

WUNDERKAMMER: A CHOREOGRAPHIC THESIS EMBODYING MY
INTERPRETATION OF PINA BAUSCH'S CREATIVE PROCESS

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to experientially investigate the choreographic process of the dance artist Pina Bausch. This embodied exploration led to the creation of a new theatrical work, *Wunderkammer*, in which I was able to explore, understand, and articulate my interpretation of Pina Bausch's creative process. I worked collaboratively for eight months with seven dancers, exploring movement inspired by the personal stories, bodies, and experiences of each individual. I then crafted this material into a non-linear collage exploring and challenging the boundaries of performance, dance, theater, and life itself. The greatest impact of this process was the autonomy the individuals had in co-creating their roles. I noted deep connections, true ownership of the roles, and heightened performances from each dancer. The openness and vulnerability of Bausch's process allowed me to take risks, and to expand my capabilities in collaboration, choreography, and art making.

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Dedicated to Pina Bausch, to my dancers, and to anyone and everyone who dares to be vulnerable, speak their truth, and make art.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“Always the beautiful answer who asks a more beautiful question.”

-e.e. cummings

“Dance is something we do, also a way of studying ourselves: a way of knowing...”

-Sondra Fraleigh

“When I write, I feel like an armless, legless man with a crayon in his mouth.”

-Kurt Vonnegut

Prelude

I see a woman in a strapless full-length evening gown with head and upper body slumped over, her long dark wild hair covers her face and heart. She holds her arms slightly forward bent at the elbow and wrist like a broken doll. This image captures my attention as I look through an outdated copy of *Dance Magazine* from November 1994. The year is 2001 and I am preparing to choreograph a solo dance for the student dance concert at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. I read the caption below that says “Pina Bausch’s Tanztheater Wuppertal presents ‘Two Cigarettes in the Dark’ at the Brooklyn Academy of Music from November 17 to 23.” “Who is Pina Bausch,” I wonder. Curiously, I continue to look through the magazine and find a short review titled “Pina Bausch Cigarettes Smolder in Brooklyn.” In this short review Hörst Koegler describes Bausch’s creative process.

Bausch asked her dancers to improvise ‘something with a waltz step,’ to formulate sentences including the word ‘god,’ to wonder when one uses the word ‘shit,’ and what one means when one says ‘mother,’ to proceed from there to meditate about ‘the world of small happiness,’ ‘to perform something with the belly,’ and to try to move like a harlequin. It was from such cues and suggestions that the individual scenes of the three-hour long piece developed. (17)

My imagination vibrates with possible answers to her prompts. Her questions fill me with more questions. What does this dance look like? How do you make a dance that is three hours long? How does Bausch structure improvised material into choreography in collaboration with her dancers? Who is Pina Bausch?

This image and review inspire the first solo I create called *Interlude*, a piece that, when looking back reveals to me, not only my aesthetic preferences (such as emotive and expressive movement and gesture, use of repetition and structured improvisation) but also, my interest in collaboration and subjectivity. I don't know it yet but this image and review will return to me, (I keep them in a folder with other inspirational clippings) when I am asked my first year of graduate school to research a contemporary dance artist and present on my findings. I take the bait and follow the white rabbit (Pina Bausch) down the rabbit hole and my journey begins. I have no idea what I am getting myself into only that my curiosity is relentless.

Introduction

In T.S. Elliot's poem the *Four Quartets* he writes, "we shall not cease from exploration, at the end of all our exploring, will be to arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time." Considering these words, I feel that life as well as art is in a constant state of becoming. There is no finish line to be reached or linear path to follow. I view life as a process of discovery, a place to uncover boundaries, to ask questions, to be receptive and responsive to the ever-changing world that surrounds us.

As a human being who expresses her art in the form of movement, I am the text, the material and the messenger of the material and cannot objectively separate my feelings, thoughts, philosophies, and values from my art. This interpretation is further explained by Sue Stinson in her dissertation, "*Reflections and visions: A hermeneutic study of the dangers and possibilities in dance education*," who claims that "we must use all of our capacities to help us understand—get inside of, dwell in—that which we study, rather than separating ourselves from it in an attempt to explain it" (1984, 10). To better understand one's identity as an artist and as a human being "one must first feel the security and self-value which comes from integration within the self. Self understanding is the basis of understanding other selves" (H'Doubler 1957, xxvii).

It's hard to pinpoint exactly when I began to wonder and dismantle the way I think about and make dances. It was a gradual, barely noticeable process, and one that will most likely continue for as long as I make art. Having some time in between

undergraduate and graduate school, the things I learned and held onto were still inside me but I had changed, my perspective had widened. How could I continue making dances the same way that I had before?

When I returned to graduate school I was involved in numerous collaborative projects in which I was asked to contribute as a dancer. I was no longer just an objective body learning and performing pre-structured movement from the choreographer. I was challenged to create and contribute movement and ideas, to be a part of a collaborative community working towards a common goal, making a new work of art. I felt engaged and validated. I had more autonomy as well as more accountability to the group. I was a part of a greater whole, connected to something bigger than me and yet built from and with me.

From these experiences I yearned to create and facilitate a collaborative space to make such a work, to allow other dancers the opportunity to feel what I had felt, to be the source and the inspiration for a new work. I also wanted to unite other aspects of my creativity, my background as a visual artist and my evolving interest in theater and character development into my work. I wanted to find a way to include all aspects of my personality and interests into one work, one process.

I searched for a model to help me break away from my old mode of working and felt that Pina Bausch's work and approach provided an openness that would ground me in this endeavor without being too restrictive. I wanted to embody and understand her process as well as see what would emerge from this inquiry. Would my process reflect and validate Bausch's experience or would it be drastically different? Would taking on her process create a similar aesthetic? Would this process change me, and the way I approach dance and art making?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to experientially investigate the choreographic process used by the dance artist Pina Bausch. This embodied investigation led to the creation of a new theatrical work in which I was able to explore, understand, and articulate my interpretation of both Pina Bausch's and my creative process. My greatest

intentions for this project were to expand and deepen my abilities in collaboration and art making and to uncover my values and identity as an artist.

Problem Statement

In order to facilitate this research, I created and facilitated a supportive yet active rehearsal space to explore subjectivity through awareness, improvisation, experimentation, and development. My choreographic practice became one of uncovering and revealing the subjectivities of each one of my dancers and using this knowledge to create and inform the work. The intention to create and produce a theatrical work emerged from a desire to understand the inherent tensions produced from an emphasis on process over product and adaptation over intention.

To fulfill the problem statement, I identified the following sub-problems:
I would create a choreographic work that would:

1. Expose and challenge my own aesthetic preferences and biases.
2. Identify in the rehearsal process which methods and questions were most valuable in uncovering and revealing subjectivity.
3. Coordinate all aspects of producing a show—publicity, lights, costumes, and any other technical or artistic requirements.
4. Document and evaluate the process and culminating performance through journal/notes and self-reflection.

Limitations

I planned to investigate my interpretation of Pina Bausch's creative process with a focus on the relationship between the dancers and myself in order to facilitate my growth as an artist in the field of dance. A strong commitment by me to be truthful and self-aware during this process would hopefully lead to a higher state of consciousness and make available more options. I was limited by my own personal perceptions and biases and needed to utilize and maintain an open mind and an open heart in order to allow the creative process to gestate and help me to create and develop a new work for the field of

dance. Since I had never worked with Pina Bausch personally, I was ultimately limited to my interpretation of her process.

Delimitations

What I proposed for this study was to spend eight months rehearsing with a group of 7 dancers in order to allow enough time for emergent themes to surface and to develop into a fully produced choreographic work to be performed on March 3, 2012 in the University of Oregon Dance Department's Dougherty Dance Theater. I felt that this was a minimal amount of time needed for this study and afforded me the opportunity to confer with available peer mentors and committee members. I selected dancers who were available for the rehearsal schedule and interested in creating dance collaboratively. I also wanted them to be technically proficient and experienced with improvisation and adept at construction of dance phrases.

Significance of Study

Going into this research I had pre-existing conceptions of art and experiences in choreographing and performing dance. I had, through practice, begun to study my process already but felt that there was still a great deal to learn about dance and about myself in the world. What I must note is that the significance of this study is not only the final choreographic work, but also the creative process itself as a way to develop a stronger sense of awareness in the areas that will guide and prepare me for a career in the field of dance with an emphasis toward dance choreography, performance, and education.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following is a review of literature describing Bausch's work: a brief history of the life and work of Pina Bausch, followed by a broad description of her aesthetic, philosophy, and choreographic process.

Brief History of Pina Bausch

Early Life/ Training (1940-1968)

Pina Bausch was born in Solingen, Germany on July 27, 1940. The third and youngest child of August and Anita Bausch, her parents were owners and operators of a café attached to a small hotel. As written by Royd Climenhaga in *Pina Bausch*, Pina was “raised in her parents’ café, often playing underneath one of the tables and watching the patrons as they played out their social connections, and occasionally, their muted passions in front of her” (2009, 4).

Bausch studied ballet as a child and then entered the Folkwang Schule in Essen in 1955, where she worked with Kurt Jooss, one of the most renowned figures in European modern dance. After her graduation from the Folkwang Schule in 1960, Pina won a scholarship to continue her studies at the Julliard School in New York City. Her teachers included Anthony Tudor, José Limón, Paul Taylor and others. In New York, she danced with the Paul Sanasardo and Donya Feuer Dance Company, the New American Ballet and became a member of the Metropolitan Opera Ballet Company. In 1962, Bausch returned to Germany to join the Folkwang Ballet Company as a soloist. Pina assisted Jooss until he retired in 1968, leaving Bausch as new Director of the School.

Emergence of Dance Theater (1973-1986)

During her time with Jooss, Bausch had begun her own choreographic explorations. Bausch stated of her work, “this early entrance into choreography came not

so much from a desire to create things a certain way as from the simple need to dance” (Climenhaga 2009, 9). Bausch wanted to express herself and found that the only way to do this was to create her own dances that explored her movement ideas and preferences.

In 1972, Bausch was invited to choreograph the dances for a production of *Tannhauser* at the Wuppertal Opera Company. The success of this work led to her being asked to become the new director/choreographer of the Wuppertal Ballet. Bausch rejected the offer multiple times until finally in 1973 she agreed to come based on the condition that she could bring along many of her own dancers from the Folkwang Schule.

Her first works at the newly renamed Tanztheater Wuppertal were based on narratives including *Rite of Spring*, and *Orpheus and Eurydice*. Instead of depicting the ballet in a linear fashion, however, Bausch “drew on her own and her dancers’ personal experiences to create presentational movement patterns formed from emotive gestures and derived from a response to, rather than in service of, formal story structures” (Climenhaga 2009, 10). These early works displayed the beginnings of her working process and choreographic methods of collaborating with her dancers to mine their associations around a general feeling or theme and structuring them into a non-linear expressive collage.

The transitional piece, *Blaubart (Bluebeard) – While Listening to a Tape Recording of Béla Bartok’s Opera ‘Duke Bluebeard’s Castle’* choreographed in 1977, revealed a drastically new approach to dance making and signified the first leap into what is now known as Dance Theater.

Pina had just finished the *Brecht/Weill* evening and felt hurt by the poor reception and from the continued opposition from her dancers, who struggled with this new approach so far departed from the established forms they were used to. Bausch admitted to wanting to quit and never work again. Jan Minarik, dancer, convinced Bausch and a few other dancers to continue developing new approaches to presentation and performance in his private studio. The small group began working and slowly the other dancers returned to Bausch. Climenhaga writes,

With Bluebeard, she first enters the questioning process of construction that includes significant input from the ensemble, and that process simultaneously

brings with it the subjective presence of the performer and fully integrates a more theatrical presentation structure within the dance form and physical emphasis. (2009, 20)

From 1977 to 1985, the Tanztheater Wuppertal defined their signature style in famous works such as *Komm tanz mit mir* (Come dance with me, 1977), *Café Müller* (1978), *Kontakthof* (1978), and *1980-Ein Stück von Pina Bausch* (A piece by Pina Bausch, 1980). In these works, the emphasis is on theatrical presence as opposed to pure movement or dance. Bausch combines subjective presence and engagement with dance form and construction principals to arrive at a new form, dance theater.

Evolution of Style (1986-2009)

From 1986 to 1998, the company traveled to various cities and countries around the world to inspire new works based on the company's impression of each destination during one to two week residencies. Bausch "uses her company's response to place to uncover something more than simply a tourist's portrait of the city...the goal is to find something more universal underlying the expressive possibilities uncovered in any given culture." (Climenhaga 2009, 26)

For example Bausch and her ensemble created the piece *Nur Dur* (Only You) 1996, in response to impressions of the American West. The company toured the four cities of Berkeley and Los Angeles, California, Austin, Utah, and Pheonix, Arizona for the residency. They began every morning with class and rehearsal, and spent evenings visiting over fifty sites in all to inspire the performed moments that would eventually make up the piece. One of the dancers Dominique Mercy states, "The point is much larger than the occasional flash of American Imagery. There is also something behind those specific experiences that speaks to larger issues of human relations" (quoted in Daly 1996, 20).

From 1999 to 2009 Bausch and the Tanztheater Wuppertal left behind some of the more theatrical elements that dominated their repertoire and returned to dance. "The ground- breaking expansion of form came from a desire from her and her company to find a new means of expression" (Climenhaga 2009, 33). They were still concerned with personal feelings and experiences but returned to more movement-based works to express

their stories and ideas. Bausch discussed her newfound interest into form and how the dances were constructed.

Pina Bausch continued making work up until her death on June 30th 2009 at the age of 68. She was diagnosed with cancer just five days before her sudden death. At the time of Bausch's death, director Wim Wenders was in pre-production for a 3D film showcasing Pina's work titled *Pina*. Although Bausch would not be able to be a part of the production, Wenders expressed that the company and Bausch's family would continue making the film to preserve and pay reverence to her and all that she contributed to the world of the performing arts.

Before addressing Bausch's creative process, I feel it important to articulate elements and qualities of her overall aesthetic. This will establish ground to delve into how the pieces were created.

Pina Bausch's Tanztheater

Since her appointment as director and choreographer of the Tanztheater Wuppertal in 1973, Pina Bausch has received mixed reviews by critics and audiences alike. From his article "Pina Bausch: Dance and Emancipation" originally published in 1984, Norbert Servos states, "The confounding novelty of Bausch's work apparently demanded...a new understanding of dance" (1998, 37).

Her Tanztheater, appropriately named due to its eclectic use of dance, theater, and elaborate stage props and designs, revealed a new way of expressing dance that was difficult for many to appreciate, let alone understand. Bausch pushed the boundaries of expression and transformed theater into something one could define as "a 'theatre of experience,' a theatre that by means of direct confrontation made reality, communicated in an aesthetic form, tangible as a physical reality" (Servos 1998, 37). Although Pina Bausch was not typically defined as a postmodernist, she employed many of the same elements used by the early post-modern choreographers such as repetition, collage structure, pedestrian movement, and the use of multi-media, "but maintained her interest in the subject to arrive not just at a new technique...but at a new form in which human experience is expressed in bodily terms" (Servos 1998, 14).

Repetition and Time

In the article “In Defense of Formalism: The Politics of Disinterestedness,” Roger Copeland defines Pina Bausch and her work as “anything but formalist” (1990, 4). He begins by summarizing the pluralist dances of the eighties in terms of a single motif and/or gesture, “The Bauschian unrequited embrace,” in which a woman runs up and embraces a dispassionate man who does not respond to this advance but allows the woman to fall to the floor only to repeat the gesture over and over and over again (4).

Copeland decides that Pina Bausch is not a formalist due to the way she uses repetition in her work. In comparing Bausch’s work with the Judson era, Copeland asserts that “repetition is no longer there to clarify, to objectify, or to deflect the focus of attention from meaning to form, now its function is to intensify meaning” (4). In Roger Copeland’s view, formalism does not evoke or perpetuate emotion and meaning, instead its absence is preferred.

Ann Daly discusses the resistance in the dance community of Bausch’s repetitive techniques in the article “Response to Tanztheater: The Thrill of the Lynch Mob or the Rage of a Woman?” published in 1986. Daly argues that “it’s chauvinistic to dismiss such a fundamental formalist technique as formless and boring just because it serves expressionist ends...Bausch’s work brilliantly embeds powerful dramatic imagery in formal repetition” (55).

In her work, Pina Bausch reveals a suspension and expansion of time by repeating a movement or gesture like the “Bauschian unrequited embrace,” to allow the viewer to see and feel the pattern in front of them in order to create or discover their own experience of it. In reference to this technique, Royd Climenhaga states that Bausch concentrates “on one essential image or gesture and probed it until it revealed the depth of its associations, its claim to power within the cultural imagination” (2009, 11). Even though her intent differs, she still makes use of the compositional strategy of repetition to manipulate and shape her productions.

Collage Structures and Scenic Constructions

Pina Bausch's Tanztheater is non-linear in its structure. Instead, her work employs an overlapping collage structure that displays detailed vignettes and individual interludes that occur simultaneously and without rational reasoning. Bausch compares her pieces to that of a street scene. "With a street scene we can see an unlimited amount of human activity, but it simply exists for us, since as observers we do not have access to the context which gave origins to the actions" (Sanchez-Colberg 1993, 222). Pina Bausch has an unfailing interest in people and their everyday experiences and emotions and understands how each of us would see and experience the same action differently. The viewer is free to choose what interests them. As opposed to witnessing the piece passively from the audience, "Bausch's structures demand active participation to discern your relation to the underlying feeling of the piece" (Climenhaga 2009, 124).

The events on the stage are a reflection of an organic reality, but the stage space itself, the environment created, is an imitation of life. In her theatrical work Pina Bausch generates "an interplay between the body and specific settings... achieved through her transformation of the stage space into environments specifically constructed for each piece" (Sanchez-Colberg 1993, 223). Over the years the company has danced on stages covered in dirt, grass, plastic carnations, water, and leaves, to name but a few. They have been surrounded by heavy walls, giant boulders, and danced through and with bursting clouds and in rain to inscribe a contextual playground of paradox (Sanchez-Colberg 1993, 223). The artist's facility of juxtaposition instills a new context for the viewer to witness and redefine meaning, a place to see and sense poetic imagery in motion.

Pedestrian Movements/Gestures

Opposing the minimalist tendencies of the American post-modern dancers of the sixties and seventies, Copeland points out "there is little if any abstract geometry in the way Bausch distributes bodies in deep space. The focus is on gestures, not academic steps" (1990, 4). Many of the postmodern choreographers were not concerned with academic steps; they performed pedestrian movements, what some labeled "non-dance"

movements in reaction against the pre-existing norm of their modern predecessors. Concerning Bausch's rendering of pedestrian/gestural movement, "she takes the smallest aspects of human behavior and makes them visible through the theatrical manipulation. She is interested in what display of human behavior can reveal" (Sanchez-Colberg 1993, 223). By taking simple everyday movements and placing them in opposing contexts the gestures become abstracted and transcend their previous inclination.

Multimedia and Theatricality

Copeland's last main reason for categorizing Pina Bausch's work as anti-formalist comes in his description of her fusion of theater and dance that "exemplified the current retreat from the doctrine of minimalist purity" (1990, 5). The Tanztheater Wuppertal utilizes a variety of dance and theatre constructions by any means necessary to attend to the task at hand, the content and meaning of the work expressed in an artistic and highly eclectic form. In his opinion, in the broadest sense, Pina Bausch's work is not formal because she uses theatrically embellished dances to convey emotion and meaning. Pina Bausch can hardly be labeled as anti-formalist since no amount of minimalism in her work can create the impossible pure formalism. As Ann Daly puts it simply, "...rarely do you find a young, experimental choreographer dealing with 'pure form' (if there can be such a thing)" (Daly 1986, 55).

Formal Tendencies Expressed Intuitively

Pina Bausch uses many of the same elements of composition as the post-modernists but instead of denying the emotional/intuitive expressions of the body she makes them the catalyst for her pieces. Pina's well-known credo is that she is "not interested in how people move, but what moves them." Unlike the post-modernists whose aim was to depersonalize the body and bring movement for movement's sake to the surface, Pina's focus is to express inner emotional feelings through the outer landscape of the body, the person, and the form. Instead of playing it cool and rejecting the self and the audience, Bausch chooses to expose the individual in a real and universal way. Sondra Horton

Fraleigh, in her book *Dance and the Lived Body: a Descriptive Aesthetics*, writes “It is impossible to erase the affective, because we live it bodily. We live and breathe within the constantly changing landscape of our sense and emotions. Neither are these separate from our ever-expressive moving body” (1987, 121).

