

Why “The Art of Making Dances” Now? Between “-What is...” and Choreography

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After Doris Humphrey: The Art of Making Dances

Consider the following image. A vast ocean, the surface black and

plain, any vibration of the surface appears to be a disturbance, fright.
After Jacques Derrida: What is poetry?

In order to respond to such a question – in to words, right? – you
It is night and yet on the beach stands a man, or Man, perhaps personi-

are asked to know how to renounce knowledge. And to know it well, without
fied as a young person hardly more than six or either years old, in full

ever forgetting it: demobilize culture, but never forget in your learned igno-
daylight. A girl. The beach slopes upwards. In the background group-

rings of summer cottages spread out in the landscape, a landscape we
rance what you sacrifice on the road, crossing the road.

Who dares to ask me that? Even though it remains inapparent, since disappear-
know rest upon post-fordist production, void of manufacturing, filled

ing is its law, the answer sees itself (as) danced (dancing). I am a dancing, pro-
to the brim by organization and ubiquitous management. The black

nounces choreography, learned me through the body, guard and keep me, look
surface absolutely still now. Suddenly the surface breaks, with an

out for me, look at me, danced dancing, right before your eyes: soundtrack,
enormous intensity and a black shiny body catapults itself out of the

wake, trail of light, photography of the feast in mourning.
ice-cold water. The body, in its entirety leaves the ocean behind and

It sees itself, the response, danced to be choreographic, by being choreograph-
as if slowed down to an almost photographic stillness hangs there mid

ic. And for that reason, it is obliged to address itself to someone, singularly to
air. Its gigantic jaws open, gleaming with razor sharp teeth, the body

you but as if to the being lost in anonymity, between city and nature, and im-
bent into a double helix. The girl – Man – equipped with a butterfly

parted secret, at once public and private, absolutely one and the other, absolved
net, stretches out over the water, smiling yet deep in concentration,

from within and from without, neither one not the other, the animal thrown
tries to catch the creature, that, from some angle resembles a killer

onto the road, absolute, solitary, rolled up in a ball, next to (it)self. And for that
whale but from another without doubt would fit well into the net, inno-

very reason, it may get itself run over, just so, the hérrison, istrice in English,
cently fluttering into it keen to take on its first adventure. In the same

in English, hedgehog. And if you respond otherwise depending on each case,
instant the image disappears. The ocean’s surface calm as if nothing

taking into account the space and time which you are given with this demand
ever happened. On the beach a girl, identical and yet different, not in

(already you are speaking Italian), by the demand itself, according to this
degree – identical and yet another kind of girl, previously unknown.

Her butterfly net now transformed into an umbrella, unfolded over her head, her face now in the shadow.

economy but also in the immanence of some traversal outside yourself, away from home, venturing toward the language of the other in view of an impos-

sible or denied translation, necessary but desired like a death – what would all

The problem with essence is that it also comprehends inessential of this, the very thing in which you have just begun to turn deliriously, have to through essence, and comprehends it in essence. The question What do, at that point, with choreography? Or rather with the choreographic, since is? – *Was ist* – prejudices some kind of simplicity of essence.

you intend to speak about an experience, another world for voyage, here the

aleatory rambling of a trek, the movement that turns but never lead back to

Since Kant, it has been common to distinguish between the world as it appears to humans, and those aspects of the world existing by themselves, i.e. between phenomena and what is referred to as “noumena”,

discourse, or back home, at least is never reduced to choreography – depicted, danced, even sung.

Here then, right away, in two words, so as not to forget:

things in themselves, beyond human knowledge.

1. The economy of memory: a choreography must be brief, elliptical by vocation, whatever maybe its objective or apparent expanse. Learned unconsciously come from the outside, hence any phenomena, any material object is based on a concept of their geneses in terms of this preexisting out-

of choreographing and of the retreat.

side, i.e. essence. Consequently what follows is a concept of knowledge that relies on a view of truth as a faithful reflection of a static world of beings.

