

DANCE/VIDEO MASHUP AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC PROCESS

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process

This thesis document articulates the development of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. Prior to this movement thesis I determined a list of goals I would aim to achieve throughout the exploration of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. The goals aimed to develop a choreographic process that sampled movement from videos found online, create a website that documented the creative process of developing a screendance, realize an artistic need and develop clear guidelines for future choreographers.

This document narrates and evaluates the creative process of developing guidelines for Dance/Video Mashup and clearly articulates the guidelines for future researchers and choreographers. The supplemental file attached allows readers to view the screendance, *Somniloquies*, created through Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As a choreographer, I have been given many tools to aid me in my creative endeavors. These tools have helped develop my aesthetic as a choreographer and question traditional choreographic processes in order to cater to my own artistic goals and interests. After engaging in my first screendance process in 2011 at the University of the Arts with video artist and choreographer, Jillian Peña, I was introduced to a whole new set of choreographic tools that would forever change the way I consider a choreographic process. Within the six-week residency, Peña introduced me to the use of a camera in the rehearsal process and challenged the way I saw dance in rehearsal and the way I think of performance.

As I continued to develop what I learned in my first screendance experience with Peña, I found ways to personalize my creative process and explore my curiosities. The use of the Internet to communicate, generate ideas, and share work became a common theme in the development of my choreography and sparked my curiosity about using the Web to create movement. In order to examine this process, I reflected on influential artists and scholars in the field of screendance to root my creative explorations.

In the first volume of the *International Journal of Screendance*, Claudia Kappenberg states that “the logic of copy” (2010, 27) inherent in screendance, “rests on the idea of borrowing or copying rather than making something “new,” that is, the incorporation of everyday objects and images into works of art or the copying of already existing works of art” (2010, 27). With this statement I began to wonder if anything is “new” when it comes to making art? I am, of course, not the first person to ask this

question about appropriation in art making or dance making and began to explore this idea further.

The innovative screendance, *Merce by Merce by Paik* created by Merce Cunningham, Nam June Paik and John Cage in 1975 explores choreography through a different lens: the camera. Although Cunningham, Paik and Cage are not the first to explore dance made for the camera, Roger Copeland describes their innovative ability to explore space and time as, “The collapsing of distinctions between foreground/background, inside/outside” (1988, 23). *Merce by Merce by Paik* is an early example of using layered video to portray one single idea.

Jillian Peña adds the next layer to *Merce by Merce by Paik* in her screendance, *Merce by Merce by Paik by Peña by Pessagno* by layering her own movement and voice to the original in the editing suite and creates a whole “new” work of art with found materials. Peña’s ability to access and download the historical video and layer her interpretation is an example of the vast library of inspiration or footage via the Internet.

In her illustration of David Hinton’s 2003 screendance, *Snow*, Claudia Kappenberg states that Hinton is able to create a deliberate blurring of “old” and “new” video footage to create a new aesthetic that “sits within this history and adds a choreographic perspective, bringing together archival film scenes from unrelated sources and appropriating them for its own choreographic purposes” (2010, 29). By sampling from found videos and sound from 1890-present day, Hinton challenges the traditional ideas of developing choreography.

Harmony Bench uses her article, *Screendance 2.0: Social Dance-Media*, to examine the dense category of dance/media and the inevitable hybrid of dance and video

on the World Wide Web and in popular culture. Like Hinton, Bench is questioning what it means to be a choreographer by exemplifying a choreographic approach attempted by Dance Theatre Workshop's 2009 experimental online-based work, *Twitter Community*. The project was designed to utilize the Twitter community by asking them to suggest movement prompts so the dancers could develop movement phrases based on their suggestions. Members of Dance Theatre Workshop responded to the Twitter movement prompts and posted each video response on their Twitter and YouTube pages. For example, a dancer obeys the literal movement translation of, "from fourth position parallel with left foot in front, saute off of both feet and land on left" and is featured in the first post on *Twitter Community's* YouTube page (Dance Theater Workshop, 2009). *Twitter Community* (Dance Theater Workshop, 2009) did not set with the intention to expand, connect or recreate the motifs after posting them. The project produced an experimental process-driven feeling and showed potential for development.

Alongside social media, the cultural phenomenon, YouTube, has played a major role in the way dance is presented and shared. Unlike the parody videos that pollute YouTube, Natalie Bookchin's screendance, *Mass Ornament* (2009), borrows images of women dancing in their homes to explore the eruption of "self-representation" (Sprague 2012, 64) as a result of YouTube. With this work, Bookchin challenges the original purpose of the YouTube videos and allows the observer to view the dancing women in a new way.

Unlike Bookchin, who directly samples videos posted on YouTube by combining them in post-production, Harmony Bench examines another type of mashup that can be utilized via YouTube. Bench analyzes viral videos and the subcultures that follow them

in her article, *Screendance 2.0: Social Dance-Media* (2010). Bench looks to Beyonce's *Single Ladies* (2008) video to exemplify the idea of *bodily mashup*. Like Michael Jackson's 1982 hit, *Thriller*, Beyonce's *Single Ladies* (2010) is recreated step for step as a, "mash-up composed through bodily movement rather than in the editing suite" (Bench, 204) by people all over the world.

After examining the above scholars and artists unique ways of creating choreography by utilizing filming/editing techniques, web-based portals and social media in my preliminary research, I arrived at a need for further development of the idea of *bodily mashup*. Within this idea, I wanted to develop a creative process that examines how we create movement with video found online through *bodily mashup*, receive feedback online, present movement on screen and make it accessible to an online audience. This thesis document will illustrate my creative research and the development of a process called, *Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process*. I will further discuss my purpose for this creative research in the following pages.

Purpose Statement

This movement project developed the creative process of *Dance/Video Mashup* by working through a choreographic process inspired by Dion McGregor's, *The Dream World Of Dion McGregor (He Talks In His Sleep)* (McGregor 1968). The *Dance/Video Mashup* is comprised of original choreography and movement samples from videos found online achieved through *bodily mashup*. Each layer of the choreographic process is available on a website where viewers had the opportunity to leave feedback and offer guidance throughout the development of the *screendance*.

Goals

Prior to this movement thesis project I determined a list of goals I would aim to achieve throughout the development of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

1. Develop a choreographic process that samples movement from videos found online through bodily mashup and contribute an innovative approach to choreography.
2. Create a website to document the creative process and provide a platform for feedback and discussion.
3. Realize an artistic need and remain connected to it throughout the development of the process and the screendance itself.
4. Develop clear guidelines for future choreographers interested in replicating Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

Definition of Terms

Screendance

As stated by Harmony Bench in a paper presented at the American Dance Festival in 2006, “Dances made for film, video, and television commonly find themselves grouped together under the label ‘screendance,’ even though the techniques used to produce and transmit these mediated dance forms may differ” (Bench 2006, 89). Like Bench, I will use the term screendance to refer to the broad category of dance made to be viewed on a screen. There are numerous terms used to describe dance made for the screen including *video dance* and *dance for the camera*, however, I most identify with the

term *screendance* for my process of Dance/Video Mashup because all aspects of the work creatively and logistically (including feedback) were generated with the idea that the end product would be viewed on a screen.

Bodily Mashup

I will use the term *bodily mashup* as defined by Harmony Bench in her paper, *Screendance 2.0: Social Dance-Media* wherein she states that, “mashup composed through bodily movement rather than in an editing suite” stands alone as an approach to referencing video material in a choreographic experience as opposed to postproduction editing as the sole mashup technique (Bench, 2010, under “Viral Choreographies”). Bodily mashup can be utilized in many forms including learning a dance from an online video or directly referencing movement that has been previously created for a separate creative work.

Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process

I will use the phrase *Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process* when referring to the process I developed through this creative thesis research. Dance/Video Mashup is the choreographic process utilized when a choreographer sources from videos found online to develop choreography by combining movements into a series of layered gestures, characters and patterns. The “mashup” created is that of bodily mashup as opposed to “mashup” created in the editing suite. The term is an extension of Bench’s idea of “mashup composed through bodily movement” (Bench, 2010, under “Viral Choreographies”). Dance/Video Mashup is utilized as a creative process to develop new movement as opposed to mimicking or replicating exact movements found online or directly sourcing in the editing suite.

Layering

In order to illustrate the multiple layers of movement borrowed through bodily mashup within Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process, I rely on the term *layering* to describe one of the steps within the process. Within this step, I select movements, characters, settings, costumes, sounds, essence or phrases from videos found online to inspire choreography. The step is repeated multiple times, creating layers with the movements, characters, settings, costumes, sounds or phrases and resulting in dense research based choreography. As the choreographer, I decide how many layers are needed to achieve an interesting phrase or motif and use this process of layering to develop all choreography for Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

Delimitations

In order to explore my aesthetic as a choreographer, this movement thesis was designed to utilize accessible tools. The dancers and I operated video recording devices including iPads, iPhones, computer cameras and an HD video camera to document the rehearsal process. I utilized Instagram, YouTube and Wix website developer to provide an easy viewing experience for my online audience. These videos were not as high quality as the final screendance, but were sufficient for their use as documentation and provided a simple format for uploading videos.

In order to concentrate on my role as the choreographer utilizing video as a choreographic tool, I filled the role of the choreographer throughout the development of the creative process. I worked in collaboration with a videographer I work with

regularly, Robert Uehlin, for the final filming of our Dance/Video Mashup screendance and utilized his expertise throughout the development of this screendance.

As I examined methods I used throughout my choreographic process, I looked to Douglas Rosenberg's essay, *Video space: A site for choreography* (2000) to define my decision to collaborate with a videographer throughout my process. Rosenberg exposes the obstacles many artists face when creating screendance due to the relationships needed to create screendance because of the technical qualities of both videography and choreography. According to Rosenberg, the lack of videographers who are choreographers and the lack of choreographers who are proficient in video technology and editing creates an obstacle for the advancement of screendance. I acknowledge this statement and decided to condense my responsibilities as the choreographer and collaborate with a videographer.

Due to financial constraints, I developed a website with the free online website developer, Wix (wix.com), where all rehearsal videos and drafts of Dance/Video Mashups could be viewed and used as a space to view the work and receive feedback throughout the process. Although I am aware of more advanced video technology that could be used for documentation of the rehearsal process, including a more advanced website and more technical recording devices, I decided to limit myself to these tools in order to enhance the idea of accessibility of a Dance/Video Mashup and its audience.

I also acknowledge the possibility of a partnership between live dancers and video on a proscenium stage, but did not utilize this option for this thesis research because of the nature of it existing for an online audience. After the completion of this research, I do

acknowledge that Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process can be utilized to create choreography for the proscenium stage.

Significance of Study

With this research, I look to offer a new approach to the creative process utilized in creating screendance. By exploring how video found and shared online can be used as part of a choreographic process, I will contribute this innovative research on Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process to further expand the tools used for creating dance via online sourcing.

Through this research, I investigated what we already know about the tools used to create web-based screendance as well as explored how we can use video sourced online as a tool to create screendance and online forums to receive feedback in a creative process. With the development of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process I hope to contribute an innovative way of creating movement that results in a unique aesthetic of screendance and choreographic works.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED WORK

As screendance continues to evolve into a subject of scholarly research, many creative and methodological ideas have been developed. Throughout the artistic development of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process, I referenced the ideas of many screendance scholars and video based choreographers. In this chapter, I will provide a narrative for my discoveries and interests that brought me to my initial curiosities for my creative process and continued to guide me throughout.

