

USING COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES AND TOUCH-BASED PARTNERING TO
FORMULATE CONCEPT AND CHOREOGRAPHY FOR A SCREENDANCE

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Using Collaborative Processes and Touch-Based Partnering to Formulate Concept and Choreography for a Screendance

The research in this study uses collaborative methodology, touch-based partnering, and screendance. The facilitator and two dancers aimed to understand how touch-based partnering and collaborative process curates movement material for the creation of screendance. The dancers and facilitator engaged in orienting movement workshops by studying three partnering idioms: Contact Improvisation, Country Swing, and Cha Cha. They later employed a methodology for collaborative choreography and ultimately filmed movement material in four filming shoots with reflective rehearsals interspersed. The facilitator independently created the screendance, *Petrichor*, from the footage. The film was premiered at a presentation event on January 19, 2018, where the dancers and facilitator also conducted a lecture-demonstration and talk-back with the audience. Reflections on the study resulted in new understandings about extended applications in touch-based partnering, collaborative methodologies, and the medium of screendance for dance educators and artists. The screendance, *Petrichor*, can be viewed as a supplemental file.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

At the age of three, I began attending Waynflete School, a small preK-12 private institution in Portland, Maine that is known for its tight-knit community, exemplary academics, and supported arts programs. I was placed in creative movement classes during preschool with the director of the Dance Department, Susan Nelson. I continued to dance for Susan through my high school graduation from Waynflete in 2011. From preschool through my senior year, I was involved with a dance program in which Susan engaged students in creative process and always encouraged fully immersed expression through movement. Susan cultivated full immersion in movement by nurturing her students' artistic voices. She helped each student explore themselves as both choreographer and dancer through playful investigation of movement that promoted ownership over the creative process. Susan facilitated discussions about movement choices, supported a collaborative workspace, and offered feedback to students towards their own artistic goals. In these ways, Susan aimed to hone, from a very early age, the students' innate ability and desire to take risks, make choices, and engage in an analytical style of imagination. In my own experience as a young dance artist under her guidance, I was constantly in the process of creating work while embedding the physical skill-building of a modern dancer's training (i.e. coordination, alignment, extension and flexibility, conditioning, musicality, and performative intention). In Susan's program, 'technique' class was not separate from the rehearsal process, and in many ways, she shaped her program around the 'repertory' or 'company' model, where the dancers took class together, but most often were working for an upcoming performance. I believe she

chose this model in order to train young dancers to have stage presence and awareness of the human body as an expressive tool capable of telling a story, conveying a theme, or revealing an emotion to an audience.

The core elements of Susan's pedagogical philosophy, built from a collaborative approach, have become embodied in the way I continually choose to work through my own artistic processes, and it was in my early college years that I recognized my own philosophies on artistic process more fully.

After my first semester as a freshman in college, my father passed away from liver cancer. At the age of 19, I was thrown into a turmoil full of dichotomy and self-questioning. A year later, I choreographed a work on myself and two dance friends in an attempt to define the recent experience for myself. What came about was a collaboration between myself and my dancers in which we worked through movement motifs and questioned the concept of relationship through conversation. In many ways, I see this collaboration now as an experience that helped me process my own grief, but even more importantly, through collaboration, I was able to gain a richer understanding of human grief as we dealt with the common themes embedded in each of our own grieving experiences. The relationship between myself and the two dancers evolved as we came to share our interpretations of the work, which ultimately was reflected on stage.

This sharing inevitably extended and enriched my artistic process by pushing the trajectory of my own perspective. The work captured many moments that felt personal for me, yet it conveyed those experiences with a deeper sensitivity than I could ever have imagined. Because they had truly collaborated with me, they imbued their performances in the work with their own connections to its themes alongside my own. It was at this

moment that I gained an additional insight: the work can create itself if, through collaboration, the artists can bring forward meaningful content and work toward full immersion in its expression.

It was from this first collaborative process that I began to define myself as an artist. Ever increasingly, what defines me as an artist has been the way I create, and the way I create, which is through collaboration. Collaboration has been an integral part of this thesis and will continue to be a main aspect of my future creative processes.

I also have come to two other realizations about myself as an artist. In reflection of my experience with Susan Nelson, I have come to see that I was simultaneously challenged and supported through her philosophy that students learn best when they are invested, when they take ownership of their work, and when they can be fully immersed in expression through movement. Immersion, out of all the lessons Susan taught me, has proven to be the most profound in my development as an artist. Immersion is a quality in process and performance that I continually seek for myself and my dancers.

Last, an identifier of my work is the nature of its thematic content drawing from what I perceive as ‘innately human experiences,’ which, for me, means that I draw from my experiences and seek to find relationships with others’ experiences. There are countless themes that could fit in this description, but some that have stood out to me are experiences that trigger deep emotions. Some major themes include death, loss, grief, affection, aggression, change of heart, struggle, pain, violence, conflict, intimacy, love, connection, and disconnection. These are just examples of themes that I have pinpointed in my past processes.

These identifiers of myself as an artist - collaborative methodology, fully immersed expression, and themes of innately human experiences - became key in my thesis research and the aims of this thesis project.

Since I have been at the University of Oregon, I have been teaching, choreographing, and studying, grounded in these defining characteristics of myself as an artist -- promoting collaborative approaches for creating movement that deal with innately human experiences through fully immersed expression. For this thesis project, I became intrigued with the ways human experiences are built on the relationships that we develop, whether with others, with environment, or with self. Recognizing that relationships are key to human experiences, I have been drawn to the modality of dance partnering as an aspect of dance that fosters fully immersed expression of human experience. Dance partnering is a modality in dance that requires the dancers to work collaboratively with one another in communicative dialogue. Dance partnering requires the dancers to interpret through complex layers of touch and the other four senses, which is a task that develops insight, investment, and vulnerability.

In this way, as I have come to practice and question through dance partnering in the past three years of graduate school, I have seen the many connections this modality has to my own artistic identity. Those three core elements of my artistry - collaboration, fully immersed expression, and themes of innately human experiences -- all require the individual to be accountable throughout the process and seek their comfort with being vulnerable. By my observation, it is only through vulnerability that a dancer or choreographer may sense themselves within the process, and secondly, through this same vulnerability, I have seen that the resulting work becomes more compelling.

Vulnerability has remained at the heart of my interest in studying touch as a creative arena and has continued to be significant in this thesis project. I saw, throughout my project, how touch draws out vulnerability by exposing one body to another, requiring both trust and sensitivity between the two people touching. Partially for this reason, I have come to realize that touch-based partnering is a modality for expressing fully immersed human experiences through relationship.

With my thesis research, I sought to further understand how I, as an artist, may use dance partnering as a modality within a collaborative process of choreographing.

One quote, in particular, by Erin Manning, from her book entitled *The Politics of Touch*, has influenced my thinking on how I used touch-based partnering as a tool for expressing human experiences in my thesis project and has become a metaphor to inform my creative process:

The proposition is that touch—every act of reaching toward—enables the creation of worlds. This production is relational. I reach out to you in order to invent a relation that will, in turn, invent me. To touch is to engage in the potential of an individuation. (xv)

This thesis research allowed me to deeply investigate how I may fuse a collaborative methodology with the task of partnered, touch-based dance. Specifically, my artistic interest was to see what could come out of a collaborative choreographic process that engaged with questions and tasks through touch. Touch requires the active engagement of two or more bodies through a collaboration that simultaneously requires communication between these two or more thinking, feeling, sensing people. I continue to see collaboration and touch as the perfect pair, intertwined, co-dependent, and intrinsically connected. I have seen how this pairing opens up a myriad of possibilities for sharing with an audience. I sought to use this thesis project as an opportunity to study

with depth and rigor the possibilities that this approach to choreography could give my artistic development.

In order to fully extend these concepts of collaborative methodology with touch and partnering, I translated studio work into a screendance. As the culmination of my research, the making of a screendance provided me, as an artist, an opportunity to use the camera to capture what we had uncovered about touch and partnering in movement, and by doing so, bring into focus a type of intimacy and detail about which I have been curious. It also allowed me to convey what human experiences of touch we had discovered in our process. The entire process of making screendance provided me a unique perspective through which I, as both choreographer and videographer/editor, could study movement, since the camera also allowed me to analyze movement intimately and precisely--distilling sensations and experiences of touch was key to conveying something that began as felt and transforming it into something that could be seen.

The camera is capable of seeing from inside the dancers and their actions on a deeply visceral, intimate level that draws on detail. The use of the camera in my project, and ultimately the making of a screendance, allowed me, as an artist, to capture, track, isolate, analyze, reflect on, collage, and convey what was exposed throughout our artistic process, and thereby more fully developing my ideas of how touch and partnering both impacted a collaborative process and was relayed to an audience.

Through this thesis study, I intended to, as facilitating artist, engage my dancers in a choreographic process that promoted their sense of immersed engagement through collaboration for their performance in a screendance. In our process together, we first

worked collaboratively in a workshop phase that developed the dancers' understanding of concepts and questions as well as explored the many ways we could express through touch and partnering. We then moved into a rehearsal process in which the dancers and I were tasked to collaboratively develop movement material based on uncovering subject matter within touch and partnering. In this phase, I facilitated their cumulation of movement material, both choreographed and improvisational, by engaging them with questions, offering them feedback, and assisting them in brainstorming and troubleshooting. Finally, we moved into a filming and development phase, in which we recorded movement material in four separate shoots. I later used this video footage to develop the final screendance. In the filming/development phase, I became a leading director/videographer, guiding the dancers through the film shoots to develop our artistic ideas for the screendance. After each shoot, we had the opportunity to go back into the studio for a rehearsal and reflection day, in which we would watch the raw footage and continue to build upon motifs and movement materials we already had created. The cumulation of this creative process was in the editing phase for the screendance, which was completed by myself as the lone artist. After my dancers and I finished our last filming shoot and reflection day, I began to analyze the footage on my own and reflect upon our process in order to make an original screendance that aimed to convey meaningfully an experience through touch and partnering. This screendance, *Petrichor*, was ultimately presented to an audience in my thesis presentation event, "An Evening of Dance," on January 19, 2018. During this evening, we screened *Petrichor* followed by a lecture/demonstration and open talk-back with the audience. The lecture/demonstration was developed by me and my dancers as we reflected upon what aspects of our process

were most impactful to the development of the work, and the talk-back portion of the evening, guided by Liz Lerman's Critical Response method, became an opportunity for us to answer questions, ask questions, and gain a better understanding of the audience's reception of the work.

At the heart of my project have been not only my core values as a dancer, artist, and educator, but also a fusion of inquiries about touch-based partnering, collaborative methodology, and the medium of screendance. Even past the ending of this process, I continue to seek a greater understanding of how I, as an artist, choose to implement my own philosophies into my creative works. I also continue to seek further development of my understanding of collaborative methodologies for choreography. By designing and implementing this project, I have not concluded all that I could possibly learn about myself as an artist and the particular content of my interests, but I have furthered my understanding of how to facilitate the type of process that feels authentic to my creative research agenda, how to generate embodied expressive dance through touch and partnering, as well as how to convey embodied meaning through the medium of screendance. This thesis research and my continued interest in reflecting upon it has intentionally prioritized an engagement of the dancers through themes of relationship and touch, in which value systems, sensations, and experiences became the primary means of conveying meaningfully relatable, complex, and compelling work in movement, revealed through an original art piece of screendance.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gain a greater understanding of my creative process as an facilitating artist through the fusion of three areas of inquiry: collaboration, touch-based partnering, and screendance. I sought to understand how touch-based partnering could be the source for a collaborative process to curate movement material for the creation of a screendance. I developed the design of the study to merge these inquiries into one project that allowed me to investigate my interests as an artist with depth and rigor. In the study, I facilitated a collaborative methodology for the creation of an original screendance that conveyed themes of touch and relationship in a meaningful way. The two dancers participating in the study and I, as facilitator, investigated, through collaborative interaction, sensory aspects of dance partnering as elements that shaped the creative work. We engaged in orienting movement workshops to hone the dancers' awareness and use of touch properties. In the subsequent rehearsal process, we employed a methodology for collaborative choreography using a newly heightened sensitivity toward touch and relationship. Movement material was developed by the dancers and facilitated by me. Ultimately, the dancers and I filmed the movement material in four separate filming shoots with reflective development days in the studio between each shoot. I independently used all the collected footage to create an original screendance, *Petrichor*, for the purpose of curating our artistic process together and exploring how I could convey touch-based experience through this medium. The editing process allowed me to reflect on how our collaboration impacted the development of a screendance about touch and relationship. *Petrichor* was premiered at my thesis presentation event, "An Evening of Dance," on January 19, 2018. Following the screening, the dancers and I

conducted a lecture-demonstration distilling significant aspects of our process and we held a talk-back with the audience based on Liz Lerman's Critical Response methodology to provide me with yet more insight into the aims of the project.

Delimitations

First, I delimited myself in my choice to play multiple roles in the process: as facilitating choreographer, videographer, director, and editor. This choice ultimately shaped the culminating artistic work of screendance. Second, I delimited myself to a collaborative process for creating movement material, which was uniquely shaped by myself as facilitator and the dancers, Jimmie Banks and Christopher Slayton. Third, I delimited myself by intentionally creating a timeline that limited amounts of time and structure for various phases of the study, including the number of workshops, the amount of time spent in rehearsal, the number of film shoots conducted, etc. More details about the timeline are laid out in the section entitled Timeline within Chapter III. Lastly, I delimited the final screendance to be a 10-minute film prior to beginning the editing process. I chose this length, based on my prior experiences creating screendance, as I found it to be within the scope of my project and was practical in supporting my project's goals for depth and rigor over unnecessary length.

