1 Public broadcast of
Pina Bausch's memorial service
Wuppertal, 2009

The audience is always part of the performance, just as I myself am part of the performance, even when I am not onstage [...]. We have to have our own experiences, just like in life. No one can do it for us.[1]

Rece

ption

The Tanztheater Wuppertal can look back on several generations of spectators around the world. These spectators have seen, felt, experienced, interpreted and processed the ensemble's pieces, some of which are now over 40 years old, embedded them within the context of their own lives and connected them with what they already know and have experienced themselves. Some of them have written about their experiences, composed reviews and communicated what they have seen to a wider public. All of these activities have been acts of translation between the piece, the respective performance, its situational framing and the audience's perceptions and (prior) knowledge. This interplay has given rise to a variety of interpretations, which are part of the dance production insofar as they also generate knowledge about a piece. These audience interpretations continue to be updated over time, become entrenched and change.

The following chapter takes the perspective of the recipient and inquires into the relationship between piece, performance, perception and knowledge. On the one hand, it examines how dance critics have positioned themselves over decades, the interpretations they have developed and how they have translated the pieces and their respective performances into text. On the other hand, it also focuses on the audience and investigates what spectators expect of a piece after 40 years of the Tanztheater Wuppertal, and how they perceive performances and convey their experiences in words.

Dance criticism

"Critics simply have to come to terms with the fact that they are nothing but critics, not unlike mustard on warm sausages, not unlike aestheticizing weather frogs, loudly croaking out their judgments."[2]
Klaus Geitel, music and dance critic

"Critique has to be an open system [...]. Nowadays a critique is not an art judge in the old sense, but he/she holds some responsibility as a participant in the shaping of a complex discursive dynamic. To define this, to assert oneself with respect to the artists and the audience, is an ever-challenging exercise of life. Writing about dance performance means continuous investigation of representations of alterities in an ephemeral structure of reception."[3]
Helmut Ploebst, dance critic

Klaus Geitel and Helmut Ploebst belong to two different generations of critics – and they differ in their views about the role, status and purpose of journalistic criticism. They exemplify the transformation of dance criticism's own concept of itself, which is what this chapter will discuss and examine using reviews written about the work of Pina Bausch and the Tanztheater Wuppertal.

Klaus Geitel, an influential Berlin-based music and dance critic, came to know and love ballet in Paris. In 1959, he wrote his first dance review – about Maurice Béjart. In the 1970s, he also reviewed pieces by the young Tanztheater Wuppertal, such as *Bluebeard: While Listening to a Taped Recording of Béla Bartók's "Duke Bluebeard's Castle"* (PREMIERE 1977; → PIECES). After the premiere, he noted: "Pina Bausch's works are anxieties set in motion: nightmarish visions, scornful gymnastics classes, bitter lessons. What Pina Bausch does has little to do with dance, ballet or choreography. Hers is a silent theater. A staged bludgeon to the head. […] Bausch makes no concessions: neither to herself, nor to the dancers or the audience. She knows how to use her art to bewitch. There has been nothing like it on German stages for quite some time. Pina Bausch storms all traditional theater divisions."[4]

The ambivalence expressed in this review repeats itself in many others – and their overall numbers are overwhelming. The Pina Bausch Archive boasts 2,372 reviews about the 15 international coproductions alone – and this collection is most certainly not complete. By the early 1980s, every new piece by the Tanztheater Wuppertal had already become an event. Dozens of critics from all over the world would travel to Wuppertal to attend the world premieres. And everywhere the company performed, renowned critics expressed their opinions in respected national newspapers, even if the performance was merely a restaging of a piece that had originally premiered years ago. However, despite the vast and immense number of reviews published worldwide, it is just a small group of critics above all in the German-speaking world who have actually followed Pina Bausch's work through the decades and who have written reviews about every single one of her new pieces.[5] Unlike US dance criticism of the 1970s, which was primarily shaped by women like Marcia B. Siegel, Arlene Croce and Deborah Jowitt, in 1970s (West) Germany, most of the dance reviews printed in the most important periodicals were penned by male authors. For this reason, the majority of the people writing about Pina Bausch were men like Klaus Geitel, Rolf Michaelis *(Die Zeit),* Jochen Schmidt *(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung/*FAZ) and Norbert Servos (e.g., *Ballett International, Die Zeit,* FAZ, *Der Tagesspiegel, Theater heute, Die deutsche Bühne, tanzdrama, tanz affiche,* as well as various radio reviews). One exception to this rule was Eva-Elisabeth Fischer *(Süddeutsche Zeitung/*SZ), who reviewed the company for years.

Dance critics are the stewards of discourse: it was the reviews of the 1970s in particular that played a major role in shaping how the world would come to speak about the art of Pina Bausch. Even today, these narratives, interpretations, explanations and judgments are still constantly referred to and repeated by audiences

3 Raimund Hoghe
Cantatas
Brussels, 2013

2 Pina Bausch
press conference
Düsseldorf, 2008

(→ RECEPTION | AUDIENCE), other critics, scholars and speakers, in Internet forums, magazines and blogs. As I will show in this chapter, the knowledge that critics have produced about the Tanztheater Wuppertal over the course of decades still influences the prior knowledge of audiences and shapes their expectations. The audience surveys that my team and I conducted for this book with specific questions related to audience expectations have confirmed as much (→ RECEPTION | AUDIENCE).

Dance reviews translate a stage event into the public sphere through media. They are paratexts,[6] i.e., texts that accompany or complement a piece and steer its reception. And against the backdrop of this book's definition of 'production,' they are also constitutive parts of a choreographic production (→ THEORY AND METHODOLOGY). In particular, the reviews published in the arts sections of newspapers hold special sway over the complex of power and knowledge surrounding the discursive knowledge of dance. Even though digital media have been breaking arts sections' exclusive position of power since the turn of the 21st century, thus diminishing the influence of individual journalists and dance critics, the arts sections in serious national print media around the world continue to mold public opinion. They still shape discourse, the reputations of artists and companies, the interest of potential host venues in a special production or in upcoming works by an artist, as well as the relevance generally afforded to dance as an art form. Dance critics and the media in which they publish occupy (differently recognized) positions of power. Dance reviews are significant written and publicly accessible sources of material for understanding the connections between performance and reception. So, while there are also other types of texts such as academic inquiries available as well as other journalistic resources – e.g., paratexts such as reports, interviews, documentaries and even texts written by the artists themselves – dance reviews, especially in the form of performance critiques, make it possible to gain special insights into the ways in which a respective piece has been perceived, contextualized and judged by a professional audience, that is, dance critics. In addition, they also reveal how the respective publications wanted to present the specific piece, the dance genre, the artist or venue. As reflective written statements, they form a counterpart to but also provide guidance for the oral statements made by the audience immediately after a performance (→ RECEPTION | AUDIENCE).

The dance reviews written about Pina Bausch and the Tanztheater Wuppertal also reveal themselves to be central components of the dance productions insofar as they fundamentally shape public opinion about their artistic work. Reviews have been divided since the outset: some have viewed Pina Bausch as a revolutionizer

of dance, as journalist Ursula Heyn wrote on the occasion of the premiere of *Viktor* (UA 1986) in 1986: "The dance-theater revolutionizer [...] has struck again."[7] Others believed they were seeing no more than endless repetitions, such as Helmut Scheier from the newspaper *Nürnberger Nachrichten,* who stated in 1986: "Almost all of it has been seen before in some way or another."[8] A third faction in turn has considered Pina Bausch's art to be sublime, for instance, Martin Töne in the *Westdeutsche Zeitung:* "Nobody presents the world as an eternal spiral of hopes and desires quite as magnificently as Pina Bausch."[9]

These three positions – that Pina Bausch showed nothing new and repeated herself, that Pina Bausch always had new ideas and is still groundbreaking, that Pina Bausch is a timeless pioneer of dance – have shaped the range of different judgments made in the arts sections since the company began over 40 years ago. They are components of the power-knowledge complex that defines the social value of dance according to the bourgeois understanding of art and decides whether the aesthetics of Tanztheater Wuppertal are innovative or not. This is especially striking when we look at its historical dimensions: the established critics of the 1970s, who were above all music critics, used the Tanztheater Wuppertal as an example to write about how a new aesthetic was infiltrating the reigning art establishment, which still adhered to the aesthetics of ballet at that time, a dance form that was considered to be subordinate to music within the hierarchy of the performing arts in Germany.[10]

This chapter deals with journalistic dance criticism and examines how critics have translated Pina Bausch's art into writing, how these acts have established and perpetuated dance theater discourse and the repercussions they have had on public opinion and perception. How is a piece translated into dance criticism? What kinds of writing practices can be found in such reviews? And in light of the opening quotations: what concept does dance criticism have of itself in relation to dance as an art form? How does dance criticism formulate critique? The following chapter pursues these questions by first outlining the different historical positions of dance criticism. This overview forms the framework for the subsequent presentation of central positions adopted by critics about Pina Bausch's artistic work with the Tanztheater Wuppertal. I will present these positions using reviews of the piece *Viktor* written between 1986 and 2017 and writings by critic Jochen Schmidt about all international coproductions (1986–2009).

Dance criticism has been an integral part of the European history of arts and culture since the public sphere moved into the media in the 19th century and journals took on the role of shaping opinion, to begin with in bourgeois circles.[11] Although newspaper scholar Wilmont Haacke emphasizes that the character of the arts sections of newspapers has repeatedly changed throughout history, he still essentially defines it as engaging in personal, subjective forms of writing, as "inner involvement."[12] In fact, the early days of arts-section dance criticism – which began above all in France with Théophile Gautier around 1830 – were characterized by translations into subjective, illustrative and poetic writing. Men wrote about the 'fleeting,' enchanting dances of the famous ballerinas of romantic ballet, and they did so with great passion and empathy. Dance criticism meant translating the imaginings and fantasies one experienced while watching dance into writing; it was less about formulating objective descriptions of what had actually been seen.[13]

After the Second World War, dance reviews in Germany primarily dealt with ballet and as such played a marginal role in arts sections. As the third and least valued art form in the hierarchy of the performing arts in Germany, it was assigned a subordinate status. And like all art criticism at the time, dance criticism was dominated by men.[14] Even in the early 1970s, when dance theater was revolutionizing the German theater landscape and calling the reigning hierarchical system of ranking the arts into question, only men – with the exception of Eva-Elisabeth Fischer – were writing about Pina Bausch and the Tanztheater Wuppertal, and most of them were actually music critics, among them 'pontiffs of criticism' *(Kritikerpäpste)* like Klaus Geitel and Horst Koegler. While other artistic genres have taken for granted that music, opera and theater critics possess practical experience and specialized knowledge in their respective art forms, even today, there is little to no discussion about what dance critics should know. Perhaps this is because so few have made the switch from the profession of dancer or choreographer to the profession of dance critic. On the contrary: if at all, they have generally gone in the opposite direction, like dance critic Norbert Servos, or Raimund Hoghe, who was once a critic, then became a dramaturge for Pina Bausch and is now an internationally respected choreographer.