2. The dance. Not the dance in the middle of a movements that circulate risk-

free through the interchanges and let themselves be translated into any and all

languages. Not simply the dance archived by kinesiology, the object of science or technologies, of philosophies and bio-ethico-juridical discourses. Perhaps Somebody else could certainly unfold the following without using images, but now I'm not somebody else, so let us for a moment return to that Hay prefer to them. No, a story of “dance” choreographically enveloped in the image. The ocean here represents the virtual, understood as a container for all the possible and impossible actualizations of the world that did not and has not yet been actualized. As long as the surface of several tracks.

the virtual stays calm the matrix of reality remains intact, but as said

Two in one: the second axiom is rolled up in the first. The choreographic, let us

every vibration of the surface causes alarm, or should we say a state

of exception. A significant shift in contemporary politics is the methodology with which to deal with those vibrations, and the solution has been to declare a permanent state of exception. A society of absolute control is one that has done away with the virtual.

The killer whale that breaks the surface equals what Gilles Deleuze, with a term adopted from the French philosopher Gilbert Simondon, calls individuation, i.e. a theory of intensive processes of becoming involving spontaneous spatio-temporal dynamisms, which is to say, agitations of space, pockets in time, pure synthesis of speed, direction and rhythm. Said in another way, processes, or better moments or instances, of individuation occurs when spatio-temporal coordination – which is the basis for identity and/or processes or reiteration – weakens, or when triangulation liquefy and the human being or any material object cannot hold on to its coordination in the world¹. Individuation breaks with resemblance as a process no less than it does with identity as a principle. In this sense individuation is always a genuine creation, writes Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*².

at the moment in which the traversing of the road named translation remains as improbable as an accident, one which is all the same intensely dreamed of, required there where what is promised always leaves something to be desired? A grateful recognition goes out toward that very thing and precedes cognition here: your benediction before knowledge.

A fable that you could recount as the gift of the choreography, it is an emblematic dance: someone dances you, to you, of you, on you. No, rather a mark addressed to you, left and confided with you, is accompanied by an injunction, in truth it is instituted in this very order which, in its turn, constitutes you, assigning your origins or giving rise to you: destroy me, or rather render my support invisible to the outside, in the world (this is already the trait of all dissociations, in any case do what must be done so that the provenance of the mark remains from now on unlocatable or unrecognizable. Promise it: let it be disfigured, transfigured or rendered indeterminate in its port – and in this movement you will hear the shore of the departure as well as the referent towards which a translation is portered. Eat, drink, swallow my movement, carry it, transport it in you, like the law of a writing become your body: writing in (it)self. The ruse of the injunction may first of all let itself be inspired by the simple possibility of death, by the risk that a vehicle poses to every finite being. You see the catastrophe coming. From that moment on imprinted directly on the trait, come from the dance, the mortal's desire awakens in you the poem (which is contradictory, you follow me, a double restraint, an

aporetic constraint) to guard from oblivion this thing which in the same stroke
The virtual is to no extent identical with the possible. The possible is
exposes itself to death and protects itself – in a movement, the address, the
the nonexistent that retains all its characteristics from the existent. In
retreat of the *hérisson*, like an animal on the autoroute rolled up in a ball. One
other words it is possible exactly because it is already given in repre-
would like to take it in one's hand, undertake to learn it and understand it, to
sentation. In short one could say that reality is that which is inscribed,
keep it for oneself, near oneself. You love – keep that in its singular form, we
thus made immobile by representation, whereas the possible is *just*
could say in the irreplaceable corporeality of the moveable if we were talking
a member of representation. The possible is imaginable, whereas the
about choreography and not only about the choreographic in general. But our
virtual is that which one cannot even imagine to image.
dance does not hold still within names, nor even within movements. It is first
Individuation and another term closely associated with Gilles Deleuze
of all thrown out on the roads and in the fields, moments beyond movements,
actualization tend to be intermixed. I would like to suggest a slight
even if it sometimes happens that it recalls itself in movement, when it gath-
nevertheless significant difference, not on an ontological level but
ers itself up, rolled up in a ball on itself, it is more threatened than ever in its
rather on the premise of performance.

retreat: it thinks it is defending itself, and it loses itself.