Limitations

Although the nature of reflective information collected was mainly subjective, by which I mean that the perceptions, thoughts, and opinions of the dancers and myself shaped the work as it unfolded, my evaluation of the project did not aim to draw

conclusions about the dancers. Rather, I have reflected on how I perceived our experiences, thoughts, and opinions as shaping the work, *Petrichor*, ultimately for the purpose of coming to a greater understanding of myself as an artist through a fusion of three areas of inquiry (touch-based partnering, collaboration, and screendance). Several types of reflective information was gathered through the following methods: first, information from the dancers, such as oral feedback while in-session, written feedback in journals, and videotaped discussions; second, my own notes and observations taken throughout the process; third, the raw video footage from the four film shoots; fourth, the culminating screendance, *Petrichor*, in its finalized, edited form; fifth, the video recording of the lecture-demonstration and the talk-back with the audience after the public presentation of the film at “An Evening of Dance” on January 19, 2018. A video file of *Petrichor* can be viewed via the URL listed in Appendix F and is included with this document as a supplemental file.

I delimited myself in terms of a specific timeline and locations, but I was limited in terms of the weather, especially for outdoor shooting in Deadwood, Oregon. We worked around some precipitation, but luckily did not need to make significant changes to our plan based on inclement weather. I was additionally limited by the nature of the site(s) selected (i.e. distance to location, amount of access to location, landscape surrounding the location).

Significance of Study

I see my study as both unique and significant in its intent and design, which specifically combined three elements (touch-based partnering, collaborative

methodology, and the medium of screendance) for a creative process. I see these three elements as operating in the way of a Venn diagram, in which no single element held more weight than another. Through the combination of all three elements, a creative work of dance came about that is completely distinctive, yet acutely reflective of this investigation into a three-part process. This three-part process contributes to formative understandings in each of the three areas: first, the nature of collaborative processes in dance choreography; second, explorations of touch-based partnering; and third, the evaluative process of curating developed movement material to create an original dance film. Aspects of this research have extended application in the arena of dance pedagogy by articulating a process for workshopping to orient the dancers toward a heightened sensitivity about touch-based partnering through a methodology that intentionally bridges partnering idioms that each offer unique perspectives on relational dynamics. Aspects of this research also have extended application for the interdisciplinary nature of presenting dance on screen.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Because this thesis work combined three of my recent artistic inquiries, it is essential for me to break down into several different categories the bodies of literature that I have been curating for my study. The first category covered is the nature of partnering and touch, the second surrounds a collaborative methodology, and the third discusses the creation of a screendance. I have researched each category separately, but I have continually sought to connect them in support of my study, especially in terms of my combined design. I have separated sources specifically focused on the physical act of touch-based partnering from those focused on methodologies and theories of collaboration for the purpose of emphasizing the significance the two aspects hold in relation to one another. At the end of the chapter, I review sources that cover information about creative process and developing dance for film. In particular, I have reviewed information that articulates the use of film and the development of screendance as a method for documenting, reflecting on, and conveying a compelling experience to an audience based on touch and relationship.

The Nature of Partnering and Touch in Dance

The Use of Touch in Dance

A foundational goal of my project has been to come to a deeper understanding of how the physical act of touch-based partnering can play a role in creating a work as well as how this physical act has impacted my artistic facilitation of that work. Partnering is an act that not only brings an attention toward the dynamic of relationship, but it is an act

that holds touch as the focal point from which the audience can draw meaning. It follows that the audience may also draw an equal amount of meaning from intentional absence of touch in a creative work. Additionally, the audience may draw meaning from the way the dancers attend toward other senses, especially sight and sound. In these ways, the audience may perceive that touch is a location where meaning is simultaneously created and creating; as Erin Manning states, touching both invents and is invented in the same moment because of the interaction between two or more thinking, sensing, feeling human beings. In my project, one of my main goals was to hone my two dancers' sensitivity toward touch and to allow this newly enhanced awareness to become the fodder for the creative work of screendance. I have sought scholarly sources that would aid me in guiding the dancers toward experiencing such sensitivity with one another, ultimately using that understanding to create meaning for the audience through our questioning about the nature of the dancers' touch, the implications of the touch, and the value systems embedded within the touch. In order to understand these aesthetics and mechanics of touch, I sought source material that focused on isolating touch as a sensory experience.

Partnering in dance is the act of moving in tandem with at least one other person based on the fundamental principles of touch and interpersonal connection. Interpersonal connection describes the meaningful social interaction between these thinking, sensing, touching bodies. Several scholars contribute to my understanding of partnering and interpersonal connection; specifically, Cynthia Novack, Alyson Cartagena, David Outevsky, Erin Manning, and Viktor Frankl, whose thoughts I will cover throughout this chapter. Defining partnering as a physical act of dance separate from a social experience

has not been simple as I researched how partnering is shaped through touch-based sensations. The following selected scholarly sources address various elements of partnering applied to dance, and when these elements are brought together, they create a picture of what partnering has meant for my project.

Cynthia Novack, in her book *Sharing the Dance*, articulates the partnering practice of Contact Improvisation. She writes that Contact Improvisation “is most frequently performed as a duet, in silence, with dancers supporting each other’s weight while in motion” (7). Novack characterizes the act by pointing out the weight-supported physical connection between two or more bodies in motion (7).

Novack makes a distinction between two primary types of touch – touch that does not require a sharing of weight versus touch that does require this negotiation. Therefore, I first distinguish physical contact in my study as any action in which two or more bodies are touching at the skin level without sharing a significant amount of weight. Alyson Cartagena, in her dissertation “Tactile Learning: Touch and Touch Self-Efficacy in College Dance Instruction,” explains that this type of touch establishes the skin as a “thinking, feeling surface” (4). For my study, the idea of the skin being a thinking, feeling surface means that information gathered through the skin played a significant role in choices made through our creative process, shifting our process from one relying mainly on my visual, outside gaze as choreographer into a process developed through the dancers’ interpretation of sensations beginning at the skin level. I will refer to this type of sourcing through the skin as ‘cutaneous information’.

The second type of touch is weight sharing, which as Novack describes, is a type of touch that requires an individual to support through a give or take of body weight

(51). Although Novack does not describe the role of the skin in the experiential practice of Contact Improvisation, she does describe how this type of supported/supporting action extends touch to a level deeper than the skin, in her words, “sensing the internal space of the body” (52). Novack’s descriptions aided me to conclude that weight sharing brings into focus the sensations occurring underneath the surface of the skin because, through weight sharing, a body is negotiating either the support of additional weight or the relinquishment of one’s own weight, which is information that penetrates the body past the cutaneous level (52-53). In either case, this negotiation brings into focus certain properties of physics that are felt during weight sharing inside the body, underneath the skin. In my experience as a dancer, I have noticed that these properties can include the initiation and resolve of momentum, and the centrifugal pull of centripetal force, the body’s negotiation of leverage, tension, pressure, and spiraling, as well as many other aspects that, as Novack suggests, require the body to negotiate from the inside out—a requirement for each body to organize itself efficiently through the bones, muscles, and organs, which finally becomes visible from the outside. My understanding about and interest in these properties, as I described above through Novack’s discussion of Contact Improvisation, were significant to my facilitation of the dancers throughout the process and specifically during the initial workshop phase, as these were properties that I particularly focused on with Jimmie and Chris in order to nurture their understanding of impactful factors into weight sharing and the gathering of cutaneous information.

My interest in weight sharing for this project was within its aesthetic qualities, which I have seen as offering rich opportunities for conveying potent imagery through touch to an audience -- specifically, touch requires the dancers to have a greater comfort

with being vulnerable. In order to give weight, one partner must rely on the other to support them, and in essence, to entrust their physical safety and mental well-being to someone else. On the other hand, in order to take weight, one partner must have clear physical self-awareness and confidence while supporting the other's body. In the case of the supporter, vulnerability comes about through an offering of protection and strength to their supported partner. I believe exposing vulnerability provides a rich lens through which to create compelling work, and thus, weight sharing is a primary mode of partnering through which I facilitated the dancers' development of movement material.

Aesthetic Considerations of Touch

For a while now, I have been interested in how touch creates relationship both physically and theatrically and I have been inspired by impactful works of other dance artists, which have aided me as I sought to understand how to use value systems to develop the nature of touch in my study. Observing other artists' works allowed me, as a viewer, to glean meaning from them, and thus analyze what held significance to me. As I observed other artists' works as well as reflected on my past choreographic processes, I recognized that, in particular, I am interested in the ways we may be able to juxtapose, through touch, various aesthetic qualities that hold meaning for a viewer, such as intimacy, sensitivity, or affection with other opposing qualities such as disconnection, isolation, aggression, or concealment. In reflection of the scholarly sources I address throughout this section, I have come to see that an artist's ability to juxtapose aesthetic qualities that hold meaning for a viewer comes about through exposing embedded value systems of touch.

One dance artist who particularly inspired me toward this end has been Pina Bausch, whose “dance theater” work is renowned for capitalizing on the nature of a relationship through visceral imagery that develops, for the viewer, a clear sense of meaningful narrative. Bausch often explored touch as both an interaction between two or more people as well as an act upon the self or between the self and the surrounding environment. David Price, in his book, reviews Bausch’s works and discusses her intention to create a narrative in *Café Müller*, which in this case, was surrounding “man-woman relationships” (331). David Price dissects the nature of the relationships that Bausch established in *Café Müller*, in which the male figure’s nature is to dominate the woman figure, and the intimacy, love, or lust portrayed between the two is always a symbolic continuation of the “battle of the sexes.” My main interest with this passage was less in the gender-specific nature of these relationships in terms of heteronormativity and questions surrounding gender equality as part of her aesthetic, but more how Bausch used incredibly specific and intentional touch to ultimately express her narrative through cutaneously-embedded value systems of gender, sexuality, and dominance. As David Price explains, Bausch used these value systems of touch in *Café Müller* to portray an increasingly painful, disturbing image. He states:

In *Café Müller* the buried truth is revealed in the production’s most disturbing sequence. A man and a woman begin an awkward duet, which culminates in the two alternately slamming one another into the wall. The sequence is painful, almost unbearable to watch, but it should be noted that unlike the rehearsed sequence, in which the man receives instructions on how to hold the woman, the slamming movements occur without prompting or provocations. It might even be said that they evolve naturally during the course of events. (330)

This description of the work clarifies not only the physical actions that occurred on the stage, but the nature of them as aggressive, violent, painful, and perhaps even

animalistic. Bausch's use of these contrasting aesthetic qualities of touch further skews the value systems placed upon them: for example, the significance of gender in *Café Müller* identifies not only the viewer's expectations or assumptions for a heteronormative relationship (i.e. stereotype of man as protector or woman as fragile, etc.), but how these expectations or assumptions are then subverted through opposing aesthetic qualities of touch that, for a viewer, hold contradicting meanings. The significance of Bausch's work for my project was in her ability to depict embedded meanings for a viewer and values of a viewer all within the container of touch as a form of expression. This ability is one I continually strive for as an artist and focused on throughout this thesis project. I also noted while considering Bausch's work that her dancers are seemingly required to have a great degree of intelligence and technical training to perform movements that could come across as violent or aggressive without actually hurting each other or themselves. This played a role in my understandings of how to use the workshop phase of my project to support a rigorous study of touch with Jimmie and Chris, which at times could portray violent or aggressive acts of touch, while maintaining their physical and emotional safety. In many ways, a work such as *Café Müller* is compelling because the viewer can understand that the dancers are not actually getting hurt and that the aggressive or violent dynamic is all a part of the embodied theatrics. In my project, the workshop phase served as a time for Jimmie and Chris to practice different relational dynamics, including aggressive ones, to work toward a physical intelligence, or what I often refer to as "physical self-organizing," thus creating trust between one another. As Jimmie, Chris, and I worked toward focusing in on the nature of their touch and the value systems embedded within it, we came to question these technical considerations as well as similar qualities

and narrative structures that Price describes about *Café Müller*. We considered, for the first time, the significance of Jimmie and Chris's gender for the work we were developing. We questioned whether we could create a value system of touch that was not focused on romance or sexual desire, but rather a refined focus on intimacy that transcended these social expectations. Through this questioning, inspired in part by my reflection on *Café Müller*, Chris, Jimmie, and I were drawn closer toward certain touch properties and qualities as the work developed, which ultimately impacted the costuming choices as well as many elements of theatrics for *Petrichor*.

Another work that significantly inspired me within this project was William Forsythe and Dana Caspersen's *From a Classical Position*. I was first intrigued by the collaborative nature of Forsythe and Caspersen's creative process for *From a Classical Position*, which was filmed and published in 2007 by Kulter Video. The screendance captures the two, Forsythe and Caspersen, in a constant, proximal duet, moving in and out of touch as they manipulate each other's and their own bodies in a bare stage space. Steven Spier writes about the use of the camera in capturing the relationship between Caspersen and Forsythe. Spier writes, "There are solos, pairings, extreme close ups that resemble landscape or hyper-real sculpture, and sound that not always corresponds to what one sees...a close look at the first fifty-five seconds shows the film's complexity" (51). I agree wholeheartedly with Spier's comments--Forsythe and Caspersen establish the complex intertwining of their bodies (Spier described this sense earlier as 'the interior of the knot') within the first seconds of the film, and this rich study of two bodies in motion continues to unravel throughout the film, becoming exposed and re-exposed for twenty-five minutes.