The turning point in dance criticism came not in the 1990s, as claimed by Esther Boldt,[15] but as early as in the 1960s – and it was radical. Unlike in Germany, where newspaper arts sections mainly focused on the bourgeois institutions of a state-subsidized art scene, it was young American dance critics who first recognized

the analogies with the new forms of dance being produced by Merce Cunningham and Judson Dance Theater, and who attempted to translate them accordingly into dance reviews.[16] For some, dance was an expression of emotion, for others a physical act. However, representatives from both sides agreed that "[t]he one inescapable thing about dance criticism is that you have to be in contact with the real live thing as it is performed."[17] Here, the idea that dance cannot be accessed discursively is connected to a kind of anti-intellectualism in dance criticism, which would soon be followed by a countermovement in the late 1970s that would attempt to grasp dance theoretically.[18]

In 1970s West Germany, dance theater's radical aesthetics triggered a crisis in dance criticism. The older, established critics rallied against dance theater. Although they recognized it as a radically new performing art form, they were unwilling to accept it as an artistic form of dance. In the meantime, a younger generation seized the chance to reinvent dance criticism and its institutional structures. In 1982, Rolf Garske founded the magazine *Ballett International,* which focused on new dance aesthetics. Young critics such as Norbert Servos and Hedwig Müller became important allies of Pina Bausch and the authors of a new way of writing about and interpreting her work. As young theater studies students, they developed an entirely different, more open approach to dance theater than the one practiced by their older, musicologically schooled colleagues. Their writings referenced current theater discourse, thus questioning the previous hostility of ballet criticism toward theory. They built a bridge between criticism and academia, reading this new art form through the eyes of theater scholars, thus developing a narrative about the work of Pina Bausch that has been replicated and translated for decades,[19] meaning that dance reviews about Pina Bausch are primarily characterized to this day by semiotic and semantic descriptions of individual scenes. This new generation of dance critics searched for new forms of writing and for analogies between dance and text – thus making a significant contribution to improving the reputation of the new art form of dance theater and, above all, to viewing the work of the Tanztheater Wuppertal as not just a purely aesthetic dance phenomenon but also a sociopolitically relevant art form.

In the 1980s, the founding of two new dance journals, *Tanzdrama* and *Tanz Aktuell,* gave German-language dance criticism another boost in the transformation of its self-image and the establishment of a critical writing practice. *Tanz Aktuell* in particular styled itself as a companion to contemporary dance and made a significant contribution to examining the problem of translation between dance and writing, between the aesthetic and the discursive,

and to understanding dance itself as a special, corporeal expression of social and cultural knowledge while also discussing its political potential. This intellectual opening up of dance criticism, also and above all in relation to the emerging field of dance studies, initially led to broad and diverse coverage of dance in German arts sections. National newspapers employed 'permanent-freelance' dance critics, some of whom wrote detailed dance reviews, also about the work of Pina Bausch. Since the 1990s, this situation has changed, due in part to the crisis in publishing brought about by digitalization. Today, only a few arts sections publish dance reviews, most of which are short, often standardized descriptions that barely allow for any adequate translation of the experimental, any critical reflection on one's own writing practice or 'open writing.' At the same time, digital formats and platforms such as tanzkritik.net, tanznetz.de and corpusweb.net have established themselves in the German-speaking world with the aim of developing new forms of presentation, appealing to alternative groups of readers and producing new forms of knowledge through their distinct mediality.

Since the 1960s in particular, dance criticism has undergone a number of decisive changes within the scope of the paradigm shift that has occurred in dance, developments that have taken place in the media landscape and in light of digitalization: in the 1960s, the artwork itself and its performance formats were regarded as objects of criticism (→ PIECES), but since the 2000s,[20] 'conceptual dance' and dance research have shifted the focus toward artistic practice, which is now in itself considered to be the "site of criticism."[21] From the point of view of conceptual dance, criticism is not so much judgment as a mode of working that makes 'other' experiences and approaches to the world possible. However, some theoretical positions in turn define certain artistic working methods as 'critical' based on the fact that they allow new forms of community,[22] friendship,[23] "complicity"[24] and new collective working methods to be tried out and tested. These experimental and experiential spaces enable the exploration of 'different,' alternative or subversive social practices, in that they address a 'different' mode of individual and collective socialization.

Not just artistic practices but also journalistic practices of dance criticism have redefined themselves since the 1990s as critical practices, as the opening quote by Helmut Ploebst illustrates. Their critical potential lies in how they carry out the various steps of translating the perceptions of a piece into written text and what effects perception, knowledge and power, as well as the critics' own position, the performance situation and the (institutional) context (recipients, conditions of publishing outlets, etc.) have on each other. There are a number of translation steps between choreography,

writing, description and judgment, each of which generates undeniable difference. By demonstrating its awareness of said difference, criticism becomes both a special practice of judging and a critique of judgment itself. Instead of relying on knowledge-based judgment, writers question what they think they know in a continuous attempt to approach artworks with fresh eyes. This attitude is not one of certainty; rather, it is based on an awareness of disruption. The act of judging a work of art can thus be read as the inextricable tension between translating dance into writing, balancing the interplay between the singular and the general, between experience and idea, moment and concept. The process of judgment itself thus appears to be a practice that is subject to open steps of translating between choreography, performance, perception and writing that must constantly be reconstituted.

These more recent concepts of a critical writing practice differ from the practices of established and traditional journalistic critique. But it would be wrong to assume that they were only developed and formulated in the 2000s – following the paradigmatic upheaval brought about by conceptual dance in the 1990s. Instead, we should regard them as the practices of a young generation of critics, who used the crisis of artistic dance provoked by dance theater in the 1970s and 1980s to productively reorient dance criticism.

These positions have redefined the concept of practice, which is usually considered to be antecedent or in opposition to theory. Practice theory's concept of criticism, on which this chapter is based in keeping with the framework of a praxeology of translation introduced in this book (→ THEORY AND METHODOLOGY), questions this duality between (dance) theory and artistic practice. Practice theory's concept of criticism thus also breaks away from the privileging of (dance) practice over theory, which is based on the dualistic notion that artistic practice is the real site of criticism. On the one hand, this thinking contradicts contemporary dance practice, which generates theory precisely in and out of that practice. On the other hand, however, it does not do justice to a way of thinking that understands the reception of a piece as a component of dance production and in itself a practice of generating knowledge. In this sense and as this book argues, practice is a complex and interdependent act of translation within the framework of an artistic production, which is defined as the interplay between developing, performing and perceiving a piece.

From this point of view, the concept of practice serves as a collective term for the techniques and "arts of existence,"[25] as Michel Foucault calls them, that play a role in dance production and that are generated in working methods (→ WORK PROCESS), forms of collaboration (→ COMPANY) and discursive fields of knowledge,

such as those produced in journalistic and scholarly texts. Practices – artistic, journalistic and scholarly – form subjects. They also create difference between different types of subject, for example between dancers, choreographers, dance critics and scholars.

THE TANZTHEATER WUPPERTAL AND DANCE CRITICISM

Although the Tanztheater Wuppertal is a world-renowned company and Pina Bausch is undoubtedly considered a choreographer who has influenced various cultural, national and regional dance histories around the world, dance critics have always been divided in their opinions of her achievements. During her first artistic phase and right up until the first coproduction *Viktor* (→ PIECES), the guardians of the holy grail of traditional ballet were facing off with her fans. As the initial excitement, bewilderment and outrage over her revolutionization of dance began to die down, voices began emerging in the late 1970s that called Pina Bausch outdated, conventional and canonized. For example, in his 1978 review of *Renate Emigrates* (PREMIERE 1977), Jens Wendland claimed that he was unable to find anything other than "[…] sparse monomaniac dance sequences with rigid creeping, tearing and gyrating movements, which provide no further variation to Pina Bausch's well known barefoot dance litanies."[26] Arlene Croce stated with disappointment in 1984: "Bausch's publicity has exaggerated the scandal and salaciousness in her work. Some mild ribaldry, some rather unappetizing nudity are all she has. As a theatre terrorist, she achieves her main effects through repetition."[27] And, back in 1979, Horst Koegler wrote that, "What we need is a new Bausch,"[28] reiterating this opinion 30 years later in 2009, when he stated on the occasion of the premiere of *"…como el musguito en la piedra, ay si, si, si…"*: "It cannot be denied that the Wuppertaler Tanztheater Miracle has lost some of its original electrifying magic."[29] While our recent audience surveys confirmed the assessment of a growing conventionalization of Pina Bausch's works, they also revealed that the audience now takes particular delight in recognizing the familiar and expected (→ RECEPTION | AUDIENCE).

Until the very end, critics were divided about Pina Bausch. There were just as many exuberant voices emphasizing the unique, revolutionary or scandalous qualities of her art – more so internationally than in Germany. While Croce lamented the repetition, *Ballett News* issued the following praise in 1984: "Her work inhabits a self-created category that pushes into uncharted territories. Theater, dance, spectacle, elements of psychoanalysis, comedy and sheer terror are welded into grandiose, oversized, overlong epics of considerable impact."[30] And while Koegler longed for a "new Bausch," Johannes Birringer emphasized the radicality of her art in the *Drama Review* in 1986: "But when Pina

Bausch's Wuppertaler Tanztheater, still unknown in this country outside of New York, opened the Olympic Festival with such emotionally devastating pieces as *Café Müller* (1978) and *Bluebeard* (1977), the Festival had its first unpredicted scandal."[31]

THE WRITING ROUTINES OF ARTS-SECTION DANCE CRITICISM In their writing practices, critics are subject to selective practices of perception framed by experiences, tastes, preferences and discursive traditions. Dance critic and scholar Christina Thurner has emphasized that critics are required to take a step that translates perception into writing: "Perception, as well as the manner of its communication are, however, fundamentally shaped by discursive traditions, i.e., by the specific description of movement that is, by writing the effect of artistic movement in dance into being *[Er-Schreibung]*. In my opinion, it is a myth that movement onstage can be directly, immediately received, written down and communicated. In actual fact, we perceive that for which we have the perceptual tools. Discourse is what provides us with this toolkit – not exclusively, but to a decisive degree. Describing dance (in the arts sections or in academia as well) is thus not, as is often assumed, a purely parasitic matter, but an act whose retrospective and anticipatory effects cannot be detached (any longer) from the entire process of perception."[32] Accordingly, writing routines, i.e., conventionalized, recurring practices of writing, and established discursive tropes can be identified in articles about pieces by the Tanztheater Wuppertal, as we will now show using the example of reviews of the piece *Viktor*,[33] Pina Bausch's first coproduction.

