Company—that is, discovering his movement habits and finding new ways of movement by deliberately disorienting himself.[33] While most of *Duo*'s movement is planned and repeated, this does not mean it is without variation, or even disorientation. Disorientation in *Duo* happens in three ways: First, through a sort of attunement to movement which displaces the subject, backgrounding them to movement taking place, emerging relationally. Secondly, the disorientation of following one's body, not knowing exactly how the movement will unfold. Thirdly, and more broadly in their practice, when the dancers invent and improvise movements, they may deliberately practice disorientation with the hope that this might enable them to find new movements.[34]

Inventing techniques for surpassing habits are part of the work of being a Forsythe dancer. This makes choreography an "entanglement" with organization, not only fixing

30 On the "back approach" Forsythe says: "So be careful not to limit any of these technologies of sliding and folding and all this to the front of your body, but practice this also moving towards the back. Let it move through the front, but towards the back. So that you get used to feeling what it's like to move towards these areas. If it is easier for you to move this way, practice moving this way. And dropping things towards the back. Moving towards the back. Very helpful. I think if you can practice that regularly, that the coordination will begin to spread itself out over the whole kinesphere. And you will have more fun." Forsythe, "Improvisation Technologies: Transcripts of the Forsythe Lectures," p. 59.

31 On "space hold" and "spot hold" see Guest, *Labanotation*, pp. 398–99.

32 Allison Brown, studio session dancing in Frankfurt, September 20, 2016. Riley Watts, studio session dancing in Bern, January 13, 2017. Allison Brown and Cyril Baldy, studio session dancing in Bern, January 24, 2017.

33 Riley Watts, studio session dancing in Bern, January 13, 2017.

34 Forsythe is not alone in his choreographic study of habits and development of techniques to "perturb and disrupt" those. On choreographer Wayne McGregor's approach, see Leach and deLahunta, "Dance Becoming Knowledge," p. 462.

rules but developing potential. Philosopher Alva Noë expounds: "Choreography disorganizes. In doing so it sets the stage for letting us reorganize. Choreography, in this sense, is a reorganizational project."[35] Approached in this way, we start to see how the dancers' expertise is *a process itself for learning about practice*, and how to go forward practicing. These remarks give insider clarity to what dance scholar Wibke Hartewig has found from her meticulous analysis of Ballett Frankfurt performances. She finds: "[Forsythe's] work is not geared towards the presentation of aesthetic elements, but places the process-related movement in the center of attention."[36]

Forsythe and the dancers' understanding of dance values the body's potential to learn and develop. We find striking evidence of this in Forsythe's own testimony. He comments:

> At any given moment, you have to be able to say: what is the potential of this configuration of my body. And at one point, I guess a long way down the line, you know intuitively what it is. And then I would suggest you try the results of that which you don't know, move on from there, with no idea how it's going to turn out. For me, that would be a truly successful dance, because then the body would take over and dance at that point where you had no more idea. I see that as an idealized form of dancing: just not knowing and letting the body dance you around.[37]

The potential of one's body—of oneself—is developed through Forsythe's *Improvisation Technologies*. Between focusing on one's body, a dancer learns from and with *other* bodies, both live and mediated. Between letting the body "take over" during improvisation, a dancer discusses and analyzes movement with others. In my interviews, one dancer linked this approach to improvisation to his understanding of Buddhist philosophy, in which, free of expectations, movement could always be discovered—there was always something small, something new, something unexpected to find out.[38]

With time, the dancers' practice of *showerhead* becomes rich with the potential of micro-variations. The dancers' expertise enables nuance and sensitivity. This is how a movement can, to an outside eye, become consistent—while to the performers, it becomes rich with the potential to vary. Attunement to potentiality creates a rich set of micro-variations of and between bodies. These minute differences become rich and exciting for the dancers, keeping their practice evolving—a generative sort of doing.

---

35 Noë, "Newman's Note, Entanglement and the Demands of Choreography," p. 234, p. 230.

36 Translation by the author. Hartewig, *Kinästhetische Konfrontation*, p. 184.

37 Forsythe, "Observing Motion," pp. 24–26. When describing *Duo*, dancer Brigel Gjoka concurs: "I feel like I am in a position where I can go anywhere. When he [Forsythe] says: 'it starts from any point.' That is how I feel. Well, I can go from any point. And then, it can start any point, at the same time, and it can start any point, and it can arrive to any point." Brigel Gjoka, interview with the author, Bologna, October 25, 2017.