Pina Bausch’s creative process is guided and informed by her philosophy. I would like to present some of her viewpoints that establish her particular approach to dance and art making.

Philosophy

What are Pina Bausch’s pieces about? What is the model for her work? When asked these questions she replies, “The human being is the model,’...Pina Bausch sees and shows people in their multiplicity and their inconsistency” (Hoghe 1980, 74). She is interested in life and love and wants to show people as they are in a real and honest way. For her, “it was also about not wanting to elevate yourself, not wanting to distance yourself, not wanting to disguise yourself. It’s something that’s very intimate. You have to see the individuals on the stage as people, not as dancers. That would disturb the work. I would like them to be seen as people who are dancing” (Bausch 1995, 238).

The individual dancers are important in her work and she states, “ they are all treasures. Each one of them in their own way” (Linsel 2006). She left behind her former mode of working and adopted a process built from and with her dancers. “Working with Pina,” says one of her dancers, “allowed all of us to be sad, furious, to cry or to laugh or to scream. We could bring out all our qualities. It was as if Pina was hidden in each and every one of us or the other way around, as if we were all a part of her” (Bausch and Wenders, 2011). The relationship between Pina and her dancers was mutually full of trust and loyalty. Pina explains, “I like them all and somehow I learn from all of them...everyone has so many colors, you don’t even know until you see them suddenly reflected in a new person. And I think we all learn through what we see” (Bausch 1987, 49).

Outside of the influence of herself and her dancers Pina was very sensitive and aware of what was happening in the greater world. She describes this influence clearly.

“I think it’s terribly important to know the world you’re living in and not think that everything is wonderful. That’s very important to me and the work that I do, as it incorporates all these people, these emotions. All of these are part of the feelings present in a piece” (Linsel 2006).

Echoing this statement her dancer Helena Pikon states what she thinks is special about Pina: “she talks...about people. When you’re in the audience, I think you don’t feel removed from the performance. I think you can see yourself onstage, recognize your emotions” (Linsel 2006). Her pieces deal with people and relationships and humanity. She doesn’t do this in a single all encompassing viewpoint, but rather with an expansive multiplicity that allows the audience to connect with the work in their own unique way. “Everybody is a part of the performance: seeing what you think, what you feel, what connections are created in your head... It’s about a kind of humanity” (Bausch 1990, 230).

Pina Bausch is interested in the audience connecting to the work, but with such a possibly diverse audience how did she know who to make the piece for? She expresses,

if you’re creating a piece you can’t ask: what kind of audience will like this? An audience is made up of a large number of different individuals. So which audience are we talking about? Who is the piece for? You don’t know. All you can do is try to show things, to say things and find what is important to me. That’s the most important thing: what you want to say. (Bausch 1990, 229)

The work itself is made through an awareness of what we all share as people who live in the world. She couldn’t predict how the piece would be received, that was beside the point. All she could do was try her best to express things that she and her dancers found interesting and important. Pina states,

I have to be able to forget everything and ask ‘What’s important in this moment?’ I must individually confront myself in this manner. Nobody else can advise me. You must listen to yourself and avoid saying ‘what are others saying or what do they want me to do?’ I believe that if you are totally sincere and have the ability, maybe you can find the things we all have in common – not the things we lock away privately. I’m not talking about what’s private, but things we all share. I believe that if it’s the right thing, you can only find it in yourself. (Bausch 2007)

But is it dance? Many have criticized Bausch's work for not being or having enough dance in it. She asks,

Well, why do we do it? Why do we dance in the first place? There is a great danger in the way things are developing at the moment and have been developing in the last few years. Everything has become routine and no one knows any longer why they're using these movements. All that's left is just a strange sort of vanity which is becoming more and more removed from actual people. And I believe that we ought to be getting closer to one another again" (Bausch 1978, 227).

She further explains,

It is simply a question of when is it dance, when is it not? Where does it start? When do we call it dance? It does in fact have something to do with consciousness, with bodily consciousness, and the way we form things. But then it needn't have this kind of aesthetic form. It can have quite a different form and still be dance" (Bausch 1978, 230).

In the early stages of Bausch's work, she choreographed every step. She began to notice other things, things that would come up in rehearsals that seemed more interesting than her original ideas. Bausch began to let go of her plans and follow the new inspirations. "At one point I had the courage not to make a plan at all. When I make a piece now, it is only out of what is present at the time. I try to feel what I feel" (Bausch 1987, 45). For Bausch, her pieces, her processes, were about people, and the things we all share as human beings.

Pina Bausch's Process

The question that many have asked and continue to ask concerning Bausch's work is, "How does she create her work-- what is her method or process of composition?" In the book *Pina Bausch* by Royd Climenhaga, he describes the importance of people in her work. "What she comes back to time and again, are people...and the difficulties of dealing with all of their personality quirks, vulnerabilities, and needs. And yet this is exactly what this process is built on" (2009, 42). She does not begin a work with a specific intention in mind except what emerges from what she and her dancers explore about their subjective lives and experiences.

According to Climenhaga, the essential component of her work is “the importance of working collaboratively with a group of people with whom you build a relationship of mutually shared expression, exposure, and trust” (2009, 42). Bausch works from the present moment, from her intuition. She asks questions based on what she feels and what she sees; but how does asking questions transform into dance? Climenhaga writes “what interviews reveal as the coalescing influence is patience, and the temerity to keep pushing at an idea until connections begin to emerge” (2009, 45).

Difficulties

Understanding and navigating Pina Bausch’s creative process is difficult. She is often reticent to discuss the content of her work for fear of robbing the pieces of the open interpretation she strives for. Raimond Hogue writes in the article, “*The Theatre of Pina Bausch*” that, “her plays pose questions. Answers stay open. To give them ‘would be conceited.’ ‘I just can’t say: ‘that’s how it goes,’ declares Bausch...’I am just as lost as all the others” (1980, 72). To describe and define a moment and/or section would be to suggest that there is only one interpretation and according to Bausch “you can always watch the other way” (Hoghe 1980, 74). Each member of the audience brings with them their own subjective realities and will see, feel, and interpret the piece in their own way.

Pina also understands that in order for her to explore with her dancers, for them to feel safe to be vulnerable and take risks, she has to create and maintain a safe working environment. Because of this, during the development process of a new work, rehearsals were primarily closed from outsiders. In Anne Linsel’s film *Pina Bausch* she expresses that “of course, you test yourself with things that are strange and embarrassing. But all of these things have to be rooted in a great trust” (2006). It is from this trust and security that she and the dancers are able to delve deeply into their histories, memories, and associations without excess fear and self-consciousness.

Although Pina did not write about or codify her processes, she did contribute many interviews in which she discussed aspects of her process and philosophy. By mining key interviews, articles, and books written about Pina Bausch and the Tanztheater

Wuppertal, I will distill a broad interpretation of her creative process that was referenced and utilized in this research project.

Starting From Nothing

Pina Bausch starts her process from nothing except what she feels in the moment. In the beginning of the creative process the experiential state of Bausch and her company is that of openness and possibilities. By starting from the present, without any pre-conceived notions or intentions, the piece is allowed to emerge from and in relation to the process. In an interview with Norbert Servos Bausch explains, “that’s the wonderful part of it, that you’re always setting off on a journey again, always opening new doors, doors you must open” (Bausch 1998, 241). She continues and declares that:

nothing is certain. I start something and I have no idea where it will take us. The only thing that exists is my dancers. That trust which you simply have to have in the moment, that’s not easy. That’s not just fear, it’s also a great hope that you will find something beautiful. You’re feeling so many emotions together at that point.” (Bausch 1998, 242)

With no clear map or direction of process, Bausch and her dancers set off on a journey of discovery. The piece would become a manifestation and reflection of the process itself and of the history as lived and felt by Pina and the dancers. In the beginning “there’s nothing you can hold onto. You always start off again with nothing. That’s hard. In this respect, one never learns anything” (Bausch 1983, 238).

Asking Questions/Giving Prompts

“How did Pina Bausch make her dances?” “What was her method or mode of making?” In many interviews Bausch declares that “all she does is ask questions, and watch” (Climenhaga 2009, 44). But what kind of questions does she ask and what does she do with the responses, with the material that emerges from her inquiry? What is the pathway from question to dance?”

The reticence that Bausch exudes about her work is also extended to her dancers and within the process itself. In rehearsals for the making of *Kontakt* Bausch explains

to her dancers “I don’t want to take your thoughts away from you,’... ‘Just dare to think in all directions.’ ‘Do what you thought of doing.’ ‘Just try it out’” (Hoghe 1980, 63).

Raimond Hoghe describes her process. “The author/choreographer/director gives her 21 dancers/actors/authors time for the (self-) questioning initiated by her, time to search for possible answers... she follows the quest for the group, the associations, proposals, histories of the various individuals” (1980, 65).

Was there a theme surrounding her questions? How did the questions arise? Bausch explains to Hoghe that her productions are not conceived of theoretically. She states that in the previous dance before *Kontakt* they had a starting place “but where the whole thing is moving is developed in rehearsals. It isn’t planned--it just happens...the composition of the group is crucial to many things we’ve experienced” (1980, 66). The ensemble creates a collective palette of images, movements, experiences that are always shifting and changing according to new developments and inspirations.

Pina Bausch asks her dancers questions or gives them prompts to explore and answer in the form that they choose. She also brings in little movements or motifs that she teaches and works on with the dancers. For example, when making *Arien*, her dancers recalled that she had given them a few different movements to work on such as “a hand going up the body,” “dropping something,” and “feeling water” (Silver and Sullivan 2010).

The questions and prompts arise from inside Pina, from her feelings and reactions to what is present within her in connection with what surrounds her. But asking questions is not as simple as it seems. Bausch discusses that “part of the problem is that many of the questions don’t produce anything. They don’t get you anywhere” (Bausch 1982, 235). She allows each individual to answer and then she collects the answers, moments, experiences that for her have potential.

The process of asking questions is extremely time consuming. Bausch allows for this because “then we’ve looked at everything” (Bausch 1982, 235). Each dancer is asked hundreds of questions and responds, but only a fraction of these responses are kept to eventually become part of the final piece.

Bausch explains how she maintains her creativity within such openness and uncertainty.

I'm not quite sure about it myself but what I've always known is that discipline plays a big role. It's not so simple to transform a feeling, an idea, into dance. Sometimes a small event happens and makes me open my eyes. Suddenly I said I see a tiny key, but don't know what it is. It's as if a light has been turned on – suddenly there's something. Something that I know is present that I must respond to. Then I start asking myself questions. And suddenly it grows all by itself. It's like an adventure but with no map. I can't just say 'treat it like this or like that.' Sometimes I have an idea but when I try to develop it, it's gone. But somehow or other, it works. All I know is that I need lots of confidence. And I mustn't get impatient. That's just my gut feeling. At the beginning, I need to listen to my feelings. As I said, suddenly a small light is lit, the energy comes and one thing leads to another. And after that, I do it again and again to maintain this approach in my daily work. This is a difficult and sometimes terrifying process. (2007)

What is the benefit or purpose of using such a difficult and time consuming process? Bausch admits that the goal is “to try to get somewhere as a group.” I'd like the others in the group to feel that the things which occupy me are also of importance to them” (Bausch 1978, 230). By using the dancers to create the material, there is an opportunity to show the diversity and complexity of the world in which we live. Bausch is the leader, but the whole company contributes and is essential to the making of and realization of the piece.

Transforming Into Dance

Bausch asks questions and collects material. “But how does this material transform into dance?” Bausch explains that:

In the end it's composition. What you do with things. There's nothing there to start with. There are only answers: sentences, little scenes someone's shown you. It's all separate to start with. Then at a certain point I'll take something which I think is right and join it to something else. This with that, that with something else. One thing with various other things. And by the time I've found the next thing I think is right, then the little thing I had is already bigger. And then I go off in a completely different direction. It starts really small and gets gradually bigger. (Bausch 1982, 235-36)

How does Pina Bausch gauge what works, what she should keep or let go of? When talking about her construction plan one of her dancers explains that Bausch made her decisions from within. “If the emotion, if the starting point was correct, then the movement itself was correct. It’s not what you were seeing but how you felt from what you were seeing” (Silver and Sullivan 2010). She uses her emotional, intuitive response to create and structure her works.

Always Searching/The Premiere

The creative developmental process could continue forever. Having a scheduled date for the premiere is there to give an intention to the process, to give the making a purpose. When discussing the tension of process and product Bausch states that she couldn’t do this kind of work if the piece had to be completely finished for the premiere and expresses that “I will go on working to finish a piece even after the premiere” (Bausch 1982, 234). The organic process that she uses has no system. Anything is possible and it is this endless openness and process of searching that allows for the piece to unfold in its own time. It cannot be rushed or forced. According to Bausch “these are things which have to be worked at, things one is always having to rediscover, step by step” (Bausch 1982, 237).

Pina collaborated with her dancers, the set designer, costumer, and many others. How did they feel about the process and about working with Pina? From various interviews and resources, I have weaved together some of the more revealing testimonies from her collaborators.

Collaborating with Pina

Peter Pabst, set designer, has been collaborating with Bausch since *1980-A piece by Pina Bausch*. Pabst has an especially difficult task of creating an open set design that will support and enhance the dance being created. In the film *Pina Bausch* by Anne Linsel, Pabst states that working with Pina “basically means that we try to delay decisions for as long as possible. Because everyday we don’t make a decision, we might

learn a little bit more about the piece and the possible impact the design might have.” (2006).

Because each project starts with nothing, he admits that the process is torturous and full of fear, but also full of trust. “It’s wonderful in its freedom to find solutions...in its flexibility, in the way things come together. Eventually a result is achieved that is put onstage and is, initially, lifeless” (Linsel 2006).

“So how does Pabst and his design team come to terms with this open method?” Peter Pabst reveals that:

Patience and art go hand in hand... There is no other way of coping with processes that are so open-ended. You are very vulnerable – as if someone had taken your skin off. You try to bring that situation to an end as soon as possible by coming up with an idea. But you have to endure the rawness and question your ideas again and again. You can’t ever stop searching.” (Pabst 2007, 261)

Marion Cito, former company member and assistant, has also been assisting Bausch as costume designer since 1980. Cito’s process is dependent upon the dance and, like Pina’s creative process, starts with nothing in the beginning. “All we have is the cast. So I focus my work on the individual” (Cito 2007, 250). She finds fabrics, then forms, and once she has something to work from, she shows her ideas to Pina for her to become familiar with them. As the piece develops, “I can see which individuals need something more special. The scenes that are only created at the last minute are more difficult...you have to start working miracles!” (Cito 2007, 250).

To prepare for Bausch’s method, Cito creates a collection of costumes for rehearsals that the dancers can use for impetus and practice. She also has her “treasure chests” with specialty items that the dancers can source from but cannot be worn too frequently. She manages the uncertainty of Pina Bausch’s process by being prepared for anything and extremely adaptable.

Beautifully Used

“Pina’s eyes turn everything we do into something even more beautiful.”

-Nazareth Pandero

A question that came to my mind before this research was, “How do the dancers feel about being the source inspiration and material for the piece?” In the film *Pina Bausch* by Anne Linsel this exact question was asked of some of the company dancers. Nazareth Pandero, one of the original company members, states: “I don’t feel used. I mean I don’t feel abused. I feel...I know that I’m part of something greater, but I’m delighted to be a part of it.” Echoing this statement, Lutz Forster declares, “I have also used the work for my own purposes. So, if you want to call that using, then I felt rather beautifully used” (2006).

I also wondered how much involvement does Pina have in their contributions? Is she merely a catalyst for their studies or does she have as much stake in the evolution of the individual pieces as the dancers do? Pandero expresses that:

without Pina’s eye and guidance, the material wouldn’t turn out as it does, because when we’re working on a new piece and have all the material I can never envisage the end result...when I see what my role has developed into I believe it’s all down to Pina’s guiding hand...I’m often so surprised at the result and think ‘my god, how does she do it?’ Using the same material could result in many different things. (Linsel 2006)

This expression is validated in the film *Understanding Pina* when one of her dancers recalls, “Pina was able to pull all of these things together and then edit, choose what works, choose what makes a relationship to something else that a lot of times we didn’t even see” (Silver and Sullivan 2010). So, how does Pina ask questions and give prompts to the dancers? How does this become dance?

One of Bausch’s dancers fondly remembers how “Pina always had a collection of books, pieces of paper, figurines...she would have any number of strange objects on this big table” (Silver and Sullivan 2010). The dancer describes being given an old photograph and told by Pina to “do something with this.” She went on to say that Pina was very observant and aware of the qualities and capabilities of each individual and knew how to use them well.

In the book *Pina Bausch and the Wuppertal Dance Theater: The Aesthetics of Repetition and Transformation*, Ciane Fernandes interviews two of Bausch's dancers Ruth Amarante and Julie Shanahan about their experiences with Pina and the company.

In the first interview, Fernandes asks Amarante about her response to Bausch's questions. She asks "What comes first in response to the question – the emotion, the movement, or both simultaneously?" Amarante replies:

It depends a lot on the question. It depends on what the question does to you. Sometimes, you have a total blank, you don't feel anything, you can't think of anything. In other times, you feel it right away. Suddenly, you find yourself going up front and saying something. Or it is a question for which you have to do a movement. It depends a lot on what is asked." (1994, 112)

Amarante describes some examples of questions or themes that Bausch asks like "talking to a flower," or "mourning," and in general questions concerning remembrance and personal history. Following this she describes what Bausch does with the material collected. "It is very hard because from all the improvisations – hundreds of them - she chooses one person's improvisation and asks this person to perform it in different ways. Sometimes she chooses specific improvisations from one person, but only fragments of them. She changes things a little, it is hard" (1994, 113).

In the second interview, Fernandes speaks with dancer Julie Shanahan about the creation of a scene in *Tanzabend II*. Shanahan discusses how Bausch asked her to take separate improvisations that she had developed in rehearsal and layer them together for this scene. The context in which the scene plays out in performance as well as the juxtaposition of separate experiences changed or altered the personal memory for Shanahan. "Originally, it is a happy memory, but in performance it becomes melancholic" (1994, 119). She then describes her view of the group's creative process.

Even though you are talking about memories, you are still an actress and it is in this piece. Other scenes may happen at the same time as my personal story, without having anything to do with my life; also other dancers can eventually do this scene about my father's kiss. (1994, 120)

The dancers understand that they are mining their personal lives and experiences for material but that what they were creating is abstract, a performance. Pina allows them

the freedom to choose what and how they respond to her questions and prompts, but in the end, the material chosen by Bausch evolves and develops to become a part of the greater whole, often taking on new meanings far from its original inception. In the film *Pina* by Wim Wenders dancer Andrey Berezin states that “Pina was a painter. She consistently questioned us, that’s how we became the paint to color her images” (2011).

CHAPTER III

METHODS

“First you jump off the cliff and build your wings on the way down.”
-Ray Bradbury

“Go ahead, make a mess. You might find yourself by destroying yourself and by working your way out of it.” -Jackson Pollock

Introduction to Methods

Inspired by her philosophy and working process, I modeled my approach to choreography after the dance artist Pina Bausch. I spent eight months rehearsing with a group of seven dancers in order to allow enough time for emergent themes to surface and be developed into a fully produced choreographic work. I asked the dancers questions about their personal lives and experiences and through improvisation and exploration themes emerged that were then constructed into a non-linear performance collage.

This study used a *post-positivist interpretive qualitative research* methodology. Post-positivists approach research with the idea that reality is socially constructed and subjectivity is unavoidable. For conducting research and gathering data, post-positivists use methods that include but are not limited to observation, participation, interviews, and document analysis. The research design is often emergent, constructed and reconstructed in process to allow new ideas and patterns to be included much like that of the choreographic process in making dances (Green and Stinson).

This form of qualitative research guided and assisted my process in terms of exposing and challenging my own preconceptions of art as well as collecting information that expressed meaning and values on the process of choreographing dance. I am informed by everything around me but I always come back to my self. What do I think and feel? What are my biases? What kind of dance am I making in response to this information or experience?

Research was documented in written and visual form through detailed journal entries, creative drawings, sketches, poems, emails, photographs and videotape. Throughout the rehearsal process I facilitated three committee showings at various stages in the process in order to receive guided and critical feedback concerning the developing work.