The reviews of *Viktor* all begin by situating the piece within Pina Bausch's overall oeuvre, with critics who have followed her work for years referencing their own personal or 'professional' history of visual experience. They then contextualize the piece by placing it in relation to a 'before' or 'previously.' A 1999 review of a guest performance of *Viktor* in London reads: "The Sadler's Wells season sold out weeks ago, because she is 'a legend.' Yet some of Bausch's targets are beginning to look rather obvious, not to say old hat – the destructive sexualizing of women with their cleavages and high heels: the inability of the sexes to communicate on things that matter, the blotting out of uncomfortable truths."[34] Often reviews distinguish between 'old' and 'new' parts. Comparisons are made with earlier pieces, and what has just been seen is accordingly characterized as being 'new' or 'typically Pina Bausch.' In 1997, Gerald Siegmund wrote in the FAZ on the occasion of a performance in Frankfurt: "Nothing human is strange to Pina Bausch. That's why her pieces are just as fresh and enchanting as when they first came out, even after more than a decade. They live and breathe with the people who never tire of looking for the strand under the pavement."[35]

These classifications are not only formulated in reviews of restagings of the piece years after its world premiere, but can also be found in reviews of that premiere. In 1986 for example, critics judge what is new in *Viktor* to be innovative and praise it by saying, for example, that "the old phobias (reappear) in new form" and "new ideas."[36] In contrast, the elements identified as 'typically Pina Bausch' are either indifferently accepted – for example, the "carrying around of men and women," which is part of the "indispensable grammar of the Bausch stage"[37] – or are classified as outdated and a thing of the past – for example, when the piece *Viktor* is described overall as "the swan song of the last ten years of dance and theater" and its stage as "a powerful museum."[38] But even when critics claim that *Viktor* is nothing new, they still simultaneously emphasize the innovative power of Pina Bausch's art and its status within the context of contemporary art, as in 1986, when reviewers write that "her pieces have a long-term effect"[39] and that "Pina Bausch's Tanztheater Wuppertal's radical abstinence from conventional form means that it now has a reputation to defend."[40]

These classifications describe aesthetic routines in Pina Bausch's choreographies that are critically called into question against the backdrop of expectations relating to the 'new,' especially when reviews are written about restaged pieces, sometimes years and decades after the original premiere. The outcome can be positive, like when a critic for *The Jerusalem Post* writes about a performance of *Viktor* in Tel Aviv in 1995: "Pina Bausch is at her best, perhaps even her greatest, in *Viktor*."[41] Twenty-two years later, in 2017, after a performance in Hamburg, a newspaper reviewer stated: "Anyone who doesn't know that Pina Bausch's legendary piece *Viktor* was created in Rome in 1986, would consider it contemporary. […]. *Viktor* is a splendid example of this. It is also an example of how timelessly modern Pina Bausch's pieces are. Still avant-garde, even after 30 years."[42] These examples show that each respective piece is measured less against the standards of contemporary dance aesthetics than against a backdrop of questioning the overall contemporary relevance of the work of the Tanztheater Wuppertal (and these voices have multiplied even further since the choreographer's death). It is an ongoing struggle with the icon Pina Bausch and her almost mythological status in recent dance history. Hence, in 2001, Hungarian writer Péter Esterházy wrote about the performance of *Viktor* in Paris: "Pina Bausch fait partie de ces grands artistes. À travers elle, l'art acquires a raison d'être; nous regardons la scène, sa scène, au plus profond de notre cœur (ou d'un autre organe interne), et nous voyons alors à quoi sert l'art."[43]

The categorizing judgments of 'contemporary' and 'new,' 'outdated' and 'historical,' or 'timeless' and 'unique,' which are also

made by the audience (→ RECEPTION | AUDIENCE), can be read as evidence of the close juxtaposition of performance, perception and knowledge. This is a juxtaposition that makes reference to the paradox between identity and difference inherent to every translation – and in particular to its temporal aspect. While restagings show the same piece and are thus identical with the past, they also create something 'new' and 'different' at the same time by shifting the piece during the performance into another present with other dancers and another audience in another place. In these new contexts, in temporary retrospectivity, dance critics measure what they see against its antecedent. In other words, the supposed original is only created during its translation into a restaging and in the reviews. And there are different positions on this matter: for example, in 1999, a reviewer for *The Daily Telegraph* complained: "[…] I was bored stiff. The poetic scenes were few and far between, listlessness and dull parody everywhere else: the sad nondescript men in drag; and the bitchtarts in stilettos, seemed like overfamiliar Bauschian archetypes."[44] On the other hand, a critic in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* wrote: "Pina Bausch's *Viktor* has not only survived the years well, but it has even increased in importance, dealing as it does with an internally torn society."[45] The *Frankfurter Rundschau* issued the following praise: "[…] but respect also grows for this dance and theater maker, whose pieces have aged like good wine."[46] Finally, in 1995, the writer for *The Jerusalem Post* stated: "*Viktor,* though created nine years ago, couldn't be more up to-the-moment."[47]

However, there was not only praise for the passing on of roles to other dancers (→ WORK PROCESS) and the translation of elements from the piece to other productions. For example, Jochen Schmidt wrote about *O Dido* (PREMIERE 1999) in the FAZ: "The magnificent gargoyle being force-fed bottled water, portrayed by Kyomi Ichida in *Viktor,* has now turned into the banal moistening of a chair by Ruth Amarante."[48] And in 2001, once again in the FAZ, he regretted that "there is as yet no one who could compete with the old fighters in terms of personality."[49]

Moreover, the dance reviews reveal various writing routines that evolved and solidified over time – over a period of 30 years in the case of *Viktor:* 1986-2017. During this period, writing conventions changed. For instance, the general eruption of dance criticism in the 1980s also becomes visible in the reviews of Pina Bausch's work as dance is placed in a political context – for example, Rolf Michaelis compares *Viktor* to German chancellor Helmut Kohl's environmental policies: "The gentle but determined, often comically, more often sorrowfully expressed – and clearly politically motivated – protest against the established world order is unmistakable on the evening of this premiere. During the rehearsals, no one could have foreseen the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl. Now, the perplexing image of a smiling

girl with no arms not only awakens memories of thalidomide victims, but above all fears for the future. But what is the chancellor, who is 'sojourning' at the 'economic summit' in Tokyo, transmitting to his men in Bonn, who are musing over the citizens' critical questions about the purpose and benefits of having so many nuclear power plants in the densely populated Federal Republic of Germany? 'Don't wobble!' is the slogan of Viktor Kohl, who craves victory in the impending elections. Just how masculinely stupid are policies that only fend off the consideration of new facts, the critical examination of previous guiding principles in the categories of military, front-line thinking and soldier jargon? The other point of view, which does not consider it a weakness ('wobbling') to abandon potentially false positions, but rather sees it as a strength necessary for survival – this is what you can learn in the way that Pina Bausch plays with eternally 'broken' victors, who have been victorious to the death."[50]

Writing routines also changed in that, compared with later critiques, reviews of the 1980s allotted more space to a critical writing practice in the sense of critics reflecting on their own subjective positions and to descriptions of the audience's perceptions. At the same time, the text dramaturgy of dance reviews has been conventionalized over the years and has become routine. It now consists of routine text modules and follows a succession of descriptions of the stage, costumes and music, as well as individual, above all 'theatrical' scenes related to established aesthetic narratives such as 'dancing everyday movements' or 'male/female relationships.' Finally, most reviews end by assigning the piece a position within Pina Bausch's overall œuvre.

Another writing routine is the attempt to create analogies between choreography and writing by translating the dramaturgy of the pieces with all their tensions, contradictions and surprises into the dramaturgy of the text. For example, the opening scene of *Viktor,* into which all of the tensions of the entire piece are condensed, is reproduced by critics in reviews of the piece as a temporal succession of observations. A beautiful woman enters from the back right-hand side of the stage (from the audience's point of view). She walks toward the middle of the stage. She is wearing a tight red dress, which is described in detail using adjectives such as "brilliant,"[51] "vibrant,"[52] "elegant"[53] and "fiery red."[54] She smiles confidently at the audience, an act that is described as "showy"[55] and "triumphant."[56] As if attending the actual performance, the reader is only informed later that the woman's arms are missing, after having first been given an interpretation of the scene and a description of the tension, confusion and surprise felt while watching it. Moreover, these writing routines are often self-referential: reviews refer back to past reviews and to established and habituated styles of writing.

Dance criticism makes a significant contribution to the production of discursive knowledge about dance theater and to the framing of future perceptions. Expectations about a Pina Bausch piece feed on the discursive knowledge generated by the media in addition to personal experiences. This knowledge is translated and framed according to the situation and is thus continuously updated, consolidated or transformed in situational perception. Thus, there are situatively different readings of *Viktor's* opening scene, which I have described above: reviews of the premiere in May 1986 – like the review by Michaelis quoted above – link the "woman without arms" to the thalidomide scandal and to the catastrophe of Chernobyl in April 1986, thus placing her within the sociopolitical context of current affairs. In addition, cultural framings interact with expectations. The dance reviews of the coproductions thus ask what statement the piece wishes to make about the respective coproducing countries and whether something culturally 'typical' can be recognized in it. One example of this is the "restaurant scene" in *Viktor,* which critics have interpreted as being "typically Italian" for years – at its premiere, on tour and even in restagings – as well as the "fountain scene," which is read as a reference to the Fontana di Trevi and thus to the coproducing city of Rome (→ PIECES). Interpretations differ depending on the social, cultural and aesthetic sources, as well as the local frameworks of the respective dance critics. In reviews of *Viktor's* 1999 London performance, for example, the "restaurant scene" is interpreted as an homage to dancer and choreographer Antony Tudor. Even *Viktor's* stage design has been interpreted differently: for some, it is a Roman archeological site or a grave; for others, it is a symbol of the post-industrial Ruhr region or a coal mine.

Pina Bausch herself reacted to the different situational readings by referring to the wall that collapses at the beginning of *Palermo Palermo.* German audiences associated this with the fall of the Berlin Wall, Italian audiences with the fall of the Mafia or Sicily's distance to Europe. Pina Bausch said: "The wall means something different to everyone, every day."[57]

Such different interpretations of individual scenes depend on the various situational, political, social and cultural framings. They prove that discursive translation is a historically, culturally and regionally distinct and fragile process, which is also subject to both historical transformation and changes in perception and reception. Together, these framings and reframings contribute to the fact that the discourse and narratives surrounding the aesthetics of the Tanztheater Wuppertal have become entrenched while remaining metaphorically open. This in turn has helped each piece to be perceived as both historical and yet contemporary.

Writing routines do not just reveal themselves in reviews of individual pieces. They can also be found in the collected works of individual critics who have written about the Tanztheater Wuppertal for decades while developing and conventionalizing their own writing practices. One prominent example in Germany is Jochen Schmidt, who has been a critic for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) since 1968. As such, he has played a decisive role in shaping opinions about the art of Pina Bausch in one of Germany's most important newspaper arts sections. He recognized the rebellious potential and controversial artistic nature of her art early on and began regularly writing dance reviews of Pina Bausch's pieces in the 1970s. He also published reviews of all of the 15 coproductions produced between 1986 and 2009. These articles primarily appeared in the FAZ, but some of his reviews were also published in other newspapers such as *Die Welt,* on the online platform tanznetz.de and in *tanz aktuell / ballett international,* which merged in 2010 to become *tanz*. Schmidt also conducted regular interviews with Pina Bausch[58] and has published a book on the choreographer entitled *Tanzen gegen die Angst* (Dancing Against Fear).[59]

Jochen Schmidt has occupied a position of power in the media discourse surrounding Pina Bausch since the 1970s. His opinions have been influential – more so in the past, when the media landscape was not yet as decentralized and the newspapers and magazines of the educated middle class held a near-monopoly, especially the arts sections. Although this example is almost historical in light of recent radical changes in the media landscape, I would like to use his critiques here to illustrate the sustained influence of an established journalistic writing practice on Pina Bausch's work: what are the characteristic attributes of his practice of writing dance reviews about the Tanztheater Wuppertal over decades? Which writing routines can be found here?[60]

The writing routines in Jochen Schmidt's reviews can be identified above all by their dramaturgical structure. They follow a routine text dramaturgy. His dance reviews often use the titles as a hook: Schmidt points out that the piece does not yet have a title and that this is typical of the works of Pina Bausch. 'Typically Pina Bausch' therefore means premiering an unfinished piece, showing a 'work in progress.' While he and other critics read and praised this at the beginning of Pina Bausch's career as a critique of notions of artistic authorship, allowing the focus to be directed toward the processual rather than the finished work, this positive attitude changed over the years, morphing into a tired dismissal of the familiar.

