

Language, Image, Action:
Experiments in Self-Expression through
Multimedia Choreography

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Forward

My interest for dance choreography began shortly after I entered Mount Holyoke College. While taking an introductory composition course, I discovered that effective choreography was not solely about the steps that the dancers were doing; rather, it was the way that the movements were performed and how they were composed in relation to the larger spatial and compositional structure.

By the end of my sophomore year, I started to develop an interest in film production – completely independent of my intrigue with dance choreography; however, I had already taken all of the dance composition courses offered at Mount Holyoke, so I decided to motivate myself to create new works integrating film within dance. In both introductory and advanced film production courses, I explored the different ways that movement and text could be captured on film.

My first work, involving both pre-recorded film projections and live movement, was a work titled, *Spatial Awareness* and was performed in the *(Blank)Space* Student-Choreographed Concert at Mount Holyoke College in the spring of 2010. In this work, I used film projections to explore different points of view and to create different worlds, individual to each dancer. The movement on both the stage and in the projections was similar; however, the projected footage was shot as if it was from a different dancer's point of view and in a different location. In my sound score, I inserted words and phrases, recorded in collaboration with the dancers, creating a fragmented

narrative about being present in a given moment in time. I considered this work successful, mainly because it was my first attempt at creating a multimedia work in which all of the elements came together in ways that I had envisioned. I was able to shoot the dancers in their different locations – woods, beach, classrooms, and studios – and rehearse the live movement so it was synchronized with the screen movement. The success of this work inspired me to pursue a more complicated and intricate thesis project that also involved film projections, live dance, and recorded text.

My work this semester is a culmination of my interests in dance choreography, film, and creative writing. This work, titled *Conversations of the (Un)Implied*, was presented on March 25-26, 2011 in *Kendall Studio Theater* at Mount Holyoke College. Performed by four dancers, Stacey, Kaitlyn, Mariam, and Kelton, the work combined movement with pre-recorded video projections and sound scores. Though each element was derived from autobiographical stories of the dancers, the elements were developed and presented in non-literal ways. For example, instead of having the dancers tell their stories through monologues, I chose to use only key words and phrases. Long before my decision to use personal stories as inspirations for my work, the stories had a large impact on each of the dancers' lives. Each of them went through a lengthy personal process attempting to reconcile these events. The creation of my work involved a similar, though less emotionally burdensome, process for the dancers. The personal processes demonstrated by the dancers while performing the

choreographic work paralleled their processes in the creation of the work; both dealt with the issue of how to effectively communicate personal stories through choreography, while weaving together a rich kinetic and visual tapestry of movement, language, and images.

Please note that this is a process paper. Though I will be explaining my choreographic and artistic decisions throughout the process, this paper's purpose is to offer insights into my personal development of the work in collaboration with the dancers.

Introduction

Communication is a general concept referring to the way that we give and receive information – both from significant events and from each other. There are myriad ways in which communication takes place. To me, three in particular stand out: movement – how our bodies respond to and give information; language – written and spoken text; and visual imagery – the many signs, gestures, and images that trigger our thoughts and memories. In my senior thesis project this year, I have been exploring ways that these three mediums might work together to deepen the expression and understanding of a person’s life. What, and how, does each of the elements contribute to this?

The focus of my project was personal stories of non-fictional events from my dancers’ lives, told and expressed by them. I wanted the dancers to truly embody this work; therefore, it made sense to use material that was specific and individual to each dancer. My initial rehearsals were dedicated to figuring out how each dancer expressed her personal story through movement and through text. Experiments included improvisational movement and image association exercises. Additionally, I researched different multimedia artists and choreographers who have explored similar terrain, such as integrating film projections and language in collaboration with live movement. I then developed movement material and text scores directly derived from my dancers’ individual stories.

The use of different media in dance works is becoming increasingly prevalent, and often, the use of so many elements can become overwhelming. Certain elements become more of a distraction than a compliment to the others. My goal was for each medium to complement the others in order to show different facets of each story. Externally, we do not always show how we are feeling on the inside or even talk about personal emotions freely; our feelings and thoughts remain private and unavailable. I wanted my work to show the juxtaposition between internal thoughts and external expressions - for example, a video projection could show images of the dancers in their everyday lives, seemingly unaffected by the events, while a layered voiceover describes how confused and emotionally disoriented they are internally. In certain sections of the work, I dropped out the video projections and only had live movement and pre-recorded text. In other sections, I chose to not have any recorded sound in order to focus on the relationship between the projected images and the live movement.

The Initial Process

In this section, I will be explaining my inspirations and content development.

Part I – Casting

As a choreographer, I have the tendency to work with dancers whom I feel I can learn from and whose personalities complement the development of the work. Personality is just as large of a factor for me as movement quality and technical proficiency. For the works that I created both last year and this year, I chose dancers who were not necessarily “technicians” but had distinctly vibrant personalities. In a way that is quite hard to articulate in words, I chose my dancers based on impressions that I got from them in dance classes and in everyday interactions; I would watch their interactions with other dancers in class, and their approaches to learning movement. I paid attention to the different ways that they experimented with movement and how their personalities were expressed through movement - for example, whether their particular mood that day was reflected in their movement qualities. In general, I gravitate towards dancers whose performance qualities complement their technical abilities. Of course, I do look for trained dancers because it is essential that they are able to replicate my movement; however technique is not solely what I look for. My initial intent for casting was to find a group of young women who appeared shy, but had explosive personalities. Quite often, I have been told that I tend to

come off as shy at first before revealing my actual personality. Though I was not thinking about my own personal processes at the time of casting, this is most likely why I wanted to find dancers who had similar characteristics.

Stacey, a senior at Mount Holyoke, I had the opportunity to dance with previously. I met and had gotten to know her in my very first dance class at Mount Holyoke. I had a very strong sense of her personality and technical abilities when I asked her to be involved in this work. As a dancer, her movement has a very organic flow to it. She also has very good instincts in improvisational situations and appears very comfortable improvising. Stacey had also been in a number of films that I had made the previous year, so she was familiar with the way that I used dance and film together. I wanted to have at least one dancer in my group whom I had previously worked with and who knew me well – as a choreographer and as a person. Though I did not tell her this, Stacey's role was partially to bridge a gap between dancer and choreographer. Because I had not worked with the other three dancers before, they were not as relaxed going into rehearsals and opening up, simply because we were still getting to know each other.