In the first volume of the *International Journal of Screendance*, Claudia Kappenberg discusses “the logic of copy” (2012, 27) inherent in screendance. According to Kappenberg, the logic of copy, like appropriation, is a tool that “rests on the idea of borrowing or copying rather than making something “new,” that is, the incorporation of everyday objects and images into works of art or the copying of already existing works of art” (2012, 27). I agree with Kappenberg that incorporating existing art or everyday objects results in appropriated art and in the terms of my research, a mashup. Within her article, Kappenberg highlights accessibility in appropriating preexisting works or objects because of YouTube and its inherent ability to, “thrive on traditions of cultural commenting and recycling and freely combine, appropriate, remake, remix, spoof and parody” (27). This technological advancement in appropriation is now known as “mashup.”

The idea of mashing found video in an editing suite to create a movement-based video or screendance is not a new idea. Claudia Kappenberg uses David Hinton’s screendance titled; *Snow*, to explore commonalities between appropriation art, found art,

and screendance. The work is made from found sounds, videos, and photos dating back to the 1890s. Kappenberg uses this illustration of screendance to exemplify the use of found materials to “re-use existing cultural clichés” (27) and create something new. She argues that the deliberate blurring of “old” and “new” creates a new aesthetic in screendance. She compares this to Duchamp’s ability to blur the line as to what was culturally constituted as art and change popular culture’s view of art as a whole.

Merce Cunningham, Nam June Paik, and John Cage’s collaborative and innovative screendance created in 1975 titled, *Merce by Merce by Paik* utilizes layering that had not yet been explored in screendance, thus creating a new aesthetic in screendance that would influence artists in years following. Mark Franko examines the connection between Cunningham, Duchamp, Paik, and Cage through their use of “readymade” art. Franko suggests that *Merce by Merce by Paik* was directly influenced by Duchamp’s “visual/verbal punning” (Franko, 2000, 212). For example, the video shows Cunningham using a technique often used by Duchamp; he questions the reality of where art should belong. Duchamp questioned what belonged in a museum by putting a urinal on exhibit and Cunningham questioned where a dancer should perform by layering the dancer’s image over changing landscapes on screen.

Roger Copeland describes Cunningham’s use of juxtaposing spatial planes and destruction of time in *Merce by Merce by Paik* as, “The collapsing of distinctions between foreground/background, inside/outside that is so fundamental to collage also results in a conflating of ‘before’ and ‘after’” (Copeland, 1988, 23). Cunningham utilized “mashup” through many forms of the word including video mashup and sound mashup by layering dancing images with landscapes and sampling interviews and conversations.

With these explorations, Cunningham was challenging classical dance making tools and impacting the way future artists would consider developing and presenting movement.

A direct example of the impact the *Merce by Merce by Paik* collaboration had on the progression of screendance is Jillian Peña's, *Merce by Merce by Paik by Peña by Pessagno* (Peña, 2010). In the video, Peña inserts her dancing image and voice to the already layered composition adding a new layer of meaning and arguably a new work of art.

Through video editing, she creates a place for herself in *Merce by Merce by Paik* that stands true to her artist statement where she says she desires “to generate a hyper-self-awareness in the viewers, who join the performance by gazing at their selves” (Jillian Peña, 2004-2013). Like many of her works, she plays with this “hyper-self-awareness” (Peña, 2004-2013, under “Statement”) and challenges the viewer to do the same. By multiplying her image or dancers images in many of her video works, she creates a surreal, hypnotic world in which we view the dance that is created by using cameras in the rehearsal process and post-production editing. In her 2010 screendance, *Merce by Merce by Paik by Peña by Pessagno*, Peña adds her voice to the conversation between Merce Cunningham and John Cage and her dancing image and gives the piece an entirely new meaning and arguably makes it an entirely new work of “found” art.

Viewing and making dance online comes in many different forms and the viewer's participation can be as active or passive as they wish. There are endless dance videos online ranging from people dancing in their bedrooms to evening length performances by the most renowned companies in the world. In her 2009 video, *Mass Ornament*, Natalie Bookchin borrows images of women dancing in their homes to create

a screendance that explores the cultural phenomenon of YouTube and the eruption of “self-representation” (Sprague 2012, 64) that occurs because of the ease in posting videos on the site. Unlike the parody videos that pollute YouTube, Bookchin creates a screendance from the images that comments on a larger theme and incorporates similar aesthetics from each video to choreograph a new work. The videos chosen were not made with the intention of becoming something larger but Bookchin’s end product could not have been created without the use of these found videos.

Another type of experience offered for the online dance experience was utilized by Dance Theatre Workshop’s experimental online-based work, *Twitter Community* (Dance Theater Workshop, 2009). The choreographer looks to the Twitter community to develop short movement phrases from the adjectives and prompts they post on Twitter. Participants made suggestions such as:

“*Make a snow angel (sans snow) one limb at a time. Roll your head & wrists in a circle. Listen*” (Twitter Community #4).

Dancers from Dance Theatre Workshop perform these prompts as solos and post them on their YouTube page. The movement does not connect from one video to the next, as the Twitter followers who developed the movement prompts were not asked for further feedback or suggestions on how their words translated to movement. The *Twitter Community* project set out to develop movement via online prompts and suggestions but did not continue to create an ongoing dialogue or develop the movement explorations that came from each prompt.

I chose to look to Dance Theatre Workshop’s *Twitter Community* as a jumping off point that expands social media’s involvement in a choreographic process and looks to an

online community not purely for inspiration but as an active voice in the creative development of a fully produced screendance. I wanted to explore the challenge of developing an online feedback community to follow my creative process and aid me in the development of a screendance that would ultimately be viewed online (more specifically, a computer screen). Like Dance Theatre Workshop's *Twitter Community*, I would look to my online feedback participants to inspire movement but I would also fill the gap I observed and develop a conversation between these participants and myself much like I would administer and use feedback from my peers in a live rehearsal setting.

Claudia Kappenberg states that screendance has not fully explored a creative process that is, "explicitly engaged with the incorporation and appropriation of existing cultural material" (2010, 27). The gap suggested by Kappenberg to create screendance that utilizes "existing cultural material" (27) is what I became interested in filling with the "cultural material" (27) found on YouTube. By exploring the ways these videos can be a source for movement in a choreographic process, I began to develop the beginning stages of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

Kappenberg suggests that, "A complication would make sense with regards to the relation between the copy and the unique presence within screendance practices and invite further reflection on the role of the body on screen as well as on spectatorship" (40). By exploring the "found" objects available to us through technology, including videos found online, I set out to explore a creative process that sources from the virtual past and create something new for the virtual present through Dance/Video Mashup. By considering "the role of the body on screen" (Kappenberg, 2010, 40) I explored a version of "copy" that was purely bodily as opposed to in the editing suite.

Duchamp and Cunningham inspired me to challenge where we source inspiration for art and the space in which art is viewed. I was inspired by their collaborations throughout my rehearsal process and worked to source movement that wasn't intended to be dance via YouTube. Their work also inspired me to consider the site in which the screendance would be viewed and the importance of knowing this detail from the start of the creative process. Their interpretation of "layering" inspired me to question the possibility of layering movement via bodily mashup as opposed to in postproduction editing.

After researching the above scholars and artists I was left with the intention to explore Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. I will detail my methodology in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Throughout the development of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process I was able to identify key points that helped me achieve the goals identified at the start of this research. After beginning with a pilot study to develop a clear purpose of research for this thesis, I arrived on the idea to explore Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process by creating four short screendances that could be viewed separately or as a whole inspired by the dream narrations of Dion McGregor (McGregor 1968). The four works are titled, “The Survey,” “Cup Your Spoon,” “16 Tickets,” “The Riddle” and “Somniloquies.” In this chapter I will recount each step employed during the development of each piece and how each section informed the guidelines of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. For the purpose of this document, I will recall the developments chronologically to communicate each point in the progress.

The Pilot Study

In the spring of 2013, I began exploring the creative process of Dance/Video Mashup with my dancers, Dakota Bouher and Robin Ewing. To begin the pilot rehearsals the dancers and I listened to Dion McGregor’s dream narration, *The Flight* (1968), to prompt online video searches for movement inspiration. I chose the dream narrations by Dion McGregor because of their ability to communicate emotion through nonlinear storylines and felt they would propel my creativity and help me achieve my artistic goals.

In the first rehearsals I did not guide the dancers in what to listen for in McGregor's dream narrations. I relied only on their first connections to McGregor's dream and asked them to move freely with their connections through improvisation.

We demonstrated our connection to the dreams by searching for videos to guide us in creating an embodied dreamscape. I decided to project the images in the studio so the dancers could improvise with the projected image. To utilize the idea of "mashing," each improvisation was recorded and uploaded to my computer. The recording was then projected in the studio and the dancers improvised with the first recording. The dancers were prompted to dance with their "selves" on the projected image and were then recorded for the next layer. We worked in this way for many layers and I developed choreography after watching each layer. As this process continued, I began to notice my disinterest in the projected image behind us as the movement being choreographed within the process of layering became more intricate. This led me to the next portion of the process that relied on creating choreography by layering YouTube videos through bodily mashup as opposed to *digital mashup* and the start of my thesis research.

Evaluating the Pilot Study

The pilot study began with testing my interest in layering movement sourced from video found online. Much of the beginning work revolved around improvising with a projected image to build the layered movement. After making the decision to create a choreographic process that focused on layering YouTube videos through bodily mashup, I was able to create a set of guidelines for Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process that can be viewed in Appendix A.

Developing an Artistic Beginning

After evaluating the pilot study I began developing an artistic beginning that would come to life by utilizing Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. Initially, I chose four of Dion McGregor's dream narrations to inspire online searches and the structure of the screendance. The screendance would be made up of four sections that could be watched separately or in any order to evoke the feeling of watching a series of dreams unfold.

McGregor's dream narrations inspired me because of their ability to capture the foggy essence of a dream story. I likened the loose narrative of a dream to my interest in making dance driven by the essence of a narrative or relationship rather than the narrative itself. I grew curious of the opportunity to combine the sensory driven narrative that McGregor creates through his dream speech and my choreography.

Like McGregor's dreams, I imagined the choreography to be nonsensical and therefore, the order was nonspecific. I would later decide that the order did, in fact, hold a sense of chronology. In order to show the development of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process I will narrate my experiences of making each section of the whole work, *Somniloquies*, chronologically.

Developing the Website for Dance/Video Mashup

Early in the process, I decided that the final video(s) would be intended for an online audience as opposed to a live audience in a theater space. When imagining the feedback process during the development of the work, I felt it was appropriate to have

viewers watch the progress on a computer screen since the screendance would eventually be viewed in that way.

Once the decision was made to have digital viewings, I noticed an opportunity to broaden my feedback audience. I developed a website where rehearsal videos were uploaded along with feedback prompts where viewers could leave feedback under each entry. I advertised the website with posters on the University of Oregon campus and a Facebook page. I wanted to guarantee weekly feedback with a feedback panel that I trust and admire in addition to the random feedback received, so I recruited three professional choreographers I have worked with in the past; Bryana Fritz (Brussels), Mathew Janczewski (Minneapolis) and Megan Mazarick (Philadelphia). This feedback panel not only provided consistent feedback but also elevated the quality of feedback and conversation within each feedback section and can be viewed in Appendix D.

As Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process developed, so did the website. I will refer to the developments made throughout the ten-week choreographic process by recalling developments made with each piece, “The Survey,” “Cup Your Spoon,” “16 Tickets,” “The Riddle” and “Somniloquies.” I will also chronologically illustrate the weeks that followed filming including editing and presenting throughout this chapter and in the Evaluations chapter of this document.