General Project Timeline and Overview

My invitation for dancers to join this choreographic process was sent out in May 2011, followed by an informational meeting on June 4, 2011 to discuss the project and the proposed rehearsal and performance schedule with the prospective cast. From this initial meeting, I recruited seven dancers to join the research project.

I worked collaboratively for eight months with a cast of seven female dancers from the University of Oregon Dance Department. The rehearsal project began in the summer on July 18, 2011 and continued up until the performance on March 3, 2012. We rehearsed for eight weeks in the summer meeting for three hours on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6-9pm in studio 353 Gerlinger Annex. The first hour focused on a warm-up/technique class to prepare our bodies for the two-hour long rehearsals. Due to the dancers' busy summer schedules, two dancers were not available to begin rehearsing until the second half of the summer, and frequently, at least one of the remaining dancers was absent at every rehearsal. The entire cast was present for the first time at the very end of the summer. During the fall and winter terms, excluding a four-week winter break, the group rehearsed for four hours a week up until the performance at 8pm on March 3, 2012 in the Dougherty Dance Theatre.

I arranged three committee showings throughout the research process to receive feedback and to discuss the development and progress of the work. The committee chair Brad Garner and I discussed in general when and what the focus for each showing would be and how I would facilitate this. The purpose of the first showing was to establish initial contact with the work in terms of overall impressions, material and movement phrases. In the second showing, the purpose was to view a structure that flows in time with an approximate length, music and costumes. The final showing, just prior to the

performance was focused on revealing a fully formed work offering feedback on production and performance details. An additional showing with committee chair Brad Garner along with fellow graduate peers Liana Conyers and Devon Polynone was added a week prior to the final showing due to scheduling conflicts.

Alongside the choreographic process, I was responsible for producing a joint-concert along with fellow graduate peer, Liana Conyers. We met at various times to propose and finalize the date for the concert, set a budget, schedule tech week, arrange the crew, write and produce publicity information such as, press release, poster and program design. Both of us produced and were also responsible for finding and/or creating our own music, costume and stage design.

Process Description and Evaluation

In the research proposal I outlined four phases to the research project: preparation, collaborative process, performance, and reflective analysis with evaluation. In this chapter, I will discuss the first three phases of this research project in detail describing and explaining my journey through this process including my initial intentions and/or strategies and what actually happened as the process evolved and new approaches and themes emerged. A final analysis and evaluation of the entire process will follow in the next chapter.

Phase I: Preparation

In preparation for this research project, my first step was to establish a group of dancers. Once I had a committed group, I spent about six weeks continuing to research Pina Bausch's aesthetic, philosophy and working process to uncover more concrete strategies and methods to employ with my dancers. I also examined relevant materials concerning the collaborative process and leadership, autobiographical art, and women in surrealism to inspire possible avenues for exploration.

Finding and Choosing Dancers

“I pick my dancers as people. I don’t pick them for nice bodies, for having the same height, or things like that. I look for the person, the personality.” -Pina Bausch

I met with a group of dancers on June 4th, 2011 to discuss the project, check their availability and receive their contact information. Of these eleven dancers I recruited seven dancers who were current or former students at the University of Oregon in Eugene and who were willing and able to commit to the lengthy research and rehearsal process. I solicited dancers who were proficient technically, improvisationally, and well versed in constructing dance phrases. I was most importantly looking for dancers who I thought would work well with each other and with me, and who had driven and genuine interest in creating dance collaboratively.

My choice was also informed by an experiential history in which I had previously worked with each dancer either in rehearsal or dance class. The cast I chose had all worked collaboratively on at least one project and had impressed me in some way professionally and personally. I did not set out to create a cast with all female dancers but there were not enough male dancers in our department that I found could commit to this process.

Saturation

“ I can feel what I am looking for but often I’m unable to say rationally just what it is, perhaps I don’t even want to put it into words sometimes. Sometimes you just come across things quite by accident, something you read. But basically I do look for them.”
-Pina Bausch

For about six weeks prior to the first rehearsal, I saturated myself with books, films, and articles about Pina Bausch, collaboration, and women and surrealism. I was specifically interested in female autobiographical art, self-portraiture and representation.

It was difficult not to fall into my previous inclination to decide upon an intention or theme and begin creating movement. In the past, the way I approached choreography was to do some initial research, go into the studio and create dance phrases on my own body to then bring to rehearsal to work on with the group. With this project, my main goal was to allow my process to be informed by my interpretation of Pina Bausch’s

approach. I wanted, to the best of my ability, to be as open and honest with myself concerning my adherence to this interpretation.

Prior to rehearsals I was considering questions surrounding the self such as, “Who are you,” and “What experiences and relationships have created your ‘self?’” I am very influenced by fine art and identify myself as a visual as well as performing artist. I found that I was particularly drawn to women surrealist artists who explored self-portraiture. I found a book called *Mirror Images: Women, Surrealism, and Self-Representation*, edited by Whitney Chadwick, that introduced me to artists Francesca Woodman, Frida Kahlo, and Dorothea Tanning. Their art and processes would become impetus for a few key developments in the final work.

I had some initial places and ideas to start with, but in retrospect, I was pretty unsure of what the project would be like and how the process and the work would evolve. This was terrifying and at the same time exhilarating. Moving between theory and practice, asking questions, trying things out, not knowing but following anyway became the heart of this process, as you will see.

Phase II: Collaborative Choreography

“Every act of creation is first an act of destruction.” -Pablo Picasso

I began the research exploration by using and referencing the practical exercises described at the end of the book *Pina Bausch* by Royd Climenhaga as a point of inception for addressing subjectivity and Pina Bausch’s process. This section of the book can be used in rehearsals to develop material and uncover themes. The chapter is broken down into five sections: setting the stage, reconfiguring presence, essential elements, looking for action, and structuring. The practical exercises in the book “are all geared toward uncovering the process of engagement and bringing out the essential elements that cohere in Bausch’s individual pieces and in the breadth of her work ” (2009, 100).

Throughout the process we explored four main areas: reconfiguring presence and relationship, essential elements and asking questions, developing images, movement, and gestures, and finally manipulating form and structuring. The practical exercises were used as guidelines for the dancers and I to explore our personal identities. Dancers were

given the freedom to respond to questions and tasks through language, an image, or a movement motif or phrase. They were also reminded to be present in their awareness of themselves and to the work in progress.

I separated the collaborative process into three distinct sections correlated to our academic terms: Summer, Fall, and Winter. I adopted Rosemary Lee's (Associate Artist at ResCen, Middlesex University) reflective description of her process in the making and writing of *Beached: A Commonplace Book* as a way to encapsulate the main areas of focus within each term. The actions of collecting, hoarding, and loss describe qualities that occurred at every stage of the process as it was always changing and evolving.

Summer: Collecting

Beginnings

“I find it incredibly difficult to take the first step because...because I know they, the dancers, are then going to expect me to tell them what I want. And then I panic. I'm scared to tell them because what I have is often so vague. It's true, I know I can always say 'Here I am – there are one or two particular things in my head at the moment,' and I might even find some kind of word to describe it and then I'll say, 'Right. Well, here's where we start from. Let's see where it takes us.'” -Pina Bausch

I was incredibly anxious leading up to the first rehearsal. Unsure of what I was thinking about, I was thinking of many things, I decided to approach the first rehearsal with establishing feelings and thoughts about collaboration followed by the first exercises from the book which focus primarily on sensing movement in space and time. I wanted to begin to establish trust, to get acquainted personally and see how each dancer moved and improvised, how they related. I also gave a blank journal to each dancer for reflection and to track their process.

At the beginning of rehearsal I asked the dancers three questions concerning collaboration. I asked them:

1. What do you think and feel about collaborating as dancers?
2. What are your expectations?
3. Can you describe some successes and failures in the past?

We discussed the topic of collaboration and here was a summary of what was said. The group agreed that as a dancer, working collaboratively allows for a richer experience, there is more connection and engagement to the work as a co-creator and it is fulfilling to understand the thinking behind how you get there. They all felt that collaboration does not work as well without a director to lead and guide the project.

Following this discussion we spent the rest of rehearsal exploring the reconfiguring presence exercises in *Pina Bausch*. They included grid work, felt response, relationship in time and space, presence and interaction. The exercises in this section were used to connect the dancers to the each other and to the space. It had been six weeks since the dancers had danced, so I felt it important to begin with some more familiar improvisational and movement prompts. The interaction prompt that dealt with revealing and expressing emotions was quite difficult and unfamiliar for the dancers who were more used to expressing themselves solely with pure movement.

We ended rehearsal by talking about women in society. I had been thinking about female archetypes and asked them, “Who or what is a modern woman?” Some things that surfaced concerned finding a balance of expectations with desires. A modern woman may have more power and freedom but how does she harness it? We all had different ideas and viewpoints that were expressed and validated. This open dialogue was important to begin right away because I wanted everyone to feel safe to be autonomous and heard.

The first four weeks of rehearsals continued mostly in the same manner. We warmed up for about one hour, explored exercises from the book as well as other images and ideas that surfaced from the process, and ended with a dialogue or sharing session. By the third week I had five out of the seven dancers present.

We Start By Collecting

“Often I’ve just been lucky in finding things.” -Pina Bausch

One example of an image that inspired a section we named “Wallpaper” was a painting by Dorothea Tanning titled *Jeux d’enfants (Children’s Games)*. The image portrays two longhaired girls ripping and tearing wallpaper off the walls while another child lies still on the floor.

From this image, I created two short movement phrases. In my notes I wrote:

1. Pull run back spin – fall to ground
2. Rip, rip, pull back, side rip spin arch fall back, bend forward rip center open, run back

I taught the phrases to the dancers and then, had them line up stage left and do them in alternation, every other dancer doing phrase one while the others did phrase two. All of us liked it right away aesthetically and energetically. This was the first piece of the collage that we collected.

Another motif that we collected came from a quote from Wallace Stevens' *Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction*: "There was a muddy center before we breathed, there was a myth before the myth began, venerable and articulate and complete." I imagined this image of a first breath, and asked "what if you died and awoke in another world?" I asked the dancers to lie on the ground, push all of the air out of their lungs, and hold their breath for as long as they could. I wanted them to experience fully, this essential first moment of breath. "First Breath" and breath in general became major motifs in our world.

Show and Tell

In the section of the book on developing images, Climenhaga talks of possibly reserving the last half an hour of rehearsal for "show and tell," an open forum for collaborators to bring in items or ideas expressing or reflecting the collective palette. At the end of the third week, I asked the dancers to do just this.

Rachell brought in a painting and mixed media self-portrait she had been working on. It showed two women facing one another in front of a colorful swirling background. It had many patterns, materials, textures, an eclectic collage of ideas and objects reflecting aspects of Rachell's history and preferences.

I brought in a book by Chris Townsend of Francesca Woodman's photography and we looked through many of her self-portraits together. We all appreciated the vulnerability and beauty found within her images.

After sharing some visual items, we had a brief discussion about the self, no self, and self-portraiture. Some words that surfaced were: “ocean, consciousness, transformation, listening, being, stillness, and too much mind.”

After this first show and tell, I began doing regular check-ins and check-outs at the open and close of rehearsal to gage the energy in the room and to foster relationships. I also encouraged the dancers to bring in or email things to the group to continue building our collective palette.

Drifting

About half way through the summer, the remaining dancers joined the process. We spent their first week mostly improvising around the theme of drift. I wanted everyone to build trust as a group and had been thinking about cycles. I wrote in my journal: “drift, collect/hold, shed/let go, open/expand, dissolve.” I set up a series of improvisations where the dancers explored these concepts in movement first as an ensemble and then in duets and trios.

In hindsight, I think I was expressing my own feelings of drifting in the process. I was starting to trust in the process but was still very uncertain of what I was doing and where we were going. Although this did not end up in the final work, we came back to this improvisation at the end of fall term as a way to connect and move as an ensemble.

Asking Questions

“The steps have always come from somewhere else – never from the legs. The movements are always worked out in between times. And gradually we build up short dance sequences which we memorize. I used to get scared and panic and so I would start off with a movement and avoid the questions. Nowadays I start off with the questions.”

-Pina Bausch

After 4 weeks of rehearsal I wrote in my journal: “I was thinking that we are doing all of these tasks, but are they taking us away from ourselves? From a more organic process?” I had worked a lot in movement, but I questioned whether I was truly embodying Pina Bausch’s process in collaboration with the dancers. I had been involved in researching along with the dancers, working in my comfort zone of movement but felt

I was falling into old familiar habits and not allowing space for me and for the dancers to create and reflect. I found an interview with Ruth Amarante, one of Bausch's dancers, about working with Pina from the book *Pina Bausch and the Wuppertal Dance Theater: The Aesthetics of Repetition and Transformation* by Ciane Fernandes. It was not new information, but it did make me reconsider and/or reflect on my approach. What I interpreted from this interview I wrote down as a series of steps or directions for myself to try. See Appendix C for process notes.

1. Ask questions related to a theme/themes.
2. Observe, take notes.
3. List of improvisations to repeat/develop, bring in 3-4 movements or motifs.
4. Put things together.
5. Scenes and improvisations, what could come next, scraps of paper.

I went to rehearsal and told the dancers about my reconsideration/change in approach. I felt that we needed to establish a main theme to center questions and associations. I asked the dancers to consider: "What experiences/events have shaped who you are," and "What are you struggling with in your personal evolution?"

I observed the group working, writing, and thinking. I approached each one individually to discuss how things were going. In my notes I wrote observations of their movements and our conversations then wrote to myself "me- letting go of control- interference/trust." This was the beginning of me working with each dancer individually, building their solos/self-portraits as a main foundation and focus for the piece.

After working alone, I felt we needed to work as a group again. I lined them up and we went down the line answering/sharing with the group these four questions: What do you like about your body? What don't you like about your body? What do you like about your dancing? What don't you like about your dancing? I asked them to tell as well as show their responses in movement. One of the dancers stated that she felt an increased connection toward the group from people's expressed vulnerability. It also gave me insight into each dancer, into another facet of their identity.

Solos – Myth, Struggle, Island, History

“And your very flesh shall be a great poem.” –Walt Whitman

I read a poem by Dorothea Tanning called *Waverly and a Place* that had a passage that resonated with me. “...islands, all islands, separate as we who, shifting with tectonic tides, merge...” I prompted the dancers to explore their associations with the word “island” and the actions “to build and destroy.” A while later I asked them to “show me the history in their body,” a specific prompt from the book. The complete prompt was “How do you carry your history in your body? Show the group. You can begin by describing how something is contained in your body, but let the story affect your body so that your physical presence is implicated in the telling” (Climenhaga 2009, 110). As we continued to work on the solos in the next few rehearsals, I asked each one to think of combining and layering, at their discretion, pieces from all of their solo explorations into one dance.

Gestures

Something that attracted me to Pina Bausch’s aesthetic was her use of gesture and pedestrian movement. We began two phrases during the summer that we developed and performed in the final piece. They were the “Sitting Portrait” and the “Walking Portrait,” later renamed “Foxtrot.”

The “Sitting Portrait” began with us sitting in a circle and one at a time creating a gesture for our interpretation of “self-portrait.” We made these up individually and collaboratively by learning each person’s gesture around the circle and then deciding on an order. The next time we worked on this section we added gestures interpreting female archetypes. The “Sitting Portrait” became the final section, the epilogue of the piece.

The other group gesture sequence came out of exercise called “essential states.” I made a list of words that summarized some of the themes that surfaced thus far. From the long list, I chose two words for each dancer to use to create a gesture. The words I assigned were “build, arrival, interrupt, collage, exposure, collect, surrealism, shed, transparent, imprint, crumble, process, reveal, and shift.” Each dancer showed, and then

taught their gesture to the group and we put them into a sequence. After the dancers were comfortable with the phrase I asked them to perform the sequence while walking. This section became my one deliberate homage to Pina as she used this walking gestural “daisy chain” in many of her pieces. My use of the term “daisy chain” referred to Bausch’s dancers repeated performance of subtle gestures while walking behind one another in a line that moves throughout the space oftentimes in a circular or serpentine pathway.

“*Summery*”

“I never create works for leotards.” -Pina Bausch

By the end of summer, we had explored all of the exercises in the sections reconfiguring presence, essential elements, and looking for action. Manipulating formal constraints and structuring were used mostly in the fall and winter terms as the piece was nearing performance. In general, I found that the prompts that were more closely related to our themes such as the “history in your body” and “essential states” were most useful.

I felt early on that the group and I had to take ownership of this process and let it unfold organically. I used the summer to establish trust within the group by creating an open and safe space to explore and take risks. I left a great amount of time for sharing and discussion to allow everyone to contribute and/or express ideas and feelings about their experience and the process. This time was luxurious and exploratory, a gift that created the essence of a world we were building together from our collective imaginations and experiences.

In our last discussion before fall term I asked the group to offer ideas about setting, costumes, characters, etc. “What kind of world are we making?” They all agreed it was surreal, like *Alice in Wonderland*. Some images and objects that surfaced were: “doors, hallways, walls, water, clothes, clotheslines, dresses, girls and women.”

Fall: Hoarding

“I hoard everything for which I search. As the search gathers pace, I am preoccupied more and more in keeping track of all that is sought and found.” -Rosemary Lee

Going into fall term I felt we were in a good place. We had established a group dynamic and had found a theme/themes to continue exploring. The emergence of solos was a strong thread that I wanted to develop right from the start. I was also really interested in continuing to build upon the “Wallpaper” and other group sections we had established.

The first two weeks of fall term we had three rehearsals two hours each time. By the third week we had to move to rehearsing only once a week on Sundays in four-hour blocks. The advantage to this was having a longer period to work and be in the space together, especially when we started accumulating objects and clothing to try out. The disadvantage was that it was difficult to pick up where we had left off with so much time and space in between rehearsals. I also noted that the dancers and I were much busier, overwhelmed with work and school, so that it was often difficult to get into the right frame of mind and energy level that this process required.

The two main events this term outside of rehearsals were the first Committee showing scheduled after mid-terms on November 2, 2011 and my trip to UC Berkeley on December 3, 2011 to see the Tanztheater Wuppertal in *Danzón*, a piece by Pina Bausch. I had planned to see Bausch’s work live for the first time, not as part of the research, but because I felt it important to experience her work firsthand. I was not aware at the time that going to see this work would prove essential in the evolution of my process and this research.

Solos

“Bees do have a smell, you know, and if they don't they should, for their feet are dusted with spices from a million flowers.” -Ray Bradbury, *Dandelion Wine*

I made a grid in my notes with each dancer with some descriptions of their movements thus far as well as some ideas, objects, prompts that I wanted them to explore. See Appendix C for process notes. For the first few rehearsals of the term I met

with each one and discussed some points of entry that they could pursue. I asked them to develop from these and then show me at the next rehearsal where I would film them one at a time.

Jenell and Julia's solos were the farthest along at this point so we were ready to just continue building them. I observed Julia's mannerisms and noticed that she was fidgety and curiously shy. She also had these wonderfully curvy and flexible hip joints that she was always popping. I asked Julia to create a "small private hip dance" and connect it to the other material she had. Then I asked her to perform her solo facing upstage with a mirror in front of her so I could watch her watching herself. At the first showing we also layered spoken text of a story written by her about a person she had "unfinished business with" while she danced.

For Jenell, I noticed her phrase was stationary, so we structured pathways for her to move forward and back upstage to downstage and worked on repetition and performance qualities. Together, we composed her solo, choosing the strongest motifs and stripping down to the bare essentials. We used repetition for emotional and energetic impact.

Haley had been working on various prompts, literally running and falling combined with "first breath" as well as her "island solo." The "history in your body" solo was very strong and personal. It dealt with a personal trauma she had experienced that she had wanted to source from. I wasn't sure at this point if it belonged in the piece so we put it aside for the moment. My first impulse was that this was one of the strongest, most honest responses I had witnessed during this process and I felt uneasy about using it, about co-authoring it. I felt that perhaps Haley should keep this study for her to continue building as a solo.

For Rachell, Rachel, and Nadya, I selected some self-portrait photographs by Francesca Woodman that I thought might inspire their solo studies. Rachell I knew was a photographer and I brought up the idea of showing me not just a self-portrait, but how do you set one up. I asked her, "Show me how you photograph yourself," and "Make the process the product." Rachel's movement quality was very dis-jointed and awkward. Images of hanging and floating kept surfacing in my mind. Nadya had told me over the summer that what she was struggling with in her dancing was being too safe and not

taking risks. I showed her a photograph of Woodman jumping wildly through the air from her *Angel series* and suggested trying to let go of being so clear and concise in her movement. I gave her the prompt of becoming a “messy angel.”