38 Riley Watts, interview with the author, Bologna, October 25, 2017.

6.3 Cultivating Sensation

Dancer Allison Brown took me under her wing in the dance studio to teach me about the practice of *Duo*'s movement. Standing next to me, she demonstrated how the dancers would practice the movement of *showerhead* to synchronize time and form. Sometimes they would stand nearly touching, almost hip to hip. In this close proximity, Brown recounts, they had time for comparing and contemplating, shifting the fingers so that your and your partner's hands look identical, "you looking at your hand and your partner's hand."[39] This began to equate a kinesthetic sense of one's own body moving with the visual attention to another body: a feedback loop. I felt that my body and Brown's were being superimposed—not just imitation or mimicry, but a feeling of being fused. For Brown this is an unusual type of vision: "this seeing each other with other senses and other body parts than the eyes."[40] Sensing fused with relation and kinesthesia.

6.3.1 Sensation in *Showerhead*

Enacting *showerhead* in performance, one does not look directly upon the right hand, as if contemplating one's gesture.[41] Rather *Duo* dancers typically keep the environment—the black of the stage space, the audience, and other dancers—in their visual field, placing their own body in the visual periphery. During *showerhead*, the vision is broad, the hand peripheral. Dancer Riley Watts explains that he has the wish to catch a glimpse of his partner in his peripheral vision—as the first movement is usually performed at a distance, with one's partner in indirect, rather than direct, sight. Given the absence of scenery in *Duo*, the black background provides little for the dancers to focus upon. Despite the audience members near the stage being visible to the performers, the audience is predominantly heard and felt. The dancers are not coached by Forsythe to visually address the audience with their eyes. Watts explains that he knows a performance is going well when he sees a video and he and his partner's heads are turning to watch one another. They do this, he explains, to stay in-sync.[42]

Thus far I have described the movement of *showerhead* holistically, as both a movement of the body and a movement of thought. Now I wish to add that the movement is also a way of awakening the senses—attuning to one's partner, one's body and the audience. Vision—"hawk-eyed" on one's partner—combines with listening for the sound of one's partner's breathing movement.[43]

The dancers described the richness of this experience: Combined with breath, one hears one's own and one's partner's body, inhaling and exhaling. One feels the heat of the stage lights, the texture of one's clothes or costume. One feels the temperature of the air. One sees one's own body peripherally and kinesthetically feels movement

39 Allison Brown, studio session dancing in Frankfurt, September 20, 2016.

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

41 In Forsythe's work generally, a dancer rarely looks at their own body moving, but keeps their focus externalized in space.

42 Riley Watts, interviews with the author, Bern, January 11–15, 2017. See also our co-authored publication: Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*."

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

passing. Once the spiral of the right arm is nearly extended, the hand is not stared upon. Instead, one looks beyond one's hand, taking an external focus that includes the arm movement in peripheral vision. This panoply of sensation moves beyond the classic five-sense model by involving heat, skin, balance, breath and proprioception. Generally in *Duo*, sensations overlap and relay between modes, mixing into the feeling of moving and being moved.[44]

In *Duo* rehearsals, the visual appearance of the movement was not unimportant, as the dancers know that how they appear is critical for the spectators. Despite this, they cared for and nurtured the *experience* of movement, through the process of dancing the movement together and for an audience. The dancers remember rarely using the mirror in the studio, as is common for ballet dancers, to evaluate and correct their posture. Rather the vision of how the movement should appear was reinforced through seeing one's partner more than oneself. Later generation *Duo* dancer Riley Watts concurs: "the big thing was to understand, to appeal to what does this [movement] feel like, not only what does it look like."[45] By the dancers employing comparisons of feeling and appearing, thus began the entanglement of bodies critical to *Duo*.

6.3.2 The Hand and the Skin

Writing about Forsythe's work in the Ballett Frankfurt, Sabine Huschka has observed: "Instead of an intensified experience, Forsythe's choreographies seek to create a difference and to make perception perceptible."[46] Such refinement, even "hypersensitivity," is cultivated throughout Forsythe's repertoire, requiring dancers to acquire perceptual acumen. Observing the interaction in a duet from Forsythe's *The Room As It Was* (2002), Hartewig observes interaction similar to that in *Duo*:

> The partners do not exchange […] primarily through application of touch and force: communication takes place on a visual and acoustic level, through the same dynamic and rhythmic sensation and through a hypersensitive body perception, with which the other body can be felt even when it has disappeared from view.[47]

As in the example described by Hartewig, the relays of sensation in dancing *Duo* go beyond the five-sense model and entwine sensations of oneself and the other. How does this come about?