Kelton, who is currently a sophomore, appears to be a very shy person with very timid movement qualities. When I had asked her to be a part of this work, I had not had very many conversations with her; however, I had heard stories of occasions where she would say hilarious things. I took one semester of technique class with Kelton and, while watching her,

realized that she had a very good understanding of what she needed to do; however, her execution was very timid. There was something inside of me that drew me to Kelton's personality. For reasons completely independent of my creation of this work, I was curious to find out in what situations Kelton would be externally expressive and why – again, most likely, subconsciously reflecting on my own instances of shyness.

Mariam and Kaitlyn I had only met a couple of weeks before asking them to be a part of this work. I had been taking two technique courses per week with Kaitlyn and six courses per week with Mariam. I noticed Mariam's movement immediately. She always appeared very committed to her movement and was a very strong and dynamic dancer. When she spoke, even though the content was very expressive, her voice was quite timid. I wanted to get to know her more as a dancer and as a person; I thought that the creation of this work would be the perfect opportunity.

Kaitlyn was the last dancer that I chose, mainly because I was not as familiar with her personality and movement as some of the others. I had noticed Kaitlyn in class because of the seamlessness of her movement and ability to learn and replicate gestures and patterns. To me, she appeared quiet, mainly because I did not know her well enough for either of us to open up to each other.

Group dynamics played a significant role in my casting process. I wanted dancers who I thought would mesh well together and be able to open up to each other. However, I did not want their personalities and movement

qualities to be too similar because I knew I would be creating four distinct worlds based on these. They would all have different stories, I wanted them to be expressed differently.

Part II – External Research and Its Influences

Development With the Dancers

Before I came to a decision about the structure and the specific order of the content in this work, I conducted a significant amount of research on choreographers and artists who also use layers of different media in their works. Each week, after researching a new artist, I would conduct a series of structured improvisations with the dancers, inspired by each an artist. All rehearsals were videotaped, which gave me the opportunity to go back and watch these improvisations after the rehearsal was over. Based on how the dancers moved, spoke, and reacted to my verbal cues, I would evaluate whether or not I could use similar material in my final work.

The first artist that I researched was Pina Bausch. She was recommended to me because of her work with vocalizations and improvisational movement. “Blaubart” (1977) is a work that deals with violence and relationships through dynamic physicality. In an article titled “Pina Bausch Choreographs *Blaubart*: A Transgressive or Regressive Act?” Meg Mumford discusses how Bausch creates a narrative using imagery through movement. She argues that

“Bausch did not, as is the case in linear story ballets, subordinate the dancers to the narrative of the words and music through illustrative choreography. Rather, her emphasis on the piling up of images

which relate associatively or ironically to the narrative, and the dismemberment of the music...” (Mumford 46).

I read this passage after watching the work several times. Only then did it strike me that the reason why I found “Blaubart” so effective was that Bausch did not merely tell a story through literal images. Rather, she developed material that was, in some way, related to her overall theme of struggling to survive in society – without being too literal. The movement allowed the audience to make connections for themselves.

I researched Bausch’s work before I had cast my dancers, so that particular week I did not conduct an experiment with them. Instead, I used my discoveries to plan the structure of my work and how I would use the movement to do so. The article mentioned that Bausch often had her dancers respond to her verbal questions through movement improvisations. I found this idea intriguing because this type of improvisation could help me find movements that told a story in a non-literal way and that were specific and individual for each dancer.

The next artist that I focused on was Meredith Monk – specifically, her work, “Education of A Girl Child.” In this work, performed by Monk, she sits on a chair, dressed in white doll-like clothing, and goes through a series of small gestures. Throughout the piece, she chants incoherent text – the inflections of her voice are more sounds than they are words. The inflections of her voice are complementing her repetitious movements and the soft piano music playing in the background. When studying this work, I noticed that I was drawn to her character and captured by her trance-like

state, not specifically because of the content, but because of her phrasing of movement and vocalizations. At certain points, her gestures and chanting – seemingly independent of each other - would speed up, slow down, and stop completely. I was intrigued by her ability to convey deep emotions without using literal gestures or coherent speech. It was not difficult to visualize the emotional source of the sounds, even though the audience was not sure of what she is trying to say. In an interview, Monk states that she often utilizes the idea of “memory as part of an experience.” This comment resonated with me because it made me realize that most of our habitual actions are directly connected to our memories. Monk went on to explain how the scale of objects and spaces transform in our memories over time.

Monk’s work inspired me to do a series of movement experiments incorporating fragmented bits of voiceover. I developed a movement phrase arbitrarily piecing together steps and gestures. I then recorded a paragraph of text about how people see themselves compared to how other people see them. I created three different sequences: the first sequence was just movement, without layered text. The second sequence was a combination of the movement and text score – both beginning and ending at the same time, with the text playing through the length of the phrase. The third sequence was the initial movement phrase with certain words from the paragraph interspersed throughout the phrase – leaving spaces of silence. From this experiment, I discovered that the final sequence – movement with interspersed text – was more effective than the other two at conveying a

thought process through both text and movement. Because the text was not constant, the words and phrases that I chose had more meaning to them, as if they were carefully selected to match with a specific piece of movement. The space between the words also left time for the viewer to take in what was just seen and heard before moving to the next movement and text interaction. Even though the sequence with constant text had a literal narrative and was coherent, it did not leave much room for interpretation of the movement.

I looked at several works by Faye Driscoll including “There is So Much Mad in Me” and “837 Venice Boulevard.” In “837 Venice Boulevard,” an autobiographical work about her childhood, Driscoll uses text – both spoken and sung – in addition to comical, slightly violent movement. At one point, one of the dancers begins a series of repeated gestures. As the gestures continue, the dancer begins to sing. Though the content of the song was in no way related to the initial movement, the context of the movement was changed. This notion of text – whether arbitrarily selected or not – changing the way the audience perceives the movement was very intriguing to me. In some ways, the work that I wanted to create was very similar to this one; both works would have non-fictional moments from an earlier life event that would be expressed through phrases and gestures. “837 Venice Boulevard” made me consider how I would use text and the ways that it would change the overall meaning of a work.

That week in rehearsal, I had the dancers write down brief stories based on something fun they did over the weekend. I then had them come up with movement that literally described what happened in the story. Afterwards, the dancers performed their compositions, isolating both the text and the movement, and then putting the two components together. They performed their movement choreography while they were reciting their story. Naturally, when the movement and text were executed simultaneously, the movements appeared very literal. Similar to the previous experiments that I did, this rehearsal with the dancers confirmed my discovery that gestural movement combined with constant narrative text becomes un-engaging because there is no room for more imaginative responses. When the words and movements are constantly paired together, one of the elements tends to overshadow the other. Either the narrative – or lack of narrative – in the words are more powerful than the movement, or the movement is so captivating that the words turn into a sound score for the gestures. I did not want either of these situations to occur. I wanted each of the elements to have a world of its own and, though related to each other, I wanted them to exist separately in the work to represent different characteristics of the dancers.