Rehearsal Process and Development

Creating “The Survey”

The Survey was the first section within *Somniloquies* I began working on with the dancers. Similar to the pilot study, I asked the dancers to listen to *The Survey* and write

down their initial connections to the dream including any characters, locations or relationships. I proceeded by developing their audible connections into visual by searching their ideas on YouTube. It became clear right away that this was not a study of chance and I, as the choreographer, needed to make creative decisions constantly when searching and selecting videos.

Given the format of YouTube, it can be hit or miss when searching for phrases or topics and decisions had to be made through the selection process to realize what videos would represent the aesthetic of the work. When selecting the videos, I had to decide if there was enough movement in the video, if the people in the video had a “character” and if it would be considered, if the video related to the previously selected layer and ultimately what movement was selected from each video. The movement selected for each layer was based on an overriding set of criteria I developed while searching for videos. Was the movement interesting to watch? Could it be magnified or simplified? Is there a phrase of movement that can be used or is it mostly single gestures?

The majority of the movements that stand out in a video online are gestures and my interest in abstracting the gestural movements became increasingly represented. One of the ways I explored the abstraction (within the constructs of finding *all* the movement online) was to layer multiple gestures, body language, spatial patterns, speeds and rhythms on top of each other. For example, in the opening movement from *The Survey*, Robin sits next to Dakota on the bench; the movement sources from videos about boy scouts, a little girl dancing, a sorcerer cartoon, a Coca-Cola commercial from the 50s, and a family running errands. The combination of movements from each video layered on top of one another provided enough full body movement to contribute to, what I believe,

an interesting phrase of choreography filled with a nonsensical storyline much like a dream.

Once all the movement was selected from the videos found online I was able to design the composition of the layered movement and coach Robin and Dakota to develop their hybrid characters created with the multiple layers of intertwined gestures, spatial patterns and mannerisms that were all found online.

As we ran the piece each week after completion, I made sure to coach the dancers on their connection to the movement and *where* it came from. With *The Survey*, I did not take the liberty to choreograph original material and feel that the diligence to do so made the work dense when it came to the movement research I set out to do. All of the movement was selected for *The Survey* in a four-week timeframe, however it continued to develop throughout the ten-week choreographic process.

Creating “Cup Your Spoon”

Cup Your Spoon started out to explore Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process in a way that simplified the layering process developed in the *The Survey* by sourcing from fewer videos, but complicated the connection to each video’s essence, character and movements. As opposed to the strict constraints I outlined for myself as a choreographer in *The Survey*, I decided to give myself more artistic freedom when it came to making decisions about what constituted as “sourcing” from the two videos selected. The idea of using the video’s “essence” to inform movement became important to me throughout the development of *Cup Your Spoon* because it helped me achieve artistic freedom within the design of the process.

The beginning of the work started the same as *The Survey* with Dakota and I listening to McGregor's dream and finding our connection to it. With *Cup Your Spoon* I was able to quickly determine the path the work needed to take and prompted Dakota to listen to *who* was in the dream and *where* they were. After leading a discussion with Dakota, I was able to modify the next step in the process to revolve around two sourced videos as opposed to multiple. This choice was made after deciding that there were two characters in the dream. One of the characters was an impatient tap dancer and the second was a drill sergeant teaching an etiquette class to said tap dancer. I selected a tap solo by Fred Astaire and an etiquette video with Gloria Starr, an etiquette expert, to aid Dakota's character and movement development.

Since this section is a solo, I decided to layer the two characters within Dakota by separating her upper and lower body. On top, Dakota embodied Gloria Starr and under her dinner table she was an impatient Fred Astaire. As I developed the choreography with the selected videos, I coached Dakota to study Gloria Starr's mannerisms in her face and her attitude as well as the charismatic gestures Astaire carried with him. The challenge to embody both videos simultaneously in one body was a challenge for me to communicate as well as for Dakota to do. It was with this frustration that I would find myself taking more ownership of the movement than before. I began cueing Dakota to connect to the "essence" of the characters as opposed to direct sourcing from the videos we referenced.

In the fifth week of rehearsals, I noticed that the choreography was being shaped by the relationship to the camera and decisions were being made based on where I was as the camera operator. Decisions were never made that indicated editing in postproduction

and problem solving ensued through Dance/Video Mashup instead. This discovery guided the decision to continue developing the work as a single shot screendance in order to highlight the idea of the “mashup” happening throughout the creative process as opposed to in postproduction. The decision for single shot also unified the four sections of the work and resulted in a chronological order and the birth of a through-line for both characters and narration.

As *Cup Your Spoon* and *The Survey* continued to develop, so did the feedback website. In the first few weeks it became clear how important it was to shoot rehearsal footage in a way that was representative of the camera angles that would be utilized in the final version in order to evoke thoughtful, productive feedback.

It also became clear that people visiting the website would not give feedback unless it was easy to get to. Initially, the visitor would go through a tutorial that explained the process, why I wanted feedback and how to navigate the site. After hearing feedback from peers and colleagues that they, “saw the website, but didn’t have time to leave feedback” I decided to condense. I edited the site so viewers would immediately see the link for that week’s feedback prompt and were then given options to see more videos. I noticed an increase in feedback both in the length of posts and the number as a whole.

Cup Your Spoon continued to develop all the way through the ten-week process and into filming and became an integral through line for the whole of *Somniloquies* because of the props used. The teacups, tablecloth, bench and flowers used in *Cup Your Spoon* would act as a memory of a dream throughout the screendance created with Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

Creating “16 Tickets”

As this thesis research continued with the third section of *Somniloquies*, *16 Tickets*, I determined that I would approach each dreamscape from a different choreographic standpoint within the boundaries created for Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. After evaluating the choice to simplify the movement sourcing in *Cup Your Spoon*, I was ready to reframe another of McGregor’s dreams and further develop the process of Dance/Video Mashup. I was also faced with the challenge of referencing the other two sections created prior and finding a through line for the single shot screendance, *Somniloquies*.

After the initial meetings with Robin occurred to listen to the dream, *16 Tickets*, I was concerned with my lack of knowledge on the subject we decided to embody within this work: Schizophrenia. Soon after our research commenced, I distinguished the framework for the production of *16 Tickets*. By using one of YouTube’s main video categories, informational videos, I would develop movement from an informational video on Schizophrenia. I selected the video, *Four Patients with Schizophrenia*, to act as an “informational video” for making the dance.

After studying the construct of the video, I concluded that it consisted of two layers. The first layer being the actual footage of the four patients with schizophrenia demonstrating schizophrenic symptoms and the second layer being the informational text that narrated the medical/chemical diagnosis for each symptom. The two layers became the framework for movement development and further abstracted the idea of gestural sourcing in Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

The layering process of Dance/Video Mashup along with the artistic permission to abstract the sourced movement resulted in an exciting and rich creative process. I was able to internalize the process of sourcing and layering the video found online by dissecting the video's parts and reacting to them with choreography. The patients, their mannerisms, the informational text as well as Robin and my reactions to them immediately sourced the choreography I developed. I was able to authenticate the work I was developing by sourcing from the informational video and react to the video as I developed movement for Robin's solo. This discovery was yet another step in the right direction, solidifying my connection to sourcing inspiration through bodily mashup and creating a dialogue with online videos throughout the creative development of *16 Tickets*.

During the development of *16 Tickets* I began making plans with Robert Uehlin, my videographer, to attend rehearsals and learn the choreographed camera angles that were developed in the weeks prior. In these rehearsals, Robert's opinion and expertise in regard to camera angles and techniques were utilized and provided another layer of feedback in addition to feedback received on the website.

Robert made many suggestions and proved to play an integral role in development when putting each section of *Somniloquies* together. Since making the decision to shoot the screendance in a single shot, I was frustrated with the lack of options when it came to different camera angles and dancers entering and exiting the space. Unlike a screendance filmed with multiple angles for the option to layer multiple shots in postproduction, I needed to find a way to give texture to the work in a single shot. Robert suggested the idea that the eye of the camera was playing a role in the work although I had not identified it. By developing the character of the camera, I was able to give it human

features and mannerisms and open up possibilities for in-the-moment-editing and camera movements. For example, in *Cup Your Spoon* Robert placed the camera at eye level underneath the table and moved the camera as though watching Dakota's performance. As Robin backs away, Robert backs out as well, lending the idea that there is another person in the space with Robin (the camera/audience eye). This character (the camera's eye) continues to explore the space and the dancers in *The Survey* and provides a 360-degree view of the movement.

Creating "The Riddle"

As *The Survey*, *Cup Your Spoon* and *16 Tickets* matured with rehearsal, I began to question if Dance/Video Mashup could be approached from an improvisational standpoint. I was also feeling the pressure of time looming both for the development of a fourth section and the length of *Somniloquies* in itself. Since making the decision to film all four sections single shot I concluded that replacing one of McGregor's dreams that was seven minutes long (*The Flight*) with *Thought for the Day* (32 seconds) would fit into the design of the work as a whole.

The composition of McGregor's dream, *Thought for the Day*, is similar to the structure of a joke. It sets up a theme, connects the audience to the theme and ends with a punch line. To support the idea of filming the screendance single shot, I decided to put *The Riddle* at the end to act as the punch line.

I began this exploration by creating an improvisational score that required the dancers to search for videos online that, like the start of each work, embodied their connections to McGregor's dream narration. The next direction within the score was to sort the videos that came up on YouTube by length and find a video that was the closest

to 32 seconds. The dancers were to watch the screen of their iPhones and copy the movements seen. Dakota's video was a tutorial titled, "How to set a nice table for your guests" and Robin chose, "steven purugganan speed stacking champ." Since the improvisation was to take place at the set dinner table and both videos featured cups as props, Dakota and Robin were reacting to each other in the space, creating a whirlwind of movement with the props and happenstance interactions with each other.

Initially, I explored exposing the inner workings of Dance/Video Mashup by having the dancers reveal iPhones with YouTube videos displayed on them. As the improvisation developed, the phones became confusing within the construction of *Somniloquies* as a whole and I adjusted to represent the movement without the iPhones.

In a sense, the improvisational approach to *The Riddle* was the furthest abstraction in the making of *Somniloquies*. The movement was heavily sourced from the two videos selected by Robin and Dakota in the initial improvisation with the iPhones but after the decision was made to remove the videos from the table, Dakota and Robin were left with only a memory of the video they were sourcing from. The choreography was never set and was therefore constantly abstracted by the dancers.

Preparing for Filming

In the weeks leading up to the final shoot, I prepared the dancers by having them rehearse with Robert in order to eliminate anxiety for the day of the shoot. In my experience, dancers can feel inhibited by the camera, especially if the videographer or the space is unfamiliar. By gaining trust and a rhythm between Robert and the dancers in the

rehearsals leading up to dress rehearsal and filming day I was able to concentrate more on the composition of the work instead of the performance itself.

In looking for a location to film, I wanted to demonstrate the aesthetic of a dream with the space. With the help of my feedback participants online I knew I needed to find a location that offered an airy, bright space with a sense of randomness. I toyed with a few ideas including a grocery store and a drained reservoir but the technicalities of achieving the aesthetic was not possible given my budget. I decided on a space I have used before that allowed me to spend as much time as needed on location, sprung floors, and on-hand props.

The space used to film the single-shot screendance was an old church that was remodeled into a dance studio. The space is now a storage space for sewing material, old furniture and electronics. Before dress rehearsal, I was able to design the space with fabric, furniture and other whimsical props found in the studio space and by the time the dancers were in the space we were able to make changes to spacing and camera facings. The spacing rehearsal was scheduled for two days before the shoot, however we were postponed due to an untimely snowstorm. Due to the dancer's schedules our spacing and dress rehearsal were combined into one afternoon. We were able to work quickly and efficiently with the time allotted and filming went on as scheduled.