After watching *From a Classical Position* several times, I have continued to be struck by the pairing of minimalist, formalistic qualities with intricate movement and relationships. On the one hand, I noticed the stark nature of the stage space as it was stripped down to its most essential elements, the clothing of the dancers as if they were merely ‘in rehearsal’ rather than ‘on stage,’ and the sporadic qualities of the piano sounds as it blended into and out of the movement on screen. These minimalistic qualities aided to draw my attention toward the relationship and dynamics explored by Forsythe and Caspersen. I was inspired by *From a Classical Position* as a beautifully rich example of how the artists used film to capitalize on experience as defined through touch and partnering. I see this film also relating directly to my thoughts on the nature of touch and value systems embedded within touch as determining an aesthetic that conveys meaning, theme, or narrative. For me, *From a Classical Position* makes impressionable use of intimacy and proximity, of elaborate manipulations and sensitive stillness, which are qualities of touch deriving from a deep level of comfort that only comes from working closely and collaboratively with another person for an extended period of time. Forsythe and Caspersen’s work is distinct from Pina Bausch’s mainly in that Forsythe and Caspersen were working from a task-based and often geometrically-inspired standpoint, rather than a symbolic or theatrical one, which was Bausch’s focus.

From a Classical Position provided me with a wonderful example to show my dancers what I was striving for in terms of developing their dynamic through touch with one another. I also became intrigued by the intertwining of proximal bodies, as was so effectively captured by the camera throughout *From a Classical Position*. I see that in *Petrichor*, we, like Forsythe and Caspersen, also made choices to capture extremely close

shots of Chris and Jimmie's intertwined bodies. We, in fact, even made the decision to have Jimmie and Chris trade clothing items every now and again during our film shoots, creating multiple different outfits for them through the same curated wardrobe. This choice drew out even further the intertwined nature of their touch. Lastly, I noticed that *From a Classical Position* used a bare stage space, which, for me as a viewer, allowed me to focus on the relationship between Forsythe and Caspersen without the distraction of the surrounding environment. I wondered if Forsythe and Caspersen also chose to use a bare stage space to film because of the athleticism and physicality required in their movements, which would have been much more difficult to perform in a nontraditional space, such as outside. Ultimately, my dancers and I, like Forsythe and Caspersen, chose to conduct some of our film shoots in the intimate and comfortable environment of the studio in which we had been rehearsing in order to focus more on the manipulations of their bodies in the space and less on the logistics of the environment. I also found the stage space to create an effective black backdrop to the dancers' movements, which gave me a heightened sense of intimacy between the two of them.

Bausch's *Café Müller* and Forsythe/Caspersen's *From a Classical Position* provide two clear examples that demonstrate how the nature of touch is an effective basis for crafting an aesthetic that conveys meaning, theme, and narrative in a work--a basis around which I sought first to orient my dancers, then to collaboratively craft material, make production choices, and ultimately to use as a point of reflection during the editing process.

The Affective Landscape of Touch: Embedded Value Systems of Touch

Developing a meaningful experience for an audience through film was, for me, deeply intertwined with the social/emotional or “affective landscape” of touch, by which I mean that, for my project, the collaborative process of touch-based partnering required the cooperative interaction of Jimmie and Chris, who are both thinking, feeling, sensing human beings. Thus, it followed that the interactions between Jimmie and Chris conveyed emotional content, and since we were studying touch-based partnering for embodied theatrical purposes, we used this emotional content to develop metaphorical content for the film that would be meaningful for a viewer. Therefore, I developed a collaborative methodology in my project that was intentionally designed to investigate the ways in which humans negotiate relationships with one another while creating. Some of my greatest tasks in my project were to question touch, to bring it into focus, and to utilize its implications in a creative work.

To understand the nature of touch as an affective landscape, it is important to recognize that there are embedded value systems drawn from the concept of touch. Since touch is an aspect of human experience and connectedness that is constantly interpreted for “meaning,” it follows that touch is an affective landscape with embedded value systems. A value system is a set of beliefs elected by an individual, group, or community to guide conduct in all affairs. A value system may, for example, reflect ideas about gender, sexuality, socioeconomics, etc. For my project, I intentionally focused on examining two distinctly different value systems represented through touch as seen first in the dance practice of Contact Improvisation, and second, in the social/vernacular dance forms of Country Swing and Latin Cha Cha. It was also my intention to shed light on

how various physical elements can be used as a reference point for value systems of touch. In this section, I will analyze two contrasting value systems of touch as described by other dancers and dance artists, all for the purpose of contextualizing how I negotiated value systems of touch for my project.

Contact Improvisation is perhaps the most analyzed form of dance partnering in academia and was deliberately developed in contrast to other already-existing partner dance forms. Cynthia Novack defines Contact Improvisation in the following excerpt from her book, *Sharing the Dance*: “Contact improvisation is most frequently performed as a duet, in silence, with dancers supporting each other’s weight while in motion” (7). Key to her description is the component of “dancers support each other’s weight while in motion.” As I read and analyzed a variety of sources discussing dance partnering from several idioms, I came to see this commonality throughout: that in partnering, giving and taking weight while in motion is one of the main aspects that defines it in physical, practical terms across idioms. In the case of Contact Improvisation (CI), the distinguishing factor separating it from other forms of dance partnering is its foundation inside one particular value system of touch: the equal distribution between both partners to give and take weight. What ‘equal distribution’ refers to is the concept that both partners seek to at times take weight and at other times give weight with no preference or assumptions that separate the partners into consistent roles, such as one partner being the ‘lead’ while the other is a ‘follow,’ or similarly for ‘base’ and ‘flyer,’ which are both typical in social dance, ballet, and even in modern/contemporary partnering. Novack describes this distinguishing value system in *Sharing the Dance*:

...contact improvisers use momentum to move in concert with a partner's weight, rolling, suspending, lurching together. They often yield rather than resist, using

their arms to assist and support but seldom to manipulate. Interest lies in the ongoing flow of energy rather than on producing still pictures, as in ballet; consequently, dancers doing contact improvisation would just as soon fall as balance. (7)

Contact Improvisation is revolutionary in its perspective on how partners give and receive weight, which gives no preference to the size of the body, the gender of the partners in relation to one another, or the distinguishment of one's guidance and the other's response. Instead, Contact Improvisation focuses more on principles of physics to successfully follow through with the task of weight sharing.

I also took note here of Novack's point that a main interest in CI lies in creating an ongoing flow – an energetic modality that is characteristic of CI and creates a frame for it. It is additionally important to acknowledge a qualification that exists within CI that, for the purposes of my research, came into direct play as we shaped movement material: Contact Improvisation, appropriately named, was conceived as an improvisatory mode of practice and performance, not a practice for composing movement sequences that could be memorized, repeated, and retooled. CI was originally built on an inquiry into how two bodies, regardless of gender, sexuality, or physique, can move in tandem with one another, in a state of ongoing flow, through a 'duet system' (as Steve Paxton labels it) without premeditating choreographic and performative choices (Paxton, 40).

As CI has developed, however, many dance artists have used its principles, techniques, and embedded value system of touch to enhance their choreographic process. For my purposes, I used CI methods in my workshops and rehearsals as a way to orient the dancers to a sensitivity around touch that is whole-bodied. I also saw that the underpinnings of CI capitalize on a rich questioning of touch that fosters playful

experimentation and a debunking of stereotypes about gender-specific roles and concerns about body image. In my mind, this was a significant element to orienting the dancers to the project overall, providing them ways to gain more comfort, vulnerability, and agency through movement. Additionally, I further used CI methods in my project to expand the dancers' creative "toolbox" for composing movement material as well as to support the dancers in a mature use of improvisation as a performance modality, all for the purpose of enriching their aesthetic intuition and their performances for a screendance.

These considerations led me to read Steve Paxton's "Contact Improvisation" article from 1975 written for "The Drama Review," in which he describes his perspective on the 'duet system' that he developed through the fundamental underpinnings of studying its technique, which is a term he uses in reference to the teaching and practice of CI. In the article, he describes how Contact Improvisation is a system based on a duet of two moving bodies in improvisation with the common aim to work "along the easiest pathways available for their mutually moving masses" (40). He explains that this aim is explored through holding to the ideal (or value system) of "active, reflexive, harmonic, spontaneous, mutual forms...based on the senses of touch and balance" (40). Paxton also acknowledges in the article his perspective on the value system of equal distribution throughout initiating and responding to actions, which was also discussed in Cynthia Novack's book. Paxton speaks about the social system that he noticed developing out of his explorations in CI, by which I took him to be describing how meaning can be derived from the interpersonal dynamics that are physically embodied by partners throughout their CI practice. Paxton describes a system he noticed emerging in CI surrounding 'active and passive engagement' in the motion between the two partners. Paxton also

describes a value system he noticed emerging which favored continual exchange between ‘demand for stimulus’ and ‘response to stimulus’ between the moving partners:

As a social system, I view it comprising these formulas, where A = active, P = passive, d = demand, and r = response:

Ad & Pr
Ad & Ar
Pd & Ar
Pd & Pr
Ar & Ar
Ad & Ad

Pd & Pr tends to become A & (A or P) because the contact is broken or degenerated by double passivity. Ad & Ar tends to become P & (Ar or Ad) as a habitual way out of a glandular stymie when the aim remains contact. Ad & Ad can be a fascinating form. Trying to step around someone to their left when they are trying to pass you and your right can result in a reflexive series Ad & Ad, Ad & Ad. . . , and into Pr & Pr, Pr & Pr, Ad & Ad, . . . (40)

Paxton’s concepts are complex and require dissecting, yet I deeply appreciated how Paxton outlines in this article the ways in which the social interactions between partners in CI can be described through this reflexive system he articulates. These social interactions seem, in Paxton’s point of view, to primarily arise from the physicality of the task, rather than from premeditated ideas about ‘meaning’ rooted in the duet, yet, meaning can be derived from an outside observer. For example, he explains that a Passive demander (Pd) and a Passive responder tend to become either an Active demander and an Active or Passive responder because the double passivity of the Pd and Pr relationship has the tendency to break and degenerate the physical contact. This is because, in my opinion, neither partner is Active, so both Passive partners are hesitating to initiate, thus, deteriorating the movement potential quite quickly. An outside observer, seeing the physical dynamic being played out between a Pd and Pr could draw social meaning or a narrative interpretation.

This theoretical approach articulated by Paxton excited me in terms of the way I facilitated activities during the workshop phase to orient the dancers to a physical, practical task that does not, at first, place primary value on the aesthetic or ‘meaning’ of the movement, yet can offer meaningful content for a viewer. I engaged Jimmie and Chris in exercises based on the Active and Passive Demand and Response (APDR) concepts that Paxton outlines, as seen above, in his article. Prior to engaging the dancers in these activities, I thought that the type of information provided in Paxton’s quote was a perfect example of a CI concept that could be used as a tool for my dancers in their later choreographic process.

Paxton’s perspective on equal distribution, and especially through APDR, made me consider how social/vernacular idioms treat the idea of “roles” and what meaning can be drawn from this treatment by a viewer. For example, ballroom dancing is, on the one hand, typically gendered, role-based, style-based, and has codified elements that set it apart from Contact Improvisation, yet in some essential ways, social/vernacular dance and Contact Improvisation share a similar value for cultivating reflexive partner awareness. As I mentioned prior, in social dance, these roles are often referred to as “lead and follow” or “base and flyer.” I read Caroline Joan (Kay) Picart’s article “Dancing Through Different Worlds: An Autoethnography of the Interactive Body and Virtual Emotions in Ballroom Dance,” in which she writes about her experience with ballroom dancing. One passage that particularly struck me describes her perspective on lead and follow roles in a male/female duet:

Nevertheless, one distinctive trait of ballroom dancing is its dependence on blending two bodies into one, particularly in the closed position. Although the man leads, often the diaphragm and shoulders, and in some moves, such as in the tango, from the pelvis and thighs, it is not a crude imposition of power; when he

moves his body against hers, she, in seamless fluidity, acquiesces, both to his lead and the power of the music enveloping them. Nevertheless, she is never an unthinking puppet; her responsiveness—which requires that she combine decisiveness (particularly in her forward steps) with nonanticipation, an almost oxymoronic combination of aggressiveness with infinite pliability—is crucial to generating the dynamic that constitutes their identity as a dance couple. (356-357)

This passage is powerful to me because it speaks eloquently to the nature of ballroom as distinct yet connected to perspectives on partnering coming from Contact

Improvisation. The passage speaks to the shared value system of reflexivity I spoke about earlier from Steven Paxton's article. In both of the considered idioms, the focus is on a duet system of two connected bodies moving in tandem with one another, in constant responsiveness toward the changing movement landscape that exists between them. Picart expresses the importance in ballroom dance of each role within the lead/follow relationship as simultaneously distinct, yet equally consequential in creating the desired dynamic or aesthetic. In my mind, these considerations directly connect to the way in which Paxton was discussing the relational dynamics between partners in Contact Improvisation, which ultimately forms unique aesthetic qualities, and thus, meaning for an outside viewer.

This is one of the biggest reasons why I chose to include studies of both Contact Improvisation and social/vernacular dance styles in our workshop phase. I was compelled by the connections between common underlying core elements that are often treated distinctly differently based on preconceived notions about idiomatically-specific value systems for touch.