Bill T. Jones, an artist whose work I have always been fond of, played a large role in the way that I thought about how text and movement could work together. One of his works, *Untitled*, is a film piece in which Jones directly addresses the camera. It also includes layered projections in

the space. The work was created in reaction to the death of his long-time partner Arnie Zane, who died of AIDS. Jones talks to the audience, recalling memories of friends, family, and occasions of joy and sorrow. Meanwhile, as Jones continues to narrate, different pictures dissolve in and out on the screen. At one point in the work, we actually see a projected holographic image of Arnie dancing in the space. This combination of hearing his voice, seeing the pictures, and experiencing these memories with him, evokes feelings in the audience – even though we were not there. This work made me realize that language and images can be powerful even when the audience is not given a back-story. I had been considering how exactly I wanted to integrate text and present the dancers' stories; this work gave me ideas about how to present fragments of personal stories without being too vague or giving too many details.

The work of Tere O'Connor influenced the way that I incorporated language with movement. I knew that I wanted to use prerecorded text in my sound score; I wanted it to serve as an internal monologue as opposed to text that was verbally conveyed by the dancers. The text would represent the thoughts that were going through the dancers' heads, but that they were too insecure to articulate literally to others. My debate was whether to solely present text through voiceover, or to have the dancers speak live as well. In his work, *Baby* (2006), O'Connor has the dancers combine live speaking with prerecorded sounds and dance movement. The dancers begin by narrating their movements – describing whether they are moving forwards,

backwards, or coming into contact with each other. What is interesting, though, is the way that the words come out more as songs than as sentences. Their voices sound as if they are in a higher register than their normal speaking voices, yet there is no recognizable tune. This new voice quality transformed the dancers into characters – alter egos that are distanced from their true personalities. At points, the voices are interrupted by a pre-recorded sound that resembles a distorted shriek. The dancers then abandoned the speaking and began dancing, as if forgetting what had just happened. The shrieking noise would return and the process would start over – with different movements and texts.

This work made me consider how live texts would affect the overall tone of the work. The dancers in Tere O'Connor's work were very committed to their characters - each had an extraordinary stage presence. This made me consider some of the cons of working with live speaking. The dancers in my work would have to project – something that was less natural to most of them. If I did include live text, the result of the work would partly be dependent on how the speaking was delivered. I could work with the dancers on the deliverance of the text, but they are movers – not actors. Even though I was very intrigued with the work that O'Connor did, after watching this piece I decided not to use live text in my own work. In addition to the movement, video, and pre-recorded text, it would be one more element that, depending on how it was executed, could shift the entire

meaning of the work. I did not want to take that risk. I also felt that it would not add very much to the pre-recorded score.

Yvonne Rainer, a dance artist who, later in her career, made dance works for film, influenced the way that I composed the video. I watched her work, “After Many A Summer Dies the Swan ,Hybrid” (2002). In this dance-on-camera work, Rainer combines on-screen text with footage from rehearsals and still-frames of old buildings. This work inspired me to use rehearsal footage in my final video composition. Since I had been recording all of my rehearsals with the dancers, I had accumulated a great deal of footage of the dancers improvising, interacting with each other, and moving in the space. In addition to other shots of the dancers in different spaces, I wanted to include studio footage in order to show my choreographic process as well as the dancers’ processes working through the choreography, just as they worked through their individual issues. Even though these are very different kinds of processes, they both involve reconciling personal issues through movement, imagery, and text. One of the larger themes of my work is “personal processes” – including my own. I did not have an event or pivotal moment that I incorporated in the choreography, rather I used the creation of this work as a process that I needed to work through. Though the movement was inspired by the dancers, it was ultimately my responsibility to create movement and structure it in a way that accurately reflect these events in the dancers’ lives. Even though I did not know any of the dancers at the time these events occurred, the presentation of the stories in this work

was based on how I interpreted their stories through language and imagery. Although I am not physically dancing in this piece, it does not mean that my presence in the work should go unacknowledged.

A work by Douglas Dunn, “Aerobia” (2001) blurs the lines between the physical world and the imagined world. The work itself is about a group of people who unite in a futuristic gym. None of them knows how he or she got there but they realize that this new space can fulfill unspecified needs of which the inhabitants are not aware. Interestingly, the text was written by playwright Jim Neu, but the choreography was Dunn’s. It was hard to imagine that the text was created completely independently of the choreography because the movement and the language worked together to create a compelling story line. What struck me the most about this work was not solely the content, but how the dancers interacted with each other. They were all in this same space, interacting with each other; however, each of their experiences was different because the dancers were coming from different physical locations and psychological mindsets. This is exactly the essence that I wanted to capture in my own work. I wanted each of the dancers’ emotional journeys to be individual to them, but I also wanted them to be able to relate to each other. Even though the experiences were different, their struggles were similar because each story had an emotional impact that bled into the social and physical lives of the dancers. I watched this work multiple times, trying to figure out how exactly Dunn managed to isolate the characters while still creating a coherent piece. I realized that the

disconnection between the movement and the text works to the advantage of the work as a whole. Because the two were composed separately, their presentations are not synchronized. The text from the play is spoken by the dancers while they are moving. It is interesting that the lines from the script are broken at odd points; sentences are not completed and conversations do not necessarily flow coherently. In addition, some of the phrases are not synchronized with the movement. Because of this, each of the dancers appears to be in his or her own world, slightly ignorant of how or why anyone else arrived in this new space. Even though there was a disconnection between the dancers, the dancers themselves were focused in their own thoughts, creating very intimate relationships with each other. I referenced “Aerobia” when thinking about the structure of my work and how the dancers interacted with each other.

In the following rehearsal, I brought back my experiment inspired by Pina Bausch – movement conversations - and combined it with elements of Douglas Dunn’s work to see how the two worked together. I had the dancers each create a few “signature movements” – phrases or gestures that were very specific and expressive of their dance styles and personalities. These could be their favorite movements, or simply gestures that they tend to utilize a great deal when asked to improvise or move on their own. I then instructed them to have movement conversations – improvising their responses to my verbal questions, using these “signature movement” gestures as punctuations.