One answer is that the sensation of hands and skin are cultivated. Given the amount of nerve endings and dexterity of the hand, Forsythe believes that it is a keystone to train the whole body. For instructing ballet dancers, who have often laid more emphasis on training their feet than their hands, a Forsythe adage is "the shape of the foot is the

44 Caroline Potter, in her ethnographic research of a contemporary dance education institution in London, similarly finds the five-sense model inadequate for describing dancers' experience. See Potter, "Sense of Motion, Senses of Self."

45 Riley Watts, email correspondence with the author, February 25, 2015.

46 Translation by the author. See Huschka, "Verlöschen als ästhetischer Fluchtpunkt oder 'Du musst dich selbst wahrnehmend Machen'," p. 106.

47 Translation by the author. See Hartewig, *Kinästhetische Konfrontation*, p. 172, footnote 71.

shape of the hand."[48] This instructs dancers to articulate their hands as if they had the same cultivated capacity of their highly trained feet. Forsythe encouraged the dancers: "*Épaulement* is a conversation between your foot and your hands. So make a wonderful conversation."[49]

In Forsythe's ensembles, the hand was studied not in isolation, but in relation: the hand in relation to the shoulder, moved from the back, reflected in the hip, and supported in the feet and knees. The hand was a keystone linking the body—a transducer of sensations. Though *showerhead* is explained as a movement initiated by the fingers of the right hand, the action is that of an arm in relation to the entire body; an energetic whole of sinews feeling twist, stretch, reach, and unfurling.

The integrated quality of movement was also developed through sensual attention to the borders of the body: through the skin. Sensitivity to skin is nurtured in Forsythe's choreography by directing attention to all the delicate surfaces of the hand and its relation to the stretch of the skin in the arms, neck, and back. This skin sensation produces an intensity of movement that differs from daily life, where such awareness is often not refined. *Duo* dancer Riley Watts described skin sensation as a way to register form.[50] Feeling light, heat, temperature, tension and release, the skin also seems to register movement around the body, through a sensation of moving with and for others—a quality of excitement.

"The sensation of form."
Email from Riley Watts to the author, March 3, 2013, RE: How did you learn *Duo*?

> It's kind of hard to describe the sensation of form without showing it … In some moments we were told to use the sensation of "'hanging" by a single point in the elbow, to be light in our feet like crystal (in my own words, I chose this to mean sharp and slightly ahead of a comfortable, even, and heavy musicality), to use the curvature of the arms as extended descriptions of the rest of our bodies and potential space, but without being overly tense.
>
> In the very beginning my partner and I were both doing it with quite a lot of muscle tension and we found it exhausting and musically predictable. We were told we were working too hard and that we needed to *plié* less and spend more time off the ground with the crystalline *ballon* I mentioned earlier.
>
> The *épaulement* and torqueing of the spine can be uncomfortable and dangerous when done with too much muscle tension and we found it necessary to simply relax more while dancing. Another sensation we used was to pay attention to what Bill [Forsythe] describes as the stretching of the skin. When I am extending my arm behind me there is a particular sensation of the skin stretching across chest and down my arm to my

48 Forsythe, personal memory of the author of rehearsals in The Forsythe Company.

49 See Ross, *San Francisco Ballet at Seventy-Five*, p. 107. Caspersen also foregrounds teaching dancers' hands in her writing about dance practice. See Caspersen, "Methodologies."

50 Riley Watts, email to the author, March 3, 2018.

> hand. I could show you this movement and you could copy it easily, but without you paying attention to the sensation of stretching that I described, we both would be experiencing something slightly different.

The email cited above, written during Watts' process of learning *Duo*, gives a first-hand account of many kinesthetic sensations, and catalogues the different images and feelings he encountered in his learning process. Watts, as a later generation *Duo* dancer, used the word *sensation*, describing *Duo* as "a process of attention to sensations that the dancers are experiencing simultaneously."[51] Not only having sensations, but considering and comparing them, *Duo* dancers build a common reserve of understanding.