Filming Day

We arrived on set at 8:30 a.m. and promptly tested light and prepared the cameras for the day. The dancers warmed up and got ready in a separate space and were ready to do a run with the camera at 9:30. The first run was primarily an opportunity for the

dancers to experience the space, Robert's positioning and include some of the notes given the day before in regard to changed camera angles and spatial patterns.

After making a few changes to spacing due to shadows, I was prepared to direct a full run. Because this was designed to be a single shot video, there were multiple takes where we had to stop part way through because of camera, dancer and lighting errors. Luckily, the piece we had the most difficulty with was *Cup Your Spoon*, which comes first.

The gray weather of Oregon in December pushed us into our final run at 2:00 p.m. because the natural light was diminishing by the minute. For the final take, Robert and I decided to shoot it with a slightly zoomed lens to create a more intimate view of the work and the interactions between Dakota and Robin. As chance would have it, the last run ended up being the best performance for the dancers and the zoomed lens was a success.

As I reflected on the day of shooting and the culmination of my research in the studio, I felt successful in the creative choices made during the shoot by the dancers, Robert as the videographer and myself as the director and choreographer. One day of shooting resulted in four single shot takes of *Somniloquies* to touch up in editing.

Editing Process

As stated in my thesis proposal, I did not want to explore the process of "mashup" in the editing suite, but instead in the choreographic process. The nature of this movement research explored a choreographic process that "mashes" movement from video found online to create a body of work presented as a screendance. The decision to

eliminate as much editing in postproduction was navigated by filming a single shot screendance that highlighted mashup in the choreographic process.

The final video shoot resulted in four single shot versions of *Somniloquies*. Robert and I met to watch each version and decided on the zoomed lens version as the shot that best carried out the artistic vision. Since we shot the piece without McGregor's sound, we were able to add it in editing and connect it to movement it identified with. The largest editing we applied was color-grading throughout the work. Robert suggested we use color-grading techniques to enhance the feeling I wanted to evoke in each section of *Somniloquies* and provide a changing mood for the audience.

For *Cup Your Spoon*, we brought out the brightness of the blues, reds and yellows to offer a light mood for the work. We softened the brightness a bit for *The Survey* and shifted drastically for *16 Tickets* to create a tense experience for the viewer. We brought out the purple and gray in the room to highlight the uneasy feeling I wanted to evoke with Robin's mashup that explores Schizophrenia. As Robin shifts into the final section, *The Riddle*, the color transitions to the bright contrasting colors seen in the beginning.

In order to provide some background for the viewers, I decided to add text to the start of *Somniloquies* that provides some background information on McGregor and the inspiration of the work. It reads,

“Dion McGregor talked in his sleep. From 1961 to 1967 his roommate faithfully recorded his dream speech on hundreds of reel-to-reel tapes. The essence of McGregor's dreams inspired this movement.”

I believe the text offers an opportunity for the viewer to connect to the startling dream narrations and provides an insight to a layer of the work that may be distracting

otherwise. The text is added to the start of the full-length version as well as each separate section.

Although *Somniloquies* was filmed in a single shot, there are four sections within the whole. After choosing the best single shot take, I worked with Robert to cut it into its four separate sections, *Cup Your Spoon*, *The Survey*, *16 Tickets*, and *The Riddle*. Because each work can be watched separately, it offers a different viewing experience than the whole of *Somniloquies* and provides more options when viewing online. Because *Somniloquies* is over seventeen minutes long, having the option to watch portions of the whole is desirable for an online audience where attention spans dwindle with the amount of control the viewer has.

Once editing was complete, I posted the finished videos on the website created to follow Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. Within two weeks of having *Somniloquies* on the website, YouTube and Vimeo it received over three hundred views.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the Rehearsal Process and Development

Evaluation of “The Survey”

Early on it became clear that this was not a study of “chance” and I, as the choreographer, needed to make creative decisions constantly when searching and selecting videos. As it became clear that I was not relying on chance when selecting videos on YouTube that exemplified McGregor’s dreams, I created a set of questions I would ask myself and the dancers when selecting videos. “Was the movement interesting to watch? Could it be magnified or simplified? Is there a phrase of movement that can be used or is it mostly single gestures?” Within *The Survey*, I followed strict guidelines and only used movement that was sourced from online videos. After reflecting on the outcomes the strict guidelines used when selecting movement in *The Survey*, I concluded that I craved finding more of a balance when it came to sourcing online. I was intrigued by the possibility of abstraction within the idea of Dance/Video Mashup and explored these ideas more fully with *Cup Your Spoon* and *16 Tickets*.

Evaluation of “Cup Your Spoon”

After reevaluating the strict constraints I outlined for myself as a choreographer in *The Survey*, I decided to give myself more artistic freedom when it came to making decisions about what was considered “sourcing” from the two videos selected. Creating *The Survey* helped me confront the importance of my artistic voice within a creative process and I examined sourcing movement in a more open way. By manipulating the process to expand online sourcing from purely gesture to sourcing in more abstract

manners like identifying with “essence” and “character” I was able to illustrate a clearer understanding of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

Evaluation of “16 Tickets”

As my thesis research continued with *16 Tickets*, I determined that I would approach each dreamscape from a different choreographic perspective within the guidelines created for Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. By utilizing the informational video on Schizophrenia on YouTube, I would develop movement based on the two parts of the video. The layering process of Dance/Video Mashup along with the artistic permission to abstract the sourced movement resulted in an exciting development within the process. I was able to internalize the process of sourcing and layering the video found online by dissecting the video’s parts and reacting to them with choreography. Sourcing from the informational video and reacting to the video as I developed movement for Robin’s solo authenticated the work and offered a sense of ownership as the choreographer. Discovering the balance between my artistic connections to the videos I was sourcing from and my original interpretation of them made the experience of creating *16 Tickets* the most satisfying out of all the works created with Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. I was able to solidify my connection to sourcing movement through bodily mashup and further develop the process of Dance/Video Mashup.

Evaluation of “The Riddle”

The impetus for *The Riddle* arose out of the curiosity of approaching Dance/Video Mashup from an improvisational standpoint. *The Riddle* was the furthest abstraction in the making of *Somniloquies*. The movement was heavily sourced from the two videos

selected by Robin and Dakota in the initial improvisation with the iPhones, but after the decision was made to remove the videos from the table, Dakota and Robin were left with only a memory of the video they were sourcing from. The choreography was never set and was therefore constantly abstracted by the dancers.

Evaluation of “Somniloquies”

As my research developed with each section of *Somniloquies* it became important for me as a researcher and choreographer to represent the development within one full-length version. *Somniloquies* represents each stage of developing Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. My efforts to embody McGregor’s dreams and create a dreamscape of my own through Dance/Video Mashup were represented in *Somniloquies* and can be viewed in the supplemental file included with this thesis.

Evaluation of the Feedback Process

Evaluation of the Website

I believe I was successful in creating an informative and visually interesting site that reflected the goals of the process as a whole. However, as I look back to the site I think improvements could have been made to guide users navigating the site. Providing too much information at once on the home page highlighted the methods of my thesis research and fogged the experience of giving feedback. Overall, the changes made to the website were based on practicality and ease both for the viewer’s experience and mine as the choreographer. Of course hiccups occurred where videos did not play and comments would not appear but overall the development of the website was successful, beneficial and crucial to the development of the work.

Evaluation of the Feedback Panel and Feedback Solicitation

Realizing that my target audience would be made up mostly of people interested in a choreographic process, dancers, choreographers, screendance enthusiasts and choreographic researchers, I decided to narrow my audience for feedback by selecting a panel of dancers and choreographers as the main source of weekly feedback. In the decision to select a feedback panel, I constructed a reliable source of feedback made up of representatives from Minneapolis, MN, Philadelphia, PA and Brussels, Belgium. Their feedback is archived in Appendix D. The feedback received guided the development of each piece and was essential to the successful outcome.

Evaluation of the Feedback

As the work developed and a consistent feedback community formed, I felt the dialogue strengthen in terms of constructive criticism. The feedback prompts directed the dialogue from week to week and guided the choreographic process as a result.

The response rate throughout the ten-week feedback session averaged five comments per prompt with the lowest being two for one video and the highest being eight. As the conversation between the feedback participants and myself as the choreographer developed, the feedback rate became more consistent. I observed that I was getting more substantial feedback when acknowledging the posts from the week before and subsequently asking developmental questions from the participants. In retrospect, I feel I could have developed the feedback by adding a conversational voice within the feedback given each week. By adding my voice to the comment box the feedback participants could have asked questions that I could immediately answer. Instead, I only asked

questions with the “feedback prompts” posted each week, setting up a one-way conversation.

Overall the online feedback became a valuable representation of how I customized feedback in Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process and an essential step in the development of each piece.

Evaluation of Developing the Film

Evaluation of Rehearsing with the Camera

Adapting the eye of the camera with tools used in Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process customized the product in a way that could not be achieved on a proscenium stage. Utilizing filming techniques including lens length and single-shot design throughout the choreographic process allowed me to develop and communicate my artistic beginning. It was vital to the development of the dancers and their ability to move comfortably with the camera as their audience and dance partner.

Evaluation of the Single Shot Screendance

As the process of Dance/Video Mashup developed, it became important to me to represent the developments made in the construction of Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process. The decision to film the work in a single shot framework supports the idea of utilizing bodily mashup as opposed to digital mashup in an editing suite.

Although the decision to shoot the screendance in a single shot supported the idea of bodily mashup within Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process, it did present technical difficulties when filming. To some extent, each take was treated like a live

dance performance wherein “the show must go on.” However, in many instances we stopped filming within seconds, minutes or sometimes even half way through the seventeen-minute piece.

Overall, the decision to create a screendance that was to be filmed in one single shot achieved my overall artistic and aesthetic goals for the screendance and highlighted the idea of bodily mashup in Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

Evaluation of Filming Days

Dress Rehearsal, Designing the Space

I was able to internalize the research conducted in prior months and rely on my knowledge of the work alongside my collaborators. Along with my choreographic ideas, I evaluated feedback from the online contributors to help design the whimsical, dreamlike atmosphere in the space. The dress rehearsal was successful and I felt prepared for final filming the next day.

Filming Day

Given the short days of winter and general gray of Oregon, we were allotted five hours of light to film. Rehearsing with the camera, costumes and props throughout the rehearsal process proved to be invaluable to the success of the filming day. There were no major issues with the dancers or their ability to react to the space or camera. I believe the development within the methods of Dance/Video Mashup aided in the success of conducting a smooth filming experience in the short amount of time allotted for filming *Somniloquies*.

Evaluation of Editing the Screendance

The decision to select the single shot take with a zoomed lens supported the aesthetic of the work I set out to create. It provided an intimate view of the work and communicated the feeling I wanted an audience to experience. The choices made in color grading demonstrated the most influence in the overall feeling of the work. The decision to apply subtle color changes throughout the *Somniloquies* illustrated an understanding of changing emotions throughout the sections of the work.

Thesis Committee Feedback

After completing my movement thesis research, producing the final screendance and posting it on my website, I met with my thesis committee. As per their request, the committee did not participate in the online feedback but provided support with the website and creative questions. After viewing the final screendance the committee members suggested that I investigate the guidelines of Dance/Video Mashup further and develop a set of steps that could be recreated.

Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Study

As requested I designed a detailed set of guidelines that mapped out the developments made throughout this thesis research. I proceeded by working in the studio and creating a short choreographic study using the detailed guidelines found in Appendix B. During this exploration, I realized it was difficult for me to question the guidelines because I developed them. I decided to work with a dancer unfamiliar with the process

and observe to identify any possible confusion and develop the guidelines with this feedback.