Set design, music and costumes are the central categories mentioned in his reviews, always in connection with the names of Pina Bausch's long-standing collaborators, such as stage designer Peter Pabst, former ballet dancer and costume designer Marion Cito, and Matthias Burkert and Andreas Eisenschneider, who were responsible for the music (→ COMPANY). His descriptions of individual scenes usually characterize dancers, describe props or categorize the piece in terms of its main theme. Rarely does he mention actual dances – Jochen Schmidt does not have a dance background – but such references have become more frequent over the years. The ratio of solo to ensemble dances is always mentioned, but mainly in terms of quantitative distribution, i.e., the total number of solo and group dances in the piece, the length of the solos or the ratio of solos to group dances. In Jochen Schmidt's texts, dance is rarely discussed in terms of rhythm, dynamics, form, quality or the synchronization of movements. Instead, his writing tends to ascribe meaning to the dance. One example of this is the description of a scene in the piece *Only You* (PREMIERE 1996): "The dances, which begin almost entirely in the area of the arms, are of a disturbing, hectic immediacy. Their movements change directions in a matter of seconds, twitching here and there, and then withdrawing even before they have been performed completely. They seem to want to confirm the existence of the world, while simultaneously rejecting it using circling and beating movements, like trying to drive away a swarm of flies or mosquitoes. But these dances are neither embellishments nor divertissement. Their self-preoccupation and isolation are the actual theme of the piece."[61] On the one hand, this literal 'rewriting' of the dance scenes reveals a metaphorical openness. On the other hand, Schmidt attributes meanings to the dance which – in his opinion – fulfills dramaturgical functions in the piece.

Thematic, theatrical, symbolic, semiotic or material references to the coproducing country are also central criteria in his dance reviews of the coproductions. It is the common theme that runs through them. Like other dance critics, Jochen Schmidt searches for references to the culture of the coproducing countries in the music, stage, costumes and scenes that he describes. However, one exception is his descriptions of the dance sequences. He classifies them in terms of Pina Bausch's entire œuvre, comparing them to earlier dances from other pieces by Pina Bausch or to dance theater as a genre. In his review of *Masurca Fogo* (PREMIERE 1998), for example, Schmidt states for the first time that "the return to dance that has been pursued for years is now pushing ahead"[62] and then repeats this in almost every review that follows. Likewise, he regularly refers to "earlier spiral dances" or "line dances" that, he regrets, no longer appear in more recent pieces. In his reviews, dance is emphasized

as something absent; the "search for the vestiges of dance" is more present in his reviews than descriptions of dances performed in the pieces. He combines this with an ambivalent attitude, criticizing on the one hand those pieces that only feature "beautiful dance" in "beautiful clothes" to the detriment of controversy and sociopolitical relevance while, on the other, yearning for a return to more dance.

Over the years, his reviews play with this ambivalence, as exemplified in his change of opinion: in the years between *Masurca Fogo* and *Nefēs* (PREMIERE 2003), Schmidt describes pieces as being "dead" and as a rehashing of "waste."[63] He comments on the piece *Ein Trauerspiel* (1994) as follows: "This is the logical end of the piece, after which only dead material is accumulated in the transport of civilization's garbage and many a repetition."[64] Then from *Ten Chi* (PREMIERE 2004) up until Pina Bausch's last piece *"…como el musguito en la piedra, ay si, si, si…"* (PREMIERE 2009), he continuously praises what he sees as the positive trend toward the Tanztheater Wuppertal gaining a new identity thanks to a new generation of dancers, a trend characterized above all by the "rediscovery" of dance. The new generation of dancers in the Tanztheater Wuppertal ensemble, which he initially described as being "too athletic" and "too professional" while also complaining about a lack of "strong personalities," now appears as a ray of hope thanks to the new motif of rediscovering dance. We see here that, while his opinions change, his practice of forming those opinions remains constant: his point of reference is not the piece itself or other contemporary pieces, but earlier phases of Pina Bausch's oeuvre, which he as the 'expert' establishes as the normative standard. In his reviews, Jochen Schmidt thus forms his opinions based on his own classifications of Pina Bausch's oeuvre. Finally, he contextualizes the piece in relation to earlier pieces. He usually refers to specific examples or the central narratives of Pina Bausch's aesthetics, such as the 'incompleteness' of the piece, the social and political relevance of the piece's theme or the number of dances in the piece. Schmidt describes the piece's effect on the audience by generalizing his own experience and by describing its entertainment value and the expectations of the audience from the point of view of an "experienced Bausch spectator."[65] His judgments are mainly based on classifications and, in these classifications, the dominant discursive tropes are those of the 'old' and the 'new,' as, for example, in his review of the premiere of *Viktor:*

"Occasionally the old phobias reappear in new form. Again and again – and increasingly exhausted – Monika Sagon steps out onto the stage and tries to briefly greet the audience after having made her rounds of the auditorium: an element of insisting on one's own obsessions seems to be

deliberately implanted into the new piece in the form of this dancer. At some point, Anne Martin, who had previously verbally attacked a colleague, asks the audience to leave, saying she doesn't need them. But alongside the variations on the familiar, there is an abundance of not only new but also very carefully and masterfully worked-through ideas. A woman receives new high-heeled shoes as if being shod like a horse; but the blacksmith does not simply shoe her using a few symbolic gestures, turning it instead into an act of extremely meticulous craftsmanship. When Kyomi Ichida, hanging over the back of a chair with her arms outstretched, turns into a living gargoyle, it creates the full image of a fountain alongside the ghostly symbolism; two men use the stream of water emitting from Ichida – as she is constantly filled back up again by force – for a thorough wash."[66]

That the process of rating something as 'new' is relative and subjective reveals itself in the fact that the "fountain scene" from *Viktor* in 1986 (→ RECEPTION | AUDIENCE) can also be read as something 'very familiar.' The appearance of water is a common element in many of Pina Bausch's pieces, as for example in the "Macbeth Piece" (PREMIERE 1978) and in *Arien* (PREMIERE 1979), in the water pistols in *Legend of Chastity* (PREMIERE 1979), a water sprinkler in *1980 – A Piece by Pina Bausch* (PREMIERE 1980) and also in later pieces, such as *Masurca Fogo, Nefés, Ten Chi* and *Vollmond* (PREMIERE 2006).

Jochen Schmidt's reviews of Pina Bausch's dance pieces are a prime example of an established practice of dance criticism. They adhere to a routinized writing practice, which reveals itself in the reviews' text dramaturgy and how their criteria are based on history and œuvre, Pina Bausch's development as an artist and the overall genre of dance theater. Last but not least, they show themselves in the use of recurring discursive tropes that aim to convey the performance to an audience through a text, with the critic as translator.

Schmidt's critiques are precise, concrete, differentiated and based on profound journalistic knowledge of, above all, the Tanztheater Wuppertal. Schmidt does not write scathing reviews, nor does he indulge in polemic extravagancies or hymns of praise. His language is prosaic. Unlike early French and American dance critics, he does not attempt to find a metaphorically rich, associative language that is itself in motion and that still characterizes some academic approaches to dance.[67] His style of language is educational: he wants to document, recount and classify all at the same time, to deliver an interpretation and perform his knowledge of and his relationship with the Tanztheater Wuppertal. Not only does he allocate a place for each respective piece in Pina Bausch's œuvre, but he also references the judgments that he himself has already made about her work in earlier texts – and comments on whether he was proven right. While the work of the choreographer changes over time (→ PIECES), as he himself asserts, he changes neither the text

dramaturgy of his dance reviews nor his standards or frames of reference. Jochen Schmidt is not one of those critics who reveal the criteria on which their judgments are based. His descriptions of how the audience receives a piece are shaped by his own subjective perspective; his attitude is that of a 'pontiff of dance criticism' who does not question himself or his 'expert' authority.

TRANSLATING BETWEEN PERFORMANCE, PERCEPTION AND TEXT

Dance criticism is characterized by the paradox between identity and difference inherent to translation, which reveals itself here in specific ways when perceptions of a dance and theater event are transferred into the medium of text. Dance reviews are characterized by translation steps that are different to those taken in translations of dance into dance studies texts, which take more time, rely on other types of data and source material, and usually address smaller, more specialized audiences. These structural differences in the fields of journalism and academia still exist even when individuals simultaneously work both as dance critics and dance scholars, as Christina Thurner explains, describing the relationship between dance criticism and dance studies on the basis of these personal identities.[68]

The act of translating perceptions into spoken language, in turn, is fundamentally different to the act of translating them into writing, as becomes clear in a comparative analysis of dance criticism and audience surveys (→ RECEPTION | AUDIENCE). The latter take place immediately after a performance. Audience statements are spontaneous, fast, impulsive and often 'amateurish' in terms of their technical terminology. Dance reviews, on the other hand, are written by professional viewers (in most cases) with the vast visual experience, specialist terminology, linguistic skill and specific technical knowledge of dance that are expected by their readers. Dance reviews are also created at a spatial distance to the performance situation, but unlike academic texts, still within temporal proximity of it. Although they are often penned under the pressures of a deadline, they strive for professionalism and are written with a broad media public in mind, the respective readers of their publications. They are typically based on specific writing routines, which reveal themselves in the dramaturgical structure of the reviews and in recurring linguistic choices, for example in the description or emphasis of certain scenes, which are usually only referenced in terms of their meaning and – as in the case of the international coproductions – are more often than not interpreted as being 'typically' Italian, Turkish, Portuguese, etc. At the same time, dance critics substantiate their judgments by assigning the individual

piece a place within the overall œuvre of Pina Bausch and by characterizing them as being 'typically' or 'untypically Pina.' In this way, aesthetic discourse about the Tanztheater Wuppertal is conventionalized, and these conventions are thus constantly updated as well.

Dance criticism demonstrates that translating dance into writing can be seen as not only a loss but also as a productive way of dealing with the limitations of translation (→ THEORY AND METHODOLOGY). We see this in the ways in which clear attributions are avoided and descriptions are 'suspended in limbo' in order to keep them ambiguous. For example, dance reviews of *Viktor* feature passages such as: "Something Roman shines through,"[69] "One seems to be able to recognize the 'Roman' here, much in the same way that Fellini portrayed it in his films,"[70] or "So you can choose to see Rome in *Viktor*, or to share (or endure) Bausch's eternal preoccupation with the way that men and women treat each other, wherever they happen to be."[71]

At the same time, these reviews are dominated by classifications and conventionalizations of the 'Pina Bausch aesthetic,' the descriptions of the dances in particular reference stylistic elements considered to be characteristic of Pina Bausch's choreographies, such as 'everyday movements,' 'everyday gestures' or dance as a means to an end, as the medium of a statement that she supposedly wishes to make: "She explains herself through dance – delicately, tenderly and enchantingly choreographed to the end."[72]

The reviews are characterized by interpretive writing. In them, the performative aspects of the pieces only play a minor role: criticism is not interested in *how* a scene is created, choreographically constructed or performatively generated, but in *what* the scene represents. The "fountain scene" is, for example, described as a dancer portraying a "water dispenser" or as a representation of the famous Fontana di Trevi. What is not being described is how this happens in and through movement, i.e., that this is a performative process created by a dancer using her body to portray a source of water – and not a case of representation. This is precisely where the difference to Pina Bausch's artistic practice becomes evident (→ PIECES), as said practice is primarily characterized by a performative approach to choreography and less by a choreographic style that uses movements, materials or scenes to represent something else, something underneath.