I was pleased with how this experiment turned out; the movement from the dancers, juxtaposed with my literal language, allowed the movement to take on different connotations. Because I was the only one conveying information literally, I had the responsibility of continuing the conversation based on my personal understanding of the dancers' movements. This encouraged me to use interactions between dancers using both voiceover and movement, which I will discuss later in this paper.

Through the experiments that they inspired me to try, each of these artists played an important role in the creation of the work. After each experiment, I examined what I did with the dancers and evaluated how, if at all, elements of the experiments could be used later. Some experiments were more successful than others in terms of their relevance to my process; however, each one helped me to figure out what I did and did not want to include in my work.

Personal Stories and The Development of Movement and Text

Why exactly is a moment pivotal? Is it the action itself or is it the context in which it takes place? These are both questions that I wanted to reconcile in my development of these stories with the dancers.

I chose to make one source of content of this work non-fictional stories from the dancers based on pivotal events with life-changing moments. I am very curious about how and why certain events have such severe repercussions on people. Through both movement, imagery, and language, I wanted to re-imagine these stories and find ways to show their severity in non-literal ways. There is something very compelling about a dancer, or any person for that matter, sharing her story through her own speaking voice. A story expressed autobiographically conveys a sense of intimacy. Because of this, I wanted the dancers to be the tellers of their own stories.

Part I – How the Stories Were Chosen

When I first decided to focus the content of my work on personal stories, I immediately knew that I did not want the stories to be generic. I could have just as easily created characters for each of the dancers to portray throughout the work. Instead, I had the dancers use events that actually happened. I also wanted the stories to be expressed through movement that the dancers felt comfortable doing and with their own voices as part of the

sound score. It made more sense for the content to be non-fictional because it would be easier for the dancers to speak in personal detail about an event that actually happened. When a narrative is created, details are missing. Even if the audience members could not see the layers of details, I wanted them to see the physiological process of the dancers – the affect that the stories had and how the event was reconciled.

I gave the dancers the assignment of remembering a specific event in their lives that, in some way, changed them as a person. This notion of pinpointing specific occasions that shift the rest of our lives is daunting; however, everyone has memories of traumatic experiences or significant events. I did not specify the scale of these events – whether they were large events or small moments that made an impact. We spent the majority of the following rehearsal listening to each other's stories.

For a few of the dancers, these stories were very hard to tell; most of them had not told these stories to groups of people before. Those around them at the time – close friends and family – had a sense of what was going on but did not know details of the internal struggles. As an experiment, I had the dancers retell their stories in third person, to enable them to distance themselves from the situation while still including as many details as possible. I also allowed the dancers to change minor details in the story – for example, changing the profession of one of the “characters” or the relationship of a character to the dancer. This made the stories easier to tell

because the dancers were able to explain details of the stories without feeling as if they were being put on the spot.

It was very important to me that the dancers felt comfortable in rehearsals talking about private and internal struggles. Because each of the dancers' stories was very personal, I assured the dancers that I would not explicitly use any details that would make the issues in the stories obvious. In rehearsals, we had a "cone of silence policy," everything that was said in rehearsals was to remain private and exclusive to those in the room. Because of this, I am not going to go into the personal details about the events in the stories. One of the reasons why we were all able to learn so many personal details about each other's lives was that we had established a level of trust.

Part II – Developing Movement from the Stories

Key Movements and Repeated Phrases:

By this point in our rehearsal process, the dancers had established a level of comfort with each other. The stories were established; the challenge was to figure out how I would develop movement from these intimate and personal life events. My first step in this process was to start movement improvisations and experiments based on their stories. I asked the dancers to come up with short phrases that, physically, captured the emotional states that they were in during the time of their specific events. I did not want the dancers to pantomime the situation, but rather, attempt to embody the psychological issues that they were experiencing and express these through

movement. After each of the dancers performed her movement phrase, I extracted three movements or gestures from each phrase whose physicality and intensity really stood out to me.

In addition, I met with all of the dancers individually outside of our regular group rehearsals to talk about their stories and develop movement that was truly derived from their experiences.

Stacey explained that she is currently still somewhat emotionally invested in her story. She feels that, although the event itself has passed, she constantly feels that she is being sucked back into her emotional state at the time it occurred. She is attempting to move forward with confidence and purpose; however, the memories still linger in her mind and cause her progress to retrograde. Stacey used the words “back and forth” and “bipolar” to describe her current emotional state. Because of this, I made Stacey’s movement have a very back-and-forth, almost hesitant, quality to it.

Mariam’s story deals with coping with pain and loss. At certain points in her story, she felt very lost and emotionally disoriented. I chose to make Mariam’s movements have a very fast-paced and nervous quality to them. I wanted to capture her internal feelings of disorientation and disconnection from everyone around her.

The event in Kaitlyn’s story had repercussions that Kaitlyn is still dealing with today. She explained that her story is more of a lengthy process that she is still trudging through. Everyday thoughts of that particular time

period reoccur – it has been a continuous struggle since the event itself. I wanted to make Kaitlyn’s movements very slow, with a resistant quality to them – as if every step took even more effort than the previous.

For Kelton, the event in her story was just as much about the people around her as it was about herself. The realization about her personality that led to her significant event came from understanding that the way other people see her and the way that she sees herself are different. Kelton perceived herself a certain way, causing her to feel trapped as this one character and isolating her from her friends and from her true personality. Because of this, I chose to make Kelton’s movements stifled and very boxed in – as if there was an external force preventing her from moving to her fullest potential.

Even after meeting with the dancers, I was having some trouble developing movement from their stories. Jim Coleman suggested to me a project that he was once assigned as a tool for developing movement through imagery. Using the dancers’ stories as inspirations, students would create visual collages called “dream bodies” made of pictures, designs, and words that embodied the dancers’ experiences and the events in their stories. I created these for each of my dancers. For three months, I posted these dream bodies on my wall and added images to them when I came across something that I found inspiring. The final work actually included movements that were directly derived from images in the dream bodies. Some of the images in the dream bodies are pictures of actual places or

objects in the stories. Other images are more abstract – colors and textures that the dancers spoke about when telling their stories to me. The collection of pictures, textures, and designs helped me to refocus and revisit the true meaning of the dancers' narratives and figure out how I would portray them through movement.





Part III – Turning the Stories Into Fragmented Narratives

One of the initial questions that I asked myself before composing the text was “How is language expressive and how is it not expressive?” Part of my struggle was to turn these stories into narratives that did not explicitly explain the private details of the stories in literal ways.

My first step was to extract key phrases and words of the stories. I revisited a recording of a rehearsal that I had with the dancers in November

where each of them told their specific stories. I listened to the dancers telling the stories in their own voices, and picked out several words and phrases that the dancers vocally emphasized and that stood out to me.