I met with the dancer and presented the guidelines as a “choreographic study” in order to highlight the idea that this could be approached as a compositional exercise as opposed to the creation of a full-length work. The dancer familiarized himself with the guidelines and within one hour developed a short phrase by following the guidelines for Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

After discussing the guidelines with the dancer, I considered steps that could be clearer. The main clarification I made to the guidelines was the importance of repeating the layering process. In order to create the “mashup” effect, one needs to search for multiple videos online and source from them in different ways including movements, spatial patterns and character.

By revisiting the guidelines with an outsider, I was able to communicate the guidelines with more clarity and ultimately improve them. The guidelines created after this choreographic study can be viewed in Appendix C.

Evaluation of the Screendance

The purpose of this thesis research was to explore and develop the creative process of Dance/Video Mashup and therefore, the screendance developed during this exploration is not the main scale for success in this evaluation. I do, however, find importance in evaluating the final work created with Dance/Video Mashup to better analyze the success of my research and artistic advancement.

Evaluating the Choreography

The choreography created with Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process is representative of the guidelines created with this thesis research. The movement created reflects my artistic beginning of Dion McGregor's dream narrations and resulted in character-rich movement clearly influenced by pedestrian gestures and original choreography. The choreography sourced from movements found online and original choreography were sourced through bodily mashup and resulted in the layered, complex choreography I aimed to achieve. Because the process was uploaded to a website, I was able to reflect on decisions made throughout the choreographic process and identify the importance of my artistic beginning. I believe that the choices I made throughout the choreographic process reflected my artistic beginning of creating a choreographic dreamscape based on Dion McGregor's dream narrations and resulted in a successful artistic endeavor.

Evaluating the Narrative

The intention of the work is identified within the title page of the screendance as a whole (Somniloquies) as well as the individual sections when viewed separately. There are two overriding concepts: the idea of a dreamscape that is viewed through the aesthetic makeup of the screendance and the conceptual research of the development of the work that can be viewed on the website where it resides.

The progression of the work develops through a loose narrative based on the knowledge that we are observing a dreamscape inspired by McGregor's dream narrations. The development of the characters is nonsensical in terms of narrative, but develops

continuously through emotional ebbs and flow. The dancers are successful in creating and sustaining a relationship to one another.

Evaluating the Performance

The psychological connection to the work is represented by the dancers ability to connect with the viewer through the eye of the camera. The dancers illustrate an understanding of their characters and the choreography and offer an emotional and physical response as part of their performance. The choreography supports the development of the work and the process of Dance/Video Mashup.

Evaluating the Lighting, Camera Work and Editing

The lighting offers a dreamlike landscape for the viewer but often reads as over exposed. The camera work is humanlike and demonstrates the idea that the eye of the camera is another character in the dream.

Although editing is minimal because the screendance was filmed in a single shot, the viewer is guided through in-camera editing. The choreographed movements for the camera can be looked at as “editing” within the shoot. For example, the hand coming over the lens in “16 Tickets” and the camera resting on the record player as the dancers reposition were techniques used to edit within the single shot and utilize similar editing techniques to the editing suite. These choreographed editing techniques proved to be essential to the flow of the overall work.

Evaluating the Essence

The essence of *Somniloquies* and the four edited sections demonstrates a feeling of dreaminess or surrealism. The large airy space offers a sense of home, but is interrupted by the strange arrangement of furniture and objects. The design of the space,

costumes and set offer a sense of calm in the irrational that is felt in a dreamlike state.

The aesthetic of the work is both representative of the process of Dance/Video Mashup and the artistic beginning of Dion McGregor's dream narrations.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The categories of social dance-media defined in Harmony Bench's paper titled, "Screendance 2.0: Social Dance-Media" are examples of the fusion between choreography and social media. She examines the three strands, crowdsource, flash and viral choreographies (Bench, 2010, under "Abstract") wherein many of the examples are that of amateur dancers, choreographers or filmmakers. Although these examples are innovative and valid examples of the development of a hybrid form of dance creation, I feel there is space for a heightened category within Bench's categories of dance and its relationship with online materials and social platforms. With this thesis I aimed to examine another possibility of dance-media that combines videos found online with a creative process to make choreography for a professionally advanced screendance. It is my hope that this thesis research can offer useful ideas to choreographers interested in an artistic combination between surfing the web and realizing an artistic intent through dance.

The artistic outcome of this process was a screendance that can be viewed as a whole or separately in four sections. The final screendances are available to an online audience via the website created for this project (<http://dancevideomashup.wix.com/dvmashup>). Throughout the reflective portion of this process, I gathered feedback from online participants, a feedback panel and committee members. The feedback received helped develop the screendances and aided the development of guidelines for Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

Along with the set of guidelines created with this thesis research, I was able to create a screendance, *Somniloquies*, that was reflective of an artistic need. By creating movement based on Dion McGregor's dream narrations through bodily mashup, I was able to fulfill my artistic need. The feedback received through and after the process illustrated that the process of Dance/Video Mashup is one that can be duplicated to create successful choreography for a screendance or live choreography.

The result of this process, creatively, is a screendance that is reflective of an artistic beginning. I produced a screendance that illustrates Dion McGregor's dream narrations and guided the viewer in a nonsensical essence-driven journey. By working to create a method for developing choreography from videos found online, I feel I achieved my artistic and aesthetic goals through the process of Dance/Video Mashup. With the guidelines constructed in this movement research, scholars and choreographers interested in pursuing a choreographic process that utilizes inspiration from videos found online can employ Dance/Video Mashup as a Choreographic Process.

As our culture constantly expands and changes because of communicative technologies, the field of dance continues to explore the advancements in creative ways. The relationship between dance and the Internet has just scraped the surface and with this thesis document I hope to contribute to the development of dance as a relevant and expanding field.

APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR DANCE/VIDEO MASHUP AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC

PROCESS:

POST-PILOT STUDY

1. Develop an idea.
2. Dissect the elements of the idea. For example:
 - Auditory- Locate the elements of the audio including: narrative within audio, essence, texture, rhythm, dynamics, timbre
 - Visual- Locate the elements of the visual stimulus including: narrative or character represented in visual, design and composition of visual.
 - Kinesthetic- Locate the elements of the kinesthetic stimulus including: form, function, and boundaries.
 - Narrative- Locate the elements of the narrative stimulus including: relationship, story development, character, climax, conflict, conclusion, and point of view.
3. Search and select sourced movement based on idea.
 - Search for online video based on initial idea to select movement. (Direct gestural sourcing, essence, character, spacing, patterns, camera angles)
4. Select and develop sourced movement into motifs.
 - Manipulate and interpret motifs using choreographic tools.
 - Always relate to the initial idea
5. Develop the use of the camera and consider final presentation.
 - Consider the audience “eye” throughout development
 - Filming techniques and needs (videographer, cameras, etc)
 - Recognize the audience and population viewing the work

APPENDIX B

GUIDELINES FOR DANCE/VIDEO MASHUP AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC

PROCESS:

POST-EVALUATION

1. Dedicate yourself to an Artistic Beginning
2. Dissect the elements of the Artistic Beginning to determine sourcing material. Examples of an “Artistic Beginning” or stimulus include, but are not limited to the following.
 - Auditory- Locate the elements of the audio including: narrative within audio, essence, texture, rhythm, dynamics, timbre
 - Visual- Locate the elements of the visual stimulus including: narrative or character represented in visual, design and composition of visual.
 - Kinesthetic- Locate the elements of the kinesthetic stimulus including: form, function, and boundaries.
 - Narrative- Locate the elements of the narrative stimulus including: relationship, story development, character, climax, conflict, conclusion, and point of view.
3. Search and Select Sourced Movement based on Artistic Beginning
 - Search for online video based on identified stimulus to select movement. (Direct gestural sourcing, essence, character, spacing, patterns, camera angles)
 - Select the sourced movement that is:
 - a. Representative of the Artistic Beginning
 - b. Interesting and representative of the dedicated Artistic Beginning.
 - c. Shows potential for development
4. Develop Sourced Movement into Motifs
 - Manipulate and interpret motifs using choreographic tools (Repetition, retrograde, tempo, size, rhythm, quality, instrumentation, force, levels, layering of multiple sourced movements/spatial patterns.)
 - Reflect back to the stimulus
5. Create Form and Structure
 - Consider the audience “eye” throughout development
 - Costuming and space reflective of stimulus
 - Narrative/Structure should be reflective of the Artistic Beginning
 - Filming techniques and needs (single shot, multiple cameras, equipment needs, special effects)
6. Final Presentation

- Decide Presentation Format
- Recognize the audience and population viewing the work

APPENDIX C

GUIDELINES FOR DANCE/VIDEO MASHUP AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC

PROCESS:

POST-CHOREOGRAPHIC STUDY

1. Dedicate yourself to an Artistic Beginning and dissect the elements of the Artistic Beginning to determine sourcing material.

Examples used in DVM include, but are not limited to the following.

- Auditory- Locate the elements of the audio including: narrative within audio, essence, texture, rhythm, dynamics, timbre
- Visual- Locate the elements of the visual stimulus including: narrative or character represented in visual, design and composition of visual.
- Kinesthetic- Locate the elements of the kinesthetic stimulus including: form, function, and boundaries.
- Narrative- Locate the elements of the narrative stimulus including: relationship, story development, character, climax, conflict, conclusion, and point of view.

2. Search and Select Sourced Movement based on the elements of the Artistic Beginning.

- Search for online video based on identified stimulus to select movement. (Direct gestural sourcing, essence, character, spacing, patterns, camera angles) Notice what movements and essences catch your eye and embody them.
- Select the sourced movement
 - d. Movement found online is representative of the Artistic Concept.
 - e. Movement selected is interesting and representative of the dedicated artistic concept.
 - f. The movement selected shows potential for development.

Repeat Step 2 many times to create a layered movement phrase.

3. Develop Sourced Movement into Motifs

- Manipulate and interpret motifs using choreographic tools (Repetition, retrograde, tempo, size, rhythm, quality, instrumentation, force, levels, layering of multiple sourced movements/spatial patterns.)
- Reflect back to the stimulus

4. Create Form and Structure

- Consider the audience “eye” throughout development
- Decide how many dancers will be performing and their relationships.
- Costuming and space reflective of stimulus

- Narrative/Structure should be reflective of the stimulus
- Filming techniques (single shot, multiple cameras, equipment needs, special effects)

5. Final Presentation

- Decide Presentation Format (Film, Live)
- Recognize the audience and population viewing the work

APPENDIX D

ONLINE FEEDBACK

Week One: The Survey

Feedback Prompt:

"What do you sense is the overall mood of the choreography below? Given the mood you are sensing, how could I bring it out more with movement? As always, does this make you think of anything you've seen a video of? Send us a link to the YouTube video in the comments section!"