At this point in the process I was accumulating quite a bit of paper, trying to keep track of the process and all of the items of impetus. While observing Hanna in her explorations I noticed that she often would be indicating a relationship to objects. I asked Hanna to try to merge her solo with a pile of paper that I had brought in, again showing the process as product.

I did not know for sure at the time why I was so interested in these solos. I think I felt that I needed to get to know each one of the dancers individually, that it was important to really dig deeply into their self-portraits as a way to consider and investigate my own. After I filmed them on October 23, 2011 I sent them this email:

For next time please work on solos this week when you can. My overarching questions are...Who are you? What do you want to say? What has made you who you are now? Where are you on your personal evolution? What emotion drives your study? I feel like we could take some more chances and maybe go a little deeper/more intimate/more honest. I am not interested solely in movement. Tell me, show me, make me feel something. What are you hiding, if anything? What are you afraid of?

The Importance of Play

“I’m interested in having fun with ideas, throwing them up in the air like confetti and then running under them.” -Ray Bradbury

At our first four-hour long rehearsal I was feeling that we needed to bring in something new. Yes, we were looking for and developing material but we also existed in this space together. I had to listen and pay attention to the energy and dynamics in the room and to the process. I found a bag of balloons in my desk that I had used for teaching ballroom dance and thought maybe we could explore the motif of “first breath” with these.

We explored blowing up the balloons and holding our breath until the last minute and also created a little breathing contest/game where they had to walk forward blowing up the balloon, hold their breath, and run back to start over when they needed to breath again. After this, I split them up into two groups, a trio and quartet. The trip developed a

competition score, measuring who was best at blowing and stretching the balloons. The quartet developed a conversation score where the four dancers created their own balloon language. We all really enjoyed the balloons. They brought the elements of play, color, and breath into our world.

Getting and Being Lost

“Always in the big woods when you leave familiar ground and step off alone into a new place there will be, along with feelings of curiosity and excitement, a little nagging of dread. It is the ancient fear of the Unknown, and it is your first bond with the wilderness you are going into.” -Wendell Barry, naturalist

On October 28, 2011, a few days prior to the first committee showing, I met with Brad Garner, the Committee Chair, to discuss the upcoming showing and to check in overall. We discussed planning and asking in advance what kind of feedback I wanted or needed and whether or not the dancers should be present during the feedback session. We decided that the dancers would not be present at the first or second showing but that if the committee agreed and the dancers wished to be, they could be present at the final showing.

Following this, Brad and I discussed how the process was going. I declared and wrote in my notes “I’m lost.” I felt that I was in a liminal place that felt extremely overwhelming and uncertain. I told him of some themes and images that were surfacing such as barriers, walls, clothes, shedding, and uncertainty. Brad offered that perhaps my experience was reflected within the emerging themes and suggested I take inventory, then step away to consider possible connections and integrations, how things could fit together. I was having difficulty dealing with such a saturation of material and really had no clue as to how to start to structure or how to decide what was important to keep or let go of. Brad suggested that perhaps I create an arbitrary structure of how things could piece together for the showing.

After our process discussion, we had a brief conversation concerning production progress for the upcoming joint concert with fellow graduate peer Liana Conyers. We discussed the budget, crew, publicity, and the overall timeline. I declared the title of the concert that Liana and I had decided on: *Alleged*.

In the rehearsal prior to the showing, I followed Brad's advice and began to put some material together, overlapping pieces in time and space. There was no overall structure or sequence but instead a list of named sections.

The three sections that overlapped were Rachel's solo with a duet by Julia and Jenell titled "Sisters," the "Foxtrot:" with Haley's running and falling, and Hanna's paper solo with Rachel's portrait solo. There was something really right about these relationships and although they would develop and evolve, these pieces remained linked for the rest of this process.

Showing #1: Juxtaposition

We scheduled the first Committee Showing for November 2, 2011 at 8:30pm in room 353 Gerlinger Annex. While the dancers were preparing, I handed out a copy of the list I had made with the showing order. See Appendix B for the first Committee Showing handout. I proceeded to introduce the committee to the material and list questions I had concerning feedback. The questions were:

1. What themes or motifs are you seeing?
2. What feedback or suggestions do you have for setting, costumes, music, etc.?
3. What specifically would you like to see developed more?
4. What did you see and feel while watching this material?

Here is a list of themes and motifs I recorded from the committee's feedback: Juxtaposition, order and chaos, angst and anxiety, form/lines, breath, woman/girls, self-portrait, process, humor and color.

I asked for feedback and suggestions for setting, costumes, music, etc. because I wanted to create a space, a world for these dancers to inhabit. Due to the nature of this collage process, at this point the main objects/props we were using were clothing, a mirror, paper, a blue plastic baby pool, and colored balloons. The committee liked all of these textual elements and thought they brought about the themes of juxtaposition and could perhaps be used as transitional elements. Margo suggested excitedly "Do you need a mountain of clothing?" Brad suggested using lighting to split the stage and create

effect, a sense of mood and place. For costumes Brad offered a suggestion of formal wear or bras and underwear.

Christian Cherry, Music Director in Dance, discussed the difference between continuity and accompaniment, how I could use music to create an atmosphere. He advised to not use more than 3 or 4 tracks of music and to source from the types of music I was already using. The three types were big band swing music, classical, and abstract dissonant music. They all also remarked on the use of ambient sound from breath, balloons, and spoken text.

The committee wanted to see development in how movements were felt by the performers, to make them fully realized. Haley's portrayal of a child was not believable and felt more like an imitation rather than an embodiment of this character. They suggested closing the gap between pedestrian movement and dancing, and in general wanted to see more pure movement. For the ensemble sections they craved clarity and quality in unison. Margo asked, "Where is the joy?" She advised me to explore with the group other dynamic qualities other than struggle and angst such as expansion, sensuality, and release. Brad expressed that he had felt pulled around emotionally and pushed away when the dancers did not appear authentic and present.

Overall, the committee was really excited about what we were doing and they expressed that I had assembled a fabulous and cohesive cast. It is difficult to think back to how I interpreted everything. I do remember the committee saying not to add any more elements, to work with what we had and develop it fully. This is important because this was my instinct too. However, as I was learning to trust and understand this process, I couldn't be that safe and secure. I had to listen to what my intuition and to what the piece was telling me. I had to keep searching until things made sense to me or until I ran out of time.

Nesting

"I think one must do what one thinks is right." -Pina Bausch

After the showing, I remember sitting in my room and listening to various soundtracks, trying to find some possible music selections to bring to rehearsal. I found *Viens Mallika Sous Le Dome Edais* from Délibes' opera *Lakmé*. It sounds like a chorus

of women but it is in fact only a duet. I had this image of floating islands, of these women emerging from the earth, blossoming from their struggles, becoming. See Appendix C for process notes. The next day, I went digging in the dance department's costume shop and found some old cream billowy dresses to improvise with.

On November 6, 2011 the cast and I collaboratively built the base layer of the opening section later titled "Nesting" in this rehearsal. I asked each dancer to explore dancing in/with these old white dresses while sitting/kneeling/standing on top of piles of clothing. After improvising we discussed some images and qualities that were surfacing such as witnessing, protecting, revealing and from this, I asked them to create three or four motifs to show. I wrote down each dancer's motifs and created a loose structure/order from them that we performed with the music. See Appendix C for process notes.

The Committee had advised not to create any more new material but this section felt right and the dancers agreed. After we worked on this new section, I discussed the feedback from the showing with the group. We talked about the theme of Juxtaposition, the contrast of order and chaos. I asked them what they thought about Margo's question, "Where is the joy?" We all remembered all of the lighter memories and experiences we had explored early in the process and how we had shifted our focus to our current struggles. The questions surfaced: How can our struggles in life be an agent for change? How can we show the positive side to our difficulties as well as the sorrow and angst? We all liked the image of a mountain of clothing and how the clothing and objects could be used as transitional elements.

An Arbitrary Structure

"Emotion is always very important. It bores me if I can't feel anything." -Pina Bausch

I took an inventory of all of our most developed material and on November 20, 2011, I brought in a video camera to record our first attempt at a structure. We would not have rehearsal over thanksgiving break or during the final week of the term because I would be in California for *Danzón*. We ran through the arbitrary structure once and then after a few revisions we ran it again.

One juxtaposition that emerged on this day was pairing Julia's solo with the ensemble changing clothes around her. At first I asked everyone to tell about their likes and dislikes about their bodies and dancing while they changed. I also tried this scene with a big band swing song. Julia danced her solo in two different dresses, one short red formal gown and one cotton grey dress. I liked the look of a formal dress but the snug fit of the grey one that enhanced the look of Julia's hips and movement. The seeds had been planted for Julia's scene, but it would take awhile for it to ripen.

Over Winter Break I wanted to be able to study the footage more closely. I, however, did not even watch the footage. In my journal I discussed feeling completely dissatisfied with the structure. I had felt no emotion, and nothing was clear. I felt extremely unsure and lost. I picked up the book *Pina Bausch: Dance Theater* by Norbert Servos and re-read through some of her interviews. When asked if she was afraid that her creativity might run out she says:

Not really. It's no more difficult than before. It must come from somewhere, we have no idea where. And some part of it is infinite. The only way I can tell this is from my enthusiasm. If I am enthusiastic, everything goes all right. These processes, these low periods are part of every piece. That has always been the case. (Bausch 1990, 232)

Pina Bausch went on to discuss how her process had evolved and how, while making a piece, things fit together. She states, "initially, nothing fits together at all. It's an ongoing process of searching and collecting material. In the meantime of course I'm also working on other things" (Bausch 1995, 235). She continued talking about trying things out in every possible way and how there is no direct way to explain how the process works. She was then asked to describe how she knows when something is right.

You feel when it is right, and you feel when it is not right too. But how do you get to that point, that's a completely different question. I can't tell you. It suddenly clicks, there is no easy way of getting there, it's a series of jumps. Sometimes, logical thinking will get you there, and sometimes you make large steps towards it, and you don't even know how you could've thought that. They are huge steps; I can't explain how they come. And it can't be forced. All you can do is keep on working, patiently. (Bausch 1995, 236)

I felt supported and validated from Pina's words and experience. Now, more than ever, I realized that going to see Bausch's work in person could be an essential step in the development of this process. At the time, I questioned how I could emulate a structure that I had never seen or experienced before. Would seeing this piece help me to understand Pina and her process? Would witnessing *Danzón* assist me in knowing how to continue into the next phase of the work?

Danzón

“Life is a journey. Isn't it?” -Pina Bausch

I attended *Danzón*, a piece by Pina Bausch performed by the Tanztheater Wuppertal on Saturday December 3, 2011 at the University of California, Berkeley. The entire trip was surreal, the piece unforgettable. It was one surprise after another, and during the one hour and forty-five minute piece, time flew by. I could have continued watching for hours.

Before the show began, I noticed a strange elderly woman sitting quietly with her hands folded gently in her lap, head bowed forward. Upon closer inspection, I realized that this was not a woman; it was Dominique Mercy, the newly appointed artistic director and dancer of the Tanztheater Wuppertal - in drag. I knew something interesting was going to happen and it was going to happen less than ten feet away from me.

The dance began with two women laying on their backs, legs and arms floating above like helpless insects. A man dressed as a baby crawled on stage and placed two large rocks on top of these women's centers. A different woman entered wearing a long evening gown and with arms outstretched she addressed the audience “So...I am here, and you are there.” She noticed the elderly woman in the audience and began a conversation that resulted in Mercy being invited to come up on stage to dance.

What was going on? What did this mean? I felt myself trying to logically figure out and understand what was happening onstage. I paused, and told myself not to do this, thinking, “Just experience every moment and don't try to analyze it.” The piece drifted seamlessly from one thing to another like a dream. Dancers and objects appeared and disappeared without me knowing what would happen next. I felt completely taken on a

journey, engaged in every detail in a wave of emotions and images.

It's been over a year since I saw *Danzón* and yet images and scenes still appear in my conscious mind and in my dreams. "You feel when it is right," I remembered Pina saying. After the concert, I felt invigorated. I felt encouraged to continue, to trust myself to know if something was right and to follow my instincts.

End of Fall

"The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place: from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape, from a spider's web."
-Pablo Picasso

During finals week the dancers and I met for two rehearsals. I wanted to share with them my experience of the concert as well as discuss how everyone was feeling at this point in the process. I asked them one specific question "What in this process, in this piece, needs to happen for you to feel proud of this work?" I asked that they be completely honest without over thinking or censoring themselves.

We had a thorough discussion and I will summarize some main points the group shared. There was talk of clarity and intention. For us to be clear for ourselves what we were doing and why we were making certain choices. To trust when things felt right, even if it doesn't make sense. Many of them missed working together since we had spent a lot of time this term working on solos. Haley expressed that she thought I should take ownership of the work and make no apologies for my choices. Rachel added that the group was ready for me to take the lead and they were ready to run along side me.

Their comments affirmed how I was feeling and gave me the permission I needed to take the work into the final stage. I will admit to having a difficult time taking ownership of the piece since I had felt conflicted about depending on and using the dancers for so much of the process. Whose dance is it when you create it together? Does that even matter?

After our discussion, I asked each dancer to write a list of things to return to and/or develop. I asked them to write down movements, improvisations, other artists and objects, settings, music, etc. I wanted, over winter break to look through all of what we had done to see what things might have been forgotten or not fully developed.

Sensing that we were all tired at the end of the term, I decided to use this time to improvise as a group with more playful prompts. We ended up creating a family portrait, having a slumber party, and sharing our favorite dance move or experience. In the final rehearsal we improvised with balloons as well as practicing all of our ensemble movement sections for memory's sake.

There was one dancer, Nadya who didn't speak during our sharing session. I sent an email to her to reach out and find out if there was anything she wanted to share with me individually. This is what I sent:

I just wanted to check on you. You seemed a little upset yesterday and I want to make sure you are ok. At the time I thought maybe you were stressed about the exam you have today but my intuition told me it may be more than that. If you need anything let me know. I also wanted to let you know I feel that this process may have been a little frustrating for you. I have been pushing you a bit to work on not being safe but in doing that I realized that I wasn't capitalizing on your strengths as a dancer. You have this amazing flow and gentle grace that is mesmerizing to watch. Perhaps we need to focus on that to allow you to blossom in your way, not the way others, me included, are telling you to be.

This was Nadya's response:

Thank you for checking in. I was just feeling really overwhelmed this week with finals and then I couldn't think of anything to contribute to the discussion and I felt bad about that. It was an accumulation of feelings I think. You're totally right about my frustration. Nothing I have done movement wise in my solo bit has been satisfying or felt right, and when I get frustrated I tend to shut down and get overwhelmed. It's just so hard not to be safe, when that's all I've done or ever been, and I really don't know how to get there. I appreciate you noticing this. I have a hard time speaking up sometimes.

Nadya's struggle and solo would come to be a pivotal turning point in this process. My intuition was way ahead of me and the approach I described above would prove to be an excellent strategy in the end.

Winter: Loss

“You have to be extremely alert, extremely sensitive: there is no system. It’s a highly intensive period; it is a great skill, being able to abandon so many false turns in such a short period – because you have to.” -Pina Bausch

Over winter break I looked through the lists the dancers had given me as well as my own inventory. I listened to a lot of music and looked for costume ideas. I had met with a costumer, but since the piece was not finished yet and called for various costume changes I decided that it would be better if I just found clothing/costumes myself, along with the dancers. I had borrowed costumes from the Theater Department’s costume shop the previous year and was given permission to borrow items for this event.

The focus for the first three weeks was on expanding and developing what I felt were the most interesting pieces. I wasn’t ready to edit yet. The piece was coming, but it needed to expand, to reach its fullness before I could strip away what was unnecessary. I was trying to trust my feelings and follow my intuition. At this point I had made a decision to move toward building scenes in and around each dancer’s solo. I was still searching just as Pina always did. I had not found the piece yet, but I would know when I had.

Showing #2

“We are cups, constantly and quietly being filled. The trick is knowing how to tip ourselves over and let the beautiful stuff out.” -Ray Bradbury

We had our second committee showing on January 29, 2012 at 4pm in room 353 Gerlinger Annex. Two committee members, Christian Cherry and Margo Van Ummersen were present. The Committee Chair Brad Garner had a scheduling conflict and could not attend.

As before, I handed out a list with suggestions for feedback with the showing order. The working title I had chosen was *Wunderkammer*, the German word for wonder room. See Appendix B for the second Committee Showing handout. I asked for feedback on the order and structure specifically geared toward pacing, dynamics and transitions. I asked for responses to musical and costume selections and anything else constructive they could offer.

I sent an email the following day to the cast summarizing my interpretation of the feedback. I wrote:

They missed the angst from the first showing. They encouraged more juxtaposition in terms of energy, music, and costumes. They encouraged more overlap in terms of transitions. The word juxtaposition kept coming up for both of them. They loved the nesting section, the family portrait, the balloons, Hanna and Rachell's section. They actually loved most of it. Mostly they want to see more changes in energy and dynamics, more juxtaposition. They love you all and said that the cast is wonderful and that you all work well together.

After the showing, I focused heavily on layering and merging various parts and scenes. I juxtaposed “Nesting” with “Play”, Julia’s solo with changing clothes, “Sisters I” and “Sisters II,” Jenell’s solo with the foxtrot pick-up, and “Wallpaper” with Rachel’s self-portrait. I brought back Haley’s “History” solo and had it lead into and connect with the “Foxtrot” section. Things were starting to come together but serendipity would finally push the work forward.

A Bad Rehearsal, Serendipity, and Knowing Your Dancers

“In rehearsals, suddenly somebody is so beautiful, so right. I have to take a chance on that idea and use that.” -Pina Bausch

We were less than three weeks away from the concert. On this day stresses were high and Haley had a conflict with one of the other dancers. I did not want to waste rehearsal time but observed Haley taking the time she needed to deal with her frustrations by writing. At the end of rehearsal I felt that Haley and I needed to talk privately about how she was feeling. Below the surface, Haley was feeling unrecognized in her dancing. She felt that she had been working so hard and had improved significantly but was not being validated. I understood and empathized with this experience.

The following morning Haley and I were sitting outside the studio discussing my feelings that Nadya was having trouble with her solo. At rehearsal the previous day I had been working with Nadya and all of the prompts I was giving her, Nadya did not know how to explore and embody them. Haley recognized this and was flooded with passion and ideas for this character that I was creating. I looked right at her and said, “You need

to do this part.” I told Haley to take the costume home that night and work on developing the part further. I don’t remember exactly what I said to her, but I did talk about this eccentric woman I hoped to be one day. I also recommended that she source this character in connection with her own life, her own history real and imagined.

With this decision of giving Nadya’s role to Haley, I still wanted to create a solo for Nadya. As stated earlier, Nadya had been having difficulties developing her solo and I had tried to help, but not by honoring and harnessing her strengths. I thought about my experience of struggle and how I have been able to move through these times with the guidance and support of others. I pulled familiar movement from Nadya’s individual “Nesting” motifs and from the “Wallpaper” section to create a solo for her in which she was guided and caught between two other dancers I named “the guardians.” We worked on structuring this section in a matter of hours and continued cleaning up until the final performance.

Meanwhile, Haley and I developed her character “Velgata,” an eccentric gypsy woman. Haley’s two parts, a child character named “Wild Girl” who she portrays in the “Nesting/Play” scene and “Velgata,” became the overall transitional elements that solidified the piece and connected it to the audience.

Obstacles

“On occasion we’ve shortened pieces after the premier, removing a few numbers so as to cut the performance time by a quarter of an hour, sometimes because we were under pressure from the theater. And I think that was wrong and I intend changing it whenever the occasion arises, when the piece is next revived.” -Pina Bausch

Since Brad missed the second showing, we scheduled an additional one on Sunday February 19, 2012, the week before the final showing. I asked two graduate peers Liana Conyers and Devon Polynone to attend and offer feedback as well. Both peers had been my classmates and had seen every choreographic and performance work I had been in for the last three years. I trusted them and knew they would give me a fair and honest critique. See Appendix B for additional Committee Showing handout.

After the run through, Brad said he would like to meet with me the following morning to give me his feedback. Liana and Devon gave me their feedback right after.