Caroline Joan (Kay) Picart described the nature of touch and value systems embedded in touch during ballroom-style social dancing. I was drawn to her description of the equal yet distinctive roles of both partners as they move improvisationally though

codified steps. My challenge when articulating the use of social dance and vernacular idioms as a part of my cross-idiomatic methodology has been to express these idioms' academic relevancy for my research. I saw, for example, swing dancing, and particularly the Country Swing style I have studied, as embodying a uniquely rigorous practice of hand-in-hand touch and the roller-coaster quality of constant turns, weight shifts, and arm manipulations. This rigor is evident in the following example, taken from professional Country Swing dancer Donny Robbins. In this film¹, Robbins and his female partner dance in improvisation to music as they demonstrate for the camera a variety of codified turns, lifts, aerials, dips, and Country Swing 'tricks'. On the surface level, this style of dance clearly is social in nature, as a form that was developed for communities of people to gather and enjoy each other's company. However, Country Swing, reflects a specific perspective on partnering and touch that is also reflexive in partner awareness, which is why I find that social/vernacular styles offer such relevant opportunities to augment choreographic processes using touch and partnering. As a movement innovator, I was curious to study these techniques and then utilize various modes of creative inquiry to expand beyond the limits of one form's traditions.

Partnering idioms are distinct traditions of dance/movement practices that require two or more bodies to be in physical contact. Physical contact and weight sharing contain many different properties and understanding these properties is a major part of a dancer's training for partnering across idioms. For weight sharing, the physical properties

¹ Country Swing Dancing -- Tricks, Flips, Aerials, & Dips. Perf. Donny Robbins.

YouTube. 30 Nov. 2011. Web. 30 May 2017.

mentioned earlier in this chapter (momentum, leverage, tension, pressure, and spiraling) are all examples of touch properties that the dancers and I physically cultivated in our process. I would argue that these properties are common across partnering idioms such as ballroom, social/vernacular, ballet pas de deux, Contact Improvisation, and contemporary/modern and thus I would label them as cross-idiomatic. The differences between these physical touch properties in each idiom lies less in the concepts themselves and more in the terminology dancers and dance educators use to describe them, which I have found throughout my review of literary sources varies depending on the specific idiom being discussed. For this paper, I will refer to certain properties with my own language as it has developed through my experience as a dancer, but I have found through my research that many properties are discussed with different language, while referring to similar underlying ideas. For example, David Outevsky, in a discussion about Contact Improvisation, explains that dancers develop and practice certain physical skills, including “rolling, balancing, posting, sliding, lifting, being lifted, falling, relaxing, centering, using peripheral vision, using dizziness, [and] accepting the loss of horizon” (9). I have since had to ask myself, “what is ‘sliding’ as a physical act of touch but a way to embody the concept of ‘pressure’?” and “what is ‘rolling’ but a manipulation of ‘spiraling’?” I have concluded that the language Outevsky used is different from my own, but the underlying concepts remain intact. In essence, the way of linguistically describing these experiences differ dependent upon the social/cultural context surrounding the dance idiom, and therefore, it has been a task of mine to find my own cross-idiomatic language in order to be true to the goals of this project. To explain the

significance of linguistic differences among idioms even further, I will give an extended example.

In Country Swing, the touch between partners is mainly a hand-in-hand connection in which the dancers strive for a constant elastic quality that plays between creating tension by releasing weight away from one another and creating a rebounding pressure by sending body weight forward toward one another. The communication of this tension/pressure dynamic is relayed through the physical contact of the hands and the focus of this communication comes from holding some of that weight exchange in the forearm—a sensation that initiates the momentum necessary to dance a swing style. This dynamic is built from a set of codified movement vocabulary (i.e. specific types of turns, dips, etc.) while remaining aware of the musical structure and mood of the accompanying song.

In Contact Improvisation, on the other hand, the touch connection between two partners varies much more than in Country Swing, in which significance is not placed on hand-in-hand contact, but rather, in body part to body part contact. This body part to body part contact does not have a strictly defined syllabus of codified movement vocabulary as Country Swing does, but rather, an emphasis on reacting to sensation as being the most important determining factor for movement choices. In my practice of Contact Improvisation, I have come across instructors who use descriptive language for this type of touch connection, including phrases such as “sending energy inwards,” “rolling the point of contact,” “transferring weight,” or “finding path to ground;” phrases that are not commonplace for Country Swing pedagogy, which favors language for a codified emphasis toward the “what” product rather than the “how.” For example, a

Country Swing instructor might direct the lead partner through a combination of movements by saying, “Start the pretzel, then free spin the girl out. Re-grab her hand and beltline through. Finish by bringing her to a cuddle.” Interestingly, this type of codified language is similar in many ways to the pedagogical practice in ballet, where terminology is also a significant part of practicing the idiom, creating a culture that reflects embedded value systems of touch. This is distinctly different from the language used to teach and practice Contact Improvisation, which avoids a set vocabulary in favor of a focus on the sensation of movement experiences, though not without reuse of some movement motifs. In conclusion, I have found that the language used in Contact Improvisation is mainly for describing and evoking sensations, rather than for the replication of codified movements, which is the emphasis of a form such as Country Swing or ballet.

Because idioms share common touch properties, but at the same time each have unique approaches to their utilization, I decided that the workshop and rehearsal phases of my study would include the exploration of select partnering idioms, but would be aimed toward a cross-idiomatic approach to partnering that uses exchanged language descriptors, by which I mean that the dancers were ultimately tasked to work between idioms and linguistic directions as they uniquely discovered and fused forms. Being able to understand touch from these various perspectives and meld them allowed the dancers to focus more deeply and rigorously on touch as a form of communicative expression and provided a unique method for developing movement vocabulary from multiple perspectives.

The aspect in my project of hybridity through touch-based partnering led me to consider how other artists have created works with similar goals. For example, William

Forsythe, in recent years, has developed his aesthetic as it stemmed from his roots in ballet and expanded to include more modern dance vocabulary, framed by his interest in a scientific, architectural approach to movement that has always personally reminded me of Rudolf von Laban's theories. Forsythe's use of hybridity as a tool for partnering is particularly clear to me not only in *From a Classical Position*, but also in *One Flat Thing, Reproduced*². Though both pieces are large group dances saturated with complex spatial patterns and advanced, technical movement, they are also dances that take partnering to an entirely new level through a system of touch-based partner work and individual material undoubtedly requiring the dancers to have refined understandings of how to flow through touch with skill and ease.

I have also been drawn to the experientially and aesthetically driven work of Eiko and Koma³ for reasons similar to my interest in Pina Bausch, even though Eiko and Koma do not focus on "partnered dancing" in the way of Donny Robbins or William Forsythe. The aesthetic of Eiko and Koma is derivative of both Butoh and German expressionism. Its narrative, theatrical qualities remind me both of traditional Japanese theater forms, Kabuki and Noh, as well as the works of Bausch and Meredith Monk. Eiko and Koma's work, such as the piece *Raven*³, also have a clear focus on the

² Forsythe, William. "Synchronous Objects." *Synchronous Objects*. Ohio State University, n.d. Web. 30 May 2017.

³ *Raven*. Chor. Eiko Otake. By Eiko Otake and Takashi Koma Otake. Wesleyan University. 19 Nov. 2009. Performance.

natural world and placing their bodies inside of natural environments. Alongside this distinctive environmental aspect of their work, my interest in Eiko and Koma's work mainly has been based on the unusual ways in which the two of them touch, which evokes, for me in viewing, senses of tension characteristic in the pain and suffering expressed through Butoh, as well as senses of intimacy and devotion, which, at times, give me a distinct feeling of ritualism or spirituality. Eiko and Koma capture these aesthetic experiences for me because I see their incredible sensitivity toward touch, which they used to draw my eye toward the most subtle details. In the above cited video recording of a performance of *Raven*, for example, Eiko and Koma did not interact until the middle of the work. Once they did, I was intrigued by the way in which his fingers barely contacted the side of her waist, yet they sustained this moment, letting the grass and feathers fall about them, with such an intention that I was pulled into the scene. As Eiko reached around Koma and they began a contained struggle, I saw the pressure with which she initially grasped his head and finally the dissipation as he walked away and she remained, lingering in that sensation.

I see my screendance, *Petrichor*, reflecting some of the qualities that have inspired me with Eiko and Koma's work. Their use of the natural environment is poignant to me and I desired to use natural environments as well to draw even closer attention towards the relationship of my two dancers through touch. In reflection of my work alongside Eiko and Koma, I have found satisfaction in touch images that last for a duration of time, which is something that, in my opinion, is a value system of Butoh in general. Even the themes of discord and the visual focus on bare skin and the facial expressions connected to the focus on bare skin are characteristics of Butoh that became

inspirational to me as we continued through our creative process and especially as I edited *Petrichor*.

Once again, as described through analyzing these contrasting idioms of partnering and influential dance artists, I find each example provides a distinct perspective on embedded value systems within touch, aesthetic qualities of touch, and human experiences brought to and drawn from touch that can become meaningful for a viewer. To facilitate our creative process, I aimed to cultivate material that drew on these various aesthetic qualities to create a novel experience in *Petrichor*.

Interpersonal Connection and the Nature of Seeing

The concept of touch as a form of communicative expression that can be interpreted for intention and experience by a viewer is reinforced and expanded upon by Erin Manning in her book, *Politics of Touch*. Manning speaks about the body in motion and explains that touch is one way in which the body thinks. Touch is one of several senses, which means that a body is a sensing body, emerging “through and alongside other bodies” (xiii) and that the significance of touch is “the relational matrices it makes possible” (xiii). Here, Manning proposes a way of considering touch as both physical and social. Cynthia Novack and Erin Manning share the notion that two or more bodies moving in space create a dynamic, and that touch is the primary location where an interpersonal connection is built. Thus, one fundamental concept underlying partnering is that the act requires two or more sensing, thinking bodies moving in and out of touch. In turn, touch becomes the primary location in partnering for creating meaningful, interpersonal connection. Therefore, I connect the physical act of dance partnering to the

social act of collaboration, because, in partnering, through sensing one another, two bodies foster the social act of connecting interpersonally in collaboration. As previously mentioned, touch is only one of several senses, and though it was the primary sense investigated in my study, it is important to acknowledge how the other senses of sight and sound came into play as we explored the relationship between partnering and collaboration. Sight and sound related to and shaped the nature of our collaboration because how the dancers saw one another affected each dancer's proprioception and their phenomenological experience as they sensed another body in motion (Outevsky, 32). The nature of seeing also affected the outward aesthetic and embedded a significant amount of meaning into the reasons for the dancers to touch and interact. Attending to the nature of seeing also developed the dancers' sense of intentionality in their performance. David Outevsky, in his article "How to Become One: A Qualitative Review of the Use and Perceptions of Weight Bearing/Giving, Touch, and Visual Contact in Dance Partnering," uses the term "visual contact" to refer to the nature of seeing as a significant part of dance partnering. Outevsky researched dance partnering cross-idiomatically by interviewing dancers from a variety of idiomatic backgrounds. He describes the findings of his study as he sought to understand dancers' opinions about the purpose of visual contact in partnering:

Visual contact is also particular because in contrast to touch and weight sharing in partnering, it does not require physical contact to be expressed or understood, therefore requiring subtle attention to its use that is too often neglected by dancers. An awareness of these aspects of visual contact suggests the importance of this often ignored element in partnering. For example, if the choreography requires the dancers to 'see each other' just looking in the direction of the other's eyes or body will not do, one must be aware of the partner and his or her response to the gaze in the same way the partner in question must be aware of being watched and respond accordingly in whatever way the choreography demands...in a case where visual contact is not emphasized or deliberately not used both

dancers need to be aware of the meaning behind this ‘non-looking’ and understand the visual, emotional, and physical impacts that such presentation will produce in themselves and the outside observer in order to make it effective. (45)

Outevsky brings up a crucial point here about the way in which visual contact (i.e. the nature of seeing) plays a role in the intentionality of the dancer’s performance. Visual contact also plays a significant role in the dancer’s sensory experience of partnering, which directly applies to a main interest in my study. I refer to visual contact or the nature of seeing for the same purpose as Outevsky, who defines visual contact as “No physical contact, use of visual sense to relate to the partner, e.g. mirroring (copying the partner’s movement without touching)” (6). This was significant to my research because I intentionally utilized the awareness of multiple senses in the creation of the screendance - considering the significance of the dancers’ visual contact with one another in conveying meaningful theme, imagery, and/or narrative, as well as working with sound to enhance the visual imagery of the screendance. I also cultivated visual contact as a significant aspect to understanding touch-based partnering with the dancers throughout the workshop and rehearsal phases.

A Collaborative Methodology

Erin Manning, in her book, *Politics of Touch*, discusses touch as a dialogue, the language between two bodies:

Touch...invents by drawing the other into relation, thereby qualitatively altering the limits of the emerging touched-touching bodies. Touch is not graspable as a stable concept. The only thing we can grasp, momentarily, are touch’s inventions. Relational time-space, provisional embodiments are inventions of touch: the body senses in layers, in textures, in rhythms and juxtapositions that defy strict organization into a semiotic system. (xiv)

This language between two bodies ultimately becomes the conversation of the collaboration. Collaboration impacts the experience of touch-based partnering because collaboration is an act that requires two or more individuals, and those individuals have thinking, sensing bodies, awareness must be brought to the fact that these are the bodies of thinking, feeling, sensing humans who exist within a social context as well as a physical one. My project integrated the collaborative nature of touch-based partnering with a collaborative methodology for creative process.

To be able to facilitate the process in the most effective way, I drew on some educational practices and theories with which were first exposed to me in my undergraduate, when I took education and psychology courses for my Teacher Licensure program.

Dr. Benjamin Bloom, who is most well-known for developing Bloom's Taxonomy for the cognitive domain of learning, asserted that the highest, most challenging form of learning is, in fact, creating. For my study, the viewpoint that creation is the most challenging of all higher-order thinking levels reminded me of the importance that the dancers participated in creation which permitted collaboration. Later, the Taxonomy was reconsidered and expanded upon in 2001 by both David Krathwohl, who furthered research on the 'affective' (or emotional) domain, and Anita Harrow, who focused on the 'psychomotor' (or kinesthetic) domain.