This focus on the representative level is also reflected in the descriptions of what the respective pieces are 'about.' Dance reviews tend to not discuss the choreographic aspects of the tensions that characterize Pina Bausch's choreographies – for example, the relationships between dance and music, movement and stage, speech and action, theatrical scenes and movement scenes. They primarily translate them thematically, for example as tensions between death/

life, human/world, man/woman, body/object/sexuality, mourning/love, the struggle for survival/a lust for life, while most dance critics believe – as do large parts of the audience (→ RECEPTION | AUDIENCE) – that the main focus is on issues of gender, used to illustrate all other themes.

Perceptions are framed by experience and knowledge. Describing dance or, as Thurner puts it, "writing [it] into being *[erschreiben],*"[73] has always been bound to context and situation. Dance reviews demonstrate that the genealogy of the Tanztheater Wuppertal has been generated within a complex of power and knowledge that – together with other forms of writing (scholarly texts, interviews, artist portraits, commentaries, overview articles), but also with visual material such as film documentaries, photo volumes and their reviews – helps to produce the perceptions and interpretations of a performance, thereby also (re)updating and consolidating the discourse surrounding Pina Bausch's dance theater. It is above all these reviews that translate the knowledge of her art from communicative to cultural memory.[74]

The audience

"Everybody is part of the performance."[75] Pina Bausch

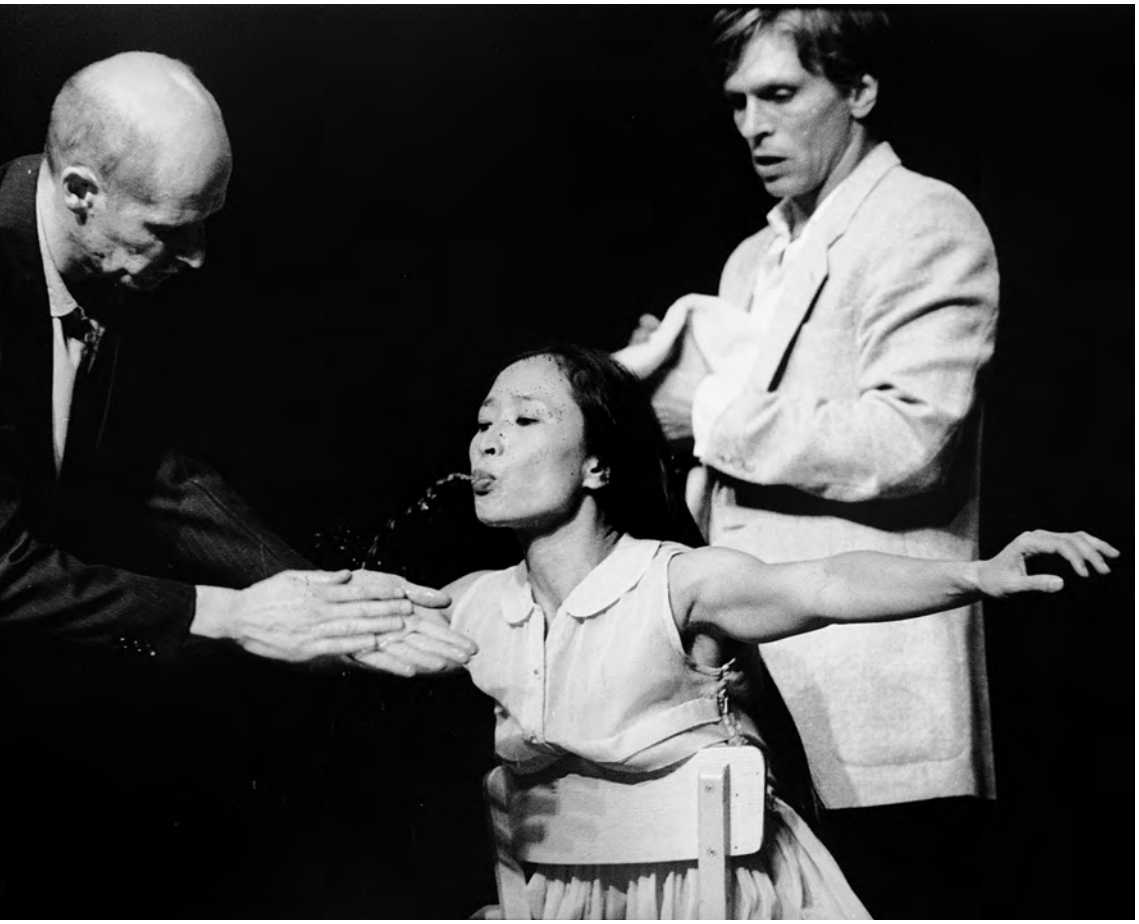
In 2008, about ten years after the publication of his paradigmatic book *Postdramatic Theater,* Hans-Thies Lehmann drew the following conclusion: "The spectator has practically, but even more so aesthetically, become the central topic of theatre, of its practices and its theory."[76] However, at the time, as others like Jacques Rancière were also declaring the audience to be the coauthors of every performance,[77] the "rediscovery of the audience"[78] was really not that new. Debate surrounding this topic had actually pervaded much of 20th-century art. For example, it had already played a major role in the works of Bertolt Brecht and Antonin Artaud. Since the 1960s, the artistic and theatrical avant-garde and, above all, young performance art had been claiming the discovery of the audience for themselves, as they sought to no longer understand art as a 'product,' but rather as a situation, an action, as performance, as an event.

In interviews, Pina Bausch also repeatedly stressed that it was not important for spectators to know or understand what she as a choreographer thought about her piece or what she saw in it. In her opinion, the audience should be open to their own perceptions, interpretations and points of view about the piece: "When I make a piece, I am the audience […]. But I cannot speak for everyone. The pieces are actually made in such a way that everyone in the audience can search for and perhaps find something of their own. Each individual in

the audience becomes creative in this state or that movement, or in the mood that he or she is in at that very moment."[79] To avoid restricting this openness, the Tanztheater Wuppertal has always rejected discursive formats such as introductions to pieces before performances or subsequent discussions with the audience, and has designed almost all of its programs to consist mainly of pictures and photos instead of explanatory or associative thoughts based on the theme of the piece. "The audience is always part of the performance, just as I myself am part of the performance, even when I am not onstage. […]. Our programs never hint at how the plays are to be understood. We have to have our own experiences, just like in life. No one can do it for us."[80]

Regardless of this interest in the audience, theater studies has claimed that the renewed interest in the audience was only sparked by the advent of "postdramatic theater"[81] in the 1990s, thereby discovering the issue of the interplay between the stage and the audience. In current debates on the theory of theater, dance and performance, this interplay thus refers to forms of theater that attempt to open up the classical proscenium stage toward the darkness of the auditorium and to allow spectators to actively participate in the action onstage. It also refers to theater projects that occupy public spaces and define them as theatrical or performative. The issue of the interaction between the stage and the audience is also raised in connection with artistic awakenings that seek to overcome the established concept of the 'artwork' and situate the creation of the piece in its reception through spectators. This entails a change of perspective, from how a piece is staged to how it is performed,[82] and with it an understanding of the audience as not just a prerequisite to and genuine component of a theatrical performance but also as something that helps to constitute the performativity of the performance situation.

It is no coincidence that this change of perspective is taking place at a time when digital space is expanding, enabling new forms of interactivity and collectivity, and assigning a more active role to individual 'users.' Theater and dance discourse have also begun debating such digital forms of interactivity by discussing the relationship between mediality and theatricality, media and dance,[83] and by seeking to prove that theater is a special case by ascribing theater performances their own specific logic.[84] The focus has thus shifted from the staging of a piece, which was central to the discourse of the 1980s and thus deciphered by means of semiotic methods,[85] to the performance, to its eventfulness, uniqueness, singularity, unrepeatability[86] and thus also to the way that it is perceived situationally, which has become the center of theoretical debate about theater and dance and the focus of cultural and philosophical discussions about art in general since the 1990s.



4 *Viktor*
Lyon, 1994

While concepts such as those of the "emancipated spectator"[87] and "relational aesthetics"[88] developed within the scope of the performative turn, "corporeal copresence"[89] has played a major role in discussions in the field of theater studies. Theater performances are thus considered unique in comparison to other media formats in terms of the simultaneity of the physical presence of performers onstage and members of the audience.[90] This also extends to a broader definition of stage presence that is applied to the auditorium. For Erika Fischer-Lichte, 'copresence' means sharing time and space through physical presence and corporeal experience. I should add that corporeal copresence is framed and takes place in the theater in specific ways: through the performance situation, which can, on the one hand, differ due to the various types of architecture and atmosphere in theaters and, on the other, through the specificity of spectators' perceptions, which are based on their distinct forms of habitus, their perceptual habits, visual experiences and knowledge, and situational moods during one and the same performance. These differences in audience perception increase when a piece like *The Rite of Spring* (PREMIERE 1975) is performed over the course of more than 40 years, thus generating multiple audiences in different places and at various points in history.

This increased interest in the audience has also prompted reflection on the previous methods of theater and dance studies, and performance theory. The focus of research has shifted from the 'piece' to its perception, bringing up the question of how to best empirically capture audience perceptions. An empirical approach to audience research has already been firmly established in art sociology[91] and performance studies, which evolved out of cultural anthropology, where ethnographic methods such as participatory and non-participatory observation and interview methods have been applied since its inception in the 1980s. While audience surveys are quite common in these fields and at events such as sports matches, theater and dance studies have so far struggled to take an empirical approach to audience research. Only recently have they begun to make use of ethnographic methods and practice theory.[92] These methodological approaches constitute the process of praxeological production analysis that this book is based on (→ THEORY AND METHODOLOGY). Inspired by concepts used in media theory such as the uses-gratification approach,[93] the encoding/decoding model[94] and the concept of bricolage,[95] praxeological production analysis focuses on the relationship between performance and reception. Audience perception plays a central role in this, i.e., how the spectators are affected and how they adopt and translate their perceptions into their own lifeworlds.