They offered a great deal of affirmations and were impressed overall. They knew that this was a totally different piece for me and that I had really embraced this process. Most of the feedback was on performance qualities such as Haley's portrayal of the little girl and on transitions for costume changes and prop adjustments. I asked them if they thought it was too long and they both agreed that they wanted it to be longer. Here is an email that I sent to the cast after the showing:

We did it! The piece is there and Devon and Liana love it! And I love it! They couldn't stop talking about how wonderful all of you are! They gave me wonderful and helpful feedback. We just need to work out a couple of details and transitions and we're there! Wunderkammer lives!

I felt ecstatic and excited to finally have a structure that worked. With two rehearsals left until the show I felt confident that we could polish and finish the piece for the premier.

The next morning I met with Brad for his feedback. He had a lot of helpful and specific questions and suggestions concerning staging, music, and performance. After going through this feedback he told me that the committee required that I edit the piece down to thirty minutes for the final showing and performance. I did not know how to respond. I can't recall exactly what I said in this moment, I just remember feeling confused and hurt at this imposed restriction and left Brad's office before we were finished.

I wanted to understand why this decision was made. I set up a phone call with Margo to discuss this imposed time restriction. I felt that in order to move forward I needed support and clarification. Through our talk she encouraged me "to be playful with my scalpel," and to focus on what was essential. I had another meeting with Brad the following day to finish our feedback session. In this meeting we discussed the rest of his feedback and how I may want to address my emotional reaction in the final written thesis. I was still hurt, but accepted the limitation that turned out to be helpful in the end.

Edits and Final Showing

“I’m always working. Every hour is a working hour and then again it’s not. It depends by what one means by the word.” –Pina Bausch

I had two rehearsals left. I made the decision to edit two scenes, “Sisters,” and the “Nesting Reprise.” I also overlapped Rachel’s solo with Jenell’s section, and worked to tighten up transitions and improvisations in general. The “Family Portrait” was to take place during the intermission and announcements. The “Sitting Portrait” was to be our epilogue before the bow.

We had our final showing on Sunday February 26, 2012 at 4pm in Gerlinger 353. See Appendix B for the final Committee Showing handout. The dancers were asked to be present during the feedback session. Some words I wrote were: “cohesive, multiplicity, fragmentation, birthing and burial, busy mind, and angst.” They gave a lot of transitional and performance notes and expressed how Haley’s roles had emerged in the piece as the wildcard bringing a welcomed chaotic energy. For her two characters of “Wild girl” and “Velgata” they asked how she could embody them fully in performance. Overall, the committee was excited about the progress of the work and once again impressed with the cohesiveness and chemistry of the cast.

Final Notes and Working Until the Last Minute

“It’s the actual making of the pieces that makes us want to do them; and of course it’s the developmental stage which is the most important stage, up to the point where one says, ‘Okay, that’s it. That’s what you want to show them?’” -Pina Bausch

Brad sent me some additional notes to consider going into tech week. At the end of his feedback he wrote:

My advice going into this week, don’t give up on this piece until opening night. You have worked too hard and for too long to say “good enough” or “close enough.” Commit to your vision and press into it. Get the lighting you need and continue cleaning and giving notes through tech. It is a very rich and wonderful piece. You will realize a lot under lights. Don’t let this week overwhelm you. Breathe, focus, direct, and don’t give up.

I worked at every moment possible with the dancers during tech week making small adjustments to design, costume, and performance. See Appendix C for final performance notes. I added one extra rehearsal the afternoon before the dress rehearsal and gave them over one hours worth of notes afterwards. We continued working on little details up until 7:30pm the night of the show when Jenell looked at me and said “Amy, I need to put on my make-up.”

Phase III: Performance

The Premier: Birth and Death

“I want to be a part of it, you see. It’s all part and parcel – the piece, the company and myself. I simply have to be there. The others are on stage – I’m there watching as always; somehow I feel it’s my performance too.” -Pina Bausch

I was sitting in the audience during the first half of the concert supporting my fellow graduate peer Liana Conyers during her solo performance. I could feel the energy from the audience and was nervous but excited to finally present the piece. I snuck backstage during the intermission to check in with the dancers and to make sure everything was set up properly. The dancers all had their costumes and props ready; it was finally time. I have no idea what I said to them exactly, but I know I talked about Pina and how I dedicated the piece to her and to the dancers who made the process and the work possible and amazing. I heard “The Bell Song” from *Lakmé* begin to play, my cue to return to the audience to witness the birth of *Wunderkammer*.

This was the first time that I saw the piece fully from start to finish without observing and taking notes. I was there to experience this world that we had created from months of exploration, collecting, hoarding and loss; to witness the version we had come to, a rough draft, a first sketch, a work in progress, unfinished but finished for now. How would the audience react? Would everything work, come together? I felt exposed, naked, and vulnerable. There was nowhere to hide. I had opened the door to this room, this process, this world, and nothing would ever be the same again.

Concert Description

“But it is the performers who carry the pieces and make them felt.” -Pina Bausch

Wunderkammer was performed in the University of Oregon’s Dougherty Dance Theater on Saturday March 3, 2012 at 8pm as the second half of *Alleged: A Master of Fine Arts Dance Concert* following the work of fellow graduate peer Liana Conyers. A cast of seven female dancers performed in the forty-five minute production. The piece consisted of overlapping scenes that when threaded together created a non-linear collage of events and images simply titled *Wunderkammer*, the German word for “wonder room.” See Appendix A for concert materials and photographs. There is a DVD of Saturday evening’s performance available in the dance department’s video library.

Before the concert, the dancers and I set up a lobby installation that featured pictures and personal artifacts. We placed them on and around props from the green room such as old furniture, bookshelves, clothing racks, a rolling mirror, an ironing board and an old chalkboard. We hung clothesline across the windows and clamped items and pictures to it with clothespins. I wanted to expose the audience to our process in making the work as well as to the history and life process of each individual. The themes of memory, self-portrait, and the connection to actual objects that were used to create and inform the work were symbolic and foretelling. They also literally created our own contemporary *Wunderkammer*.

The dance began during the intermission while audience members were moving freely about the theater and lobby. The dancers wearing short white vintage slips and fur coats slipped through the lobby and into the audience independently and nonchalantly began to walk, sit, or stand in and amongst the audience while blowing up colored balloons strategically hidden in their colored bras. The dancers blew up balloons and gave them to audience members while the “The Bell Song” from the opera *Lakmé* filled the theater. Slowly, the dancers began to set up a family portrait center stage in front of the curtain. While the house manager attempted to give the theater announcements the dancers broke from the portrait and ran to stand on the stairs of the seating system while one dancer, Rachel exited the theater door stage right and moments later unseen knocked on the other theater door stage left. Once the house manager opened the door and let

Rachel back in, the dancers continued to interrupt the announcements further by setting and resetting two different family portraits, one serious and one silly. The intermission ended with Rachel being covered with all the fur coats and finally entering through the proscenium curtains blind.

The lights to the theater faded and the curtains opened to reveal all seven women kneeling on top of individual piles of clothes hidden underneath white billowy dresses and colored petticoats. Another song from *Lakme*, “Viens Mallika Sous Le Dome Edais,” accompanied the dancers as they moved like flightless birds caught in their own nests. Before this section called “Nesting” ended another section called “Play” began with Haley running in wearing a purple, blue, and pink child-like dress and Rachell wearing a slip and teal petticoat. Rachell entered by jumping and kissing a balloon. Haley’s character named “Wild girl” performed awkward cartwheels, handstands, runs, spins, and falls weaving through and interacting with the other dancers as they exited. She pulled Nadya’s hair, making her spin, and slammed into Hannalisa while lifting and spinning her in circles in the air. This section ended with Haley lying on top of, and kissing Jenell who had built a nest center stage out of clothing.

Transitioning to the next scene, Haley somersaults off of Jenell only to stand and address someone in the audience. Behind her Hanna enters and empties a huge sack of paper on the floor. We called this section “Paper/Photo/Pool” and in it Hanna dives into the huge pile of paper endlessly looking for one specific piece. Overlapping this Rachell poses in various self-portraits first in a yellow coat and then in a vintage teal halter dress next to and within Hanna’s paper pile. Haley exits the stage spinning only to return moments later by throwing the theater doors open carrying in a blue plastic baby pool that was set-up in the lobby display. She pushes the pool in front of the audience and begins to explore her “toy.” After a while Haley begins to climb into the audience to collect her balloons and then proudly places them into her pool for later.

As Hanna cleans up her pile of paper with a broom, Nadya’s solo begins. The song “Memoires de Futur” by Rene’ Aubrey fades in and Nadya wearing a white slip and long white petticoat is pushed onstage by Jenell. Nadya covers her eyes with her skirt as Jenell and Julia, the “guardians” spin her and run her through the space. They release her and she performs fluid reaches and falls trying to escape the confines of the stage, held

back by them. She ends with throwing her dress up in the air and falls blindly into it as she runs through the paper pile left by Hanna.

The following scene called “Julia/Clothes” begins with the song “Jumping At The Woodside,” by Count Basie. Five dancers Rachel, Hanna, Nadya, Jenell, and Rachell run in carrying piles of vintage clothing from the thirties, forties, and fifties era. They frantically run back and forth trying on different items of clothing while Julia enters and performs a slow, graceful dance inside the paper pile wearing a short strapless blue silk evening gown that keeps falling down exposing her red bra underneath. The five dancers eventually cover Jenell with most of the clothes and the scene ends with her reaching out to the audience from beneath the clothing pile and then shyly slipping away.

Moments after Jenell’s exit, Haley enters wearing a bunch of miscellaneous clothing, carrying the wooden chair from the first family portrait, and walking awkwardly with one high heel pink leather boot on her foot, the other in her mouth. This character named “Velgata” proceeds to place her items into the blue baby pool and after all of her extra clothes are off she is wearing a pink, black and white circus bathing suit with a fur shoulder shrug and the pink boots. This scene is called “Velgata/Balloons” and in it Haley once again interacts with the pool and the audience. As she performs five other dancers, Rachel, Rachell, Hanna, Julia, and Nadya run in and begin a balloon contest. The scene ends with “Velgata” singing out into the lobby and the dancers letting go of their filled balloons as Jenell enters slowly from upstage.

The remainder of the scenes “Jenell/Rachel/Pick-up,” “Wallpaper/Rachell Portraits,” and “Haley/Rachel/Foxtrot” create a heavy climax with no resolution. The lights dim to a soft blue with amber sidelights as Jenell walks forward stage left reaching out her hand and dropping it. She performs a minimally intense solo as Rachel enters throwing a dark red sheet into the air and falling underneath it. Rachel repeats a series of turns and falls until she is exhausted on the floor. Meanwhile the remaining dancers weave throughout the space in a line picking up clothes off the floor and draping them over their arms and shoulders. They follow the leader into the baby pool and reset the family portrait without Jenell and Rachel.

Just as before, the dancers cover Rachell with all of the clothes and leave the stage as she begins another series of self-portraits in the baby pool. The other six dancers

wearing white slips and white petticoats fall in from the wings holding piles of clothes and begin the “Wallpaper” section where they are trapped inside the stage space and run back and forth not being able to escape. Rachell leaves the pool and performs two more self-portraits, one wearing a vintage robe, the other picking up Rachel’s red sheet and stretching inside it as if it were her own skin.

Once finished, Rachell removes the sheet and drops it on top of Rachel who lies on the floor in front of Haley. All of the dancers cover Rachell with all of the clothing and paper left on the stage as Haley begins an emotional solo, wrenching and heaving on the floor. As Rachel is buried she begins to make snow angels and swim along the floor leaving a trail of items behind her. “Begin the Beguine” by Artie Shaw begins to play and Jenell, Hanna, Julia, Nadya, and Rachell enter upstage wearing different brightly colored petticoats and perform a gestural dance with a foxtrot foot pattern. Simultaneously, the dancers foxtrot, Rachel struggles to push the pile that is burying her, and Haley runs and falls throughout the space. The lights fade and no resolution has been reached.

After the stage is emptied and mostly dark, the lights return and “Moidin Moidin,” by Raphael Beau, a cheerful French song plays. The entire cast runs out in their white slips and colored petticoats, and dance a series of sitting gestures portraying aspects and stereotypes of women. They end with grabbing their chests and shaking back and forth as they scream louder and louder until the lights eventually fade to black.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

“I couldn’t possibly produce the same piece the same way again. All the pieces were produced so quickly, too, that I scarcely recollect just how it happened. It was a surprise even to oneself. One always has to rely incredibly on one’s instinct – intellect and instinct both at the same time.” -Pina Bausch

In this chapter I will perform a final evaluation of the entire process. As in the actual piece *Wunderkammer*, the discussion is non-linear but interrelated and threaded into familial elements. I will begin with the difficulties and clarifications of interpreting Pina Bausch’s process, followed by the transformations of self, process, and performance that I experienced. From there, I will elaborate on the collaborative process with a focus on the dancers and the Committee, the witnesses that journeyed alongside me. I will conclude with the significance of this project and end...with a dream.

Interpretation

“I just do my own little thing, and if other people see it or hear about it and can now do something of their own, well that is good. But I think sometimes people see something we do and they think, well if Pina can do that, then I can do my thing. It is their work, and if something I did gave them the initiative to do it, fine, wonderful. Now show it to me so I can do maybe something else.” -Pina Bausch

Since I had never worked with Pina Bausch in any capacity, one of the problems I encountered with this research was not knowing and not being able to know if I had embodied her process. I realized that my journey would be, at best, an interpretation of her process. The process of searching, questioning, making, and reflecting were all filtered through my subjective lens. As stated earlier, I am informed by everything around me but I always come back to me. What do I think and feel? What are my biases? What kind of dance am I making in response to this information or experience?

Emulation Over Imitation

I was aware from the very beginning of this project that my intention was to emulate Pina Bausch's process, not to copy her aesthetic. I originally thought I would focus primarily on the collaborative aspect of her process, but as I sunk deeper into Bausch's world I realized that the particular way she structured the material was a natural progression of her methods and to not follow her whole process through fully would be a detriment to my experiential journey.

In the book *Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told you About Being Creative* by Austin Kleon states, "Don't just steal the style, steal the thinking behind the style. You don't want to look like your heroes, you want to see like your heroes" (2012, 36). I wanted to understand Pina, to see through her eyes why and how she arrived at and evolved her process, philosophy, and aesthetic. It took awhile for me feel confident in directing and taking ownership of the work and to realize that it had been my process all along. Even if I had wanted to, I could never understand nor copy Bausch exactly. According to Kleon, "Our failure to copy our heroes is where we discover where our own thing lives. That is how we evolve" (2012, 41).

Sourcing

Pina Bausch by Royd Climenhaga provided a starting point, a primary resource for exploring her process. In the beginning, I used the exercises and prompts from the practical exercises section of the book but soon realized that I needed to go directly to the source, to the words and images of Pina Bausch and interpret them for myself. Pina's words along with her dancers became not only inspiration, but also a form of support and encouragement during this experience. When I could not logically understand how to structure the dance, I witnessed her piece *Danzón* and was provided further experiential insight into how she made certain structural and aesthetic choices. I witnessed so many layers that could not be articulated in words, the dance spoke for itself.

As the process neared completion, I sourced from Bausch less and less and listened and relied on my fellow collaborators and to the work itself as the guiding force.

What does this world want to be? What does it need? What do we want to express, evoke, represent? I, along with the dancers, claimed ownership of the piece we had created. The journey had been long, the process tenacious, and the mysteries infinite.

Confronting Bias

I have a great deal of admiration and reverence for Pina Bausch aesthetically, creatively, and philosophically. During this process, I was not so much challenging my preferences and biases as I was exposing and confronting them. As Pina has said of her process, in the beginning she choreographed every move out of fear. This fearful state is similar to how I used to work as well.

Before this project, I had started to invite the dancers I worked with to collaborate with me, but not to the level that this particular process required. I caught myself over and over falling into old familiar patterns of making, of wanting to create and set movement and to decide upon a definitive intention and/or theme for the work. I realized that it was not my goal to completely let go of my patterns, but instead to hold them in my awareness and to pause and really see and study what I do-- and why I do it. My decision was to question and reflect on the source of my habitual tendencies and behaviors, and decide if I would like to change them. This project ultimately was a practice of shedding personal layers of time, pattern, and experience that I had accumulated-- to get to the core, the center of who I am and what I do. I am still on this journey.

Whose Process Is It?

What in my piece is “Bauschian?” I used many of Bausch’s devices and strategies, but they were not chosen intentionally. That is, I did not try to make the piece look like Bausch’s work, but by following the process and attempting certain methods it was bound to share aesthetic commonalities.

I have been known in my previous work to mix pedestrian movements and gestures with more formal and codified dance steps, to creating emotive and subjective

work, to use props and create settings. I think all of these preferences were shared between myself and Pina and reveal why I chose to emulate her process. I wanted to unite all of these ways of working into one piece as well as expand and adopt some new methods to enhance my options and capabilities.

Aside from using many of Bausch's structuring tools, the only direct reference or homage paid to Bausch was my use of the walking gesture sequence in the final scene of the piece. Even though I used this method, the gestures, the music, and the context that this sequence lived within and belonged to our process. I would not have used it if it did not relate and connect to everything else in the piece.

I am sure that many other things were subconsciously referenced and utilized due to being exposed to visual and written descriptions of Pina's work and methods. I attempted to stay as true to the process as I could, which meant that I had to listen to what was around me, but most importantly, to what was inside me. Everything from Pina was filtered through me and interpreted by me, and that is where the beauty lies. Another aspect of her philosophy continues because her process, much like her pieces, is so open that anyone can enter and interpret it for herself. It is yet another invitation to engage and experience, to see the world from and through your own eyes.

Validation

Was there any way of knowing if my interpretation of Bausch's process was accurate or even close to accurate? At the start, I could comprehend Bausch's testimony describing her process, but I could not understand it. Once I began to experience it, I started to feel that I was on the right track and connected more deeply with her descriptions. After the project, I felt I understood where she was coming from and encountered many of the same challenges in remembering and speaking about the work as she once had. It was such a complex, intuitive and emotional process that I still cannot fully disclose what or how I created the piece exactly. The deeper I fell into the process, the more I relied on my instincts to make decisions and shape the work.

One of the first questions I was asked by an audience member after the premier was "How did you make this piece?" Being asked the question that inspired me to do

this research project in the first place was tremendously validating. The piece was described by many as dream-like and surreal, and expressed that certain images and moments kept appearing in their consciousness far after the concert. This was exactly how I had felt after witnessing Bausch's piece *Danzón*, a further validation of my intention. I could never know if my interpretation of Bausch's process was correct, but I do feel that I came closer to understanding Pina and her work through the process of making *Wunderkammer*.

Transformations

“To them (the dancers) the work process is what's most important, the things we discover ourselves during rehearsals.” -Pina Bausch

Transformation of Self

We began this process with nothing, with no exact themes to explore except what surfaced during the collaborative process. It took about four weeks of rehearsal to start to feel an overall focus emerging, that of personal evolution and self-portraiture. I asked the dancers to consider the following preparatory questions: “What experiences and events have shaped who you are,” and “Who are you, who were you, who will you be,” and finally “What are you struggling with in your personal evolution?”

I was investigating who these dancers were individually and wanted to build the piece around their self-explorations. While thinking of each individual, I was also going through this self-examination. Considering each question for myself to understand and empathize and search. I had to become aware of not projecting myself too much on the dancers but also utilizing my experience for guidance and support.

I experienced a widening of self, an opening that expanded my views to include the others. I began to see that although each one of us is unique, we all share a lot of the same feelings and experiences and what was most important was this process itself as a metaphor for life. Our self, our identity is always changing and yet carries with it all these parts of our histories, our stories.

How we choose to experience, portray, and represent ourselves is constantly in question and provides rich and vibrant material to source from and explore. For example, Haley's roles of "Wild girl," "Velgata," and finally her "Self-Portrait" carry not only her story, her struggle, but are a main theme of past, present and future selves, of evolution and transformation not fixed either in movement or identity.

Transformation of Process

Asking Questions

The main process I adopted from Pina Bausch was to ask questions and give prompts to the dancers and allow them to respond in their own way. Near the beginning, I attempted to create a lot of space to explore and answer. As the piece began to emerge and I got to know the dancers more, I began to give more specific prompts to each individual. Their self-portraits had to relate to the whole piece and became a combination of how they were portraying themselves and how I was. I never made anyone do anything they were uncomfortable with but observed greater risk taking from all of us as more trust was established within the entire group.