In Stacey's story, the phrases that I selected were: sad, turning point, just knew, nervous, moved, identified, what to do with myself, weakness, seeing myself, couldn't be a strong individual, relying on support, process, step, intense, length.

In Mariam's telling of her story, she emphasized the words: learning how to continue, strings, passing, close together, believing I could carry on, what I wanted to do, wanting to experience, what I could be, empathy, in my story.

While Kaitlyn was telling her story, I noticed the words: taken a picture, made me conscious, had to bring it up, I tried to shut it down, got help, taking care, a turning point, launched it, it was the reason, she was concerned, while on track, it's done now, one comment, went on for a while, was so insecure, energy's back.

Kelton's key phrases included: back to middle school, said something, everyone laughed, turned, my friend was jealous, it was surprising, made me see myself, no one paid attention to, on my own, opened my eyes, not that type of person, crazy time, something about a hairclip, stop talking, vague issues.

I then decided to turn the fragments of text into poems that would be recorded by each of the dancers and presented by voiceover in the actual

sound score. I have always seen a connection between poetry and movement. To me they are, in part, different mediums for expressing the literal through the abstract. Dance takes gestures and turns them into abstract movement phrases that convey meaning. Poetry takes words, from the same vocabulary that we use in everyday life, and transforms them into fragments and sequences in ways that are not used in casual speech. Dances are series of movements strung together in non-literal ways, whereas poems do the same to words.

Internal Monologue Poems: The Final Products

Stacey

Turning Points, Identified.
 Individual Lengths
 Rely.
 Support of the process –
 Nervous Process.
 Couldn't be a step.
 Seeing myself step
 Individual Steps.
 Identified Steps
 Identified Parts.
 Nervous lengths
 of
 What to Do

Mariam

Strings of passing – close passing.
 Learning to pass. Learning to
 Continue. Continuation of
 Empathy. Believing in
 Empathy.
 The debate: needing to believe
 Or believing to need?
 That's my story. To do
 What I wanted to do.
 Learning how to experience.
 Experienced What

Could I be.
I could be experienced.

Kaitlyn

It's done now
Energy's back
Insecure Already
It's an internal thing -
Launching Concern.
Bring it up, shut it down.
Reason to take care.
Keeping track of the pictures.
Conscious for a while,
It's done now,
For a while

Kelton

Open Eyes,
Crazy Times.
Attention to:
Jealousy, surprising laughs,
Laughing surprisingly.
Attention to:
Quiet – crazy quiet,
Hairclip quiet, jealous quiet,
And “not *that* kind of person” quiet.
Seeing issues. Seeing *something*.
Myself?
Attention to:
Friends?
Myself.
Surprising Self.

My next development in the text composition process was creating response poems that would be recited from one dancer to another. We get a lot of information about ourselves from what other people tell us. In addition, we sometimes need advice or consolation from a friend to be able to realize something about ourselves and feel encouraged to carry on. For this reason, I wanted the dancers to interact with each other through text as well as movement.

The Response Poems

Each of these poems was recited through pre-recorded voiceover and was put in the third section of the work, in which the dancers begin to break out of their isolated spaces and attempt to reconcile their individual issues.

(Kelton) To Stacey:

You identified turning points – relying on the individual length of your process. Individual. Take a step forward. You're nervous. Go on back. That can't be a step. See yourself. Identify your steps, parts, lengths. You know what to do.

(Stacey) To Mariam:

You were hanging on by a string. I saw. From across the country. We all did. I believe you. Well, I believe *in* you – your story, your experience. You're still learning. I can empathize with that. But I need you to believe. It's not a debate.

(Mariam) To Kaitlyn:

You say it's done? You say it's internal? You look energetic. That's not internal. Keep track of the pictures, the insecurities, the reasons. They may have launched concern before. You say it's done for a while? Internally or Externally? That concerns me now. How long is a while?

(Kaitlyn) To Kelton:

Pay attention, please. You're open, you're crazy, you're surprising, you're quiet, you're laughing, you're jealous. She's jealous? Your issues are your friend's issues too. Is that what you see in yourself? Are you "that kind of person?"

Structure of the Work – Defining Spaces and Setting the Movement on the Dancers

In this section, I will discuss the development of the stories as sections of the final work and how they inspired my decisions about movement vocabulary and the structure of the space. Before I created these projected worlds, I first needed to establish those worlds by developing the other elements that the worlds were meant to reflect.

Part I – Sections of the Work and the Part of the Stories

In rehearsals, I divided the work into three different sections. The first, I called the “existing” section; it evoked a time in the dancers’ lives after the specific event had occurred. Each of the events had a visible impact on the ways that the dancers functioned on a daily basis. The repercussions of the event caused each dancer to be extremely constricted emotionally. The dancers are bound in by their emotions and are slightly afraid. Another significant quality in this section is that the dancers are not aware that there is something wrong about the way that they are living. They spend each day going through the motions, unaware that a specific event had such a large impact on their daily lives and personalities. In this section, I gave small introductions to each of the characters and did not have the dancers interact with each other. This section was meant to serve as a contrast to what would be happening in the subsequent two sections.

The second section of the process, I called the “awakening” section. In this section, the dancers slowly begin to realize how much the events in their stories are affecting them. For the most part, the dancers are dealing

with their issues alone; however, I used the other dancers to create different environments for each of the situations. I would have the dancers stand in certain locations to alter another dancer's movement patterns. For example, in Stacey's section, as she is moving up and down her vertical pathway, the other dancers run horizontally through her space, forcing Stacey to move either upstage or downstage. In Mariam's section, the other three dancers walked through the diagonal channel, paying no attention to Mariam as she tried to get their attention. This heightened the feeling of isolation that Mariam experienced as she was dealing with her issues alone. As Kaitlyn was trudging through her path, I had the dancers literally put their weight on her and become a physical burden – mirroring the emotional burden that held her back and made her process so long. For Kelton's section, the dancers stood around the periphery of Kelton's space – circling it as they watched Kelton exist in this enclosed area. This interaction of the other dancers created a heightened realistic feeling of social intimidation.

The third section of the work I called the “reconciliation and living” section. In this final part, the dancers begin to explore different ways that they could break out of their mindsets and pathways. With help and interventions from the other dancers, they begin to explore new and more expansive ways of moving that ultimately allow them to break free of their psychological and physical constraints.