"Abstractions are awesome post-mod style meanderings -- love 'em. the literal gestures - - not so much." -Steven

"Vid 3 (until the ending) reminded me of a swiffer commercial, where someone can't reach the top of the ceiling fan? I enjoy the essence of it all being so human and non chalant, but with little flairs of extension or involvement in the movement outside the normal pedestrian attitude." -Kyra

"The first viewing was done on my phone without sound. This brought up a lot of things: voyeurism (mainly due to the way the camera moves and tracks the dancers bodies up close), formal versus informal movement (a gesture that is with meaning next to a gesture formed out of functionality), setting and where the eye is being led due to the frame of the picture (there is a moment when your eye is led to someone who is in the background until the camera angle switches). After watching with sound a lot of these initial reactions were changed: I thought about the shape of the dancers' bodies, the context that is in their unique forms, I didn't feel any specific mood coming across other than a voice and a follower- perhaps playfulness or simply willingness? I thought it was odd that I liked the soundless version (an accident) and that I needed more information." -Megan

"The overall sense of mood of the choreography for me in these three short snippets seems to be longing, searching and organizing. After reading Megan's comment below, I too enjoyed more without sound of hearing direction. For each snippet, it seemed like there was play on where you were holding the camera, dancer coming into the screen from afar, camera moving into the dancer from afar and how that shifted when he moved his leg to move forward and then in the final how the gaze of the camera moved in space as if doing a panoramic, it actually made me feel as though I was moving, I found this interesting.

The movement currently for me is very literal and gestural, feels each are a beginning of an idea, an introduction to something. I like the idea of taking the movement you have and abstracting to be bigger and more physical, or tiny. I would welcome play with the movement not being taken from the hands directing so much of the impetus of the movement. But, that is also very much an aesthetic thing for me not knowing what it is you are going for." -Mathew Janczewski

“On the one hand, it has a mime-like quality where the person being filmed is referencing and acting in relation to what is absent, where the context which they are moving amidst is for me, the viewer, to imagine. In this way of watching many images arise which I teleport the moving body into and then soon notice that the movements actually begin to transgress the image which I situated it within and further ask me to generate a new image in order to make sense of what I watch. On the other hand, I notice something which makes obvious my background in dance training. This is when I experience a breach in the imaginary space because I see a codified dance move enter the stream of movement. Due to the more gestural movement, a leg above 90 degrees begins to feel out of place. I wonder for myself, why codified dance movements and gestural movement have a hard time existing in the same space (for an eye which knows and practices dance). It seems to happen in such a way that looks (and I imagine) feels uninterrupted and almost 'organic', though as a viewer I enter into a linguistic space where I begin to name what is happening. Now I will commit to the prompt. For me, the overall mood appears to be a calling upon of space which is not there, though spaces that we could potentially identify based on a bodily knowledge or cultural knowledge of the movements proposed. It does remind me of movie-like scenes, if I had to situate what kind of movies I would say somewhere in between advertisement clips and Hollywood drama films.”
-Bryana

Week Two: The Survey

Feedback Prompt:

"After combining the two phrases from week one, has it changed the mood or developed characters? Do you see any opportunities for contact/physical partnering?"

“love it. The text and the movement were used very nicely. it gave me a sense of an unknown relationship, yet I see her as wanting and he is full of himself in his own world. The importance of his gesture with the "lens" was very cool and then how they joined in unison with the slap of 'favorite costume' really stood out to me. I do not see contact/physical partnering just yet, I feel I want need to see them separate a little longer. I feel it is important for them to see each other eye to eye first. She has looked at him, but he is unaware of her presently. If partnering is to happen it would have to be abrupt and clingy for her to me at this point. A surprise to him, he knows she is there, but is choosing not to look at her. Why is this? And what will it take for him or the two of them to see eye to eye?” -Mathew Janczewski

“hmmm... garbled voices, I am not always aware of what the female is doing since we are focused on the male dancer, the male is blowing and sniffing (this reminds me of some sort of farcical "interpretive dance" done by a non-dance friend years ago), there seems to be a loose rhythm connecting the dancers, i wouldn't say there are "characters" but perhaps a single character that seems to be emerging in the male dancer? (he is making fun of something or there is some irony in his movement)... there is room for partnering/contact but this isn't what I would assume would happen next based on the current composition and movement choices, choices in the face seem to be important and perhaps dancers are making different choices in this regard” -Megan Mazarick

“As the two people begin the choreography together with a synchronized movement I am led to believe that they share a common temporality, though because of the severing of aims which are pursued afterwards, I start to think that they do not share a common space until the moment that the woman is pointing at the ground which the man soon arrives to and she watches him as he does ambiguous, yet indicative, gestures. What is striking is the fact that he is focusing his efforts on performing to the camera and is seemingly unaware that he is being watched by the woman. I can read this instance in two ways, though I do not have reason nor am I led to choose which way to read it. Either I imagine that it is a moment when the two choreographies stumble upon each other and attempt to collaborate their efforts, or I imagine that it is a moment of dramatic irony where the audience knows more than those on stage, that the characters are unaware of their own collision of imaginary spaces. The mood of the piece draws out two things for me. Firstly, I sense that the space is compartmentalized and segmented with transparent screens and secondly I feel a vague radiation of the people forwards, even if the two sets of movements are contained within their own narratives, they are consciously directed outwards. I relate it to an instance which often occurs in acting where despite the fact that characters are in a dialogue they are consciously opening themselves up (physically) to the audience.” -Bryana

Week Three: The Survey

Feedback Prompt:

"As far as dynamics go, where could I concentrate to add more depth?
Also, where do you see the work taking place for the final filming?"

“This camera work and the open space with multiple facings and orientations of the dancers makes landmarks, like the piano bench, seem to appear as if magically, or by surprise. The choreography is fascinating to watch. Where is vast and indoor, or vast and outdoor but with a human/society/urban link to the landscape? A good question. Wardrobe can be difficult, as well. I like the idea of more pedestrian feeling to the clothing, or like futuristic or retro catsuits or something.” -Rachel Winchester

“For the dynamics, the only thing I specifically crave is a moment of space in the beginning for the image to set up, other than that rate of change changes, and that's always a good thing. If I could add anything, it is that Robin and Dakota (if I can use their names) are very comfortable with the material and therefore I assume that any shift in the dynamics would be easily integrated; in order to add more depth to this I would be curious how additional mental tasks would direct the dynamics of the movement. For example, I would be interested in movements which take more time because they need to take more time, rather than applying choreographed flows of time. To be more concrete, I think of two specific tasks, which I will explain in the following sentences. "Perfect movement" is a way of thinking and executing movement in three steps, the first step is that the dancer analyzes the position they are presently in (the shape, relation to space, what is in sight), the second step is that the dancer imagines where they are going to, how they will get there, which muscles/bones need to be engaged, in what order, and continuously trace the pathway, in step three the dancer executes the movement as

faithful to the way they imagined as possible. What is interesting is that it doesn't always work out as you planned in your head because there are always things that were not accounted for... whether that be a body part, shift of weight, etc. Another strategy I thought of was rather than always thinking of what comes next the mind is thinking about what just happened. I find that these things produce dancing which is thinking physically, mentally, and performatively. As for where I could imagine the work, there are two images which come to mind. The first is performing it in front of a green screen (as would be used in television and movies) which would compliment the cinematic feel of the material as well as indicate that the spectator can project (in their mind) which ever scenery they would like to into the background. The other thing I imagine is a very elaborate scenery made of cardboard (a cardboard backdrop, cardboard trees, cardboard people, a cardboard house, I lean more towards a domestic setting which the material also presents in my eyes) where the juxtaposition of flat 2-D images with 3-D bodies moving would open up a different examination of the movement." -Bryana

"A man and woman dancing to an unimportant conversation. I am currently waiting to understand the conversation or at least the connection of the dancers to it. Occasionally they are pedestrian in form and occasionally they are virtuosic bodies executing unison, precision, and ideas. I wonder what you want these bodies to be (and do they change). The dynamics shift on a small scale and I wonder about how you want to shift these dynamics. For example, there is a lot of order in the relationship as indicated (for this viewer) through unison- do you want chaos? Do you want to change the mood drastically? There is an even tempo to the placing of limbs, lifting of legs, shifting of positions that is punctuated briefly by pointing, slapping, or slow grasping at the sky. I wouldn't consider the punctuations in time changes in "dynamics" but they are bits that I remember more vividly." -Megan Mazarick

Week Four: The Survey

Feedback Prompt:

"The first video shows the work after digesting Bryana's feedback from 'Week Three' wherein she suggested she, "would be interested in movements which take more time because they need to take more time, rather than applying choreographed flows of time." We experimented with her suggested techniques to do so and were quite happy with the results. (Thanks, Bryana!!)

Do you see any differences in intention? Do you have any suggestions for objects that could appear in the film or costume recommendations?"

"Place a few mirrors on the perimeter of the dancers' space to provide additional views, including the camera dancer." -Katy Peterson

"Firstly, I appreciated the classical music choice. It gave the spirit of the dance a regal timelessness. The dancers move well together--I would be interested in seeing intentional focus choices from them - looking at each other, looking down, looking up, etc... I imagined colored helium balloons in the space? (something obscuring the dance/an obstacle for them to circumnavigate), and a thin layer of white dust everywhere, so that

when they move they would create a design, parting realities...This brings me back to my first comment "regal timelessness" if there were a thin layer of white dust/powder in the space, it would further the image of something being unveiled from another time -- Very surreal, the world that you've created. Cool!" -Taylor Theis

"It has a very playful, kind of childlike quality to it. I see it in a park or in a playground. The freeing quality that children have, no inhibitions or fear. Balloons yes, maybe even, colorful bouncing balls, all shapes and sizes. Also, try varying the diagonals so that they don't become so predictable or literal. Use a park bench, instead of a piano bench. Dress (floral) or even a skirt. Continue to be playful and explore what isn't always the obvious." -molly misgalla

"I loved the version with the GoPro...Was the music different though? I liked the classical music being the forefront without the text, but with the perspective of the GoPro. It really gave it depth of field and like we were closer into this couple's world. Also, as far as costume/world things are concerned, I see them in ornate, grandiose, period clothing, but playing in a sandbox. The movement is childlike, but they have such a posture that makes them seem regal...Like the nobles who shouldn't be getting their feet wet, but they're doing it anyways ;) The moment where they blow the "sand" off of the box/bench and then stare at the particles in the air was my favorite moment, and I actually laughed out loud. It's definitely that thing where you lose yourself, and it takes the slightest little fleck to get in your face to bring you back to "oh, yes, I'm a grown up now.....shoot." Loved this excerpt!" -Kyra

"I (like many others) really enjoyed the specificity of the world created by the classical music. I believe you are already playing against the music by adding elements of irony and idiosyncratic gesture to the very "formal" feel of the score. I think really acknowledging the music through dancer intentions is working well and suggests "character" for me more than anything else. The music kind of says "frilly blouse" but I believe you should make the opposite choice for costuming and/or maybe for setting. Meaning that since you set up this sort of particular world with the music and movement I believe you could insert some sort of pointed contrast through other elements. The whole dance could happen in the aisle of a Walmart between two shoppers or dancers could be wearing 70's gold lame' disco outfits in an abandoned club. I think the costume and setting will make a huge impact on the video work. Also in terms of the video work- I really really like the moving camera GoPro stuff and feel that it could be even more specific. It feels like the camera has its own opinions and decisions. Maybe the camera doesn't always chase the dancers but occasionally the dancers could succumb to the will of the camera. There is one particular shot where you lose the dancers momentarily then spin around and catch up with them again (they are on the floor). I feel like this is a very specific decision the camera has made to "look away" and perhaps the dancer could reappear in frame? Otherwise I feel like the camera should not lose its subjects- maybe it is me wondering who is in charge (dancers or camera person)? The shot moves so much that viewers are being directed where to look (it isn't a static view where our eyes can wander) so a feeling that the camera has a human behind it operating it is actually quite interesting. Are we peering out of someone's eyes (like "Being John Malkovich") or are

we supposed to feel like there is a big expensive swooping crane shot for the entire film?”
-Megan Mazarick

“Video one: I really enjoyed the music and how you have used it. As for the questions of intention, I am intrigued by the dancers relationship. They are rarely looking at each other, and if they are it seems more to be through them as if they are not there. The female more specifically looks at the male, but not the other way. Makes me want to know if this is a choice or if it has not simply been addressed yet. It is almost as if they are not together in the same space, but then they are also dancing unison quite a bit, so seems that they should be??? As for the suggestions for objects, I am really enjoying how the bench becomes a table they are sitting at (I see the old fashioned ice cream parlor type of chairs and table, likely because of the coca cola commercial though) or a bed they are making. I enjoy not knowing what they are blowing or watching drift up into the sky. It makes the action more tangible for me to go with my imagination. As for costume, I like the look of what you are wearing on the main page of the site, but it doesn't seem to fit for me with this music, looking too 70s style. Is there a time of when this dance happens? Why was this music chosen, what about it called out to you? Where are the dancers?, setting? If I were costuming it right now, my guess would be to make it pedestrian (her in a belted dress, he in a suit, gosh now I am seeing business 60s attire I guess, think Pina Bausch in <http://www.pina-bausch.de/en/pieces/ahnen.php>).