6.3.3 Breathing-Movement in *Duo*

The last quality of sensation that I would like to focus on is the sensation of breath. Over the course of *showerhead*, the dancers phase through inhale and exhale—typically inhaling through the nose, with a light and long sniff, and exhaling through the chest, the mouth and lips slightly open. The more tired the dancers are from prior exertion, the more this might sound like a sigh. Unlike singers, who have extensive breathing training, the dancers breathe *implicitly* with their movement, learning by doing—without breathing concepts or training techniques. *Duo*'s breath is a logic of practice. It is a subtle and functional layer of the choreography, helping to create the right movement quality (delicate and precise) and sustain synchronization with one's partner. One dancer told me, "We synchronize breathing, not the steps."[52] Forsythe concurred: "*Duo* is finally, for me, a breath score that has choreography that generates it."[53]

The names denoting this practice varied from: "breath score" to "breath opera," "breath song" or simply the breath.[54] Neither Forsythe nor the dancers considered *Duo*'s "breath score" to be extraneous or outside the choreography—like the unprescribed sound of musicians' breath and motions, when playing classical music. Rather, it was part of the choreography of *Duo*. Forsythe agreed: "The breathing in *Duo* is so specific. It really is the common dimension on which everything operates."[55]

I have chosen to name this practice *breathing-movement*, to emphasize the way it is a hybrid medium of movement, sound and sensation. The dancers would typically use inhales as upbeats and rises in actions, and exhales for lowering actions and other forms of exertions (such as the end points of twists or swings). For example, in *showerhead*, following inhale and exhale, respectively, the weight of the body rises and descends. The dancers also used the breath communicatively, to signal timing via cues.[56]

---

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

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

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

54 On Forsythe's term "breath score" see Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, in particular pp. 232–56; on "breath opera" see Eckert, "Taking a Look at *Duo*"; on Riley Watts' term "breath song" see Waterhouse et al., "Doing *Duo*," pp. 10–11.

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

56 For further discussion of these cues, see section 9.2.3 Counterpoint Model.

Ordinarily, breathing is an involuntary motion, intimately associated with the border between life and death. In *Duo*'s breathing-movement, the involuntary and voluntary become entangled. In this way, the prescribed choreographic organization of movements goes even deeper into the internal organs of the body and the neurological mechanisms for enacting movement. Biomechanically, the muscle of breath—the diaphragm—creates an inner unit with the pelvic floor, directly shaping the internal support of the motion around the organs, wrapped in the abdominals. Awareness of one's breathing, while listening to one's partner, also produces a feedback loop, tethering connection—visceral, communicative and meditative. Breathing-movement sutures the becoming as repeatable: becoming learned, becoming controlled with the becoming new, becoming present and becoming expressive. The intimate and subtle integration of breath in *Duo* changes action, from an "I do" state to a "being" state, a change in effort from "I act" to "I am with you."[57]

Though it is difficult to reconstruct the sounds of *Duo* from the archival videos because of the poor audio quality, by moving with the dancers I learned about breathing-movement. The practice extends across much of the repertoire in The Forsythe Company, which I myself had performed; works such as the first act of *Three Atmospheric Studies* (2005), *Decreation* (2003), *The Room As It Was* (2002) and *N.N.N.N.* (2002). In *Duo*, breathing-movement was cultivated implicitly through practice, with pairs finding their own style of communication. In the Ballett Frankfurt it was rarely explicitly worked on or acoustically directed. In The Forsythe Company however, Forsythe gave more directive and explicit feedback about breathing-movement—suggesting that he could hear the togetherness through how the dancers' breathed.[58] After this feedback, one dancer noticed that he had to avoid making an effort to synchronize his breath (which sounded to him affected). Rather, he wished to find a way for the breath to operate functionally through sensitive attention to his partner. Listening, more than breathing, was the substance of alignment.

Breathing associated with a movement, or movement phrase, may change from performance to performance. *Duo* dancer Brigel Gjoka (Watt's partner) demonstrates this with me while dancing in his kitchen, vocalizing "eee-ahhh" or "and," changing pitch and tone melodically. His breath interlaces with his voice; this musical language defines a specific style of breathing-movement.[59] Similarly, performer Regina van Berkel (who originated the role that Gjoka dances) also used her sonorous voice melodically in breathing-movement, though never forcing her breath or deliberately trying to sing.[60] Her partner, Jill Johnson, used her nasal passages more than her throat, but was there to whisper words as needed: such as "new beginning" and "Almost there!"[61]

Late generation *Duo* dancers—male dancers Watts and Gjoka—breathed more loudly than early generation *Duo* dancers. Despite this, no *Duo* dancer viewed the breathing practice as gendered. Rather, the shift in practice of later generation *Duo*

57 Brigel Gjoka, interview with the author, Dresden, March 5–6, 2016.

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

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

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

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

dancers reflects the greater emphasis on acoustic elements in the work of The Forsythe Company, in parallel to Forsythe's increasingly explicit interest in the "exploration of the visuo-sonic affordances of movement and its presentation in performance."[62] The breathing practice was never "ornamental" for the dancers.[63] Their quality of breathing-movement was a sign of their relational bond.