Part II – Which Mediums to Use and When

I knew that I did not want to use all three media - movement, text, and video - in every section. Rather, I wanted to use each element to clearly define each of the sections and give each of the worlds that they represented a distinct feeling. I also wanted each of the media to progress and develop, just as the dancers did. Because the different media represented different dimensions of the dancers lives – internal thoughts, external actions, the worlds that they are trapped in – I did not want to present the media in the same ways throughout the work. For example, as the dancers’ processes became more complicated emotionally, I used combinations of fragmented text to amplify this. If I had begun the work using fragmented text, it would not represent distinct pieces of the dancers’ lives.

For the first section of the work, the “living” section, I decided to use movement, music (without lyrics), and video projections. I chose not to use lyrics because the following section would be only text. I did not want to further complicate the work by using lyrics that were not relevant to the dancers’ stories. The movement in this section was not complicated – it simply showed the dancers moving in their individual spaces in ways that were natural to their specific characters. The music and the video were meant to set the tone of this section. The music, which I will discuss later, was selected by the dancers and is meant to provide a general environment for the space. The melodies would set an emotional tone that would carry

out through movement and text. The video was the only element in this section that was fragmented. I chose to have distorted images of certain dancers' body parts and movements to show that even though the dancers were moving on stage, there was a part of them that was not entirely there. I did not want to use text in this section because I wanted to initially present the text in a fragmented way, and save that for the second section.

In the second section, I used movement, fragmented text, and video. I chose to use fragments of the dancers' poems instead of initially introducing the poems in their entirety because I wanted the words to act as puzzle pieces. They were snippets of information that would hint at a greater meaning – we just were unaware of what that meaning was. Additionally, I did not want the dancers to recite their entire poems yet because they were still trying to find structure in their own lives.

In this section, I also used the dancers' live voices. I had them laugh on stage and whisper phrases that, to the audience, would be “audible noise” but not coherent language. I wanted bits of their voiceover to be presented verbally, though I did not want the audience to know which pieces were being vocalized.

The third section was composed of live movement and layers of recorded voiceovers. I chose not to use video in this section because I wanted to highlight the text and the movement. The video did not have a function in releasing the dancers from their contained spaces – it was setting an environment and bringing back images from previous movements in the

work. It would be too overwhelming to use video projections in addition to the layers of voiceover and movement. It would be a nice contrast to the other two sections to take away the video for this final section.

Part III – Using Music to Define the Characters

I used music to set the overall tone of the work and help to define the emotional tone of each of the dancers' stories. I wanted the music to reflect the emotional states of the dancers. If certain sections were more somber or pensive, I would use slower melodic music to complement this. Throughout the length of the work – including the two video montages that began and ended the work, I chose to insert the musical composition, *The Passing Measures* by David Lang. The continuity of the drone was used to make connections between each of the three sections. Even though the stories come from distinct phases in each of the dancers' lives, they are also connected because they are part of the same long process. Originally a 42-minute piece of work, "The Passing Measures" contains sustained tones that evolve subtly and slightly. The subtlety and the continuity of the drone mirrored the small changes and the continually evolving process of the dancers.

I wanted the additional pieces of music that would interweave throughout the work to be personal to the dancers and have an authentic relationship to each of their stories – songs that they were previously familiar with and were truly reflective of a specific time in their lives. I met

with the dancers individually to discuss music selections. I asked them to prepare a list of songs that remind them of that specific time period or evoked feelings that were similar to the ones involved in their stories. From the selections that the dancers gave me, I chose several songs for each of them to mix together for the final sound score. The songs from Stacey's selection included *Sweet Song* (Blur), and *For No One* (Will Stratton). Both of these songs begin very slow and tentatively, with gentle sounds of the piano and guitar increasing in speed and intensity as the songs progress. Mariam's song choices were *Linger* (The Cranberries), and *Make You Feel My Love* (Adele). The combination of piano and strings that occurred when I mixed the songs together created a repetitious, but still evolving, sound. Kaitlyn's songs were *Love Lockdown* (Kanye West), *Vagabond* (Wolfmother), and *Satellite Heart* (Anya Marina). The two songs that I began Kaitlyn's section with – *Vagabond* and *Love Lockdown* – begin with very steady pulses that resemble a heartbeat or intentional footsteps. After those two songs fade out, *Satellite Heart* comes in, which slows down the pace of the sections with slow repetitious string melodies. Kelton's section contained the music selections, *40 Day Dream* (Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros), and *Sooner or Later* (ZaZa). Both of these songs have a very electronic quality to them. Combined with heavy drums and electric guitars, these two pieces of music create an alternate reality – similar, but also different from the spaces preceding it.

I chose not to use the entirety of the songs – only sections that did not have lyrics because I did not want the lyrics in the music to tell a narrative that was different from the story of the dancer on stage. I would be using text in the following section, so I decided that using song lyrics would be confusing in terms of following a specific storyline. For most of the songs, this included the introduction and snippets from instrumental sections. I edited the songs by looping certain sections and layering songs over each other so they would become slightly less recognizable and more complex. I did not want my work to simply be a compilation of popular songs – I wanted to show that each of the songs had a specific meaning and related to the story in a certain way. I also wanted the arrangement of the songs to relate to the dancers stories; I mixed the songs so certain sounds would repeat or get louder, depending on how the section of the song embodied the story.

I used this mix of songs in the first section of the work – where we were first being introduced to the dancers and the issues of their stories. Even if the audience was not aware that I was using the music to define the characters, they would be able to notice that each of the dancers' sections had a different feeling and different sound qualities. For example, Kaitlyn's section had the undertone of a heartbeat throughout most of it in addition to numerous looped measures - establishing her repetitious predicament that could possibly have health-related repercussions.

In the third section of the work, I chose to underlay the dancers' layered voices with the song *Glosoli* by Sigor Ros. I wanted the musical selection in this part to have a freeing quality to it. I wanted the instruments and the sounds in the music to be constantly evolving and uplifting, without overwhelming the text and being too distracting. I also did not want the music to have a strong, constant beat because I did not want the dancers attempting to follow along with the rhythm. I wanted this piece of music to serve more as background music to the events that were happening rather than music that the dancers were dancing to. The soundtrack containing words was diegetic whereas the music was more of a background element.

Part IV – Isolating the Spaces Through Light

In addition to establishing characters and individual spaces through sound, video, and movement, I wanted to use channels of light to isolate each of the dancers from everything around them. Every dancer had a specific space in which she performed the majority of the work – representing the emotional space in which she existed. Each of the corridors gave each of the worlds a different feeling that mirrored the way that the dancers were progressing through the predicaments of their stories, internally, in their stories. I wanted each of the dancers to exist in different spaces.