Always Searching

It would be easier and less time consuming to start with an intention, be it thematic or structural, and place the creation process into a restricted container. With this process, it was the opposite approach; the container was the process and emerged from a continual questioning and searching. Because I was always searching and staying open to new possibilities, I was able to follow my intuitions about certain ideas and characters that I did not have a place for yet, but knew there was something valuable and important about them.

Knowing Your Dancers

The switch that happened between Haley and Nadya was a prime example of knowing your dancers. While I think Nadya could have portrayed *Velgata*, or a version of her, she needed more time, time that I did not have. She was in a different place and is a different person than Haley and although it took me a long time to recognize it, when I accepted where they both were presently, the choice to change roles made perfect sense. Haley found the validation she was looking for and Nadya embraced where she was and performed the solo that I created for her beautifully. My email to Nadya confirms that I knew how to portray her in the piece but I hadn't yet learned how to trust my instincts.

Layers

The physical elements, the costumes, props, and setting came out of and reflected our process. We used what was available to us: dressing room furniture, clothing racks, our own wardrobe, Nadya's wading pool, a wooden studio chair, balloons, and recycled paper. In the final performance, the objects and clothing signified transitions and became a tangible reality of associations and memories. Accumulating and keeping track of these artifacts was a tedious and time-consuming endeavor. It was another layer to consider when structuring but ultimately created a visually stunning and an imaginative world.

The music was another element that helped to create mood, ambiance, and transition. I listened to a great deal of music and tried things in rehearsals. The advice from Christian Cherry was most helpful: to source from the types of music I had found and restrict myself to no more than three to four genres. Given that I used that advice, I found that the music assisted in structuring and provided a context to work within.

Structuring

I used and adapted various structuring tools from the practical exercises section of *Pina Bausch*. The one used most heavily throughout this piece was *layering*. I layered movements, costumes, props, images, scenes, music, and spoken text to weave elements

together for a dense and pluralistic world. The concept of juxtaposition surfaced many times and became a major theme and strategy for creating tension within actions, images, and sequences. One of my favorite examples of a layered scene was merging “Nesting,” with “Play.” The energy created with the slow “Nesting” scene is suddenly broken open by Haley’s portrayal of “Wild girl,” who runs, cartwheels, rolls, and interacts spontaneously with the other dancers as they attempt to exit the space. The seriousness of the ensemble against the wildness of “Wild girl” complement and accentuate each other and shake up the energy and flow of the piece.

The tool of *dislocation* refers to taking an image or movement away from its original context and placing it in a new one. I used this tactic for Nadya’s solo that was created at the very end of the process. With barely any time for development and to reference other parts of the piece, I borrowed from Nadya’s individual motifs in the “Nesting” section, a short phrase from Julia’s solo, and a few phrases from the “Wallpaper” section and threaded them together to form her solo, performed as a trio with two other dancers. This new section was connected and foreshadowed other sections of the dance, but existed uniquely in its theme and intention.

Densing refers to merging two elements or moments together. It differs from layering in that you are not just placing one with the other, but instead fusing the two images to make a third. An example of densing is the scene with Hanna’s paper solo and Rachell’s photo portraits. These two solos were layered together by chance at our first showing and had an interesting appeal. As the work developed I was interested in seeing what would happen if I merged the two in various ways. Hanna is searching in her paper pile when Rachell enters in a yellow jacket to pose for a self-portrait. She performs two poses, one facing the audience and one “flashing” Hanna while looking at the audience. Rachell then enters the paper pile and performs the same portraits again, interacting with Hanna. In the first, Hanna is trying to pull the paper out from beneath Rachell’s feet while she poses. In the second, Hanna is crawling beneath Rachell’s legs while she “flashes” her. The two duets continue to exist as solos but in relationship. They are independent yet interdependent.

Throughout the developmental phase of this process, I would often encourage and improvise within and at the end of a scene to find material and listen to where the dance

could go. For instance, when we were working on the “Wallpaper” section, I had asked the dancers to bring in clothing to dance with and toss. Two of the dancers, Haley and Rachel, ended the scene lying on the ground as the other dancers tossed clothing in the air. The clothes landed on top of them like falling snow. I immediately asked the two dancers on the floor to make snow angels and then to swim along the floor on their backs and then on their fronts. As they did this, I asked the other dancers to collect the clothing that was falling off of them, and place it back on top of them like picking up dirty laundry. This *open play* improvisation ended up in the final dance.

Tracking the Process

I had every intention of being very thorough with my journaling, however, the amount of elements to keep track of soon became overwhelming and time consuming. At the start, my journal became a place to house plans, keep track of material, and describe feedback. It was also a canvas to saturate with questions, possibilities and associations. As the process evolved, so did my system for tracking materials.

As I collected, I began to name and write down pieces and sections on scraps of paper so I could lay them out in front of me in search of possible connections. See Appendix C for process notes. This method evolved into using a legal pad to do the same as well as make lists and record materials. When the piece moved into structuring, I bought a horizontal spiral notebook where I could map out the scenes in storyboard form to see the full work on one page. This helped me see transitions, costume changes, and the overall structure.

I attempted in the beginning to reflect after each rehearsal, but I found that I was so heavily involved with the making of the piece that I couldn't possibly analyze and evaluate the process before it was finished. At the time, I had no words to explain my feelings because my focus was on listening and intuiting about the work itself.

Aside from my notebooks, I used email as another form of documenting the process and recording conversations between the dancers, the committee, and me. A lot of the emails were schedule related but I also wrote little thoughts, questions, and reflections about the process. One email documents that I was thinking of bringing

balloons to rehearsal. Another mentions that after finding a certain inspiring piece of music, I think I may have found the opening section of the dance. Email was also a place for me to express my gratitude to the dancers for their hard work and dedication to the piece, effectively maintaining a sense of value and appreciation that holds up morale and contributes to a more effective group dynamic.

I used video recordings only twice in this process. First when I recorded the dancers' solos and second with my first attempt at structuring. I made the decision to focus primarily on tracking the process through note taking because I wanted to be heavily engaged with the present moment, with the actual process in front of me. Lack of time and resources were a factor in this decision as well.

Transformation of Performance

One of the most difficult things for me about this process was the simultaneous crafting of pieces individually and in relation to the whole. Everything was always shifting according to how the whole work was evolving. Once I understood this, it became easier to trust that solutions would present themselves if I practiced patience and awareness. This was not a passive listening; however, I found that I also had to work diligently at taking action and persistently trying things out.

I also found that the way I ended up structuring the collage was primarily through my subjective intuitive response. The way I layered and juxtaposed events was not through random choice but through experiential knowing it was right by listening to the space, the energy, and the emotion. For all of the dancers, we worked a lot on presence and a living and breathing reality onstage. There was a balance between crafted and set material and structured improvisation or embodied experience.

The emergence of Haley's characters in *Wunderkammer* came together in the end because she represented the final layer of this work and couldn't surface fully without a world to exist within. From her first rehearsal on she actively pursued the theme of transformation. Her journey from "Wild girl" to "Velgata" to "Haley" reveals a literal and figurative journey of transformation.

Witnesses

Throughout this research project I had various witnesses along the way. This openness and accountability helped me tremendously with seeing the work in process from a more objective point of view as well as affirming and challenging why and how I was making certain aesthetic and philosophical choices. Opening up the creative process allows others to share in the creation of new work and inspires a dialogue of ideas and expressions that have the potential to reflect the values and concerns of a greater community. I will discuss the collaborative process I engaged in with my dancers as well as the guidance and feedback I received from the thesis committee.

Collaboration

“But the bee takes a middle course; it gathers its material from the flowers of the garden and of the field, but transforms and digests it by a power of its own.” -Francis Bacon

Pina Bausch built her work from the inside out, working with her dancers to create a collective tapestry of thoughts, feelings, and expressions. The engagement my dancers and I shared was one built on trust, cooperation, support, and community. We all struggled, laughed, and felt lost, but in the end we arrived somewhere together. We evolved on a personal as well as communal level.

Negotiating my role was, like the process itself, a method of adaptation. I observed myself moving from creator to collaborator, to mentor, then to editor, and eventually to director. Who I had to be moment to moment depended on the situation and dynamic energy in the room. I had many conversations with each individual that impacted how I was considering their roles and how I might frame them in performance. What each individual felt and what the group expressed was important to me not only for the process but also as part of what were building, a community of artists.

As I said earlier, I felt uneasy about asking for and using so much of the dancers' offerings, but this is from what Bausch's process was built; it is significantly derived from the dancers. I had to learn a whole new way of working outside of the material and practice deep, contemplative listening. The questions and prompts I asked were open for the dancers to interpret in their own ways. I had no control over this. I was often

pleasantly surprised at what they came up with which became a problem in being able to know what was useful or essential. The determining question I asked myself was, “Does this fit with everything else-- does it belong?”

The dancers were not only essential to the process; they were also essential to me. They all committed fully to this entire endeavor and although there were difficult days and times, they were always ready and willing to follow me. When I was confused and stuck, the dancers encouraged and supported me and I did the same for them. Bausch’s process is not easy, and it requires that you remain open to what is present while simultaneously working and working and working more. Because of this, I tried to be as transparent as I could be with the dancers, to let them see my vulnerability with the hopes that it might allow them to do the same. One of the best compliments I heard about the work was the investment and engagement in performance by each individual dancer. I think the reason for this is the time we spent digging and asking these questions of ourselves and for ourselves.

The Committee

“Learning to let go should be learned before learning to get. Life should be touched, not strangled. You’ve got to relax, let it happen at times, and at others move forward with it.”
-Ray Bradbury

The four showings I had with the thesis committee were helpful in terms of either validating and/or suggesting aesthetic choices and directions. I took every suggestion into consideration, and often found that I was in agreement with the feedback given. Overall, Christian was most helpful in terms of advising the musical choices and structure. Margo’s feedback aided me greatly in terms of sensation, embodiment and performance. Brad gave a great deal of advise on structural, spatial and visual considerations.

The only time I had a disagreement with the committee was when I was told to edit the piece down to thirty minutes. I questioned this limitation because I lacked understanding in the motivation behind the decision. I also felt conflicted about adhering to the time frame I had proposed without knowing how the process and the piece would

evolve. Ultimately I accepted the committee's decision but not without some personal confusion and struggle.

During the meeting when Brad expressed this to me, I had a strong emotional reaction. At the time I was under a lot of stress to finish the piece and was caught off guard. At the first showing, the Committee had encouraged me to develop what I had fully and not continue to find more material. But this was going against what I believed was a huge part of Bausch's process. She had been known to keep finding material and make drastic changes to the work up until the premier and for months afterward.

For the second showing, the piece had gotten larger but only because I had developed the material further and hadn't yet been ready to layer and structure. By the time I had the additional showing with Brad, I had merged sections and scenes and it was in fact shorter than what was shown previously. Being told by my peers that they wanted the piece to be longer and the next day hearing the opposite perspective was shocking and confusing.

The committee reiterated that in the proposal that they approved, I had proposed to make a twenty to thirty minute piece. I proposed this time frame initially because that was the requirement for master of fine arts candidates making choreographic work. I had never made longer than a twelve-minute dance before this and honestly, did not think that I would even be able to craft twenty minutes. At both showings and every meeting prior to this there was no mention or reminder of this detail and so when told suddenly that I would have to cut the piece down to thirty minutes, I was extremely emotional.

When I had to confront this obstacle, I only had one week until the show. The piece was finally coming together and I just wanted to focus and work on the transitions and performance. I felt emotionally drained and distracted by this imposed time restriction. I had just begun to trust this process; it was finally making sense to me and was coming together. The imposition felt like the committee did not trust me to make this decision on my own.

Realizing that I had to move forward, I took an inventory of each scene and how long it was. I thought about the pacing and overall dynamic arc and realized that I could cut two scenes and quickly create short transitions in between those sections. Brad was surprised I had done this. He thought instead I would have cut from each scene

individually. I made this decision because certain images and scenes needed lived time for the dancers to fully invest in presence and embody their roles and characters. It would have been difficult with the short amount of time left to go through and edit parts from each scene.

As stated earlier, in the end I was pleased with the direction the piece took and satisfied with the final performance. The time restriction, although painful, was a benefit to my choreographic development in being able to work within and adjust to outside parameters. It forced me to consider and decide what was truly essential and eliminate the rest. I believe the restriction also expanded my creativity and presented me with the idea to overlap the “Family Portrait” prologue with the intermission and announcements, and place the “Sitting Portrait” as the epilogue. Once again, the process informed the product-- which informed the process.

Significance

“We are shaped and fashioned by what we love.” -Goethe

The significance of this research project is, I believe, personal and universal. What I offer in this reflection is my experiential interpretation of Pina Bausch’s process. I want to understand and know what it would be like to create a theatrical work using her methods. What I discover is that my initial attraction to Bausch is not accidental. There are things within her process, aesthetic, and philosophy of which I had no previous knowledge of, but feel connected to on an instinctive level. Perhaps the reason why this process brought me closer to myself was because it embraced characteristics and preferences that I had not fully explored before or been aware of. The openness and vulnerability of Bausch’s process allows me to take risks and to expand my capabilities in collaboration, choreography, and philosophy.

The Process

Pina Bausch’s process is time consuming, labor intensive, and holistically demanding. It requires an artist who can adapt to many roles, who can facilitate and collaborate with the dancers while holding the space and the overall aesthetic in mind. I

found that initially I was not used to giving the dancers so much time, space, and freedom to explore and articulate their investigations, but once I embraced this openness, wonderful discoveries emerged and the overall investment in the work grew.

I struggled with not having enough time to work on and develop material. I sacrificed many ideas and interesting movements in order to craft a fully produced work for the premier. Dealing with all of the layers of movement, music, costumes, props and set design in this type of theatrical work involved me juggling many elements at once and working as long as I could to allow the most salient images and actions to surface. Leaning into uncertainty was difficult but once harnessed, I found a growth in personal and aesthetic development. The structure emerged from the process; that is, from the many trials of collecting, hoarding, building, and editing. As the piece grew and transformed, elements had to evolve with the work or fall away into our collective memories, giving rise to questions such as: What is essential? Does this belong? How does it feel, look, speak?

Who is cast in a role is crucial. I found that my criteria for casting was successful in that I was familiar with each individual in terms of movement ability, willingness to explore and craft movement, and enthusiasm for collaboration. The struggles we went through were born of my lack of experience in this method or mode of making as well as inevitable and essential for the creative process. Ultimately, these struggles became a main focus and theme in the final piece.

Bausch's process starts with nothing and paradoxically everything. You and the dancers are in the space together and what you bring with you, your memories, experiences, associations, your imagination becomes part of a colorful palette in which to create a completely unique world. What grounds the work is the process itself as a container for the endless questions and explorations, and the people involved who provide the inspiration, the material, and the community.

Future Study

Most artists/dance makers do not have the same luxuries of time, space, money, and access to dancers as the Tanztheater Wuppertal. They may have strict limitations to

work within that Bausch's process would not be suited for. However, because this process is so subjective, an artist could source from some of the various elements and methods that Bausch utilized such as collaborating with the dancers, working on presence and improvising with emotions, and trying out the various formal and structuring tools that Bausch employed. As Climenhaga states, "the process necessitates an individual viewpoint, so the work takes on the character of those who do it" (2009, 97-98). Whether an individual sources all or some of Bausch's process, in the end it will become a product of that person's history and imagination.

I found that what was most impactful about this process was the autonomy I witnessed from the individuals in co-creating their roles. I saw deep connections, true ownership of, and heightened performances, from each dancer that I had never seen before. This increased engagement resulted from the process itself, and from a supportive community that nurtured and challenged every member of the group.

Closing Reflection

From the many conversations throughout the course of this project, with the dancers and others who witnessed it, there was (and is) a longing and a notable need for community and collaboration in our field. The strongest reason why I wanted to do this research was to see if I could create the type of community and environment that I had wanted to belong to. Dancing itself is wonderful, but I think there is something even more beautiful and deeply rooted in our practice: that of belonging, and of sharing the journey with others as a way to deepen your relationship to yourself and to the world.

This project created a bridge connecting me from the student I was to the artist and educator I aspire to be. I came to graduate school to find and further develop myself. I wanted to go deeper into my practice to find out what was really important and essential to me.

Having completed this process, I know that I am much better prepared as a dance creator, practitioner, facilitator, and mentor to enter the professional field of dance. I am more curious, and feel inspired to continue to question, experience, and explore life in all of its forms and possibilities.

Epilogue

“An enlightened master once said, ‘If I see the moon, but you do not, I will point at it. First you will watch my finger to see where it goes. Eventually, however, you must take your eyes off my finger and find the moon yourself.’”

-Mark Salzman, “*The Laughing Sutra*”

December 18, 2012. I dreamt about Pina last night. She was sitting two rows ahead of me on a white folding chair among rows of white folding chairs, her long hair draped down her back, held together by a wide barrette. Pina’s legs were crossed and her hands were folded gently in her lap. She was quietly watching the empty stage in front of us.

I shifted anxiously in my seat wanting to go over and sit next to her and ask her questions and hug her tightly, but I was too afraid. Rachel, sitting next to me, asked if I wanted a piece of gum as she handed one to me. She looked over and saw Pina and nudged me to approach her. I resisted and remained unmoving, yet racing inside. My focus eventually drifted from intently watching Pina to observing the stage. Its barren presence was not empty; it was bursting with possibilities. I felt my heart hammering in my chest, anticipating what I could and hoped to create.

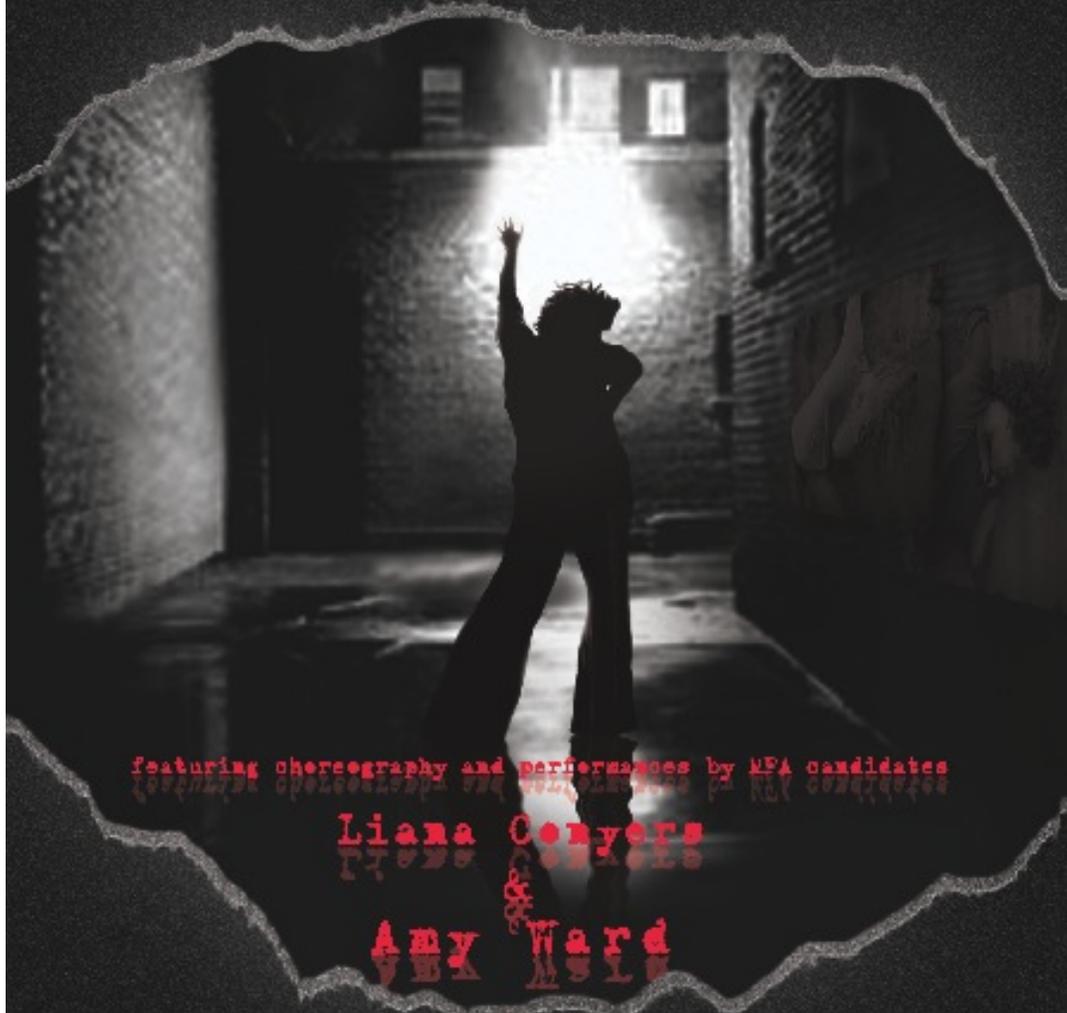
Pina had pointed to the moon, but now it was time for me to find the moon myself.