Praxeological production analysis assumes that work process, performance and audience perception are closely connected. A 'dance production' thus emerges out of the interplay between different sets of practices: practices of developing a piece, restaging and rehearsing it, training and performance practices, and practices of spectator perception. The practices of spectator perception depend on the work process and the performance, but also on the cultural habits of each theater audience. Since choreography and dance are rarely clearly encoded, it is similarly impossible for the audience to uniformly decode them. In addition to this diversity of interpretation, which is embedded within the piece itself, the audience's perceptions are not purely individual and subjective, because they are bound, firstly, to complexes of knowledge, which include discursive knowledge, i.e., knowledge that is generated by and acquired through language, texts and images. However, the situational perceptions of the audience members are also framed by cultural and social patterns of perception, which are habituated and thus differentiated, physically manifesting themselves in relation to social and cultural categories such as gender, ethnicity, class and age. Finally, several temporalities are inscribed into the situational perceptions of a performance. As theater scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte explains, while a performance is "always executed in the present,"[96] it is simultaneously connected to the past and the future: "For it is past experiences and expectations of the future that the perceiving subject has made or cherishes that make it perceive the present in a given constellation."[97]

The situative aspect of performance, that which theater studies defines as instantaneous, momentary or unrepeatable,[98] thus encounters patterns of perception, knowledge and visual experience as well as the expectations and the situational mood of the audience. It is this interplay that allows the specific atmosphere that makes a performance unique to emerge in the theater. Philosopher Gernot Böhme defines 'atmosphere' as a spatial carrier of moods[99] that help to shape the realities of the perceiver and what is being perceived. Böhme defines perception as a modality of corporeal presence and, like phenomenologist Hermann Schmitz,[100] as a feeling of presence or an atmosphere that is neither objective nor purely subjective. "In my perception of the atmosphere, I feel what kind of environment I am in. Thus, this perception has two sides: on the one hand, the environment that radiates the quality of the mood and, on the other hand, me, by allowing my state of mind to share in this mood, thereby assuring that I am here now. […]. Conversely, atmospheres are the way in which things and environments present themselves."[101] Elsewhere, he writes that atmospheres

are "not thought of as free-floating, but rather inversely as something that emanates from and is created by things, people or constellations between them. Conceptualized in this way, atmospheres are neither something objective, namely the properties that things have, although there is a thingness to them, they are something that belong to a thing, inasmuch as things articulate the spheres of their presence through their properties – conceived of as ecstasies. Nor are atmospheres something subjective, determined by a state of mind. And yet they are subjective, they belong to subjects, insofar as they are felt by human beings in corporeal presence, and this feeling is simultaneously a corporeal feeling that subjects have of being in space."[102]

If we take this approach, it is almost impossible to maintain the separation between a theatrical performance and its reception. Instead of defining two separate entities, more recent approaches to the philosophy of art and the theory of theater performance have viewed performance as something in-between, that which Jacques Rancière calls a "third thing." It is something that only constitutes itself in interaction with the audience: "Performance […] is not the transmission of the artist's knowledge or inspiration to the spectator. It is a third thing that is owned by no one, whose meaning is owned by no one, but which subsists between them."[103] It follows from these basic propositions that the polarization between staging and performance on the one hand and the audience on the other – still evident in the theater studies of the 1990s, above all in semiotic approaches to theater[104] – cannot be maintained if we wish to adequately grasp the complex interactions between performance and audience perception both theoretically and methodologically.

How can we methodologically understand the performance situation from the point of view of the audience? Theater scholar Stefanie Husel has given some thought to the issue of how to analyze performances. As yet, she has only discovered two distinct possibilities: "'from the outside,' by describing text-like, possibly predetermined structures of meaning, and 'from the inside,' by making recourse to the experiences made by those participating in the situation."[105] Dance and theater studies have so far tended toward an external view of the performance with the aim of examining artistic intent or concepts of staging by analyzing production processes, employing hermeneutic methods of performance analysis or examining the connections between an underlying (dramatic) text and its theatrical execution.

Theater scholar Jens Roselt attempts to methodologically reverse this external perspective by proposing an approach 'from within' the performance that conceives of the performance in terms of its eventfulness in order to understand the simultaneous presence of audience and performers as more than just a "media condition

of reception," instead making it visible as something independent in the "execution of the event"[106]: "The examination of performances should not stop at amazement, but should take this state as its point of departure. My proposition is that performances can be analytically accessed in a meaningful way through these moments of experience."[107] In order to implement this methodologically, he proposes writing performance logbooks: "Spectators are given the task of recording what they can still remember after a performance. It is expressly not about retelling a story, distilling stage directions or repeating the dramaturgy, but about taking a direct look at immediate memory. […]. Writing a logbook is a kind of experiment, not a test, but a self-experiment whose outcome is uncertain and through which the writers of logbooks can find out how a performance has affected them, free from preconceived interpretations."[108]

In contrast to Roselt's approach, which attempts to capture the situativity of the performance from the perspective of the audience, Husel proposes an ethnographic approach that focuses on the interactions between performance and audience and proceeds in a theoretical and empirical manner: "The performance situations […] should be reformulated and reflected on in a dense 'back and forth' of description and theoretical reflection."[109] For this, she examines materials such as audio recordings, which record audience actions such as clapping, laughing, the clearing of throats, giggling and complaining during a performance, and then relates them back to the dramaturgy of the piece.

Both research approaches, from the 'inside' and from the 'outside,' are attempts to overcome the separation between staged piece and audience perception. Nevertheless, as Husel notes, the vocabulary of theater studies still reflects "the distinction established by academic practice between staged piece and performance, production and reception, even if overcoming this epistemic divide has long been aspired to and approached in specific ways (post-structuralist or phenomenological)."[110]

This is also evident in the fact that audience research – with the exception of Bettina Brandl-Risi, who explores applause from a historiographical perspective and postulates that the emotional dimension of a performance can also be observed from 'the outside'[111] – has so far been literally non-existent in theater and dance studies. This book seeks to respond to this research desideratum by presenting the approach of praxeological audience research. How does the 'piece' translate into audience perceptions? What is the best way to describe the copresent relationship between perceivers and what is being perceived? Our methodological starting point is ethnographic and practice-theory-based research; both are more than familiar with the constant changes of perspective between the 'inside' and 'outside,'[112] something that only Husel's work has so far reflected upon methodologically in theater studies.

Agua Ein Stück von Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal. Gestaltung: Uli Weiss

5 Program booklet, restaging of *Água* 2005

By abiding to sociology's tradition of qualitative research methods (→ THEORY AND METHODOLOGY), praxeological production analysis attempts to take an empirical approach to audience perception using ethnographic methods of participatory and non-participatory observation and audience surveys. My team and I therefore conducted a total of four audience surveys in connection with four coproductions, each of which first premiered during one of Pina Bausch's four different artistic phases (→ PIECES): *Viktor* (PREMIERE 1986), *Masurca Fogo* (PREMIERE 1998), *Rough Cut* (PREMIERE 2005), *"…como el musguito en la piedra, ay si, si, si…"* (PREMIERE 2009).[113] The four audience surveys were conducted at the Opernhaus Wuppertal at restagings of the pieces between 2013 and 2015. In short interviews (max. five minutes), spectators were asked three questions before and after the performance.[114] A total of 1,553 spectators were interviewed at various locations in the opera house (in the foyer, in the cloakrooms and in front of the bar).[115] In each case, four to five interviewers conducted the interviews simultaneously and recorded them using audio equipment. At the same time, observation logbooks were drawn up for the events in Wuppertal before, during and after the performances.

"Yes, oh goodness me, they've been around for so long. It just feels like I'm a part of it,"[116] is how one spectator described her relationship with the company in an interview before the performance of *Masurca Fogo* at the Opernhaus Wuppertal in 2015.

A performance is a situational and situated practice, and both aspects are constitutive of the translation of a perceived piece. Dance studies and social research have each developed a different understanding of 'situativity' and 'situatedness,' which are combined in the approach presented here. In dance and performance studies, situativity is generally used to describe the momentary, the unrepeatable, the fleeting, that which is always already absent as it emerges. It is not its embeddedness in the situation, but rather its non-availability, its non-graspability, the non-categoriality of situativity that is focused upon here. The specific criterion of copresence is therefore ascribed to the situativity of theatrical performance. However, at the same time, it is important to point out that situativity presents a number of epistemological problems, such as permanent absence[117] and constant non-presence, which can only be grasped via "presence effects,"[118] i.e., can never be observed themselves. This approach also disregards the framings of situativity, be they social or cultural or framings based on knowledge systems and expertise or on the visual experiences of the spectator. On the other

hand, sociological practice theory (→ THEORY AND METHODOLOGY) defines situativity as itself socially structured, i.e., interspersed with patterns of social order. It emphasizes its situatedness, which is here meant as that which embeds, constitutes and frames the situation. Accordingly, the basic assumption of practice theory is that practices reveal themselves in their situatedness. Hence, the counterpart to situativity can be found in the routines and habits that characterize practices – including perception.

A copresent audience at a theater, dance or opera performance, but also at a sporting event, has different routines than an audience attending, for example, a movie at the cinema or watching it on television. These habits are not only brought about by the mediality of the performance format and by the performance venue (theater, cinema, private residence), but have also been established by tradition. As a place of bourgeois representation, the theater has been producing a specific audience for generations. One spectator described it this way: "Oh, I've been going to Pina Bausch ever since I was nay high. So, I don't know, since I was four, five, six years old. That's why it's a tradition."[119]

The Tanztheater Wuppertal has a global audience. In addition to being performed in Wuppertal, the piece *The Rite of Spring,* for example, was performed almost 400 times in approx. 80 cities and more than 40 countries on four continents between 1977, when it went on tour for the first time, and 2019.[120] This clearly shows that the audience of the Tanztheater Wuppertal not only spans several generations but also includes people with very different cultural and social patterns of perception and experience, and with a broad range of specific (dance) knowledge and personal expectations. In this respect, that which practice theorists Alkemeyer, Schürmann and Volber ascribe to human perceptions and actions also specifically applies to theatergoers: "They are affected differently, bring their own distinct experiences and expectations to the table, develop disparate views, interests and desires based on their respective physical, mental, linguistic and personal situatedness, can be addressed in different ways and, as participants, invoke 'cognitive artifacts' (Norman 1993) such as rules, criteria, systems of knowledge and justification that reference disparate contexts in order to lend emphasis, plausibility and legitimacy to their points of view."[121]

Although the perceptions of different audiences are heterogeneous, it is the specific, respective atmosphere of the performance situation that has an ongoing community-building effect, not only on the dancers but also on the audience. At the same time, historically specific routines have emerged that pertain to theater as an institution on the one hand and to the specific art of Pina Bausch on the other. This juxtaposition of institution, theatrical atmosphere

and specific aesthetics is particularly apparent in the Wuppertal audience, which has grown and aged together with the members of the ensemble. "We know most of them – not personally, but for us, it's as if we're part of the family; they've grown old with us."[122] Spectators from Wuppertal tend to emphasize the aspects of family and local tradition in particular: "As a resident of Wuppertal, I have a natural predisposition for it. My parents took me with them to performances when I was just a child."[123] In this respect, many people have developed routines and habits of attending performances. These are framed by the architecture of the venue (forecourt, foyer, buffet, bar, etc.). In Wuppertal, the central meeting point before the event is the entrance foyer, where there is a bar, a booth that sells posters of Tanztheater Wuppertal pieces and a bookstand that exclusively sells in-house publications by the Tanztheater and its members.

The audience obeys the (unwritten) rules and regulations of the theater as a traditional place of bourgeois representative culture: unlike at the movies, coats are left in the cloakroom, drinks and snacks are not taken into the auditorium, and three chimes of the bell remind the audience that the performance is about to begin and that they need to take their seats. You take your allocated seat – and apologize if you arrive late and the other spectators have to get up from their seats, forcing you to embarrassingly push your way past them down the narrow aisle. The latter in particular is an audience routine that the dancers repeat and perform in the piece *Arien* (PREMIERE 1979), thus demonstrating that the audience and its habits are part of the piece itself. The audience also shares this point of view: "The Tanztheater Wuppertal doesn't just perform pieces onstage. The Tanztheater Wuppertal plays and performs with the audience."[124]

In Wuppertal, routines and habits have been established over decades. This is a rare phenomenon, because there are hardly any companies anywhere in the world that have resided at a specific theater and worked exclusively with one choreographer for as many decades as the Tanztheater Wuppertal or the Hamburg Ballett under John Neumeier. The majority of the audience has seen multiple pieces by the Tanztheater Wuppertal – and this unites them: "I think it's great that they've actually grown old with me."[125] The knowledge gained over long periods of time by reexperiencing pieces together or observing the changes effected by new cast members in restagings are therefore not just one of the experiences of copresence in the theater, but are always an updating of memories as well. Behaviorisms such as quietly laughing, silently mouthing the texts, murmuring a dancer's name and whispering about what comes next are not merely due to the situation onstage, but are always an indication of what is already known to the audience, demonstrations of knowledge about the piece.