Throughout Deleuze thinking there seem to exist an obsession with

movement. In order to avoid obvious traps of either dialectics or

Literally: you would like to retain through the body an absolute unique form,

universalism, Deleuze must insist on movement and becoming. He is

an event whose intangible singularity no longer separates the ideality, the ideal

the philosopher on the move *par excellence*, the dancing nomad com-

meaning as one says, from the body of the movement. In the desire of this

pulsively de-stratifying his loci, whether concerned with philosophy,

absolute inseparation, the absolute non-absolute, you breathe the origin of the

politics, cinema or time. We, however tend to forget, that individu-

choreographic. Whence the infinite resistance to the transfer of the movement

ation and actualization is part of some process(es), and are instead

which the animal, in its name, nevertheless calls out for.

inclined to fasten those concepts, to render them immobile, thus subject

That is the distress of the *hérisson*. What does the distress, stress itself, want?

and measurable, not first of all in or of themselves but in respect of

Stricto sensu, to put on guard. Whence the prophecy: translate me, watch, keep

existence.

me yet a while, get going, save yourself, let's get off the autoroute.

Thus the dream of learning through the body arises in you.

My proposal is, following Manuel De Landa's proposition that for

Of letting your body be traversed by they danced dancing. In a single trait –

Deleuze noumena are not beyond human knowledge³, that there is

and that's the impossible, that's the danceatic experience. You did not yet know

a difference between the two concepts in respect of performativity,

the body, you learn it thus. From this experience and from this expression.

I call a choreography that very moment that teaches the body, invents the body, where individuation, however partial, is somehow expressive, or at least, expansive, whereas actualization must be considered oriented

that which, finally, the word body seems to mean and which, in my language, I cannot easily discern from the movement itself. Body, in the dance “learned towards reception, a process of becoming form. They are part of the through the body”, no longer names only pure interiority, independent spontaneous instance, the very same moment or even presence, but are performing, so to say, two sides of the moment. They are both differentiating

The memory of the “through the body” is confined like a prayer – that’s safer but when individuation is differentiating towards differing, i.e. a difference without destination, actualization is the process of rendering this differing form, one’s own differing productive.

your passion and bears down on you as if from an outside: *auswendig* “through the body” in German. Thus, returning to our image, actualization is that butterfly nest held out to catch some thing.

So: your body pulses, gives downbeat, the birth of rhythm, beyond opposition. The moment when we forget this minute although significant difference between individuation and actualization, we inevitably reproduce an innocent notion, brought from the theatre or any artistic expression, presence, humble, close to the earth, low down. Reiterate(s) in a passing: never that there can exist an unqualified reciprocity between the performed, repeat ... In a single cipher, the dance (the learning through the body, learn it or expressed, and the received - not in the sense of interpretation, but rather as affect, or irritation on the body. For the process of individualizing out time.

tion/actualization to be initiated it is imperative to insist on this difference, hence, if we don’t we mistake activation for an action, and an action is precisely, always already inscribed in representation, it can be measured: affect transformed into effect.

dance depends on this condition. You must celebrate, even the stupidity of the “through the body”: the *hérissou*. It blinds itself. Rolled up in a ball, prickly, This difference in our image is depicted by the mismatch of scale with spines, vulnerable and dangerous, calculating and ill-adapted (because it between the gigantic body and the butterfly net, and it is the meeting makes itself into a ball, itself to an accident). No dance without accident, no dance that does not open itself like a wound, but no dance that is not also just a wounding. You will call dance a silent incantation, the aphonic wound that,

of you, from you, I want to learn through the body. It thus takes place, essentially, without one's having to do it or make it: it lets itself be done, without activity, without work, in the most sober pathos, a stranger to all production, (difference in degree) and differentiation (difference in kind). especially to creation. The dance falls to me, benediction, coming of/from the

other. Rhythm but dissymmetry. There is never anything but some dance, before any choreoesis. When, instead of "choreography", we said "choreographic", we ought to have specified: "choreomatic". Most of all do not let the h risson be led back into the circus or the menagerie of choreoesis: nothing to be and time, acting directly on the soul, having larvae as actors – and for moved (choreoein), neither "pure choreography", nor pure rhetoric, nor reine which Artaud chose the word "cruelty". These abstract lines form a Bewegung, nor "setting-forth-of-truth-in-the work". Just this contamination, drama /.../ which directs both its specification and division"⁴. and this crossroads, this accident here. The gift of the dance localizes nothing,

it has no location, its histrionics are over, it comes along without you expecting. Finally the figure on the beach: the girl or Man, who in this moment it, cutting short the breath, cutting all ties with discursive and especially bal- necessarily must maintain some sort of innocence. An innocence letic choreography. In the very ashes of genealogy. Not the phoenix, not eagle, that we understand as a fidelity to the event. This is what the state of but the h risson, very lowly, low down, close to the earth. Neither sublime, nor exception has cancelled out, or what Foucault describes as a society incorporeal, angelic, perhaps, and for a time.