The dancers remarked on the difficulty of teaching the breathing of *Duo* to students or to dancers in other companies. Dancers with considerable ballet training enforce that they silence their breath—dancing without making any noise at all. Such dancers had to cultivate the freedom to acoustically release this breathing-movement. Moreover, it was not an expressive line of one-voice, but a result of shared experience. Breathing together was produced through ample experience and practice together. *Duo*'s breathing-practice composed the dancers' subjectivity at a deep level, at the cusp where dancing meets music, communication and sociality.

6.3.4 "Perceptual Performativity" of Forsythe's Ensembles: Freya Vass-Rhee

Dance scholar Freya Vass-Rhee, writing with insight as a dramaturg working with The Forsythe Company, identified "perceptual performativity" in Forsythe's oeuvre. By this, she draws attention to a chief aspect of Forsythe's aesthetic: the composition of the sensual proclivities of the dancers and spectators, comprising unusual degrees and combinations of sensation.[64] Concurring with my own arguments, Vass-Rhee has described how the dancers distribute and scaffold learning cooperatively; she has also analyzed how teamwork extended co-perception between the dancers to the larger team that included Forsythe, the technicians and the musical performers.[65] Building upon Vass-Rhee's writing, in which *Duo* has been analyzed only briefly in in terms of its sonic properties,[66] here I contribute the dancers' own review of their sensual panoply, and analyze how such perception is *practiced*.

I find the term *practice* helps to show what Vass-Rhee has already emphasized with the word performativity: subjectivity shaped through perception, in the context of choreographic labor. In Vass-Rhee's words:

> […] the construction of the subject can also be illuminated by a different perspective on performance, one which addresses a more fundamental level: the subject as a *perceiving agent* immersed in and interacting with a world of sensory information which, in the case of performance, is composed in ways intended to elicit specific effects and affect.[67]

62 See Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, p. 1.

63 Riley Watts, interview with the author, Bern, January 15, 2017.

64 See Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, in particular pp. 120–61. Vass-Rhee frames her study within Hans Thies-Lehmann's diagnosis of the perceptual composition in postdramatic theatre; see ibid., pp. 129–34.

65 See Vass-Rhee, "Dancing Music"; "Distributed Dramaturgies"; "Schooling an Ensemble."

66 See Vass-Rhee, *Audio-Visual Stress*, pp. 240–44.

67 Ibid., p. 128 (italics in the original).

Duo dancers' testimonies concur regarding the importance of constituted perception as a layer of *habitus*. The agency of *Duo* dancers is complexly immersed in an organizational array of activities—cooperatively constituted. Unlike approaches of movement analysis, which focus solely on form and first-person experience of one's body, co-movement merges sensation and action in complex feedback loops. Implicit attention to sensation by dancers in Ballett Frankfurt is made explicit in The Forsythe Company—reflecting Vass-Rhee's participation in shaping the discourse upon this layer of choreographic process.[68] Further exploration of these matters will arc through this manuscript, illustrating how sensory perception is complexly instituted and choreographed, and how the practice of choreography retains multiple views and contours of emergence.

6.3.4 Bodies

Figure 20. Brigel Gjoka (left) and Riley Watts (right) performing Dialogue (DUO2015) *in 2018.*

Photo © Bill Cooper.

68 Additionally, this could be an effect of dominant discourse seeping into rehearsal, as suggested by the research of Kleinschmidt. See Kleinschmidt, *Artistic Research als Wissensgefüge*, pp. 157–58. In my dialogues with the dancers, sensation was a pivotal concept to later generation (Forsythe Company) dancers' understanding of *Duo*. While it was described in my interviews with Ballett Frankfurt dancers, with vivid accounts of their sensorium, few dancers used the words sensation or perception. I believe Vass-Rhee is entirely correct that perception is an essential aspect of Forsythe's choreographic craft, and that this is true across Ballett Frankfurt and The Forsythe Company. The manner by which this became explicit in The Forsythe Company reflects Forsythe's, as well as wider discursive interest in this topic; from Vass-Rhee as well as visiting philosophers Alva Noë and Erin Manning.