For my research about collaborative methodology, I turned to the work of Leslie Wilson, who has written about how educators can blend affective and psychomotor strategies together to target their learning objectives, which, in my case, would be to facilitate the creative process with autonomy.

Krathwohl/Harrow's and Leslie Wilson's contemporary research expanded Bloom's Taxonomy to include emotional factors as well as embodied movement and has concluded that feeling and moving are also primary modes of learning. It becomes clear through Krathwohl/Harrow's recent research that the field of education is coming to new understandings of how cognitive functions are tied to both emotional capacities and physical experience, which, as many dance scholars have asserted inside our field, is a key reason why dance is a field worthy of more attention.

When I realized that questioning and response was a significant piece of my role in the collaborative process throughout the project to elicit meaningful interactions between the dancers, I sought out sources to aid me in developing a style for questioning and response. In the case of my study, these questions and responses served to elicit an articulation of the dancers' perceptive thoughts and reflective opinions through embodiment that did not impose my own inclinations, dictate their actions, or assume their impressions in ways that would taint the intentions of the process.

In the work by Jack Morgan and Joan Schreiber, "How to Ask Questions." The authors outline and analyze how to identify the purpose of a question and impact of the wording of the question in eliciting response. The authors bring to attention the importance for a facilitator to understand the reason behind their question and what they hope will be gleaned from such a question. The authors worked from Bloom's Taxonomy to articulate how selected wording of a question directs the question toward a certain goal, such as a 'recall' goal or an 'evaluative' goal. They suggest several considerations when questioning. The authors first suggest to use precise wording of the question that directs the question toward the goal, which becomes particularly important

during ‘on-the-toes’ moments (which the authors describe as ‘quick thinking, in-classroom moments’) (4). [For example, in our rehearsal process, I may see a moment between two dancers where I want to bring their awareness to their focus and eye contact. Instead of simply saying something like “look at her,” I could ask a question with precise wording, such as “How would this moment change if you look toward her instead?” This question is open to the dancers’ interpretation while still directing them.] Secondly, Morgan and Schreiber consider appropriate timing of the question – the question should “provide continuity to the discussion topic and reflect the true purpose of the lesson and the content of the material” (4). Third, they suggest to clarify the purpose of the question. For example, a facilitator may need to restate the student’s question or statement to frame their own in a way that clarifies the purpose of it (5). Fourth, the authors discuss how the length and difficulty of the question should depend on the individual toward whom the question is directed, especially in consideration of their prior knowledge (5). Fifth, Morgan and Schreiber explain that eliciting student responses, student questions, or exploring incomplete answers becomes extremely important in furthering the students’ understandings (6). Last, but certainly not least, the authors remark the importance of stimulating creative, critical thinking with questions (6).

The authors also make statements about what questions to avoid, such as questions that seek ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers; questions that only encourage one person to answer (i.e. the person who always raises their hand); leading questions that embed an opinion or ‘right’ answer; ‘guessing-game’ questions where the purpose is unclear. Sometimes rhetorical questions may do this unless the rhetorical nature of the

question is clear; and last, unimportant questions that don't pertain to goals for the students.

I found this article provided me with a guide for understanding how to craft questions that would elicit richer responses from my dancers. This article provided me with extremely useful information, since I was working through a collaborative process with my dancers in which I sought to not only elicit their responses to my questions, but also to cultivate their own questions within the process. From this collaborative practice of questioning and response, I was able to involve the dancers in the creative process, to continually reflect with the dancers, and ultimately, to direct and guide the project to its fruition.

Ali Leijen, Ineke Lam, and P. Robert-Jan Simons conducted research from Utrecht University in The Netherlands and wrote an article entitled "Pedagogical Practices of Reflection in Tertiary Dance Education". The article summarizes their research intentions to describe practices of reflection and develop a model. As part of their findings, the researchers came across an emphasis on developing self-awareness in dance (in terms of physical self-evaluation) that led them to consider somatic practices as well as an attention toward nurturing personal needs and preferences based on personality and an acceptance of the uniqueness of individual bodies (235). These formats of reflection, as noted by the researchers, were used as a main part of choreographic activities, and composition teachers focused on formats of reflection to support their students' investigations in choreography. The article related to my interest in using reflection for the dancers as a supportive tool for the maturation of our creative process, and led me to consider how I extended these same philosophies on reflection to myself as

facilitator, since this practice ultimately impacted the decisions I made in the editing process about the crafting of *Petrichor*. This practice of reflection drew me back to Jack Morgan and Joan Schreiber's article "How to Ask Questions", since it is through questions that we can come to a clearer understanding of what has become meaningful to us throughout a process.

The process of questioning as a reflective tool reminds me of a statement Pina Bausch made about her dancers that has since become a defining characteristic of her work: "I am not so interested in how they move as in what moves them" (Lepecki, 64). The statement is profound in its attention toward the emotive capacity of the performers themselves that links their techniques of performance with deeper meaning about human experience that the audience may interpret. I wished to take a similar perspective in my project as Bausch did for her work. I was interested mainly in eliciting a similar type of raw and instinctive qualities through which Bausch transcended the boundaries of dance and theater. Bausch, in an interview with Jochen Schmidt, spoke about her own questioning method as a part of her initial process in creating a new work. For Bausch, questioning was an activity she conducted with her dancers at the beginning of a choreographic process, which helped her select themes or narratives that she wished to further investigate.

In my project, I used questioning as an integral part of the collaborative process because the dancers were significant artistic contributors who made and refined movement choices themselves. Although not the same as my own, I see Bausch's process as relevant to the process we underwent in my project because of her emphasis on an aesthetic that signifies experience. This is a clear characteristic of Bausch's work

rooted in its raw and visceral nature, which, as in *Café Müller*, transcends the viewer's perspective by extending beyond the symbolic capacity of movement and transforming it into a living reality. The sheer physicality and emotional investment the dancers must have embodied to perform Bausch's powerful work signifies that a core element of her process was to engage with many similar curiosities as my research aimed to unearth. Where my research appears to have diverged from Bausch's methodology, again, is in the emphasis I placed on the dancers as decision-making collaborators who created most the physical movement material and articulated pertinent themes as uncovered throughout their process. This difference is clear in Schmidt's interview with Bausch:

Schmidt [1982]: Is this always how you begin work now, by asking questions?

Bausch: Well, of course, I have asked hundreds of questions. The dancers have answered them, tried something out ... If they understand the question, then they know what's what. They know what I'm looking for....Each of them [the dancers] does, say, ten things and in the end I'm interested in maybe only two.

Unlike Bausch, a focus of my research was to facilitate and observe the dancers without imposing my own authority as 'choreographer' over their input as collaborating artists. I attempted as much as possible to let the work develop through concepts and motifs that the three of us all found significant, and not just from my own ideas of what "should" happen. This type of facilitation was based on my questions and responses to the dancers, which were mainly meant to guide the dancers in their own questioning, rather than only directing them through my own interests. For example, my questions would typically look something like this: *What are you feeling in this moment? Where do you want to go from here? Why do you want to do that? How do we do that?*

As much as possible, I wanted to connect my questioning to honing the dancers' self-awareness as artists inside the process, rather than imposing my own ideas about what should be significant to them from my own perspective. I did this intentionally because I knew that in the final editing phase, I would have more individual influence over the use of the material they had developed for film. I wanted to begin my direct control over the product from that point in our process, but not earlier. Touch-based partnering required the dancers to have a continually developing and mature, open awareness of themselves and their partner. I determined that it was important to cultivate full immersion for the dancers in both the curating of movement material and its performance. To do this, I elicited responses and encouraged questions to motivate their personal explorations through touch and to draw meaning from those explorations.

Conveying Meaningful Experience through Touch:

Where Partnering and Collaboration Align

Erin Manning's proposition is that touch is both relational—made possible through the cooperation of two or more bodies—as well as cyclical, as Manning stated in the aforementioned quote, “I reach out to you in order to invent a relation that will, in turn, invent me” (xv). This cyclical process is a production of relationship through constant initiation and response. The term ‘invent’ that Manning uses in this passage has intrigued me for a long time now and I have asked myself many times why she uses the word ‘invent’ to describe not only the creation of a relationship between herself and another person, but in fact to express the idea that touch actively continually shapes her existence as a human. After a lot of thinking, I interpret Manning's use of ‘invent’ as a

metaphor to describe how a meaningful experience in the self is recognized through creating relationship with others, and when two people touch, their physical connection becomes the primary location where these relationships are simultaneously invented and inventing.

In this way, I recognize that touch is an experience that is felt on the inside as an emotion that can elicit meaning for the dancers, impacting theatrical intention, which, in turn, offers meaning for the audience. It has been my interest as an artist, during this project, to take a felt experience of touch and transform it, through screendance, into a theatrical experience that can be seen. This idea of conveying meaningful experience is a main goal of my project and the culminating screendance.

Manning's ideas about creating meaning in the self through others reminds me of a book I read over a year ago. Austrian Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl published *Man's Search for Meaning* in 1959. In his book, Frankl discusses his experience in a concentration camp during the Holocaust to set up for his theories on man's search for existential meaning. There is one quote from Frankl's book that has helped me answer my question as to why Erin Manning would use the term 'invent'. Frankl writes:

...we can discover meaning in life in three different ways: (1) by creating a work or doing a deed; (2) by experiencing something or encountering someone; and (3) by the attitude we take toward unavoidable suffering. The first, the way of achievement or accomplishment, is quite obvious. The second and third need further elaboration. The second way of finding meaning in life is by experiencing something—such as goodness, truth, and beauty—by experiencing nature and culture or, last but not least, by experiencing another human in his very uniqueness—by loving him. (133-134)

The second way of discovering meaning is to experience something, or rather someone; to experience this person in their very uniqueness. The fact that each person is unique, filled with a lifetime of thoughts, feelings, and memories, makes a person, according to

Frankl, worth loving. The love that one person holds for the other is because they are unique, and that experiencing them in their uniqueness is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that carries significant meaning for the individual. I have compared Frankl's idea that humans create meaning through experiencing each other's uniqueness to the act of dancing with another person in partnering: to feel them as a unique human being, to engage with them, and to create meaningful experience through them.

A main goal in this project was to use partnering and touch as a vehicle for working with a deliberate methodology of collaborative inquiry to create movement together and ultimately, to use that movement as a conveyor of a human experience on film. In this way, the meaningful experience created and even felt between two people became the stuff that I sought to capture and curate through the camera, and again, transform into something that is seen from the outside. Because of the way my project combined the subject of partnering with a process of collaboration, it was my primary interest to engage in a methodology that allows the camera to capture felt sensations embedded in experiences of touch-based partnering, ultimately bringing felt sensation and observation closer together.

Premise for Screendance

The single largest decision I made when developing this project from its original design over a year ago was when I chose to create an original screendance to convey my interpretation of the movement material we accumulated. Since I already had an interest in the making of screendance and some foundational experiences with dance for film, I realized that refocusing my project on the making and presenting of an original

screen dance would draw on some of my key research questions, such as, “How does the study of partnering alongside a collaborative methodology impact the creative process?” The use of the camera in my project and ultimately the making of a screen dance allowed me to capture, track, isolate, analyze, reflect on, collage, and share what we exposed throughout the artistic process.

I chose to use the medium of film in my project because of its potential to convey sensory experiences as investigated with the dancers through partnering and touch. Film has a capacity to capture with intimacy and detail the act of touch and relationships resulting through touch in ways that are unique from live performance.

To create movement for the camera, and especially to do so as a way of conveying sensory experiences, an additional goal of my project was to capitalize on the role of the camera for screen dance. The term screen dance itself is relatively fresh and many scholars have taken different approaches to it. At its core, screen dance is simply any work that includes both dance and film or screen-based software to achieve a final expression (Rosenberg, 3). My main goal for using the medium of film was to understand how the camera could meaningfully convey choreography developed through touch-based partnering. Douglas Rosenberg speaks to the relationship between camera and collaborative process eloquently in his book *Screen Dance: Inscribing the Ephemeral Image*:

Migrating dance to a camera space is a process of meta-production that resembles something similar to contact improvisation—in a sense, it is about both contact and improvisation. One participant – the dancer – moves freely, unencumbered, while the other – the camera operator – is tethered by the camera, a prosthetic image-gathering device that by necessity becomes an extension of the body. Although the contact is often metaphorical, there is an intense relationship between the camera and the dancer, one that often begins with improvisation. In this process, numerous diversions and details vie for the eye’s attention. But at

the center is the body in motion: there the camera fixes its gaze. And there the camera allows for a kind of engaged looking at the body that is unique to that device. The camera functions for the director as a microscope functions for the pathologist, providing a way of seeing that is both privileged and functional, as well as an opportunity to isolate and track the smallest bits of data, often invisible in isolation but rendered poetic in their mediatized physicality. (2)

Rosenberg points out that the dancer and the camera have a relationship similar to Contact Improvisation, which means, if we expand upon Novack's and Manning's thoughts, that the two rely on and are affected by one another--that both, just as with Contact Improvisation, are focused on a common goal of equally sending energy toward a central, common ground. In my project, I was interested to know how I could collaboratively work with the dancers using the camera to capture their movement.

Douglas Rosenberg also describes how the camera acts as a vehicle to aid inquiry through the creative process: "...the camera allows for a kind of engaged looking at the body that is unique to that device. The camera functions for the director as a microscope functions for the pathologist, providing a way of seeing that is both privileged and functional, as well as an opportunity to isolate and track the smallest bits of data..."