Also as for dynamics to the work, it seems very steady. What would happen if something happened faster?

Video two feedback: I am loving the moving camera, and the GoPro does enliven the work, in the first video loved the way you walk through them, and then they are pointing the ground, this play on perspective is so interesting. Is the way you are moving in and between them set? Just by chance? The timing of the cameras movement is so crucial now to have the vision you want it to and the perspective adding a very difficult, but totally worth it, layer-- it is another dancer really.” -Mathew Janczewski

“What I find interesting in the work now, is the relationship of contingency between Robin and Dakota. It becomes clear that they are in a constant dialogue, a relation where one needs the other in order to continue, at moments this looks like waiting and in other moments it looks like pushing and fueling the other one forwards. I enjoy the complexity of how this movement is propelling onwards. As I read Matthews comment on the relationship, I would situate the lack of clarity in the performativity. I don't know if I get the impression that Megan looks more at Robin than Robin looks at Megan, but I would say that the look at each other with different intentions, motivations, and inquiries as to who this other body in front of them is. The narrative doesn't make their relationship explicit, but in fact that's what intrigues me to continue watching. I begin to wonder, are they always inside the same narrative. In terms of objects, I would try to find a different bench because I can identify it too quickly as a piano bench, which is very much a rehearsal room object. I still think that I would be up for an empty space with just a bench and a 'green screen' in the back (potentially with some other green objects, a cactus, a plant... but this would be edging towards something slightly more absurd). For the

costumes... all green! Just kidding, kind of. I would shy away from something too gender indicative, because I imagine that the piece could really become about a heterosexual intimate relationship. Though as I watch the choreography again, I think the last sentence I just wrote is a bit exaggerated. Pedestrian costumes have become almost an automatism, but that doesn't mean that they shouldn't happen, but the fact that it almost always works should be critically considered. In terms of the GoPro, I really enjoyed what it added to the piece. I would point out especially during the fighting scene (starting around minute 1.05) where it made choreography which looked previously in the realm of mime to much more dynamic and interesting to follow. I would just ask the question, when is the camera an observer, when is the camera creating the relationship, when is the camera a part of the scene as a third actor, and when is the camera excluding things. All of these different things can be a part of it, I think. There is one moment that I see as a break and it is the moment of Robin's close up with hands in a W formation. I think this should be handled with particular care because it is the moment that we as audience realize that the performers know they are being watched and our performing for us. I relate it to a literary gesture when all of a sudden in the middle of a fiction the author references him/herself, or the reader directly." -Bryana

Week Five: The Survey

Feedback Prompt:

“The feedback from Week Four concentrated on focus and the relationship between Robin and Dakota. We had a lot of fun playing with focus not only between Robin and Dakota, but also between the dancers and the camera. This will be the last post for "The Survey" for awhile. Thank you so much for your feedback these last 4 weeks!

Where do you see possibilities for the camera's eye to leave the the dancers for a moment? What would you like to see when the camera leaves? Objects? The space? Other people? Animals?"

“Video 1:

For the camera's eye question, I much preferred an earlier week, where they were not looking into the lens and we lost them and then came back to them on that point at the exact time, somehow for me it engaged me as a viewer and made me more a part of it. When the camera does leave, I think it would be great to have completely different objects/scenes from a backyard, a dressing closet, someone's driveway. I am being much more heavily influenced by the text now, but I really like the layering you have done with the previous music over it.

Video 2:

This location works much better for me. Again, I am being influenced by the text, so I see this dance happening in a woman's big closet full of dresses that they are having to move with in. Maybe the table is her (I am forgetting what they are called right now) but something where ladies get ready and pamper from that time frame....I know this is a dream, but what if he was the door to door guy asking the questions, but it is all within her closet. Must really work with the space, if it is a closet, maybe it all is just a little off, or a mess or something. I really liked the stacked arm chair over another chair in video 2.” -Mathew Janczewski

“VIDEO 1:

In the specific setting of the first video, I cannot say that I am particularly intrigued to see the space. Whether this be because I have seen it in all of the videos thus far (possibly I am conditioned) or because it looks like a gym that has been converted into a dance rehearsal space (it is definable, something I already know and understand). I try to picture now the possibility of other objects in the space, I think it would be possible. Though they would need to be specifically addressed, and potentially choreographed. Ill try to lay out my thought: Something that strikes me as particular to the dream, and how it is depicted and represented in our culture, is the surreal and forward propelling quality. The dream appears and is unpredictable, sliding across our cognition, with a passing-quality. How can this happen in the video? What if while the camera is moving and changing position, objects are placed into the setting in the blind-spot of the camera, only to be later revealed by a shift in the camera. Objects could appear and disappear without showing the how. I imagine that if this were to happen an object could be focused on for a moment while the dance goes on with out it. The other thought I had in relation to a leaving of the camera, would be an operation of delay. Where the dancers would move out of the shot, and the camera would fixate on the background devoid of the dancers that were just there a moment ago.

VIDEO 2:

I prefer this space. It seems to be full of possibilities. Going out the door as Robin did, and catching the image of Dakota in the mirror were two things I quite enjoyed. The text seems to integrate itself much better in this space. But perhaps some of the material would have to be altered, I imagine that it would be nice to really have the dance treat the space and the space treat the dance. There are a few moments that it looks like just ‘dancing in the living room’ but I think this could be changed with just minor shifts in movement and camera work. For example filming into the mirror, or through the window. Also I feel like a more extreme choice would need to be made between a dance which really goes for it and utilizes the space to the advantage of the material, or whether the material is more ‘domesticated’ to be plausible within the setting of the house. Right now it is situated somewhere in between, it looks like a dance that was made in a different space that is now coping with the predicament.

Other thoughts:

I am not sure about the fish eye lens because I think that it holds so many other connotations. The distortion of the image does not necessarily add too much for me other than bending the dimensions of the space, yet the body remind in tact. It poses a specific importance on the integrity of the human body, yet in the context of a dream, this is interestingly put at stake. Is a dreaming body capable of more things then an awake body?

I should probably mention that I just saw the description for the survey today, that is why I am referring to the dream world so often.

Another thing that I have been contemplating while I watch this is the depiction gender, more specifically the depiction of women. It poses the woman as a rather submissive,

docile, and materially-concerned figure (this is taken more from the text). This could be read into and put into question...politically. It is not screaming out at me as it is, but it strikes me in a way that is not nothing.

I swear, the last thing... When the dancers look into the camera, a whole new dimension is added, self-awareness. The characters know they are being watched, they know they are performing for someone, it also feels slightly conniving, or as if the characters are hiding something, as if they are in control of more factors than I know or am aware of, I almost feel that I lose some interpretive agency as a viewer and it pulls me slightly away from a dream-like reading of the piece.” -Bryana

“Video 1: I would like the camera to take a panoramic view of the ceiling, to allow the viewer to gain perspective of the everyday of the room. It would be great to see a janitor or some kind of technician, electrician perhaps, come into the room with a ladder and a tool box. The figure should be out of focus and 'all business', fixing something, a light in the grid...going through the motions of an everyday activity, in real time, to juxtapose the abstraction of movement from the dancers. Another idea I had was that someone, presumably a woman, could be behind a partition trying on dresses, throwing them over the partition. The presence of the "everyday" may add texture to the dance/space and give the viewer an experience of real and surreal in the same bite....” -Taylor Theis

"Where do you see possibilities for the camera's eye to leave the the dancers for a moment? What would you like to see when the camera leaves? Objects? The space? Other people? Animals?" -- The combination of movement, text, and classical music is really great, interesting in a 'mysterious, oh wow, I'm super drawn in kind of way!' Since the text invites the viewer to imagine that there is another person in the space (the narrator), I would like to see the camera, in the very beginning after the piece first begins, turn around to see what Robin and Dakoda see...to reveal that there is actually not another person in the space, further adding to the mystery of the presence of the narrator. It would be interesting to acknowledge the door knocking - which I think happens at least once (could have imagined it...?), when the narrator knocks on the door, that could be another place where the camera could turn around the face the nothingness that is the narrator.

What do you think? How could we alter the space to create an interesting landscape? -- I am far more drawn into the piece when it is in the openness of the studio. There is something about the minimalism of the studio, the wide open space that makes the movers seem so special. I appreciate the black floor that stretches a great length and the high ceilings. Something I do think is interesting about the living room version is the mysterious shadow that comes into view (you)...this gives the text another dimension, It sort of tells us that there actually is another person in the space with the dancers, narrator perhaps? I feel very strongly about the dance having the wide open space of the studio vs. the enclosed, tightness of the living room. Enjoying the progression!”-Taylor Theis

“There is a pretty big thing happening with the text on top of the music. I quite like hearing the text- it adds humor but with a sort of darker subtext of what is perhaps misogynistic alcoholic ramblings? The movement of the camera, gaze/character/intention

of the performers, and spoken text have equal importance to the choreographed structure and movement now. The dance has a very atypical spatial structure (near and far perspectives versus diagonals, locomotion, small gesture, etc.). I am very interested in the way the movement of the camera changes the "size" of the action, where hand gesture sends the camera reeling away or rolled eyeballs seem larger than legs reaching. I liked the camera work in the house version of the video but wasn't in love with the size of the space. There are some lovely moments with dancers moving outside of the room or the camera leaving at the very end but something about the awesomely strange sort of "fisheye" effect of the lens is lost in the smaller space (did the lens of the camera change?). I felt that a small apartment space could work but missed the expressiveness of the camera movement- perhaps if there had been some "camera looking away" moments at specific things in the apartment ? I felt like the camera could relate to the text by entering doors, looking at costumes, looking at old phones (it feels a bit like one half of a phone conversation), lingering on catalogues, or even focusing on another specific type of survey? These ideas might be too cheesy... maybe there is some other kind of way of relating to the text- big open space with a sea of tattered yellowed children's costumes strewn about? I think the male voice somehow changes the dancers' relationship in a way- i am not opposed to making it obvious with one dancer in a 50's style bathrobe and hair curlers and one dancer in a business suit and briefcase (either dancer)." -Megan Mazarick

Week One: Cup Your Spoon

Feedback Prompt:

"We started by developing gestures Dakota chose from a video of someone stuck in traffic. In video two we took those gestures and added them to the spatial pattern and rhythm of a Fred Astaire solo found online. What sticks out to you? What do you think Dakota's character is going through? What would surprise you?"