One of the central notions within this chapter is the way dancing together emerges through bodies *individual-collective:* through bodies with individual histories and proclivities, who collectively fabricate and negotiate their choreographic project of *Duo*.[69] One final example from my fieldwork is intended to bring this argument into focus. What dancer Riley Watts described to me as one of the fundamental essences of *Duo* is a way that he senses himself reaching and twisting with his upper body. While shaped by the collective training in *épaulement*, this practice is also something that he adapts to fit his personal style of moving—going a bit beyond what dancers in *Duo* have done before him, due to his particular flexibility (see Fig. 20). Watts tells me these differences also reside in individual particularities of what bodies can do: "Part of that is just the way your body's built. My rib cage is just weird like that."[70] Yet Watts also shared a picture with me that he had made (see Fig. 5), in which he had digitally superimposed his body onto an image of his partner's—telling me that this feeling of togetherness, of becoming one body, was central to *Duo.* Through Watts, and from other stories throughout this manuscript, we learn how intimately dancers come to define themselves by the knowledge and sensations of *their* bodies and *other* bodies. We also see how this is begotten by one's particular body aptitude, while also changing in accordance with the communities in which the dancers move and the dyad of their *Duo* partnership. In this, bodies are individual and collective: developing what they can do, with potential for extensive transformation.

***

The movement of *showerhead* opens up a world. Splashing the reader with this movement has been my strategy to introduce the dancers' *logic of practice*. By examining the dancers' testimonies and attempting to make sense of this movement using my own body, I have staged an encounter in writing that strives to animate the reader off his or her chair.

The movement *showerhead* is a significant constitutive element of *Duo*. Working with the imagery of a shower dial, *showerhead* reverberates the dancers' bodies, holistically connecting body parts into an integrated whole. *Showerheading* undermines dualities of conscious/unconscious, voluntary/involuntary, body/mind, my/our, formal/informal and theory/practice. The choreographic movement is not representative, rule-based, normative and static; rather, it is built up, negotiated, individual-collective, with micro-variations of complexity.

Most significantly, what *showerhead* has shown us is how a dance company's style of movement is honed through bodily techniques that are the "work of individual and collective practical reason."[71] In this chapter, I have argued that we view choreographic movements like *showerhead* as the community achieving movement based upon the ensemble's history of practice. The dancers not only magnified and reverberated *Forsythe's* gestures, but also manufactured movement through exchanges with one another. The precise movement emerged through phases of doing and reflecting, rehearsing and

69 Compare to Wacquant, *Body & Soul*, pp. 17–18.

70 Riley Watts, studio session dancing in Bern, January 13, 2017.

71 Marcel Mauss cited in Wacquant, *Body & Soul*, p. 17, translation by Wacquant.

performing, observing and being observed. The bodily practice of *showerhead* thus combined "doings and sayings" and was based upon the dancers' shared investment in the *Duo* project and in one another.[72]

The terms that the dancers and Forsythe used to describe their movement, (I have highlighted *épaulement*, residual movement and sensation) and their strategies for doing so (going backwards-forwards, dropping the hips, breathing-movement) give insight into their process. This terminology helps as well to highlight how the movement practice of *showerhead* enmeshed different modes of intentionality (thinking, sensing, feeling) and phases of moving-thinking. When examined longitudinally, *showerhead*, like most of the movements in *Duo*, went cooperatively beyond one person—or even couple—rehearsing and practicing the piece—linking the dancers in recurring activity. In other words, the dancers' logic of *showerheading* relied heavily on individual coordination and sensorimotor skills, amassed through histories of relational interaction.[73] Though each dancer's body was unique, through moving together, they fused.

Showerhead has given us an indication of *Duo*'s movement, but a limited one, based upon one movement. In the following chapters I will broaden this depiction, to decipher the arrangement and dynamic variance of movements within this choreography. In the next section I begin this by foregrounding the concepts of movement *material* and movement *relation*.

72 Schatzki, *The Site of the Social*, p. 73.

73 Tacitly, later generation *Duo* dancers profited from the research conducted by the ensemble prior to their arrival. Both Ballett Frankfurt dancers and Forsythe Company dancers shared the term *épaulement*. While the practice of residual motion was shared by all *Duo* dancers, the term *residual* was not: Ballett Frankfurt *Duo* dancers used this terminology, but Forsythe Company *Duo* dancers did not. Conversely, while all *Duo* dancers described the sensation of *Duo*'s movement richly, Forsythe Company *Duo* dancers used the term *sensation* whereas Ballett Frankfurt dancers did not.