(2). As Rosenberg says, the camera has the unique ability to function as a microscope, to give the director the opportunity to isolate, track, and capitalize on even the smallest details as impactful to the development of the final work. This was important in my study because I used the process of creating a screendance for a variety of goals: first, as a culmination of my research that provided intimate viewing of the relationships evolved through the collaborative process of exploring touch and partnering. Second, the camera acted as a motivator as I facilitated the dancers' collaborative method for creating movement to be filmed. Third, I used the screendance to reflect upon how the dancers and I developed movement, as well as to analyze how the camera captured movement.

Last, the screendance was my medium for conveying my interpretation of curated movement to an audience with the aim to engage the audience in their own compelling experience of touch and relationship. As Steven Spier says in describing William Forsythe's screendance, *From a Classical Position*: "the primary nature of...[their] relationship with the film is spatial; it is about the shape of another body from the interior, defining the space between them [Forsythe and Caspersen], making visible "the interior of the knot"...that the two bodies make" (52). As Spier describes, the camera can see from the inside the dancers on a deeply visceral, intimate level that draws on detail, which places the viewer next to and within the dancers. Spier interviewed Dana Caspersen, Forsythe's dance partner in *From a Classical Position*, where she described how this screendance captured both her physical and psychological experience, which humans intuitively understand: "What is interesting about dancing is that we come to live in a physical world which understands the geometry of space...I might see Bill [Forsythe] as himself, but I also see him as a collection of curves and lines. I might realign him on a purely geometrical level, from my point of view. But humans understand intuitively that it has another level" (53-54). Film has a unique ability to serve as both a hyperreal representation of space, time, and body, as well as serving as a symbolic/metaphoric platform to convey theme, imagery, and/or narrative.

Film also has a unique and beautiful ability to capture candid or unplanned moments that cannot be intentionally crafted to impart the same authenticity as when it was in its original, organic form. I remember in my first year at the University of Oregon, I worked on a film project for a course I was taking. During the shoot, I accidentally captured what most would consider a "bloop" – I had asked my dancers to

perform an action, and when they made a mistake, they both began to laugh. From all the shots I filmed that day, this shot, this mistake, was the most compelling of all. I appreciated its spontaneity and its authenticity. I admired its clarity at conveying the dancer's as real human beings, rather than just the manufactured one that I had originally been seeking to capture. With film, these types of moments can be recorded and further explored. I chose to be open to capturing candid moments because I saw the camera's potential for capturing authentic moments of relationship.

In reading Faith Morrison's MFA thesis "Creating and Conveying a Kinesthetic Experience of Place," I found that her philosophies and methodologies behind her choice to create a screendance as the culmination of her own project are in line with my own rationale. In her thesis, Morrison describes working collaboratively with her dancers on-site through improvisational structures as well as setting solo and group material to draw on their kinesthetic experiences of place; whereas in my project, we were drawing on kinesthetic experiences of touch. Morrison's creative process and intentions for capturing her dancers on camera are compelling to me because, similarly to the collaborative process I facilitated, she developed a methodology for guiding movement explorations with her dancers, which led them to craft movement material focused toward having an experience of place both through the kinesthetic sensations deriving from their environment as well as the different feeling states they faced in the environment (26-33). I appreciated not only how Morrison utilized film to reveal these experiences, but also how she did so while leaving the craft of the movement open to a process that focused her dancers on their environmental experience, which, in turn, allowed her to question how the camera could become an integral player rather than a disruption to her

dancers' experiences. Her approach benefited her final screendance, *enso*, because she could use the footage to convey a close connection between the kinesthetic experience of the dancers in their environment through captivating imagery and sound that resonated for me as a viewer. I took a similar view to Morrison by likewise facilitating a responsive methodology to capture sensations for film.

I chose to create a screendance as the medium for the final creative product because screendance has both artistic and logistical components that captured the goals of my project to collaboratively curate movement through touch-based partnering, just as the medium of screendance captured Morrison's goal to engage in a process for conveying a kinesthetic experience of place. Screendance enhanced the collaborative process in my project by providing an objective visual forum through which we reflected on our investigation of touch and relationship. The raw footage we collected became the material we used to reflect on our investigation for creating a work that evoked a meaningful response from the audience. I knew that one way to evoke meaningful response in a viewer would be to draw their eye to chosen theatrical elements from the footage during the editing process for composition of the film. Douglas Rosenberg writes about the way in which screendance affects dance composition:

In the construction of a screendance, the traditional linearity of the choreographic process is flayed open and exposed to a very particular kind of scrutiny. Composition may come in isolated bits; kinesthetic transitions may become virtual or nonexistent, slated to be inserted later in the editing process. Movements and gestures, released from the physical boundaries of weight, time, and space, are digitally archived to be retrieved and reconstructed at a later date. The dance/dancing thus becomes malleable, fluid, and available as a kind of digital text. (2)

Rosenberg points out the malleable nature of dance when captured by the camera and the ability for editing to expose the choreographic process and dissect it. The ability to

dissect the material the dancers created collaboratively over time and through several iterations was yet another key reason why I decided to create a screendance as the final product for this research because I wished to more deeply understand the process of dissecting the dancers' choreography--as Rosenberg states "the choreographic process is flayed open and exposed to a very particular kind of scrutiny" (2). I believed that this type of scrutiny would be a method for extending our choreographic process in the editing of the film and for reflecting on not only the work being created, but on the significance of its underlying themes. If I wished to articulate how a collaborative approach through touch-based partnering affected our creative process, I knew that having an intentional method for reflection would only benefit me. Rosenberg also points out that capturing movement on camera makes it "available as a kind of digital text," which is yet another advantage of screendance over live performance. The material captured is stored, available for review at any time, and opens the potential for crafting iterations of the work to see how different editing choices affect it as a whole: to see not only how the camera captured the curated movement and diegetic sounds deriving from touch, but in fact to see how the editor can navigate, shape, and uncover an authentic experience of touch, how the editor can in effect guide the viewer through these experiences in movement as he or she reflects through editing a film.

To understand this concept more fully, I referred to Hilary Harris' *Nine Variations on A Dance Theme* (1966), in which Harris' purpose was to experiment with how the utilization of different filming methods would affect the way the camera conveyed the dancer's solo by filming the dancer performing the same phrase nine times. Harris worked with camera movement, angle, and distance to reveal various

perspectives to the audience. Faith Morrison, in her MFA thesis, writes of Harris' work, "In the eighth variation of filming, Harris explores an extreme close-up camera technique that almost seems to be capturing the inner sensation of the dancer in the film...[which] allowed me to experience kinesthetic empathy with the dancer in the film...I was able to feel the movement in the film" (16-17). Morrison goes on to explain that this approach to filming emphasized intimacy and inner sensation. This concept of enhancing intimacy and inner sensation through a manipulation of components of film (lighting, angle, videographer movement, and collecting diegetic sound) struck me while watching both Hilary Harris' work as well as Faith Morrison's *enso*. Morrison's film additionally reminded me of Thierry De Mey's screendances, especially his collaborations with choreographer Ana Teresa de Keersmaeker for *Rosas Danst Rosas*. Both works explore a similar use of diegetic sounds, which in Morrison's case, was deriving from the natural environment. Whereas, for De Mey, the use of diegetic sound was capitalizing on breathing or sounds the dancers were making with their bodies, such as swiping along the floor. I have noticed De Mey's choices with color as influencing my experience of the work, which I also noticed while watching *enso*, specifically in terms of the choices affecting how the skin of the dancers was lit and visible, which became an element to explore while editing for capturing touch in the filming of my screendance that I also investigated.

Viewing these three films clarified how various formal elements of film served me in capturing touch and relationship through movement. For example, recording diegetic sound of the dancers as they moved in proximity proved to be potent material for

my editing process, as I use these gathered sounds to draw the audience's attention to the way we hear touch as well as how we see and feel it.

Additionally, Hilary Harris' experiment with changing both camera angles and movement is one of many examples of how different approaches can record the movement material, placing the viewer next to and within the dancers, which, as Faith Morrison articulated, aided her in seeing the inner sensations of movement, feeling the movement on film, and experiencing kinesthetic empathy through movement as a viewer. Not only camera angle and movement of the videographer, but also the recording of diegetic sounds had a strong effect from drawing the viewer into a multi-sensory touch-based experience.

The book *Envisioning Dance on Film and Video* edited by Julia Mitoma, Elizabeth Zimmer, and Dale Ann Stieber is a collection of fifty-three essays from a variety of artists. Within this book, essays cover topics including Chapter 40, "Dancing with the Camera: The Dance Cinematographer" (218-223), which describes how the movement of the videographer affects the movement of the dancer and vice versa, especially in terms of the way the dancer and videographer must negotiate their own physical experiences as it impacts what and how the camera captures.

The relationship a dancer builds with the camera is a collaborative relationship that is also captured by the camera in real time. The nature of the camera gaze and the operator behind it influences the dancer, and thus the dancer must situate themselves in relationship to the camera and its operator, connecting the device to the dancer and, in my case, even transforming the duet of the two performers into a trio between the performers and myself, since as the operator behind the camera, I was also an interpreting party,

considering how to attune the dancers' comfort with the camera and my operation of it to allow for the dancers to express vulnerability, becoming key to the process at the end of the rehearsal phase, nearing and within the filming. As Rosenberg also states, "Within this conceptual shift from live performance to mediatized representation, the 'dance' is reduced to the smallest sum of its parts. A gesture is isolated and viewed for its innate characteristics, as if through a microscope, and there is a scientific precision involved in the reproduction of even fleeting sequences of movement" (1). What this means is that the disparate parts may become linked and reconfigured in the future, the production need no longer be sequential, and the dance becomes "as conceptual as it is physical, as much digital construction as corporeal performance" (2). This was significant to me as a videographer because I had the job of constructing the film from isolated parts by analyzing, interpreting, and making critical decisions about what material is used, what is not used, and how it was used to create certain results that are either heightening or constructing experiences captured on film.

For my project, I not only considered the environment surrounding the dancers in motion, but in fact how to create a simulated inner landscape between bodies within filming and editing. As Rosenberg states in his book, *Screendance: Inscribing the Ephemeral Image*, the camera functions as a microscope, isolating and tracking even the tiniest pieces of physicalized information (2). This type of intimacy the camera can capture is one of the most compelling reasons why I saw that it had the potential to effectively convey meaningful work using touch-based partnering. Touch is only one of many senses that the camera can bring into clear focus. This study was focused on touch, and although the movement encompassed all the senses, it remained important to me that

touch was the primary sense for analyzing meaningful content and my film provided the means to that analysis.

Live performance holds a special quality for the performer – a live performer cannot experience the work as the viewer does. The viewer and the performer of live performance are distinctly separated from one another in perspective, contained in a certain restriction of time and space. The case of dancers in live performance suggests that though the dancers have a unique connection to the work because of their role within the creative process, they are never able to see the work in its live iteration. In contrast, because of the nature of screendance, Jimmie and Chris had the opportunity to become a type of viewer, though there are still limits to how they see the work. On one hand, due to its more permanent nature, Jimmie and Chris could see the screendance after its full conception, to see it as many times as they liked. Yet, on the other hand, they were restricted because they had to see it as I have created it: on a screen, through a camera, which had captured their three-dimensional, time-based movement and translated into a two-dimensional work symbolizing time and space. By viewing the film, my dancers served to extend the collaborative process because they could reflect on how their movement was interpreted through my editing and provide me with feedback. This is partly why I chose to conduct a third discussion session with my dancers upon completing a draft of the film—so that they could have a precursory viewing before the public presentation. This precursory viewing and subsequent discussion with my dancers helped me gain a greater sense of how they interpreted the work and what they found potent within it, which offered me deeper insight into the choices I had made through the editing process and the effect of those choices on an audience. For me to more

profoundly understand the role that touch and relationship played within our collaborative process, it was vital that I give the dancers the opportunity to also reflect upon what resulted from the choices I made and how the film conveyed a meaningful, compelling experience on screen. I was able, from their feedback, to consider what aspects of our process and curated material I found significant throughout the workshop and rehearsal processes in comparison to what aspects had, in practice, come forward as important during the editing and making of the final film. Their precursory viewing of the film also aided me in understanding what theatrical elements and curated movement material had come forward as compelling to me once I edited the film in comparison to what theatrical elements and curated movement material the dancers saw as compelling once they had viewed the film at its final stage.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Human Subjects Research Approval

I submitted a Human Subjects Research Approval application to RCS in July of 2017. I received response from RCS and IRB in August of 2017. The RCS and IRB committees decided that my research project did not meet the requirements for Human Subjects approval, since I was to be using the gathered information from my participants as a means for creating a work and reflecting upon my own development as an artist, in which the various types of information were to be used as tools for me, rather than as “evidence” toward “proving” a hypothesis. I submitted a formal letter from the RCS relinquishing my need for Human Subjects approval to my committee in August of 2017, which is Appendix A.

Participant Selection

I selected two dancers through invitation, Jimmie Banks and Christopher Slayton, to work with me on this project. Before I selected Jimmie and Chris, I was assessing how potential dancers I was already familiar with would work together, mainly in terms of their interpersonal connection with one another, but also in terms of practicality for their equal ability to give and take weight.

It was essential to the aims of this research that I selected dancers who possessed certain qualities, which I believed would benefit us throughout the process. I did not choose dancers based solely on their age, gender, or their physique, but rather selected dancers based on the following criteria that extended beyond these basic foundations.

Jimee, Chris, and I, later into our process, did come to ask questions about the role of gender as it was impactful to our work. My initial selection of dancers, however, was not based on gender as a primary consideration, but rather, I wished to select dancers who could efficiently work together with equitable opportunities for partners to both give and receive weight.