For Stacey, I chose a long vertical pathway that ran from the upstage right to the downstage right section of the stage. Her movement in this vertical channel was from upstage to downstage. Psychologically, Stacey

felt that she was constantly being pulled back into the emotional state that she was in during the time of her story.

The space that I defined for Mariam's section was a diagonal path that went from the upstage right to the downstage left corner. Mariam's character only allowed herself to move on this long diagonal path, which represents her emotional predicament of being stuck in one mindset. In addition, Mariam felt very alone in her story. This long diagonal path was often filled with other bodies walking around while paying little attention to Mariam – heightening the feelings of disorientation, loneliness, and helplessness.

In Kaitlyn's section, I had a strip of light that covered the area from the downstage left to the downstage right corner of the stage. One of Kaitlyn's personal images for her movement was "walking through thick mud." Kaitlyn's horizontally-lit movement was slow and trudging, reflecting the tedious and emotional burdens of recovering from the events in her story.

Because Kelton was the last dancer that I established a space for, I had a bit of trouble deciding where to place her corridor. For Kelton, I chose a medium-sized pool of light on the stage left side of the stage. I decided to make Kelton's space a pool of light instead of a long corridor, which happens to complement the theme in her story perfectly. In her story, Kelton often felt very trapped and "boxed in" by certain fears that she had. Kelton's

images and movements in this space were enclosed and stifled –
demonstrating her shyness and inability to be vocal about her emotions.

Video: Shooting and Composing the Projected Images

In the overall production of the work, I chose to edit and compose the video projections after I had finished developing the movement and the text. My main intention for the video was to have it create different worlds for the dancers.

Part I – Establishment of the Dancers' Personal Spaces Through Video

My intent for the video component of this work was to help establish each of the dancers' spaces and amplify the types of physical movement that their stories inspired. I used the screen images to create psychological spaces – projecting each of the dancer's emotional experiences, while the live movement performed on the stage represented the dancers' physical experiences.

As I mentioned earlier, I used a great deal of rehearsal footage in the final video in order to highlight the idea that this entire work was a collection of processes. For some of the dancers' sections, I distorted the images using features on Final Cut Pro. Even in the video, I wanted the dancers' worlds to have different feelings. The projected video was shot in the same space that the performance took place, and it was shot from the front – as if the camera was an audience member. Because the movement in this footage is from the rehearsal stage, the movements are slightly different. I made this decision to show the progression of actions in different stages of

the dancers' lives. Changes were made as the movement was being developed in rehearsals, just as changes in the dancers' actual lives were being made as they progressed in their stories.

I used editing effects such as changing the speed, retrograding the film, and adding multiple frames to further demonstrate the qualities of the dancers' stories. For example, For Stacey's video projections, I chose to loop sections of the video and change the speed of the video. This helped to reflect her feelings of being back and forth in her process. As some points, her process would be quick, but her mindset would change and she would have to start over. Also, I decided to have many of her images in a corridor of video on the left side of the screen – right above the area of light where Stacey was moving. This helped to keep all of Stacey's elements in one space and isolate her from the others.

I distorted Mariam's video by adding a rippling effect to a video that I took in rehearsal. In the video, Mariam is moving from dancer to dancer, trying to get her attention. The effect that I added created a circular ripple that started at Mariam's virtual body and expanded to the other dancers as she moved closer to them. Despite this, none of the dancers in the video acknowledged Mariam's presence. This exemplifies her feelings in the story of isolation and helplessness.

Kaitlyn's video is composed of fragmented images of her trudging through a difficult space, with very slow and sustained movements. Kaitlyn is doing very similar movements throughout each of her videos because her

process was very slow compared to the other three dancers. This shows how she is both physically and emotionally burdened by the event in her story. She explained to me that parts of the process still affect the way that she acts today. In a sense, Kaitlyn is still trudging through. I did not want to distort Kaitlyn's images any further because her process is slow and sustained. I wanted to video to reflect this.

For Kelton's video, I filmed her in an enclosed space, attempting to push walls and break free. I added the effect of multiplying Kelton's frame so we were seeing multiple bodies attempting to push multiple walls down. In Kelton's story, the older she got, the harder it was to break free of this particular mindset. The multiplying boxes were meant to reflect and exaggerate this.

At certain points in the work, I chose to make the on-screen movement and live movement similar in order to establish each of the dancers' personal spaces. At other points, I disconnected the screen imagery and stage movements to show the progression of the dancers reconciling their individual issues. For example, in the third section of the work, Kelton is learning how she can break out of the psychological box that is keeping her from interacting with others in a certain way. As she is doing so, the projection behind her is the same image - Kelton pushing away walls - that was presented at the beginning of the first section.

In addition, I recorded the dancers in their everyday environments - doing everyday tasks such as homework or walking through campus. I

wanted to capture each of them existing outside of the studio space. Seeing the dancers doing “normal” movements – writing, walking, eating – would give some insight as to how they move outside of a dance context. I wanted to see if the dancers used the same gestures and habitual movements outside of the studio that they did when expressing their internal struggles through abstract movement. With this, I was able to compare the dancers’ everyday habits, movements and gestures to those that were conveyed in a dance space, which gave me more insight into how each of the dancers’ events affected them physically. I ended up using these everyday shots in two different montages – one at the beginning and one at the end of the work. The purpose of the first montage was a prelude to the work. I wanted to set up the rest of the work by giving the audience small glimpses into the dancers’ worlds. Using shots of the dancers, images from their dream bodies, and additional colors and textures, I wanted to present the dancers in ways that were foreign to audience members who knew the dancers. My intent was to remove the dancers from their safe spaces in order to relocate them in different worlds. In the final video, I chose not to show clear, coherent shots of the dancers doing these actions. Instead, I would quickly cut between fragments of images to give the video a very disorienting feeling and convey how disoriented the dancers felt. The end montage contained similar images and video clips. I chose to revisit these images at the end of the process in order to show the dancers in a different context. The dancers had spent roughly twenty minutes showing different facets of

their personalities and coming to terms with buried personal issues. The re-visitation of these images shows how differently we perceive the images after seeing them a second time, having been through an experience with the dancers who inspired them.

My decision to use black and white video projections had to do with the stage lighting. Because I wanted each of the dancers to have different channels of light, the on-stage light played a very important role in the final work. I did not want the stage lights distorting or washing out the colors of the video. I wanted to keep the color scheme consistent.