APPENDIX A
CONCERT MATERIALS

THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON DEPARTMENT OF DANCE PRESENTS

ALLEGED

A MASTER OF FINE ARTS DANCE CONCERT



featuring choreography and performances by MFA candidates

Liana Conyers

Amy Ward

Tickets \$5 available at 7pm March 3rd
@ 1st Floor of Gerlinger Annex

Saturday, March
3rd 2012 • 8 PM

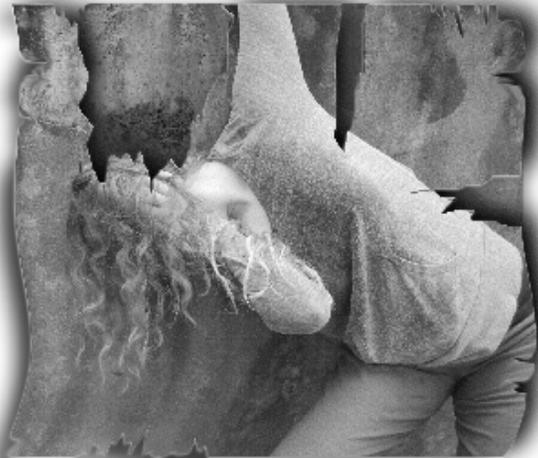
For more information please
call the UO Department of Dance
541-346-3386 • wheelchair accessible

3rd Floor
Gerlinger Annex

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UNIVERSITY OF OREGON



The University of Oregon Department of Dance Presents

ALLEGED

A Master of Fine Arts Dance Concert

featuring choreography and
performances by MFA candidates

**Liana Conyers
and
Amy Ward**

Saturday
March 3rd
2012

Program
Liana Conyers

Shedding Skin: Expose, Educate, and Evolve

Choreographer: Liana Conyers
Lighting and Costume Design: Liana Conyers
Video Design: Liana Conyers and Tanner Johnson
Video Excerpts: Black is...Black Ain't (1994) by Marlon Riggs, Movement (R)evolution Africa by Joan Frosch and Alla Kovgan, Gesel Mason and Camille Brown

I know this much...

Sound Design: Mo Diggity Super Producer
Song Title: Heaven by MeShell NdegeOcello, Lalah Hathaway, Neal Evans, and Chris Dave
Text: Liana Conyers
In loving memory of Larry Conyers Sr.

Little Pink Pills

Sound Design: Liana Conyers
Text: Liana Conyers

107: Afro-Human

Sound Design: Liana Conyers and Tanner Johnson
Song Titles: *Super Bad* by James Brown, *Fillet-O-Rapper* by MF DOOM, and *Sex Machine* remix by James Brown and D.J. Coldcut
Dedicated to Jhon Stronks a.k.a. J-Boogie Down

Committee Chair: Christian Cherry

Committee Members: Rita Honka, Jenifer Craig

Program
Amy Ward

• **I n t e r m i s s i o n** •

Wunderkammer

A piece by Amy Ward for Pina Bausch

Collaborative Dancers:

Rachell Hughes, Jenell Iorg, Hannalisa Johnson, Nadya Matiya, Rachel Slaughter, Julia Vickers, and Haley Wilson

Lighting Design:
Liana Conyers

Costume Design:
Amy Ward and dancers

Music:

The Bell Song and *Viens Mallika Sous Le Dome Edais* from *Lakme'* by Delibes
Memoires de futur 2 by Rene' Aubry
Jumping At the Woodside by Count Basie
Viva Davidoff by Passengers
Begin the Beguine by Artie Shaw
Moidin Moidin by Raphael Beau

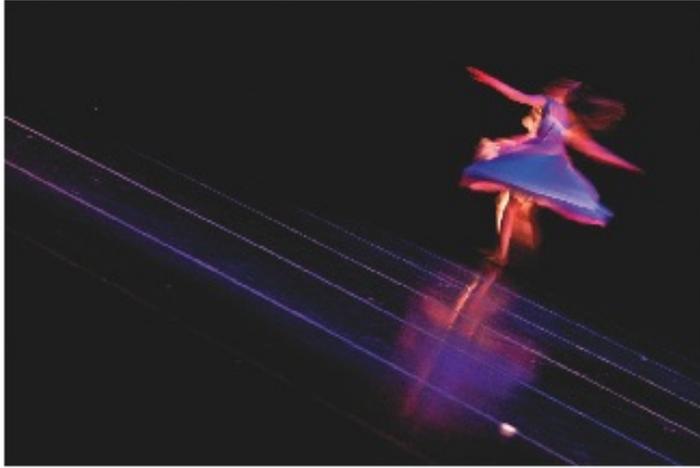
Committee Chair: Brad Garner

Committee Members: Christian Cherry, Margo Van Ummersen

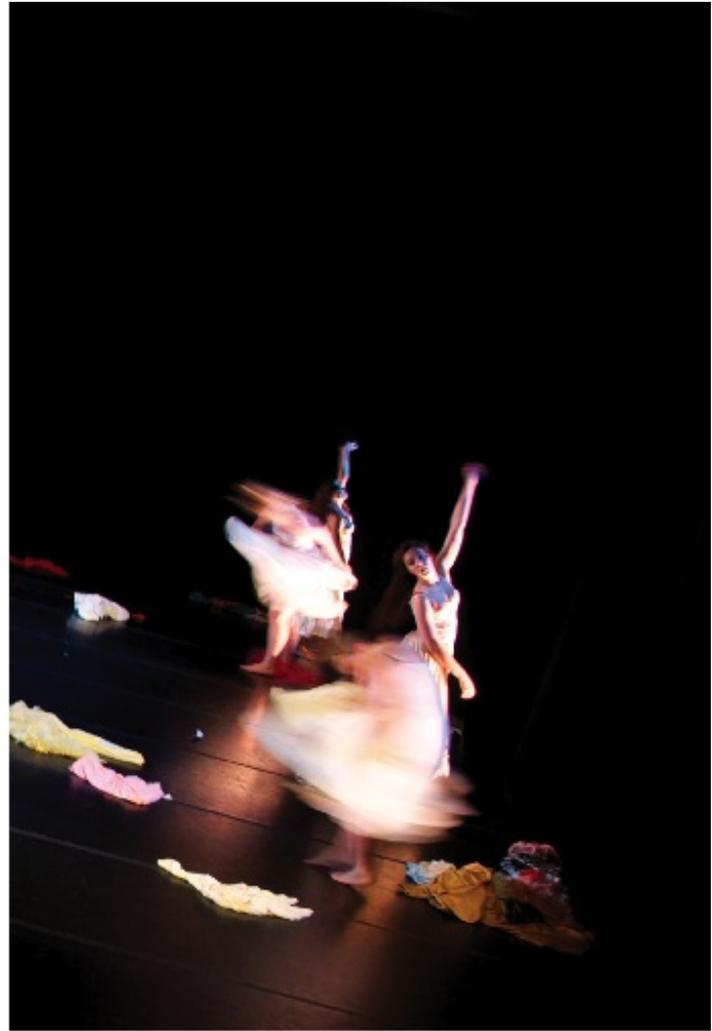














APPENDIX B
COMMITTEE SHOWING HANDOUTS

Amy Ward
MFA First Committee Showing
Wednesday November 2, 2011
8:30 pm Room 353 GRX

1. Brief introduction to material/feedback
2. Showing
 - a. Balloons ensemble and improvisation trio and quartet
 - b. Wallpaper ensemble (transition Haley/Rachel with Nadya)
 - c. Jenell solo
 - d. Nadya pool solo, Haley and Rachell handstand/kiss duet
 - e. Julia mirror solo with Jenell reading
 - f. Rachel solo, Jenell and Julia sisters duet
 - g. Hanna paper solo, Rachell photo solo
 - h. Group gesture foxtrot, Haley solo
3. Dancers strike set while Amy receives feedback

Amy Ward
MFA Second Committee Showing
Sunday January 29, 2012
4:00 pm Room 353 GRX

1. Brief introduction to material/feedback
 1. order (pace/dynamic of structure/transitions)
 2. relationship to music
 3. costumes

2. Showing, Working Title: Wunderkammer

Scene 1: Family Portrait (cast)

Scene 2: Nesting (cast)

Scene 3: Play

Scene 4: Julia

Scene 5: Sisters II

Scene 6: Jenell

Scene 7: Hanna and Rachell

Scene 8: Nadya

Scene 9: Family Portrait Reprise (cast)

Scene 10: Sisters I (Rachel, Jenell, Julia)

Scene 11: Balloons (cast)

Scene 12: Rachell portrait

Scene 13: Wallpaper (cast)

Scene 14: Haley

Scene 15: Foxtrot end (cast)

Scene: 16: Sitting Portrait, bow (cast)

Amy Ward

MFA Additional Showing with Brad Garner, Liana Conyers, and Devon Polynone

Sunday February 19, 2012

4:00 pm, Room 353 GRX

“Wunderkammer”

Portrait

Scene 1: Nesting/Play

Scene 2: Sisters

Scene 3: Hanna and Rachel/ Haley collect balloons-pool/Nadya trio

Scene 4: Julia/clothes

Scene 5: Haley solo (pool)/Balloons

Scene 6: Jenell solo/Portrait (no Jenell/Rachel behind/Rachell stay self portrait)

Scene 7: Nesting/Wallpaper/Rachell Portraits/Haley solo

Scene 8: Foxtrot (Haley/Rachel)

Sitting Portrait

Amy Ward
MFA Final Committee Showing
Sunday February 26, 2012
4:00 pm, Room 353 GRX

“Wunderkammer”

Family Portrait (intermission)

Scene 1: Nesting/Play

Scene 2: Hanna and Rachel/ Haley collect balloons-pool/Nadya trio

Scene 3: Julia/clothes

Scene 4: Haley solo (pool)/Balloons

Scene 5: Jenell solo (Rachel behind/family portrait)

Scene 6: Wallpaper/Rachell Portraits/Haley solo

Scene 7: Foxtrot (Haley/Rachel)

Sitting Portrait (bow)

APPENDIX C
TIMELINE AND PROCESS NOTES

Summer		8 weeks		Notes on Paper	
1	2	3	4	5	6
July 18 [3]	July 20 [3]	July 25 [3]	July 27 [3]	Aug 1, 3	Aug 8 [4]
Rachell, Genell, Hanna no Haley no Rachell	Rachell, Genell, Hanna no Haley no Rachel S.	Rachell S., Hanna, Genell no Haley no Rachell	Haley, Rachell, Genell no Rachel S. no Hanna	Cancelled	Genell, Rachel, Rachell, Haley no Hanna
1. Journals 2. Centering What are we doing? 3. collaboration Warm-up / Tech. Rel. in space Presence Interaction Discussed women in society Hw! Find a myth Bring in precious object	1. Rachell Journal Warm-up grid work Rel to time to space Interaction (emotions) Do something to someone Respond to other person (trio)	Warm-up 1. Story of object 2. Move across floor, no standing verbs (struggle) 3. Wallpaper (1,2) 4. told myths no movement	1. Haley Notebook Explore trauma Warm-up 1. From a myth Haley - phoenix 2. arm (shelf) exploration 3. Res. to person conversations (siblings / not/daugh) 4. muddy bracelet		Warm-up Improv - verbs phrase - combine Reviews wallpaper 3. sitting portrait circle → line
women archetypes		Handstand Dorothea Tanning Yellow wallpaper	- muddy bracelet		Check in there Warm-up 1. Balance/ crumble (doubt) 2. 3 paths (searching) 3. groove 4. put together Shaping Rachell self-port. Francesca - define self, Zen * palette show + tell
					Francesca
					Beached Hofesh/Schechter paper/clothes Francesca clothesline
					Aug 15 [7] No rehearsal

6		7		8		9		10	
Aug 22	Aug 24	Aug 29	Aug 31	Sept 5	Sept 7	Sept 12	Sept 14	Sept 19	Sept 21
No Rachell Julia, Nadya Haley, Rachel S. Genell, Hanna	No Nadya, Rachell, Rachel Hanna Haley, Genell, Julia	No Haley	No Genell	Rachel S. - No Genell - No	No Haley (gestures)	No - Haley No - Julia	everyone 1st time	everyone	everyone
Warm-up	Warm up	Blue Notes what struggling w/ on personal evolution? gave dancers 45-1 hour went around checked in likes/don't likes	Warm up	6-8 pm no warm-up	Warm-up	Warm-up	Warm-up	Warm-up	Warm up
1. Drift flocking 2. trios, sand - pass - play, keepaway 3. sit portrait add female archetypes	drift add collect 2. intuitive drift - interrupt unfinished 3. duets Genell/Julia Haley/Rachell		1. Island solos (build & destroy) 2. Bouy phrase 3. History in body 4. Interaction (emotions) <u>Check out</u>	1. Revisit Island solos develop 2. History body 3. List of key words, group list, assign word, circle gesture	1. gestures essential states dialogue interactive relationship	2. Bouy phrase add on 3. Wallpaper 1d 2 *add on 3 (Rachel S.) 4. Solos - island - history - myth - struggle 5. History of your feet	1. Drift improv 2. Bouy phrase add on 3. Wallpaper 4. gestures w/ walk 5. sit portrait 6. solos <u>✓ out</u>	1. Improv grid uncertain/ certainty 2. Solos 1-3 motifs to share <u>✓ out</u>	- Wallpaper - walking gestures - bouy The wall improv * Solos Talk about environment images Brooke Shaden ↓ Bea & Ted Losers
aching (drift)			Dorothea Tanning				Frida Kahlo	"Every little piece"	

FALL						Meeting Brad 10/28 Notes		Showing Nov. 2 8:30pm	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9/28	10/2	10/5	10/9	10/16	10/23	10/30	10/30	10/30	Nov. 2
* discuss set/prop ideas ① Wall paper add phrase 4 ② Moving wall w/ Haley ③ Boy phrase	personal prove warm-up ① clothesline first breath ② Wall paper add # 5 + throwing Haley/Rachel angels on floor swimming clothes ③ solos * potential ideas, how to frame	videotape solos ② types of hugs ③ Haley blind walk	cancelled	12-4pm (4 hours) Haley 1pm Genell gone ① Presence walk back w/ Rachel's motif ② Balloons, first breath floor/standing - contest trio quartet ③ Solos Julia, hip dance/mirror story boyfight Haley - handstand Hanna - paper/solo w/ Genell	Warm up 30 min ① Review wall paper add Julia's phrase ② solos Rachel/duet list! Nadya - pool etc. ③ balloon - presence	prep for showing 2 hours prep 2 hours Review, develop	appendix order Feedback questions ↓ duet ↓ notes email to cast.	List of Main phrases Objects - themes List of exercises done from book clothes "like a treasure hunt and a dissection" Bits and Pieces	Brooke Shaden * Nadya Pool

⑥ Nov. 6	⑦ Nov. 13	⑧ Nov. 20	⑨ Nov. 27	⑩ Dec 3	⑪ Dec 8	⑫ Dec 11 / 15
<p>Dresses Julia-go home</p> <p>① Nesting</p> <p>② Bouy phrase don't like, give to Nadra?</p> <p>③ disussed feedback</p> <p>List of what we have, ideas</p>	<p>No Haley/Rachell → develop material</p> <p>→ Bouy phrase in pool</p>	<p>Videotape ②</p> <p>Scenes</p> <p>* Julia's solo - costume - clothes - music</p> <p>Try random structure</p> <p>Hate it!</p> <p>Don't even watch.</p>	<p>No Rehearsal Thanksgiving</p> <p>see Notes, reflection!</p>	<p>* Danzone video of D Mercy</p>	<p>schedules project feel proud lists</p> <p>family portrait</p> <p>Slumber party</p> <p>Fav. dance</p> <p>theme notes</p> <p>connect ↓ Badlegs in audience</p> <p>* Rhi costumes Lanae Katzy</p>	<p>Script Ballcoos</p> <p>kissing smother Runt hug</p> <p>drift in pool</p> <p>foxtrot</p> <p>sitting</p> <p>Hanna Rachell</p> <p>Sisters duet</p> <p>Rachell - teal dress yellow coat scarf sheet blue nightgown</p> <p>Hanna solo video</p> <p>try to give her moment not right.</p>

Winter										
	①		②		③	Committee #2 1/4-5pm	④		⑤	
1/8(Sun)	1/13(F)	1/15(Sun)	1/20	1/22	1/27	1/29	2/3	2/5	2/10	2/12
2-4pm	12-2p	2-4pm	12-2pm	2-4pm	12-2pm	1-2pm Hanna 2-4pm Rachell 4-5 showing Christ/Margo	12-2pm	2-4pm	12-1pm Costumes Mon 2/10	2-5pm
① Nesting builds fruity each one featured ② Show & Tell ③ add on for top ④ sitting por trait (music) ideas; music, Halcy solo w/ straitening up Nadya pool, purse, bite balloons	① sit portrait laughed possible ending* ② Foxtrot so's house Halcy ③ sisters 1d 2 ④ school- family portrait (sisters) ⑤ halcyon w/ Nadya Pool/balloon Halcy emotional portrait	① Balloons 1d 2 ② Fam portrait ③ Foxtrot, dan line ④ sit portrait	① Nesting ② Fam port. ③ Julia, solo ④ Hanna/ Rachell ⑤ sit portrait	* ? * structure w/ post its visual layout	① Wall paper ② Nesting ③ sisters ④ Foxtrot walk through structure, props list of costume ideas first page scene list * costume * Shop	prep for showing * working title Wunderkammer Notes, ! - layering	Nesting/play Julia/ clothes Run inside pile Jenell solo, add pick up clothes	Fam portrait Nesting/play Hanna/Rachell * dancing (girls layer) Julia/clothes Nadya pool Jenell solo, Rachel rep: x Fam port 2 Rachell stay pile on clothes Wall paper Rachell general order	Wall paper/ (nesting) Foxtrot Portrait	Wall paper Rough sisters Nadya solo Rough Rehearsal! try out yellow/ green petticoats

6		7			8				
	Showing				Showing 3				
2/13/2/15	2/17 Fri	2/19	2/20	2/22	2/24 (Fri)	2/26 Sun	3/1	3/2	3/3
12-1pm Nadya-solo w/ Julia & (M) Halley	Halley & Nadya → Structure transitions	<input type="checkbox"/> Halley 1-2 <input type="checkbox"/> Reh. 2-4 <input type="checkbox"/> Showing 4-5 Brad Devon/LC <input type="checkbox"/> Ceedback Devon & LC	Mtg Brad Kostromy Brad Call Margo Tues 21.10pm	2nd Mtg	edit nesting 2 & sisters tighten up	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-4 reh. <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 showing #3 feedback w/ Dancers xtra notes emailed from Brad <input type="checkbox"/> LC see for lighting	tech <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10pm	<input type="checkbox"/> Reh. 12-2pm <input type="checkbox"/> dress 6-10pm photos <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Notes	<input type="checkbox"/> set-up display 5pm <input type="checkbox"/> warm-up Run.

I/P

Duets

- ticking
1. Julia/Janeel - shifting Rocks
add standing
 2. Hanna/Rachel - Repel
magnets
 3. Haley/Rachel - How feeling

↙ sisters duet
↘ handstand
competition

I

Drift (Improv)

- (+) collect
- in body / out body
- internal / external focus

~~by~~ motifs Fore shadow
pop (collect them)

group ameba
* in Pool?

I

Tumbling Journeys

SL → SR
never reach standing

guardians

crumbling, tumbling,
falling, climbing, reaching
searching, shedding
Fire tunnel

I/P

Gestures

1. gesture sequence
2. dialogue (2s)
3. Interactive
transform dialogue
4. 4 duet -
gesture sequence (loop)
evokes relationship

List (see notes)

(used)	Surrealism
build	shed
arrival	transparent
interrupt	imprint
collage	crumble
exposure	shift
collecting	

non-attachment
emptiness
Personal Histories
important
people in life -
childhood
shaped you
Me - 3-4 little
movements
→ ? , watch
improvise
write what like/dont
- decide → list of
improvs to
repeat

- Question(s)
- Observe
(Notes)
- List of Improvs
to repeat
↓ * perform in
diff ways
(fragments)
- Put things
together (layering)
- Scenes
Improv, list of
what could come
next
(Videotape)
watches video w/
dancers

- personal
(individual)
evolution
What experiences
/ events have
shaped who you
are?
* History (Injury)
traumas, handicap
What are you
struggling with
as an individual
self evolution?