At the conception of this project, I sought dancers who had solid background knowledge and a wide range of experiences in the field of dance, both as performers and as choreographers. It was my belief that dancers with these types of prior experiences would have knowledge about creative movement and artistic expression that would allow for our deep and rigorous investigation into touch-based partnering without needing to take additional time for the development of foundational movement skills, such as alignment or understanding of basic movement vocabulary.

I also sought dancers who had pre-existing inclinations for and interests in partnered work, improvisational exploration, composition, collaboration, and who would be mature in their ability and willingness to open up with one another, who could come to know each other as sensing, feeling, thinking humans. I felt that dancers with these qualities would have greater motivation throughout the process, as they would already have an innate interest and intention behind participating. I was interested in the unique ways in which we would be able to work in collaboration as we got to know one another through movement. Learning and creating through touch-based partnering, as well as working in a collaborative methodology, is a rigorous pursuit and I knew it would include both challenges and rewards. I sought dancers who would be respectful, poised problem-solvers, who enjoyed challenge and strived to be the best version of themselves

throughout any creative process. I sought dancers who were highly perceptive as we came to an awareness of self and others. Essentially, I chose to select Jimmie and Chris because they were advanced in their ability to embody through prompting, had a heightened awareness of their bodies as thinking, sensing instruments, and most of all, had an inclination toward sensing shifts and making micro-adjustments to attune their own bodies and minds toward one another. Jimmie and Chris were willing to articulate their experiences within the process verbally through in-session feedback and in writing through prompted journaling. Because my project was significantly shaped by the artistic input from the dancers I selected, I knew that the entire project, and especially the culminating film, would be formed through the unique suggestions and articulations of Jimmie and Chris, especially through the way they shared their ideas, thoughts, and opinions both in conversation and through embodied movement. From the conception of this project, I sought dancers who were enthusiastic about this type of in-process sharing. When I selected Jimmie and Chris, I recognized that they had the ability to be effective partners and that the three of us had a rapport with one another to discuss potentially intimate topics.

I asked Jimmie and Chris to sign a Participant Contract with me at the beginning of our Workshop Phase. The contract accompanies this document as Appendix B.

Phase 1: The Workshops

The First Discussion

The beginning of the project started with the four-week workshop phase. During our first workshop session, I conducted the first videotaped group discussion with the

dancers, in which I posed questions to the dancers and myself about the perceptions of themselves and others, their background experiences in dance, their perspective on partnering concepts, touch, and collaboration, as well as their goals while participating in the process. My main goal for this conversation was to gain a better understanding of the dancers' knowledge and opinions before their participation in the study to help me assess where and how I should begin to offer creative ideas for meanings of touch in relationship that would align with their sense of self. The conversation was also a tool for initiating a dialogue between myself and my dancers, which served as a preliminary bonding and trust-building activity and as a precursor to the style of collaboration in which we would be engaging. This conversation was meant to be relatively open-ended to leave room for spontaneity and for listening to responses in the moment. I chose to ask follow-up questions to their responses as I saw appropriate for furthering our discussion. I encouraged the dancers to do the same, as I also answered the questions along with them and responded to their thoughts throughout the discussion. The following questions ask about sense of self, reflecting on awareness of being seen, ways the dancers perceive touch, and their background with collaborative methods for choreographing.

1. *How do you define yourself as a person? As a dancer?*
2. *List identifying words and phrases (related and unrelated to dance)*
3. *List areas of strength (related and unrelated to dance)*
4. *List areas of vulnerability (related and unrelated to dance)*
5. *How do you think people see you? How would you like people to see you? Describe strengths people have recognized in you as well as areas for improvement. Are there any criticisms or comments that you carry in particular?*
6. *How do you define the term 'touch'? How do you see the term as similar or different from the term 'partnering'?*
7. *What is your current relationship with touch? Describe this perspective both within a dance context as well as outside of it.*
8. *How do you go about getting to know someone? Describe strategies you employ as well as challenges you face when meeting someone new.*

9. *How do you work as an artist? As a choreographer? As a student? What is the optimal learning or creative environment for you?*
10. *Have you ever worked in a collaborative environment? Can you describe any of these instances? Do you have any assumptions, thoughts, expectations, or questions about how we will work collaboratively with one another?*
11. *How do you see collaboration as affecting the choreographic process?*
12. *Have you ever participated in the filming of a screendance? If so, in what capacity? How do you see performing for the camera as similar or different from performing for a live audience?*
13. *How do you think the camera may be able to capture your experience as a dancer? How do you think the camera may be able to capture your relationship with one another through touch?*
14. *Instinctually, what images come to mind when you imagine seeing yourself on screen? Do you envision any specific colors, movements, expressions, themes, or motifs?*

It is worth noting that several of the initial questions listed were first conceived through an independent study I conducted with Shannon Mockli in Fall 2016, which was a piloting study with myself and two different dancers. In this piloting study, we underwent a similar process to discover a greater sensitivity toward touch and relationship, especially as it related to the perception of self and others. I discovered through this pilot study that beginning our process with a discussion surrounding the perception of self and others oriented the dancers to an awareness of experience, which, as they later articulated to me, helped them while working collaboratively. I subsequently developed questions #9-14 to cover the nature of our collaboration for this thesis study and what the dancers envisioned for the screendance. I was interested in their initial thoughts and opinions on the collaborative process and the potential for a culminating film so that I could later consider their responses in the editing of the film and reflection of the project overall. I anticipated that the dancers' responses to these questions would in part impact the creation of the film and that I might use their comments to question metaphoric content for the development of the work. For example,

I realized later on while revisiting the recording of the first videotaped discussion that Jimmie, while discussing her perspective on the term ‘touch,’ mentioned atoms and connectivity to the universe. This reiterated, to me, the fact that this theme had been embedded in our process from the very beginning, and ultimately continued to come forward in the curating of movement material. Additionally, I used these responses also to refine content in the facilitation of subsequent activities that initiated our creative process together. For example, I learned from our first discussion that Chris felt he held back and was more naturally a responder than an initiator, until he felt comfortable with someone. I used this information to focus on developing his ability to initiate without hesitation in our Contact Improvisation unit, and especially through the APDR activities such as Active Demander + Active Demander, which requires both partners to be unhesitating initiators in the dynamics.

Overall Workshop Design

The overall design of the workshops included several different types of activities⁴. First, I guided idiomatic studies, in which I, as facilitator, directly instructed the dancers in basic skill-building activities for the idioms of Contact Improvisation, contemporary/modern partnering, Country Swing dance, and Cha Cha, serving to expose the dancers to certain aesthetic qualities and movement vocabulary for later crafting of movement phrases. Second, I facilitated cross-idiomatic and hybridity explorations, in which I, as facilitator, provided the dancers with guidelines for extending beyond an

⁴ A full outline of Workshop Unit Plans can be found in Appendix C.

idiomatic study, supporting them in developing skills of hybridization. Third, we explored physical tasks for collaborative problem-solving and experiences for embodied reflection. Finally, we used oral and written feedback through discussions and journaling, in which we continued our practice of questioning and response while in session as well as through journal prompts.

The overall workshop design focused on orienting the dancers about the choreographic process to come by exposing them to a variety of different partnering idioms and cross-idiomatic activities. Activities developed physical touch skills, awareness of touch as an expressive form of communication, and the interpersonal connection between the dancers throughout the workshops. The goals of the workshop phase that we progressed through were first, to establish physical and social rapport between the dancers and me, orienting the dancers toward the project; second, to provide them with basic training for the development of partnering skills and a more deeply honed sensitivity toward touch; and third, to expand their ‘partnering vocabulary’ by encompassing a variety of idiomatic aesthetics. This expanded vocabulary ultimately supplied them with tools to develop movement material in the Rehearsal Phase, making the most of embedded value systems of touch, aesthetic qualities of touch, and human experiences brought to and drawn from touch by understanding these distinct perspectives across idioms.

Workshop Implementation, Timeline, and Mapping

The Workshop Phases lasted for four weeks, in which the dancers and I met twice per week for three hours during each session for four weeks. We met in Gerlinger Annex

dance studio 353. These three-hour sessions included the studio-based, embodied workshops as well as inclusive discussions and journaling sessions. At the beginning of the Fall term, we reduced our meeting times to two hours twice per week for the remainder of the term, with a few exceptions during the final filming/development phase, and transitioned to the Rehearsal Phase.

We began the workshop phase with acclimating activities to support us in getting to know one another, building interpersonal connection as previously mentioned in the Review of Literature, as well as to initiate our work with touch-based partnering. We concluded with an in-depth exploration of advanced weight-sharing and creating hybridity between the idioms we studied (Contact Improvisation, Country Swing, and Cha Cha). All the topics that we covered together were aimed to prepare the dancers for the second phase of the process and expand our creative questioning, since we continued to work collaboratively during the Rehearsal Phase to craft movement material with metaphoric, meaningful themes, imagery, and/or narrative(s) that ultimately was used in the shooting of the film.

I structured and facilitated each workshop as a cumulative series. Concepts embedded through the workshops built in complexity as my dancers became comfortable with one another, gained physical skills, and came to a deeper understanding about the nature of touch and about metaphorical human experiences as drawn from and brought to touch. During the workshops, we began with one week devoted to each of the three idiomatic studies (Contact Improvisation, Country Swing, and Latin Cha Cha). The last week of the workshops transitioned us to directly tackling concepts of weight sharing through both idiomatic and cross-idiomatic approaches. These tasks were aimed to help

the dancers experience roles of supporter and supported, lead and follow, and physical touch properties within weight sharing, such as leverage, spiraling, pressure, tension, momentum, and centripetal force. These are several examples of physical touch properties that are practical components of weight sharing, and the purpose of my focus on these physical components in the workshops was to engage the dancers in questioning how and why touch is a communicative form of expression, as well as how and why we could use touch to convey meaningful content to an audience through the medium of film.

Throughout the workshops, the dancers and I explored embedded value systems of touch, by which I am referring to any set of beliefs/attitudes held by a group of people about touch in relation to issues such as gender, sexuality, or socioeconomics. As discussed previously in the Review of Literature, various partnering idioms offer different perspectives on value systems of touch, which is one primary reason I chose to incorporate a workshopping phase in which the dancers learned about different idioms into my study. All of the concepts and questions explored in the workshops were elements that I later developed in the dancers' collaboration through cross-idiomatic partnering phrase work.

Phase 2: Rehearsals and Creating Material for Film

The second phase of the project, the Rehearsal Phase, lasted for three weeks. The Rehearsal Phase shifted our goals away from exploration and toward choreographing movement material, motifs, and extended phrases as well as structuring improvisations through our collaborative methodology that used our prior explorations of advanced

partner work, cross-idiomatic hybridization, and a deepened sensitivity about the nature of touch, embedded value systems of touch, and metaphorical human experiences through touch. This phase of the process defined our intentions and qualities, transitioning us away from a focus on the practical, physical aspects of partnering toward a focus on metaphoric content that built an immersive and expressive experience of touch, evolving the relationships of the dancers. As facilitator, I offered ideas and strategies for crafting movement material, but my focus was to aid the dancers as they accumulated and developed movement together. I encouraged them to build movement material from the basis of the partnering concepts we explored throughout the workshop phase and I focused their attention toward articulating their ideas, thoughts, and opinions about touch and relationship through conversation and within their movement. We also developed an understanding of sequencing possibilities that aided me in the organization of the subsequent film shoots. For example, while making phrase work, I offered the dancers a couple of movement suggestions and asked them to expand the phrase from that point. This is how we developed several phrases that appeared throughout *Petrichor*. We also continued to refine our various structured improvisations, which came to include several from our Contact Improvisation study, as well as several that we created for hybridizing CI with Country Swing or CI with Cha Cha. This is how we developed what we called the “Cha Cha rhythm” improvisation, in which the dancers would either use an external Cha Cha rhythm (my clapping or recorded music) to guide the improvisation, or, in a different variation, the dancers would set their own internal Cha Cha rhythm and improvise without an external source. The Cha Cha rhythm is counted as slow, slow,

quick, quick, quick, and in a 4-count pattern, the rhythm is counted as 2, 3, 4+1, meaning that the initial 'slow' does not occur on the count of 1, but on the count of 2.

It was my primary job during this Rehearsal Phase to put further emphasis on questioning and response as the dancers developed their ideas into extended movement sequences, structured improvisations, and detail-oriented motifs. I offered them feedback through questioning and response strategies such as those mentioned earlier by Jack Morgan and Joan Schreiber. I also used methods stemming from my loose interpretation of guidelines outlined in Liz Lerman's Critical Response methodology, especially in terms of her emphasis on unbiased, unopinionated, non-leading affirmations and questions. This included questions that targeted physical awareness such as "*What does your right foot do in that moment?*" or "*Is the leg extended or bent?*" while other questions targeted social or emotional awareness, such as, "*What does the touch of your foreheads signify for you in that moment?*" or "*How would this moment change if you held each other more tightly?*" These questions and underlying reasons for them became the heart of our explorations in the rehearsal process.

There were also times when I needed to step in more directly and provide my opinion as an outside viewer. In these moments, I attempted to offer my opinion or advice as a way to aid the progress of the dancers, rather than impose my own bias in ways that would restrict the integrity of our process. For example, there was one lift that the dancers were practicing during the rehearsal process where Jimmie was lifting Chris. For several reasons, the lift was feeling awkward to them and was not aesthetically interesting in the way we had originally hoped. I ended up telling the dancers to find an alternative because I had a sense that it was not worth our time to focus so much on one

particular lift as it was to find the most potent movement material for our filming purposes.