of surveillance: a society where fear has become effective. The dynamisms individuation/actualization implies fear, but rather than the the signature that repeats its dispersion, each time beyond the logos, ahuman, "contained" fear of liberal governance, it is fear productive only when barely domestic, nor reappropriable into the family of the subject: a converted we surrender to it, when we give "ourselves" up, and jeopardize identity, allowing ourselves an unconditional fidelity, thus rendering the moment – modest, discreet, close to the earth, the humility that you move-after, dynamisms individuation/actualization universal. thus transporting yourself in the move beyond a move, a catachrestic h risson,

its arrows held at ready, when this ageless blind movement sees but not hears. How can one make oneself available to such dynamisms in a world death coming.

dominated by liberal governance, or a permanent and ubiquitous state. The dance can roll itself up in a ball, but it still in order to turn its pointed

of exception? We can't! Especially not through some process of self-
moves towards the outside. To be sure it can reflect movement or dance cho-
precarisation, or even worse concept of sovereignty (I need chocolate
reography, but it never relates back to itself, it never speaks by itself like those
not to become depressed when reading Agamben, as Maurizio Laz-
machines, bringers of death. Its event always interrupts or derails absolute
zarato once said). But perhaps there is an, however and necessarily
knowledge, autotelic being in proximity to itself. This "demon of the body"
temporal escape route. Today's line of flight is not to be found down
never gathers itself together, rather it loses itself and get off the track (delirium
the allay of smooth space, on the contrary, my proposal is that we
or mania), it exposes itself to chance, it would rather let itself be torn to pieces
have to seek the "dark precursor" at the other end of the line. To make
by what bears down upon it. Without a subject: choreography, perhaps, there is
oneself, or some process, available to such dynamisms rather implies
some, and perhaps it leaves itself, but I never move any.
to search for and inhabit an absolutely striated space, striated to extent
A choreography, I never move(s) it. The other move(s). The I is only at the
where it is has become unconditionally useless, entirely lost its value,
coming of this desire: to learn through the body. Stretched, tendered forth to
to liberal governance, or today's society. There is no longer any "dra-
the point of subsuming its own support, thus without external support, with-
ma" beneath representation or logos. Every opportunity of movement
out substance, without subject, absolute of moving in (it)self, the "through the
is already incorporated. Instead the "choreography" hides between the
body" lets itself be elected beyond the body, sex, mouth, and eyes: it erases the
lines, footnotes, asterisks and never ending scribbles in the margins
borders, slips through the hands, you can barely hear it, but it teaches us the
of an absolutely melancholic piece of prose, deliberately written into
body. Filiation, token of election confided as legacy, it can attach itself to any
grand representation, super-abundant with meaning.
movement at all, to the moment, living or nor, to the move of the hérisson, for
example, between life and death, at nightfall or at day break, distracted apoca-
It is in this over-determination that choreography can escape its te-
lypse, proper and common, public and secret.
leological panopticon and become gesture, thus refusing to become
- But the choreography you are talking about, you are getting off the track, it
either means to an end or an end itself. A gesture shows a willingness
has never been moved thus, or so arbitrarily.
to function as a mean that remains unconditioned by ends, it interrupts
- You just moved it. Which had to be demonstrated.
language exactly at the moment when it is actualizing itself.
Recall the question: "What is ... ?" (tí estí, was ist ... istoria, episteme, philos-
ophia). "What is ... ?" laments the disappearance of the dance – another catas-
trophe. By announcing that which is just as it is, a question salutes the birth of
It is in this landscape where "-What is..." is completely given that choreography begins:
stability.
in which case, who, how, how much?

1. Triangulation here refers to how one through the interplay of three points can define not only ones position but also direction and speed. This is how navigational systems such as GPS function.
2. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 212.
3. See Manuel De Landa: *Deleuze, Diagrams, and The Open-Ended Becoming*, in *Becomings, Explorations in Time, Memory, and Future*, ed. Elizabeth Grosz, (New York, Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 29 – 41. De Landa however is not differentiating between individuation and actualization.
4. Gilles Deleuze: *Method of Dramatisation*, in *Bulletin de la Société française de Philosophie*, vol. LXII, 1967, p. 89 – 118.