* clothesline - first breath → Enter, image (text), Exit
 * wallpaper # 4 * clothes - sheet
 add looking for shirt

Certainty / uncertainty > duet

Sunday : Oct 2 / Week 1

McJagger Personal Groove
 Runway
 Bedroom Jam/club

Julia

* Private Hip Dance (Mirror)

Genell

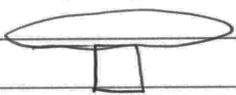
* Hugs (story) how you like to hug
 Hug people walking by?

* Heart

Haley

Running + Falling - First Breath
 Drift, Shifting arms (Stillness)

Rachel S.

* Black Stool floating

 wall

Rachell

□ frame → How photo graph self
 Paper Roll - outline body parts
 make paper dress

□ Hair monologue



Hanna

* certainty / uncertainty

* paper words
 collect - let go - destroy
 scramble

Nadya

- Risk to safe

finny
 * messy angel
 - blurry
 - free
 - out of control
 - unstable, shifting

Themes

Perspective

build & destroy

islands

drift

Process (revealing)

collage

surrealism

exposure

breath (balloons)

Women

walls

shedding/letting go

self portrait

struggle

who am I?

Relationships

certainty & uncertainty

movement themes

new legs

hanging

forward / back

defining wall

personal groove

hugs

Rooting

mirrors

shedding / ripping / tearing

dis-jointed

gesture.

Rachel - idealism, solo w/ duet,

Rachel - Photo set-up duets, Haley (Hair)

Haley - handstand, fall/pass out, tied in chair

Jenell - solo, duet Julia / Nadya Hugs ↑

Julia - mirror - hip dance/story, solo phrase, duet - Jen

Nadya - Baby pool, messy angel, hair → Proas-stuck

Hanna - Paper, certainty/an, father rate

anxiety

transcendence
transformation

Release

Darkness → hope
endurance
resilient

Through the struggle
how do you move through struggle.
moments of hope, tenderness, laughter
support, love.

Why did you dance?
will

What is it about dance that keeps
you coming back?

people, community, evolution,
challenge, expression, joy,
presence

Opera

Hanna choreographing
→ what's precious?

Rachel
Jenell
Julia



clothing
sinking
islands
buried

Jenell's
face
back walk
how to
get up
opera
buried
slow movement



underdressed
trying on clothes → who will I be?
who am I?
motivated emerge → showing
from the crowd → island buoy

Hanna lit in silence
Reading dropping tearing
considering thinking
gets up leaves turns on music
re-enters lights up slowly

Week 6 #Try on white dresses

① Warm-up

② Buoy, drift
emerge from clothing

Hanna

gather
stable - roll - reach
lay down, under head turn

Julia

Nadya

circle - arms
cross arms on shoulder

Rachel

covered resting
up - snow angel
safe sit
clothes under skirt
- Proper dress off
arms

Bird <

Jenehl

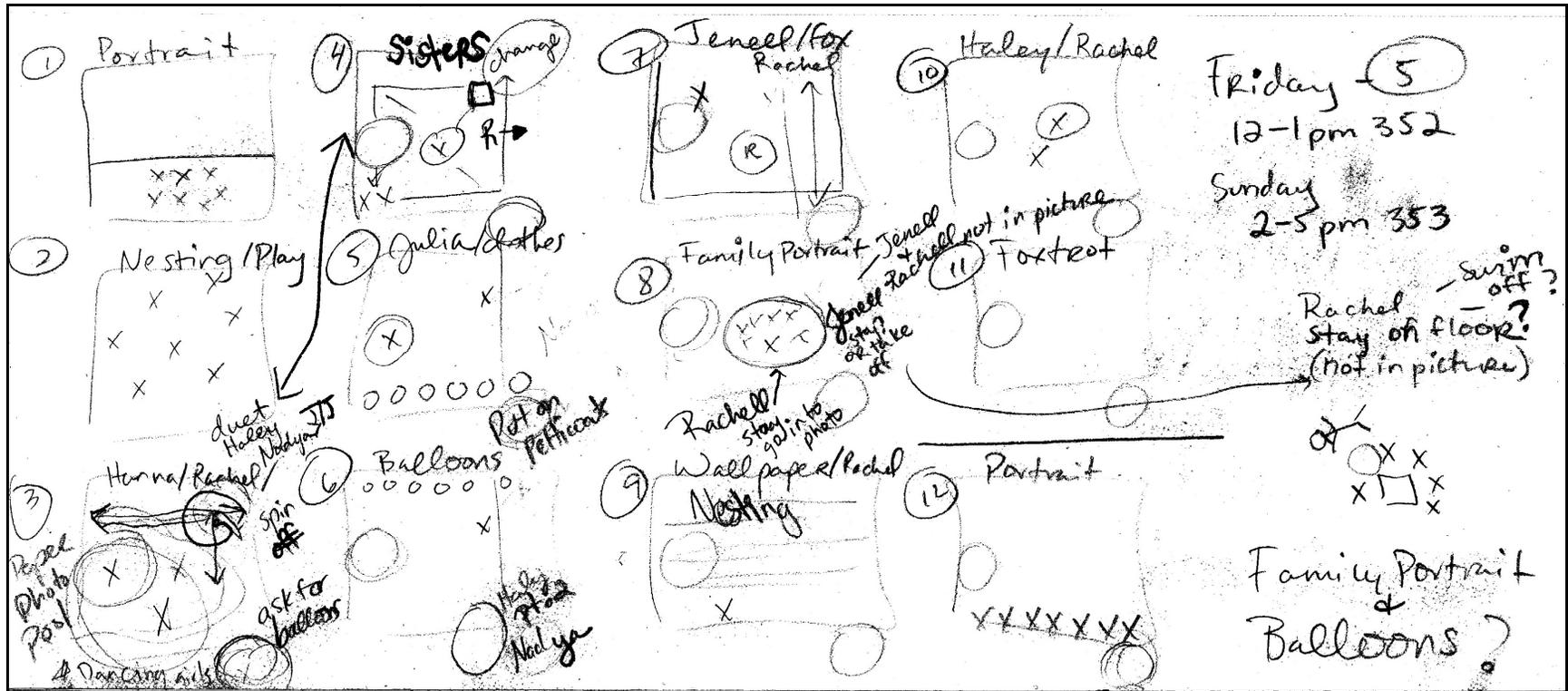
first stretch
peel up - skeleton
pile up - be as high up gather skirt

Rachell

clothes under, cover head can't see
eyes covered exist

Haley

- 1 - arching / reaching
- 2 - cover dress / hollow back embrace circle
- 3 - swoop back
- 4 - Phoenix reach reach down eyes fingers



Rite of Spring

Use of staging

- diagonal entrances

ok meet

Jenell
push
Nadya
USwing

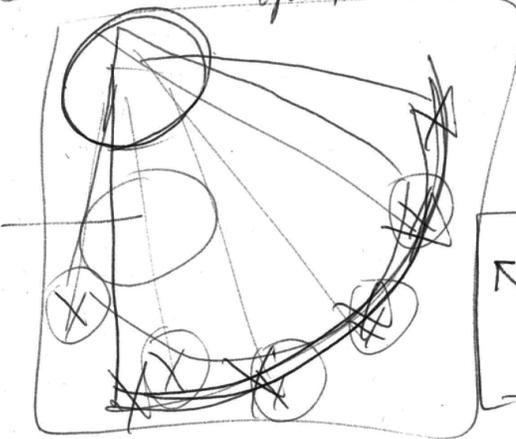
Rachel, chair
2x fall, chair
w/ papers



push her on
diagonal
walk off

Wallpaper - 1st phrase
Ripple add in wall roll
Julia solo

Rachel - Put Paper
on her @ end

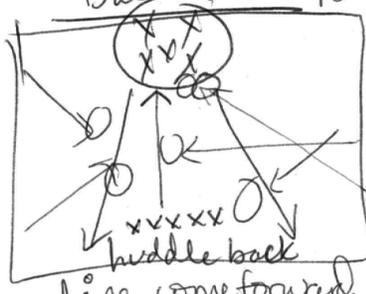


enter as line is in front
Jenell walk off
w/ clothes
put on white petticoat
do solo w/ clothes → shedding

Haley sit
on diagonal
→ extend 3rd
solo to
apron
(arms)

diagonal
Julia
exit

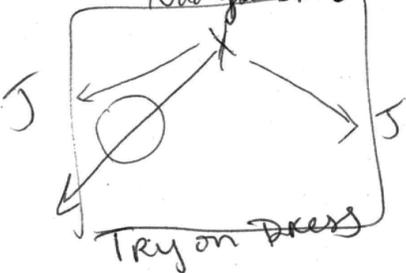
Balloons (Ref. nesting
piles?)



secret
Keep
facing
walk
back

line come forward
close together
spread back

Nadya exit



Try on Dress

Week 8 Notes

"Wunderkammer"
2/26/12

Portrait (Intermission) - Cover Rachel w/ furs?

change direct. after Haley

1. Nesting/Play

- change face back diagonal for flight
- Rachell leave a little later (exit-how?)
- work on timing (fall, etc.)
- Haley quick change (skips?) - more child-like

Nadya Hanna

2. Hanna and Rachel/ Haley collect balloons-pool/Nadya (Julia/Jenell)

- Hanna - Rachell put on yellow Sacket

*Try pink dress

- Nadya, ending, entrance diagonal (run paper, *need second pile?) exit?
- Flasher play w/ face - enter asap

3. Julia/clothes

- formation of change) curve
- Julia facings?
- Jenell how exit?

4. Haley solo "Velgatta" (pool)/Balloons

- enter 2 poopies in audience
- entrance/body - chair half in pool? - diag ↓
- balloon formation

*music? w/ humming?
drill w/ partners & w/ Rachel
*add in wall ripple

5. Jenell solo/Rachel solo/ Pick-up/Portrait

- enter sooner (try w/ clothes on) skirt shed & fall
- Rachell repetition
- Foxtrot feet/humming

put on white skirt

6. Wallpaper/Rachell Portraits/Haley solo

- stillness in sheet
- Rachell portraits/diag. pathway - sheet
- put clothes & paper on Rachel? put on Rachel

7. Foxtrot (Haley/Rachel)

- Haley (fall in X bring skirt up?) legs
- drill → faces
- Haley run into apron, cry/scream?

Sitting Portrait (bow) - set spots, lights fade as scream

Hair?

APPENDIX D

DANCERS' RESPONSES

Questions

1. How do you/did you feel about this process? Was this process challenging? If so, in what ways, elaborate.
2. What suggestions would you give if you were to be involved in a similar process in the future? To the director? To other dancers?
3. Any additional comments, feelings, thoughts, perspectives, anecdotes, funny memories, experiences, etc. you would like to share with me and/or the group?

Responses

Dancer #1

1. This process was indescribable, you really had to feel it, but I will do my best to put some words to it.

It was wonderful connecting with the woman. Sharing our stories, lives, and moments together. There was drama, there was difficulty, there was breakthrough, there was warmth, there was crying, there was laughing, there was weakness, there was strength. There was the power of presence. These things were shared and discovered verbally, and silently: through conversations, through motion, and through stillness. It was such a great challenge. There were days I came to rehearsal and parts of my heart, and who I am was closed off, intentionally. Some days there were parts of me that just didn't want to be opened. This work however, called for complete vulnerability and openness. So each rehearsal I needed to force myself to open up those locked up places. Not only open verbally but also open with where I was willing to be directed in movement studies. I was not able to close off bits and pieces of myself and just process through and deal with the parts of me I wanted to or that were easy. We were called to have 100% of who we were in that moment present!! That was very difficult at times.

The solo I worked on and Amy helped me develop, was the most painful of all. Every time I did it, it felt like my body was a wet rag and I was tightly wringing it out of all its pain and emotion and breath. If I used one word to describe the solo it would be... uncomfortable. Even just thinking about the feel of the floor on my skin in that solo makes me irritable as I write this now. That is how detailed the emptying of ourselves became, I could sense it in the pores of my skin. Finding the place I mentally needed to be each time we ran the piece, or participated in any part of the process, was challenging every time. What was uncomfortable, painful, or inspiring one day or moment differs from the next. Being able to find and access whatever you call the place that I went to each time I danced any section of the piece was always different. It forced me to deeply feel constantly and to be present!

I think that is one of the hardest things in life is being present, especially being present constantly and with such depth. It is wearing; emotionally, physically, and

spiritually. At the same time it is the single most rewarding thing in this life. The breath it brings, the openness and the newness is so amazing. Times that by eight people investing in the same research/exploration as well as just about as many structural layers and topics as you can imagine and the possibilities are just amazing. It is so difficult to wring out what is most real, most true, and most pure. It is difficult to look at myself so "naked" but revealing it with a group of woman I did not know well, that is even more difficult. Difficult, but even more then that it is freeing and it is powerful.

I am so grateful for all these things I have briefly shared. I am grateful for the sisters I gained through the piece, and for Amy's research, time, questions and heart that directed and facilitated the process.

2. The only thing I can really suggest is more time, more opportunities to explore and to share, and really choosing people for these projects that can compose themselves but equally are willing to be broken and messy.

3. Amy is such a wise, thoughtful, and strong woman. Her heart billows with love and attention towards those who she works with. What a privilege it was to work with someone who can challenge, demand, and lead that equally can love, help and walk beside each one of us. We talked a lot about Pina and her discoveries, and explorations and ideas. We were/are all inspired by them. But this is not Pina's work this is Amy's work, so powerful, layered, and integrated. And it is just one tiny cabinet full of wonders of a greater exploration that is in motion and happening now as I write this. That is the most exciting thing of all...I feel like we are still dancing, learning, opening ourselves up, and striving to be deeply present. This lasts as any expression from a person's depths should. This last because it is something that is lost yet humanity depends on it! Brokenness, openness, and laughter!!

Dancer #2

1. After working with you for SSDC 2011 I knew that you liked to make changes throughout your choreographic process, which made the piece grow and become more and more crafted. I was honored to be in that piece as much as I was to be involved in her thesis project. I loved watching the piece grow and try experiments throughout the rehearsal. Like popping water balloons with my mouth and wearing a crazy costume.

I think my biggest challenge with this process was that I came in to the rehearsals a little late after being gone for the summer. It's not that I was "left out" but I was a little behind and relationships between dancers were already forming. I loved every dancer that was in the piece and I was happy to get to know them better and more deeply. Most people know I'm shy and quiet, which makes making friends slightly difficult. I think this is one thing that intimidated me when joining a group that I didn't know very well at the start. I think this piece challenged me more than any piece I have been in. Not so much in the movement but in the intellectual process that it required. Being myself is really hard. Letting peers know that I'm having a rough day, my family history, or even my personal life is really difficult. I haven't even told my best friend some of the stories I shared in rehearsal.

2. I don't know if I have any suggestions. I think you created the piece in the best way possible for what you were trying to achieve. It was finely crafted even if we had to remove bits to make the time/length cut :)

3. Your positive feedback was really important to me and really struck me every time you would bring a card or letter with quotes or images that reminded you of a quality in each of us. Your words are full of love and it was necessary to create a safe space for each of the dancers to be able to share and dance together. I really loved being a part of you thesis even if it was a really big challenge for me personally.

Dancer #3

1. I found many aspects of the process of this piece to be very fulfilling. The explorative nature with which we, the dancers, generated material allowed for me to tap into a lot of emotions. It allowed for personal exploration of our individual troubles, thoughts, and feelings. Many of the activities were also very joyful in nature, and felt much like a return to childhood. The diversity of this process played a key role in what made it so enjoyable to be a part of. However, the diversity was also what made it challenging to be a part of. There was such a wide range of activities; it was hard to get a grasp on what the piece was while in process. It was also hard to spend so much time on particular segments, only to eventually discard them by the end. The piece was definitely much more about the process than it ever was about the final performance, as the entirety of the generated material could never all fit into one performance.

2. I do not have many suggestions, as I enjoyed the process so much. Nevertheless, it would have been nice to be able to devote more time to the segments that were eventually performed, so that by the time we were on stage, we felt as though those segments had been worked through to their full potential.

3. This piece feels like a dream. It was so dreamlike to be a part of, and all the audience members I spoke to felt as though they had just watched a 30-minute dream sequence. It had a very surreal quality that seemed to transform the space while we were within it. I have never been in another piece that did this in quite the same way. Immediately following the second performance of it, I actually had dreams about the piece as well, usually the nesting scene to some capacity. It was almost as if we had created a tangible world that could be revisited. It's funny to think back on our first rehearsal with just Rachel, Jenell and myself, when we were walking the grid in different patterns. The piece developed and changed so much. I'm glad I got to be a part of it.

Dancer #4

1. I feel extremely grateful for the process that we used because of the freedom we had to explore. We were able to explore movement openly with spontaneity and curiosity and without a feeling of an agenda. Amy provided a safe place for us to explore more than just movement. What was so exciting and fulfilling about the process was that we were stretching and expanding our creative boundaries because Amy prompted us to source our movement from the emotional, psychological, mental, personal, cultural, family and

elemental (wind, water, spirals, etc.) realms. So there was a broad range of context and material. This provided something for everyone. I felt that each of us shone in different ways and were challenged in different ways. Which provided a rich experience for me as a dancer to notice and observe the other dancers and how they dealt with the process. This helped me to introspect into my own ability to dive within myself and peel away the layers of our culture and of the typical dance culture to find a deeper source for expression. Amy created an environment and a tone that was open and safe in the sense that I knew and felt that nothing was right or wrong. Amy was looking for a sense of aliveness and honesty in that we were doing. Her perspective helped me to see movement and dance differently, to also look for what was alive in the dancer instead of their technique or even creativity. The process helped me start to see the rawness of human experience as beautiful.

I always felt excited to come to rehearsal because I never knew what we were going to do. I felt a sense of playfulness, oftentimes because we were prompted to play. We were also prompted to dive deep, to get awkward, to fight, to play nice, to explode and to shrink small, to be ourselves and to be someone else, to yell and to be quiet, to be proper and to let it all hang out. I loved being prompted to do things I'd very done before, to move it ways I'd very moved before and to think in ways I hadn't thought before. Eventually this started to create a deep sense of liberation within me in the rehearsal space.

I was challenged by the process. This is part of what I loved. It wasn't comfortable, yet it always felt safe and held by the container Amy created. I felt a sense of shaking off the shackles that bound my pure expression, which can sometimes be a painful uncovering. I was challenged to be real, to be vulnerable, to dive into places within myself that I have never tried to source movement from before. When I went into this phase of the process I often times felt tired, angry, and sad. It also was extremely challenging for me to "choreograph" something to share on stage from these vulnerable places of my life experience. It sometimes felt contrived to put the movement into a score that I could do again and again. On the other hand, I felt that it helped to heal the broken places within me by allowing them an outlet of expression. So I found that each time I performed the movement, the emotional charge behind it began to lessen. I also heard this feedback from Amy.

2. It's hard to suggest something different because suggesting something different is almost contrary to the nature of the process, which was exploration. The only suggestion I thought of was to videotape more of the process. The down side of this would be that I think the dancers would not feel as liberated to explore and feel safe going to vulnerable places. The upside is that we could remember and record more of the brief profound moments that could be developed later. Maybe the choreographer could set up a video recorder that could run the whole time that could be out of sight and eventually out of mind.

I would suggest to the dancers to throw away any previous concept of what it means to be part of a dance piece and even what it means to dance. I would encourage them to throw away any attachment to results or outcome. I would encourage them to find ways of getting into their sense of childlike exploration. Maybe the choreographer could find some games or activities at the beginning of the process to activate the child

self of the dancers. Although I feel that we did access those places through many activities.

3. I could go on and on I'm sure. I loved all of the moments that we shared and the beginning of the piece, the artwork, the conversations, so many rehearsals of pure exploration before we began to form the piece. I also enjoyed forming the piece. I loved all that we gained that there is no record of, no video or performance of. The record is in our bodies, in our hearts, in our cells. It's a living memory, and a transformation beyond words. Thank you.

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