I did not spend a lot of time rehearsing the dancers' movement in relation to the video work. I set movement on the dancers first, and added the video afterwards. The dancers were not watching the video while they were dancing; I had them take movement cues from the sound score and from each other because the video would be projected behind them and I did not want them constantly looking backwards for cues. Because of this, some of the interactions that the dancers had with the video projections – shadows, timing – were slightly different each performance. I chose to keep the dancers moving independently from the video because this added a spontaneity to the dancers' actions and caused the dancers to be more aware of each other spatially.

Elements of Performance

Part I – Floor Projected Video

When composing the video, one of my initial debates was whether I wanted to project the video from the booth – in the back of the theater – or from the floor, at the same level that the dancers were on. In the project that I did last year, I used floor projections because the interactions of the dancers' shadows was necessary to the intent of the work. In rehearsals, I would use floor projections for the dancers to practice with, simply because I was not familiar with the projector at the back of the theater. I decided that I would rather have the dancers rehearse with a slightly different video projection than not have the ability to rehearse with projections at all.

As we continued to rehearse the piece this way, and as I was receiving comments from faculty members about the nature of the interacting shadows, I realized that I liked the way that the shadows complemented the video. As the dancers traveled through the space, the silhouettes of their figures showed against the projected images – allowing their live actions to exist in the same space as their emotional states. At first, I figured that the shadows would add another element that was not necessary and was distracting to everything else that was going on. This was not the case. Because the video was not always covering the entire cyclorama space, the shadows were not as intrusive as I imagined they would be. For the final

work, I decided to leave the projector on the floor and let each of the dancers shadows interact with the projected images.

In addition, I realized that floor projections also allowed the projected images to be seen on the dancers' bodies. Though this was not originally intentional, it was interesting how the dancers' worlds were projected onto them – almost consuming them – as the dancers moved throughout the space. Even though the dancers were making progress emotionally, the issue still remains a part of them.

Part II – Costumes

I wanted each of the costumes to be distinct to show how each of the dancers is a distinct individual with a different personality and personal preferences in clothing. I wanted the dancers to be wearing primarily white because I wanted the projections to be seen on their bodies. Also, I wanted to project text from each of their voiceover poems in addition to their response poems; contrasting to the projections that float on and off the white clothing, the text would be constant. It would serve as a subtle reminder that fragments of these events still live in the dancers' minds and bodies. I chose to have the dancers wear different combinations of white and black clothing – dresses, pants, shirts – because I did not want to make the dancers look uniform. In each of their lives, the dancers are different people with different personalities. I wanted their costumes to reflect this.

Part III – Title of the Work

I chose to title this work, *Conversations of the (Un)Implied*. I came up with the words “Conversation” and “Implied” separately when brainstorming about different themes of the work. Arbitrarily, I put them together to see if their individual connotations would create a more in-depth description. In this sense, the combination of these words was accidental; however, I decided to keep them because they perfectly exemplified the different elements of the work. The entire work is a process – a process exploring self-awareness and self-reconciliation. In order for a recognition to occur, a person must reflect on the past and realize something about the way that she used to be. In this sense, we are constantly in conversation with our former selves. Depending on how much information about ourselves we are willing to reveal to other people, these realizations could be obvious or very subtle. My choice to use the parentheses in the word “(Un)implied” came from my personal tendency to add some mystery and ambiguity to the work. Because the dancers were not literally pantomiming out their stories, the audience may or may not have understood the details of the elements they were conveying. In this sense, the stories – and the events in them – were either implied by the on stage movement, or they were not.

Final Thoughts

Although the final product of this work is significantly different from what I had first envisioned, I am very pleased with how this work turned out. The different elements – choreography, language, and projected images – worked together to demonstrate how each of the events in the dancers' lives affected different aspects of their personalities. Every so often after a rehearsal, I would be discouraged about the direction that the work was heading. I would remind myself of my original ideas and regret some of the decisions that I made. Despite my occasional moments of regret, I think that this work exemplifies how each of the mediums works to convey a different dimension of specific memory, event, or time period in different ways. The live movement began with a very stifled quality – the gestures and patterns keeping the dancers from branching out of their personal spaces. By the end of the work, it progressed into larger movement that represented the dancers' abilities to free themselves from their previous mindsets. By showing distorted images of the dancers in everyday spaces, trapped in certain psychological states, the video effectively created different worlds for the live movement to exist in and provided a stagnant contrast to the constantly-evolving stage movement. The projected images showed how the dancers could mentally be in one mindset, though physically, their actions portrayed something different. Similarly, the

fragmented, poetic text worked as an inner-monologue for the dancers – subtly conveying the thoughts that the dancers were too self-conscious to speak openly about.

What I would Revise and Further Work

It is difficult for me to speak about more revisions to this work because it seems as if the work was constantly being revised. Even when I thought I was finished, I would have new ideas, or new notes for the dancers. To a certain extent, the success of the work is dependent on how it is performed by the dancers. In terms of the use of video and text, I believe that I effectively created distinct worlds for the dancers and portrayed their stories in abstract yet evocative ways. I could spend more time revising the movement – solely because of the different performance qualities of the dancers. Each of them did a beautiful job performing and I am very appreciative for all of their work. Despite this, I would have liked to have more time focusing on their movement vocabularies and how they would be performed I would experiment more with movement qualities – making certain movements have more intention while others were performed with a hesitant, languid quality. This would provide further contrast between the different sections and more clearly define the dancers. I was pleased with how it turned out, but I am still curious as to how much further they could go. It may be that going further with their characters would be too overwhelming and appear inauthentic; however, it is something that I would

like to try. For example, I would not want the dancers to pantomime their stories and over-exaggerate emotions and gestures.

The conclusion of this process has caused me to think about other choreographic works that I would make in the future. I would definitely like to continue with multi-media choreography; there is a lot to be discovered about finding the right balance between different mediums and discovering new energies and imagery in each one. To me, one of the main differences between live movement and projected movement is the tangible energy that is created when the audience and the performers share a space. Because of this overlap, there is an inherent connection between what the dancers are doing and how the audience perceives it. In a live performance, the bodies are directly in front of you – each breath is visible, and moments of contact are heightened by the realistic feelings that they convey. The dancers' physicalities show that the movements are extensions of their inner experiences. In video, the psychological distance between the performer and the audience is heightened by the presence of the screen. The audience also gets a skewed view of the performer because the shot composition is completely controlled by the person holding the camera – in this case, not an audience member. I would like to do further experiments with bringing these two worlds together to create new levels of physical and technological activity to a stage space. My intent is to work more with dancers' personalities and to use video to provide alternate realities and show them in different ways.

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