"The first video seems somehow more "character" specific for me... the second video feels more like abstract upper body movement with a locomotor pattern through space. I don't have a feeling of Dakota's character going through anything specifically yet... I am not completely sure what would surprise me- maybe if Dakota gets eaten by someone in a shark costume? Maybe if her hands fall off? Maybe if her shirt starts to inflate? I think small surprises need more set up time to be surprising- right now I would need something drastic." -Megan Mazarick

"In video 1, there is something about the material which feels like it has been very abstracted from its context. It is in between a bare exposure of shape and an attempt to fill the shapes with something more. I cannot decipher what the guiding terms of this movement appropriation are... shape, rhythm, expression, bodily tension, etc. It seems that it has adapted a dancerly flow, one where Dakota is not making decisions (as someone waiting in traffic would) but she is following a pre-scripted order of movements and filling the in-between. It has a lyrical quality to it. In the second video, what sticks out to me is that in this layering of culturally-identifiable "dance movement" and appropriated gesture, the idiosyncrasies of everyday movement is lost and becomes

embedded into the musicality. Is this a relationship between two types of movement that put one another into question or is it a relationship where the gestures only provide landmarks for the dance to move through. From the few times I have watched it, character doesn't really play a role in either of the videos. The first seems like a parcours of shapes that Dakota must go through and the second is a direct relationship to music that Dakota continues to maintain. I find it difficult to say what would surprise me, I like Megan's shark idea! Perhaps what would be very surprising is if something is instantly imposed upon Dakota, like a naked person jumping into her arms.” -Bryana

Week Two: Cup Your Spoon

Feedback Prompt:

“Since Week One, I've abstracted the involvement of the Fred Astaire video we were initially inspired by. A video with etiquette expert, Gloria Starr inspired the table setting and Dakota's bad manners. "I am interested in exploring some of the other props Gloria Starr has in her video including silverware, bread, wine glasses and salt & pepper shakers. How do you see these every day tools being incorporated? How can we abstract them?"

“I like how you have combined ideas from both week one and two and made this piece. It seems like you kept the theme of wanting to move and being impatient because you are kind of trapped. However, this time you were inspired by Gloria Starr to use props to make this piece more interesting. I think it would be better if you moved around more. Also, it would be cool if you get more props and throw them around while you dance!”
Justin Cheung

“What seemed to have happen here is the creation of a mini theater. The curtain comes up to expose the dancing feet. The way that Dakota manages the props thus far is quite virtuosic in itself. I wonder if you are dealing with two different spaces here and thus to different articulations of virtuosity and theatricality. The two I identify is underneath the table with the feet and the above the table with the cups and the face. I think it would be interesting to identify these two spheres and set them against each other. Two claims to what is theatrical, to what is virtuosic, and so forth. Okay and to get to the main questions...As for the other objects it seems necessary that Dakota remains the control center. I wonder what it is to have them on strings where Dakota can make them slide across the floor. It also would be perhaps worth bringing out all of the supplies to start trying different sculptures/compositions of the materials to see their potential. How close do you want to stay to the image of a table? Are you trying to reprogram the way we see these items? I imagine that the first step in abstracting them would be to try to look at them as just shapes, not useful and everyday materials. Or what if you imagine them as other things, and force them to fit another function. I thought of this video when you mentioned bringing in more kitchen-like supplies...

Martha rosler- "semiotics of the kitchen"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zSA9Rm2PZA>”

Bryana

“I was hoping to see tea actually spilling out of the cup (maybe the objects are functional but being used in a ridiculous way). I like the objects sliding slowly on the tablecloth and would have been interested to have something exposed slowly underneath the table (another dancer, other objects, the bottom half of the body unusually clothed). I also would have been intrigued if the tablecloth was a dress and the teacups somehow stuck to it. I believe playing with using objects on the body is a good start at abstraction.”
Megan Mazarick

Week Three: Cup Your Spoon

Feedback Prompt:

“Dakota and I worked with the Gloria Starr video to develop more movement with the tea cups. I do plan to have liquid in the cups, but cannot have any liquid in the studio we are using. "I am interested in the juxtaposition between the movements in the two videos we are referencing. I've been exploring this idea by choreographing Dakota's upper and lower body separately. Do you have any suggestions as to how I could highlight this separation even more?"

“I think you show the juxtaposition of the two themes - stillness and madness - fairly well. Nonetheless, you can highlight the separation by having two people doing different things at the same time. The background could be different as well for each of the two dancers. Or you could divide your body into two completely different "performers" and have half of your body stay still while the other half moves around frantically. I still really like the idea of using crops and various camera angles to show the juxtaposition though.” -Justin Cheung

“Perhaps a way of highlighting this separation more is to constantly have two layers going the whole time, not only when the camera highlights them. I also find that one of the linking factors in the rhythm, again to highlight the difference I imagine could involve a complex juxtaposition of rhythm scores happening in the upper and lower body. This would be a lot of coordination work I imagine. The one thing that is unclear for me after watching the reference videos is, how does affect play a role. Both videos are very charismatic, is there room to play with this, I wonder.” -Bryana

“This is a very interesting piece. I like the use of the cups and if/when you can use liquids in them it might be interesting to have them different colors and maybe explore transitioning the all of the cups and not just the one. I strongly agree with the last comment added that I feel it would almost be more powerful imagery and mystery to start on her legs tapping before going up to her upper body. I feel that opening with the entire shot framed with the white walls of the table cloth and black ceiling and floor really isolate her legs and create a sort of mystery around what is going on by isolating the audience to that perspective alone. Another thing that might be interesting is the use of an above angle looking directly down, when isolating her upper body. I think all of the shapes and her lower body sinking into the table might be a very interesting perspective to explore.” -Rylan Mervinsky

“This is so interesting to me. I wonder if you flipped it, that we start by seeing her tapping and then with the cups. I also craved for her legs to be bare for some reason. I started thinking of it as this really out there proscenium stage curtained by the white table cloth to then reveal it is just that. Makes me think more of her as a giant or something. Really liked her with the cup on her face, also wanted to see her mess with the other one's as well, maybe there is liquid in one or a few of them. I also liked the "magic" trick of wondering where the heck the cup went, and then it came back.” -Mathew Janczewski

Week One: 16 Tickets

Feedback Prompt:

“Like *The Survey*, we started by listening to McGregor's dreams and searching for videos online that helped us connect to a character. Instead of borrowing gestures and spatial patterns from videos found online, I am creating movement from descriptive words and phrases in informational videos and documentaries about schizophrenia found on YouTube.

I am interested in exploring a dreamscape that gives the viewer the feeling that they are watching a nightmare unfold. Not necessarily that they are *having* a nightmare, but that they are a bystander in someone else's nightmare. "In your own words, how would you describe a nightmare and the way you feel while having one? How would you describe the movement created so far?"

“zombie zombie noose goblin frozen escape scare swirly faint (this is the description of the movement)
nightmares for me are usually based in real life situations- boring nightmares such as "my boyfriend cheats on me" or worse (and with more residual bad feelings throughout the day) "my brother dies"
real terrors involve me waking myself up in a silent scream that causes my whole body to tense up” -Megan Mazarick

“a nightmare is a dream that you cannot escape from, have control over, or are pained by. I feel incredibly tense, jaw clenched, hands in tight fists... either wake up exhausted or crying... afraid to fall asleep into the same nightmare. I used to have frequent night terrors that I wouldn't recall... only discovered at a sleep over. In these night terrors I would either whimper or have a painful moan and thrash my arms and legs... never to remember them in the morning.

According to the text from the first :55 seconds of the youtube video, it seems as though the movement is picking up on the delusion and paranoia that the man is enduring... Robin is very scattered and his movements are rapid and unconnected which is right on par with male #1, also the "flat effect" of decreased outward expression in Robins face is very reminiscent of male #1.. very lost and paranoid.” -amv

Week Two: 16 Tickets

Feedback Prompt:

I have been exploring a changing character by sourcing movement from the descriptive text in *Four Patients with Schizophrenia*. This week, I worked with Robin to add the second of four personalities he will switch between. "Robin's character "switches" at the 1:00 mark. Does the switch feel gradual or abrupt to you? How do you think we could explore the transfer between personalities in the weeks to come?"

“Actually, I find the two characters very close to each other. Had I not been told about the switch I don't think that I would identify the fact that there are two. Though, because I read the prompt before watching, I was trying to identify who this new character was. What I noticed, though, it could be pushed further was that the second character was using the more (I'm searching for a good word for this, so I'll name a few and imagine its somewhere in between) exterior-extensional-theatrical-products of movement- that's all I got. Namely, the production of sound and the moving away of the lips to expose the teeth. Also, it seems that the camera was defining the character in a different way, which I found quite interesting-closeups were definitely more prominent. Overall, I find that the narrative subtext which I image each of the characters has, has something to do with a violent relationship with the self. For example, the punch of oneself, the moving the hands across the face with tension, and so on. This is what binds the two characters and makes them one. I would be curious about how the character was constructed. Does he/she have a history, habits, preoccupations, particular things which satisfies him/her, what does the body look like, what are the asymmetries?” -Bryana

“Oops- I didn't mean to comment without looking over what I had written- please ignore my sloppy spelling!

Megan MazarickI actually felt like the switch happened in little spurts in different parts. In the beginning at the jump forward then after the teeth exposure in two other moments. As if the alternate character was fighting to get out of the body and occasionally breaking to the surface.” -Megan

Week Three: 16 Tickets

Feedback Prompt:

“In week 6, Robin and I talked a lot about the other character in the dream (the camera) and how they are involved in the dream. As a viewer, do you feel involved in the dream? Do you feel like a bystander? A fly on the wall?”

“I can't say that I particularly feel inside the dream. I find that the moments that I am most drawn towards becoming involved beyond spectatorship is when Robin is doing some kind of repetitive movement like in the beginning 0-25 sec. Even though this movement evolves and becomes more complex it remains inside the sway. (btw the sway seems to be the common threat for me). Another type of material that I find enticing is close ups of the face. (50-1.24 sec) This material paradoxically poses Robin as completely transparent and at the same time as impossible to pierce through. This

paradox has a dream like quality. I pose some questions lightly...Does being inside of a dream necessarily mean that one is possessed? How do we represent a dream- with other representations of dreams?" -Bryana

"The subconscious offers the best inspirational material for dances! The audio provides a lot of information. The disjointed stream of consciousness from the sleeper is embodied in the facial manipulation and bearing of the teeth toward the end. Where did that phantom foot come from?? :)" -Rachel Winchester

Week 9: Somniloquies

"As we close in on the rehearsal process, I have been working with my videographer to create a world for these dreams. The main question Rob has been asking me is, "If you were to wake up from this dream, how would you feel...in one word?" I've been chewing on this question and thought I'd pass it along to you all! Give one word for each piece! Thanks!"

"I would say each piece has a theme which can be summarized with one word
"Cup Your Spoon" shows impatience because the dancer looks as if she was an impatient child forced to sit at the dinner table
The theme of "16 Tickets" would be story because the dancer is trying to tell us about his or someone else's experience through movements
For "The Survey", I would have to say soulless because of their expressionless faces"
Justin Cheung

"Too much going on to fit into one word, but if I must:

- 1: Cup your spoon- Consoled (there really isnt one word it reminds me of something alice would see down the rabbit hole)
 - 2: 16 tickets- operated (controlled not by himself)
 - 3: The survey- Intertwined
- Rylan Mervinsky

One word through line is "perspective"

"cup your spoon": tricks

"16 tickets": voices

"The survey": stealing

Mathew Janczewski

Difficult to characterize how I feel in one word, here's a go...

1. "Cup Your Spoon" -- whimsical (a gypsy sideshow)
2. "16 Tickets" -- mischevious
3. "The Survey" -- frolicsome

Taylor Theis

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