In Wuppertal, conversations with others in the audience before the performance thus already follow special routines: many people know each other; they usually talk about the piece they saw last, whether they have already seen the piece being performed that evening, how long ago it was, whether they liked it or not, and what their relationship is to the Tanztheater Wuppertal. This is already a kind of initiation into the community of the audience and into the shared theater experience, the beginning of which is signaled by a strict announcement: unlike in many other theaters, at the Opernhaus Wuppertal, a tape-recorded voice draws attention immediately before the beginning of the performance to the fact that the cell phones must be switched off and that video and audio recordings are prohibited during the show. Aside from making the audience aware of copyright issues and of what would be disruptive behavior, it also indicates to the audience that, when the auditorium lights go out, they will be witnessing an event that, unlike mediatized 'events,' should only take place in the here and now as a shared experience between those physically present. The fact that the audience's attention should be focused solely on the performance situation is also demonstrated by the fact that, unlike in movie theaters, disturbances during the theater performance such as conversations with neighbors, the use of cell phones, the rustling of candy wrappers or constantly sliding one's backside back and forth are usually negatively commented upon by neighboring viewers, as one spectator in particular emphasized in his interview: "The stupid cell phones that people opened next to me during the performance; two women looking at their cell phones in their pockets and scrolling through them, writing text messages – it's annoying. It upsets and angers me, because I can't concentrate on the show. But that's probably just how it is these days."[126]

It is above all these disturbances that penetrate the almost meditative silence of the auditorium and clearly reveal the habits and routines of the theater audience. And unlike audiences of contemporary dance, spectators in Wuppertal largely adhere to the traditional bourgeois ideal of passive and silent observation. The Opernhaus – where the company has performed since the more modern Schauspielhaus closed down – its architecture and atmosphere make a significant contribution to this.

Performances by the Tanztheater Wuppertal can last for up to four hours. As a rule, there is an intermission of approx. 20 minutes, during which the audience is not required to exit the hall, although the majority does. Immediately after the performance, there is always frenetic applause in Wuppertal – no matter which piece is being performed and no matter how well the respective performance went. The applause is a tribute to the dancers, to Pina Bausch, to the Tanztheater Wuppertal's decades of artistic work:

"Yes great, I can tell you, but we are also die-hard Pina Bausch fans."[127] Many spectators jump out of their seats and immediately offer the ensemble respectful standing ovations for minutes on end, which the members of the ensemble, standing closely together in a row, arm-in-arm, accept gratefully, but also benevolently and as a matter of course. The audience surveys that we conducted in Wuppertal also give the impression that the audience is celebrating 'their' dance theater company. Thus, the audience tends to emphasize not the individual piece, but the 'overall event of going to see the Tanztheater Wuppertal,' as one spectator said after *Masurca Fogo:* "It was another magical evening. I have seen three pieces so far and I always find it wonderful how you can immerse yourself, how you have to first find your way into it. When you leave, you're terribly sad that it's over, and you really don't want it to be over. It's magical to me to see how different the dancers are. It feels much more unique than in other companies, and it's as if you know the people. That's kind of absurd, but very beautiful."[128] People are proud of 'Pina' and 'Pina Bausch,' names that have now been trademarked and whose fame has long since outshone the reputation of the suspension railway, Wuppertal's most famous listed landmark in this impoverished city so rich in tradition. This final gesture of standing ovations also ritually concludes the event. In this liminal phase, which can be described in the tradition of anthropologist Victor Turner as a ritual transition between the end of the performance and the state of still being present in the theater, the collective excitement demonstrated by the applause evokes a community comprising the dancers and the 'Pina fans.'

EXPECTATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE

From a cultural-sociological perspective, habits of perception and audience expectations are not merely individual. Instead, subjective perceptions depend on cultural and social patterns. As habituated knowledge, they are persistent and powerful. From this perspective, a dance piece does not exist by itself, but is confronted with the audience's respective habits of perception and expectations during the performance situation. This interaction creates a specific performance atmosphere that is not always supportive, but rather can sometimes be confrontational and full of conflict. The Wuppertal ensemble was forced to experience this in the 1970s, when a number of spectators in Wuppertal angrily and loudly left the auditorium, slamming doors on their way out. At the world premiere of the "Macbeth Piece" *He Takes Her By The Hand And Leads Her Into The Castle, The Others Follow* (PREMIERE 1978) at the Schauspielhaus Bochum (→ PIECES, WORK PROCESS), the performance was nearly stopped due to the tumult taking place in the audience only half

an hour after the piece had begun. Thirty years later, Jo Ann Endicott, who was in charge of restaging the piece in 2019, remembers the uproar: "All hell broke loose in the auditorium! It was impossible to perform during the first half hour. It was terribly loud. The audience kept booing. In the first scene, I stood right at the front of the stage, and after 30 minutes I thought to myself: I can't stand it anymore. I got up and yelled at the audience: 'If you don't want it, then go home, but we can't continue our performance up here on this stage.' Then I left the stage and thought: 'Oh, no, what have I done?' I quickly returned and, from then on, the audience really was quieter. Maybe I saved the premiere."[129]

During the India tour of 1979, the performance of *The Rite of Spring* in Kolkata had to be stopped because the audience was so horrified about the barely dressed dancers that they stormed the stage.

Unlike in the 1970s, audiences today have high expectations of the Tanztheater Wuppertal. "A sensational spectacle,"[130] "To have a great experience,"[131] and "Another form of dance, the magic of Pina Bausch"[132] are just some examples of what spectators are looking for. For them, there is a dazzling range of reasons to see pieces by the Tanztheater Wuppertal: to pay homage to a great artist and to a world-famous ensemble, to express gratitude for decades of outstanding dance, to see their own process of aging reflected in the aging dancers still standing onstage, fearing that it might be 'the last time' before the ensemble is dissolved, going to see something that their parents' generation admires so much. Finally, there is also the aspect of seeking to educate oneself, since Pina Bausch has now become part of the canon of knowledge about modern (dance) art. Performances thus attract not only individuals but also cultural associations, school groups, educators, scholars and young international artists who are interested in the work of Pina Bausch and want to add the live experience of seeing an actual performance onstage to the theoretical knowledge they have already acquired about the company. Some spectators have simply been inspired to see a show after seeing Wim Wenders' film *PINA* (2011), which has undoubtedly introduced the Tanztheater Wuppertal to new audiences. Many people now want to experience the ensemble 'live,' like the spectator who came to see the piece *Viktor* after watching the movie: "Yes, to experience the dancing live for the first time in addition to having seen the film. It's very geared toward emotion, and I'm really looking forward to actually seeing it live."[133]

The expectations of most of the spectators in Wuppertal are closely linked to knowledge and experience. Most of them have specific dance knowledge that they conventionalize: they know what is "typically Pina Bausch" or "typically Pina." More than 75 percent of the 1,553 spectators interviewed said that they had already seen at least one piece by Pina Bausch before. Their knowledge is not only

nourished by their own visual experiences but also by personal connections to their hometown of Wuppertal or to acquaintances who know the dancers. It was striking to hear just how many of the viewers mention that they think they know the dancers, as one woman did: "I know the dancers and have been following them for years, and I am interested in everything that has to do with Pina."[134] However, their knowledge is actually shaped above all by paratexts such as photos, films, DVDs, television shows, documentaries, reviews, books, scholarly articles, lectures, programs, merchandise such as calendars or posters, and video clips on the Internet. Linking perception with this discursive knowledge influences the supposedly 'open' perception of the pieces; it becomes tempting to search for what is 'familiar.' In this respect, the situation of perception is always permeated by experience and memory, and framed by knowledge. This is illustrated by the ambivalence formulated by viewers. On the one hand, they want to "be surprised," "completely open" and "unbiased," to "enter entirely without expectations." On the other hand, they expect to experience something "sensational," "spectacular," "fascinating" and "beautiful."

Whether the specific atmosphere affects the audience also depends on the habituated knowledge that shapes perceptions and expectations. This knowledge of Pina Bausch's signature style produces patterns of perception and routines of expectation that preform situational perception and bind it to past experiences and habituated knowledge. At the same time, perception itself helps to update patterns of perception and knowledge complexes when that which has just been seen coincides with what is remembered – in the words of one spectator: "I know a lot of it, I've already seen a lot of it several times before."[135] Even when audience knowledge of the Tanztheater Wuppertal's aesthetics is guided by experience, translations of this knowledge into language still take their cues from media discourse, which is above all defined by the critics who have continually refined and updated it for decades (→ RECEPTION | DANCE CRITICISM). The audience surveys show that audiences believe Pina Bausch's pieces are about "love," "interpersonal relationships," "humanity" or fundamentally about "humankind." It is above all guests who have not yet seen a piece by Pina Bausch before who are most likely to reproduce this discourse: "I only know that the piece is about the relationship between men and women or rather about the interactions between men and women,"[136] or about the "outstanding dancing of all human emotions,"[137] or "the difference between happiness and sadness."[138] If the guest has not yet seen the piece that is being shown that evening, they say that they will approach the evening with an open mind, without any specific expectations, while even rejecting any such expectations: they want

to imagine "nothing," go into the performance "open minded," be "bowled over" and "let themselves be surprised." They say that they want to be astonished, which can also be viewed as an expectation routine of theater audiences.

REMEMBERING WHAT HAS BEEN PERCEIVED

How and what do viewers remember and *how* do they translate it into language? This question becomes particularly important when we assume that what is perceived becomes experience when it has meaning for the present of the perceiver, that is, when it can be related back to his or her lifeworld and identified there as relevant. But what parts of that which has been perceived are truly remembered? The interviews that we conducted show clear connections between dramaturgy, knowledge and perception: interviewed spectators primarily recall scenes that played a central dramaturgical role – such as the opening scene in *Viktor*, in which a woman in a tight red dress and high heels enters stage right with a charming, winning smile. From the audience's perspective, she then purposefully strides to the middle of the stage. Only then does the audience see that she has no arms (→ PIECES, SOLO DANCE). This is a scene that is also highlighted in many reviews. Alternatively, spectators recall parts of scenes that repeatedly reappear throughout the piece as well as scenes that they read as being "typically Pina." In this way, they seek to comprehend the complex choreographic process by ascribing meaning to what is already known and familiar, i.e., to habitual knowledge. Examples of such practices of description and ascription are the "line dances" – ensemble dances that are also referred to as "polonaises" in the audience surveys conducted after *Viktor* – and the women's dance in *Palermo Palermo* (PREMIERE 1989). Other examples include the very 'gestural' dance scenes, i.e., scenes that are charged with meaning and that are supposedly easy to decode, or scenes that tell a 'story,' such as the famous dance solo that uses sign language to illustrate George and Ira Gershwin's ballad "The Man I Love," featured in the piece *Nelken* (PREMIERE 1982).

Spectators tend to gives names to the scenes that they are able to recall according to their main narratives or images. Sometimes there are clear parallels to earlier reviews of the same piece. For instance, many mentioned "the fountain scene" in *Viktor*, which they associated with the Fontana de Trevi in the coproducing city of Rome: a dancer sits on a chair. She is bending forward over the backrest, her arms stretched out on both sides. Men continually 'fill her up' with water from a plastic bottle, which she then spits out in a high arc like a fountain. The men then wash themselves in this

fountain. Others recall the "restaurant scene," which is often interpreted as "typically Italian." Three waitresses serve a male guest, probably a tourist, who is somewhat confused by the clumsy service as he attempts to order spaghetti and coffee. He is then served by the waitresses in a bored, slow and disinterested sort of manner, which is above all expressed in the posture and gait of the dancers, who do their job by performing slow, delayed movements with their feet turned out, their hips pushed forward, round backs and cigarettes hanging out of the corners of their mouths. In *Rough Cut,* the scene that most people remember is the "washing scene," in which the women wash and scrub the men. In *Masurca Fogo,* it is the "water scene"/"water slide," in which a clear sheet of plastic is stretched out across the stage, filled with water and held up on both sides, creating a water chute through which dancers dressed in swimsuits slide from one end to the other with childish joy. It is also striking that cultural associations with the coproducing countries are primarily triggered by the music, although it has usually been compiled from a broad cultural mix. Finally, spectators also react strongly to specific visual cues and images, such as the video images in *Rough Cut,* also referred to as the "escalator scene," which features video projections of escalators in a shopping mall in Seoul.

In contrast, dance solos are much less frequently mentioned by the audience and just as rarely talked about by dance critics. When they are, their translations are more unspecific and simultaneously more metaphorical and charged with emotion. Solos are not described in detail; the audience prefers to speak of "lots of dance" or of "particularly intense," "expressive," "emotional," "fascinating" and "inspiring" movements (→ SOLO DANCE).

BEING AFFECTED AND SPEAKING ABOUT BEING MOVED

When spectators are asked what they think of a piece, they tend to classify it in positive ways, placing what they have seen within the context of other pieces. They describe Pina Bausch's pieces as "beautiful," "inspiring," "fascinating," "impressive," "great," "wonderful," "indescribable," "unbelievable," "overwhelming," "outstanding," "lovely," "evocative," "splendid," "gripping," "emotional," "stirring," "exciting," "amazing," "superb," "moving," "profound," "touching," "phenomenal," "awesome," "fantastic," "delightful," "uplifting," "intoxicating," "extraordinary" and "unique." They use these adjectives to describe what they have perceived, while at the same time leaving it undetermined. They describe corporeal affective states brought about by the piece such as "palpitations of the heart," "goose bumps" and "taking a deep breath." They search for words for their emotions and use small gestures to show that and how the

movements onstage moved them inside. They use expletives and words that allow them to grasp something intangible and indescribable, and that help them to convey their corporeal affective state. "I'm just still somewhere else, I really can't do this now. Can you?"[139] Yet even by hesitating, evading, paraphrasing vaguely and refusing to find words, they reveal the cracks in translation between 'being affected' and speaking about 'being moved.'

In our audience surveys, the audience spoke about what they had just seen directly after the end of the performance while they were on their way to the cloakroom, still in the theater. This is a kind of threshold situation, a liminal phase, a state of passing through, a floating transition between collectively being-with in the fleeting community that the audience constitutes during the performance and the individual processing of experience afterward. It is a phase in which what has just been seen is still reverberating. At the same time, the act of leaving the theater as a site of the extraordinary has already announced itself. In this liminal phase, the audience is in the atmospheric echo chamber of affect, in a state of 'being affected,' in which what it has witnessed has neither been processed nor become experience yet: "At most, we have emotionally absorbed it, but already calling it experience would be saying too much, I think."[140]

This quote makes it particularly clear that the distancing process required in order to translate an aesthetic perception into language has not yet taken place. In this respect, it is not surprising that emotionally charged descriptions, evasive remarks and attempts to withdraw from the situation typically characterize the interview situation. The many "ums," pauses, stumbles, groans, answers broken off mid-sentence, refusals to answer and the use of adjectives that attempt to capture the "overwhelming" effect of what has just been seen all indicate this. In this sense, words such as "incredible," "fantastic," "unbelievable," "monumental," "brilliant" or "terrific" should not be read as helpless, exaggerated descriptions, instead revealing the ambivalence of the untranslatable in aesthetic perception as a productive failure on the one hand and, on the other, as the potential, openness and incompleteness evident in the process of translating aesthetic experience into language.

This liminal phase between the end of the performance and not yet having left the extraordinary site of the theater can also be characterized as the relationship between 'being affected' and speaking about 'being moved.' Speaking about 'being moved' means wrestling for words that can be used to convey 'being affected' into language, thus allowing it to turn into 'being moved' by voicing it. For 'being affected' can only be communicated by translating it into language. Spectators are affected 'by something' and translate this feeling of 'being affected,' which they perceive as authentic, into

6 *Palermo Palermo*
Tokyo, 2008

the discursive figure of 'being moved.' Spectators speak of 'being moved' when they are affected by something, when something "concerns," "addresses," "touches," "grasps" or "grabs" them. The state of 'being moved' expressed in their statements is a discursive figure that has always dominated the reception and discourse history of the Tanztheater Wuppertal since its very beginnings. According to this narrative, Pina Bausch's pieces are moving because their everyday topics are so close to human beings and human feelings. The audience's feeling of 'being moved' is intensified by the re-cognition of the dancers and their personalities. From the audience's perspective, the affective state has little to do with dances that are performed perfectly or being moved by the perfection of the performance. Instead, one spectator spoke of "special kinds of behavior that are almost psychiatric, but very interesting. Physical and emotional exertion that manages to achieve wonderful harmony," concluding with: "and I'm still quite moved."[141] Another woman remembers "[…] the vitality, vibrations of the soul, everything that is communicated by the dancing."[142]

Speaking about 'being moved' can be understood as a linguistic transposition that allows spectators to negotiate their affective state. The step of translating from 'being affected' to speaking about 'being moved' can thus be understood as 'interpretation,' i.e., as a linguistic translation from a (prelinguistic) affective state.[143]

Phenomenologist Bernhard Waldenfels puts it this way: "What befalls us or chances upon us has always already happened by the time we respond to it. This is precisely why every reference to experiences has an indirect character. It takes place from a position of temporal distance. […]. Being affected, which should be considered as something similar to being overcome, is preceded by an encounter with something. Only in *response to* what we have been affected by does that which affects us reveal itself as such."[144]

The reassurance of the affective state, of the supposedly authentic experience and of 'being moved' as something sublime beyond compare therefore only occurs in retrospect, that is, when it is translated into language. On the one hand, this transformation of aesthetic experience into language makes use of a knowledge of 'feelings' and a discursive knowledge of Pina Bausch's work, according to which her pieces generate a state of 'being moved.' On the other hand, this translation creates something constitutively new by generating knowledge, transforming patterns of perception and prompting ambiguous interpretations. Spectators describe the pieces as opening up spaces of thought and perception: "Oho, in the end I thought that it's actually unbelievable, because you suddenly drift off into your own fantasies and thoughts, and that's actually what I find so beguiling, which leaves so much space for association. Or it triggers you, let's put it that way. That's an even better way to say it."[145]

The productivity of this step of media translation lies in the way that something is transferred into language and thereby emerges as something new in perception and knowledge. For although something that cannot be grasped linguistically is lost in the distancing process of speaking, there is also something else to be gained in the new connection between perception, knowledge and experience. The translation of dance into language is thus always a two-sided process that creates new knowledge while simultaneously being doomed to fail from the outset. Moreover, translation is an important and decisive step in transforming what has been perceived into communicative memory and finally into cultural memory.

That which is generated in language continues the discourse surrounding the Tanztheater Wuppertal and creates mental spaces to question, change, adapt or re-posit previous discursive tropes. This is precisely what constitutes the potential and productivity of linguistic translation, which become most visible in linguistic disruptions. In addition to avoiding and refusing speech, these disruptions reveal themselves above all in the way that audience members speak about 'being moved' using words and concepts that document the failure of translation. After a performance of *Viktor,* for example, a spectator summed up the state in which she found herself using the words "tears, goose bumps and awe."[146] Another variation is emotional speech, which translates the tensions between joy and suffering, love and hatred, etc. in the piece into dramatic language – "an interplay between tenderness and brutality,"[147] "ebb and flow,"[148] "exuberant joy and deep despair,"[149] "chaos, vitality, trance, fatigue, exhaustion"[150] – or describes an experience of transformation – for example, of being "pushed" or "dragged along" or of "going along for the ride." With the help of kinesthetic terms and metaphors, spectators try to grasp the indescribable. Two people interviewed after *Masurca Fogo* emphasized: "Wonderful emotions were conveyed; I was deeply impressed by the music in combination with the dance, and it actually carried me off with it like a tidal wave."[151] The refusal, the inability or unwillingness to speak, and the way recourse is made to the vocabulary provided by existing discourse, points to potential disruptions in the translation process. When the "overpowering" effect reveals itself in people being overwhelmed, pushing those who have been 'moved' to the limits of their own linguistic abilities, it allows the aesthetic 'remainder' to show itself: the aesthetic surplus of translation, what is untranslatable in the aesthetic experience, that which is not immediately accessible through communication.

The practice of translation is a permanent process of negotiation and decision-making, which in the case of audience research is a multistep process. In audience surveys, the audience translates what they have just perceived into language, in this case in a face-to-face situation immediately after the end of the performance (in other approaches, this is accomplished using questionnaires or transcripts or even at a different place and time). Next, some form of media is used to document their spoken words (in this case, audio equipment) and the recordings are transcribed (using one of the various methods of transcription). Finally, the text that has been generated is treated as a piece of 'data'/a document that is analyzed (using one of many different methods, such as content analysis or discourse analysis), and the results of this analysis are in turn translated into a continuous text. Depending on the original question, there are different methods and ways to approach each and every one of these steps. Moreover, due to these multiple stages of translation that characterize the relationship between perception and writing, the process of negotiation fails in a special way due to the im/possibility of translation (→ THEORY AND METHODOLOGY). The reason for this is that it is only possible to record what spectators feel – what affects them, and when and how they are affected – communicatively, that is by essentially taking a linguistic approach, and to examine it in writing. The questions of who is observing when, where and how and who is conducting interviews where, when and with which spectators also shapes this translation step, as do the subsequent processes of transcribing and analyzing the audio material.

Researchers are translators, and empirical audience research must therefore transparently disclose and reveal the methodological *how* of their translation. It is only through this kind of reflection that the insights into and the handling of audience surveys can be substantially and soundly conducted as praxeological contributions to discourse about the audience, its perception and activities, and about the "emancipated spectator."[152] It is not the "work of the spectator"[153] and what he or she does singularly during a performance that is the focus of praxeological audience research, but rather the ensemble of practices that situatively allows an audience to become a specific audience, a kind of 'fleeting community,' as well as the way, in which we investigate audience perceptions and actions and their corporeal and sensory practices while they perceive a piece and thus translate them into another public sphere.

7 Advertisement for *Nefés*
Istanbul, 2003