Although I was a facilitator and I did not perform with the dancers, I did see myself as the leader, the collaborating choreographer whose thoughts and opinions also mattered. I saw my role as an outside director who gleaned information for my artistic purposes while balancing my task to support, guide, question, and suggest based on what made the most sense for my practical, aesthetic, and experiential goals.

Since we ultimately developed movement to be filmed, I offered my feedback as a way to ensure rigor, quality, and a sense of authenticity for the final product.

Around October 25, we conducted our second videotaped discussion for the purposes of reflecting upon our process throughout the Workshops and Rehearsals, while also looking ahead to the film shoots and developmental rehearsals. I formulated topics and prompting questions for this second videotaped discussion based on the proceedings from the first discussion.

We transitioned into the Filming Phase by conducting our first film shoot in the Gerlinger Annex studio 353 during our regular rehearsal time.

Phase 3: Filming and Creating the Screendance

Selecting Location

Together, the dancers and I decided on our locations for filming by the conclusion of the Rehearsal Phase by considering which locations the dancers and I felt would enhance the movement material and concepts best without distracting or taking away from the main goals of the project. We did not want to shift attention away from the

inquiry into how touch can be a vehicle for conveying relationship by emphasizing the site itself too much in the filming process, but we did feel that it would be to our benefit to select at least one indoor and one outdoor location for variety. While moving through the process with the dancers, I saw that this variety would benefit the film overall and could enhance the experience of touch and relationship. The sites we selected were ideal for enhancing narrative and thematic context as it related to our investigation through touch.

We first selected to film inside of the studio theatre that offered a black marley floor, open space, and stage lighting options, as well as a hallway area to the side of the stage. We were already quite comfortable in this location because we had been workshopping and rehearsing for two months. We chose to do our first film shoot in a hallway of this studio theatre that has a door to a green room and a ladder leading to the lighting booth for the theatre. In this hallway, we lit the dancers with a multi-bulb floor lamp and I had the ability to climb the ladder and view the dancers from above, capturing them from a bird's eye view. This camera angle created a shot that I ended up using in *Petrichor*, in which the dancers were lying on the ground, and I used it because I found the shot to capture an intriguing perspective of the dancers' touch relationship, as it almost felt like, from this perspective, the dancers were entangled, floating in a void of black space, rather than lying next to each other on the floor.

We ultimately filmed in the dance studio two subsequent times later in our filming phase. The second indoor shoot was in the main studio theatre area instead of the hallway and we used the same lamp to light the dancers with a soft amber glow. The studio theatre space gave us privacy and lighting options as well as a large working area

and dance-appropriate floor for the dancers to explore physically aggressive movement and floorwork, which we created in the Rehearsal Phase.

We spent the weekend of November 10-12 filming in our outdoor location, which was the Brainard family property in Deadwood, Oregon, about 45 minutes northwest of Eugene. This is the same location where I filmed a screendance I made in the Fall of 2016, entitled *Deadwood*. This location has both indoor and outdoor options--the property spans 40 acres of preserved and posted mountain wilderness, with an abandoned house still standing near the roadway. Knowing the property owners allowed me full access for staying on site for several consecutive days. Day one of filming, we went into the woods around the Deadwood campsite and conducted a long filming session on a pathway with surrounding forest. We mainly filmed phrase work that we had created during the Rehearsal Phase. This same day, we also filmed in the field on the property where there is an abandoned house. We also filmed phrase work created in the Rehearsal Process and began to mix and match phrase work to create new structures. That evening, we filmed in the abandoned house itself, experimenting with both phrase work and structured improvisation. Before nightfall, we filmed on the rural roadway leading to and from the property, focusing on one particular phrase for this session. In the evening after it was dark, we built a fire in a fire pit and filmed both phrase material and structured improvisation by the fire. On the second day of filming, we captured structured improvisations by the creek and did a longer session on the same roadway, expanding our filming to other phrase material.

Equipment and Other Logistics of the Film Shoots

I filmed on my Canon Rebel T5i DSLR camera. I own this camera and other related equipment, including a simple shotgun microphone, tripod, SD storage cards, external hard drive, batteries, etc. I filmed with two different lenses - one standard Canon zoom lens and one 50mm portrait lens. All outdoor shots were filmed with the 50mm lens and all indoor shots were filmed with the zoom lens. Having my own equipment allowed me flexibility to film my dancers throughout the project, and specifically allowed me to upload and store my own footage without restriction.

Filming Procedures

I recorded the dancers performing their repertory of movement material using a variety of formal elements of film, including the use of different camera angles, camera movement, and adjustments in lighting. We recorded this material in full sequences as well as in deconstructed segments and we did a lot of mixing and matching between different movement motifs throughout the shoots. I also employed these same techniques to record structured improvisations, which I guided them through in rehearsal as well as on site as necessary.

The dancers and I met for developmental rehearsals between each film shoot. During these developmental rehearsals, we watched all the raw footage together and had discussions about what we found effective and what we wished to explore more. This is why we ended up filming three separate times in the dance studio - after each shoot, we came to a more refined understanding of what was coming forward as impactful and what we wanted to work toward in between shoots. We also had intermittent meetings in

between filming sessions while at Deadwood, since we filmed at Deadwood over the course of two days. We were able to film material and then review it on site before continuing with more filming, which proved to be extremely useful in understanding how we were capturing touch and relationship within the site and what we wished to develop further while on location as well as when we got back into the studio. After we conducted our fourth and final shoot, we met one last time to review material and discuss how our collaboration would move forward into the Winter term for the presentation of the film, the lecture-demonstration, and the talk-back. Upon completing the film shoots and this final meeting, the dancers and I no longer met for regular rehearsals at the end of the Fall 2017 term.

Phase 4: Editing

I made the screendance, *Petrichor*⁵, by editing the raw footage during Winter break, December 4, 2017 to January 9, 2018. I presented a rough draft to the dancers during Week 1 of Winter term, continued to edit the film, and finally presented a second rough draft to Shannon Mockli on January 18, 2018. The final draft was edited and exported on January 18, 2018. On January 19, 2018, I made a projection edit, in which I took the final draft and increased the brightness and exposure of many shots in order for the images to be visible on the projector we used to present the film during my thesis presentation event, “An Evening of Dance,” on the night of January 19.

I purchased a monthly plan and used Adobe Premiere CC to compile and edit the footage for *Petrichor*. I used Garageband to compile and edit the sound score. Diagetic

⁵ A link to the screendance, *Petrichor*, can be found as Appendix F.

sounds were embedded into the sound score using Adobe Premiere CC, since these diegetic sounds were already attached to the footage from which they came. I edited on my laptop, which is a 2015 Macbook Air, and I saved all drafts on my external hard drive.

Although my dancers were not directly a part of the post-production editing process, I intentionally included a meeting with my dancers directly following Winter break so that we could continue our collaboration together by having them watch the film and provide me with feedback. For this session, I generated prompting questions and topics based on my own reflections throughout the editing process. However, I was mainly interested in using this discussion to receive their honest feedback regarding choices I had made in the film and their suggestions for changes to the film after viewing it. I began by asking the dancers to first watch the film, without me giving them much context at all to how or why I made choices. Then, we discussed what they saw. I wanted to not only receive their feedback, but also field their questions about my editing process. I saw this discussion as a continuation of our collaboration with each other, since I was seriously taking their feedback into consideration as I made final changes to the film before the public screening. When I asked the dancers what they saw and how they felt the work portrayed the themes of universe, void, and nature toward which we had been working, I found their responses to be overwhelmingly positive. We discussed the sound score and how they saw it as adding to the work. I asked them what changes I could make, and we concluded two main changes together: first, the three of us felt the beginning could use a bit of bolstering with more images, shorter shots, and some teasers to the 'nature' scenes that were to follow; second, we agreed that the transition from the

‘void’ section into the ‘nature’ section needed to be a bit slower, so that the audience had a chance to adapt to the change both in terms of concept as well as in terms of the brightness of the nature scenes in comparison to the darker images from the beginning.

Finally, after making changes based on the dancers’ feedback from the discussion, I sought feedback from Professor Shannon Mockli for the last editing steps. I intentionally sought out Professor Mockli’s feedback only after receiving feedback from my dancers, as I felt this timeline would continue the integrity of the collaborative process.

Phase 5: Presentation + Talk-Back

Once I had made all edits to my film, I exported a final draft to be presented in a public screening at the University of Oregon. The screening was held on Friday, January 19, 2018 in Gerlinger Annex 353/354. The entire event was entitled “An Evening of Dance”⁶ and this portion of my thesis included an opening introduction by me as presenting artist; the screening of *Petrichor*; a lecture-demonstration in which I narrated and gave live instructions to my dancers, Jimmie Banks and Christopher Slayton, in order to expose certain aspects of our creative process to the audience; a talk-back session guided by Liz Lerman’s Critical Response methodology, in which we began with affirming statements from the audience. We then moved to three questions posed by the collaborating artists and finally to questions and opinion statements from the audience toward the collaborating artists; a brief intermission, which concluded the thesis portion

⁶ An Evening of Dance Poster and Program can be found in Appendix D and E.

of the evening; and a short performance by guest artist, Lindsey Spratt, who had worked on a separate distance-based collaborative project with me throughout the Fall 2017 term.

Following the screening, I conducted the lecture-demonstration with Jimmie and Chris as well as hosted a talk-back with the audience, in which both the dancers and I fielded questions and discussed the project with the audience. The talk-back provided me yet more insight as I considered the effectiveness of our collaborative process for the expression of sensory experiences of touch and the development of meaningful, potent imagery reflecting the concept of relationship. I video-recorded the entirety of “An Evening of Dance” for my record and reflective review to support my evaluation portion of the thesis.

Collecting Reflective Information

There were several forms of reflective information that I collected throughout the process, which served me in three main ways: first, in my facilitation throughout; second, in the making of the screendance; and third, and perhaps most importantly, in coming to a greater understanding about myself as an artist through collaboration. I have outlined these forms of reflective information below.

I conducted two videotaped discussion sessions (the first on September 3, 2017 and the second on November 14, 2017) for documenting thoughts from Jimmie, Chris, and I about our process before the workshop phase and during the filming phase. These two videotaped discussions offered me the ability to review and reflect upon what Jimmie, Chris, and I had discussed at the beginning of our process before we had conducted any workshops or rehearsals, as well as later, after the workshops and rehearsals, to reflect upon what Jimmie, Chris, and I were discussing in the midst of our filming phase. I found,

from these videotaped discussions, many through lines about our inquiries into touch, relationship, collaboration, and the creative, expressive capacities of film.

In addition to the two videotaped discussions, the dancers and I continually engaged in verbal conversations, which provided me feedback in-process. I believe these conversations were integral throughout the development of the choreographic work.

The dancers also engaged in journaling sessions throughout the workshop phase in order to reflect upon our study of partnering and our collaborative process. The difference I saw in the journals versus the verbal conversations was the additional opportunity for each of the dancers to articulate their thoughts through a written medium, which is a medium that allowed the dancers to articulate any personal views without being required to share in the group setting. I facilitated each of their journal sessions with a prompting question based on recent activities as well as topics arising from the process, but I also encouraged the dancers to write about whatever relevant thoughts came to mind. I read the journals as they were written. Based on my reading, I used these journal entries as a way to frame my own artistic choices in the facilitation of workshops, rehearsals, film shoots, and post-production editing. Ideas deriving from the journals affected the creative choices I made during post-production film editing.

Raw footage from the film shoots was stored from our filming process. Raw footage gathered through the shoots also played a significant role in reflecting on the process as a whole. In many ways, those shots that did not end up making it into the final cut of the film were as informative as the material that I did choose to use. I wished to come to an understanding of our process together and my own choices as an artist not only through seeing what material or shots I found effective as a conveyor to an audience,

but also those which I chose to set aside. I anticipated asking myself reflective questions while editing to make choices about the film. Some examples of questions are: *How does the captured material in the footage relate to themes we have uncovered throughout our process? How have relationships between the dancers evolved and how has this been captured in the footage? From both a formalistic standpoint and a aesthetic/qualitative standpoint, what parts of the footage are standing out to me as most compelling and why? (i.e. lighting, camera angle, color, backdrop, facial expressions, gestures, movement motifs, diegetic sounds, etc.) What message(s) are evoked through the footage in terms of their metaphorical presentation? What is not effective in the footage and why? Where do I see potential for sequencing events to connect ideas?*

I came back to this list of questions, which I had curated early on in the writing of my thesis prospectus, as a way to remind myself what some of my core research questions were initially and what questions were coming forward in the present moment.

Ultimately, the final screendance, *Petrichor*, in its fully edited, finalized form, was not only a culminating product of my research, but it also served as a platform for documentation, as a tool for my own reflection, and as a conveyor of a sensory, touch-based, and interpersonal experience to an audience.

Evaluation

In considering how I wished to evaluate this project, I was drawn back to my initial reasoning for designing and implementing this research, which reminded me of what is at the core of this study. I wrote at the end of my Introduction to Chapter 1:

At the heart of my project are not only my core values as a dancer, artist, and educator, but also a fusion of several inquiries. I seek to find a greater

understanding of how I, as an artist, choose to implement my own philosophies into my creative works, and how I develop my methodology for choreography, which is collaborative in nature and prioritizes an engagement of the dancers through themes of relationship and touch, in which sensation and experiences become the primary means of conveying meaningful, complex, and compelling work in movement.

To evaluate my project, I sought to answer some questions deriving from this initial statement. A list of these questions is articulated below. I knew, throughout this process, many other questions or thoughts would come to me, which I did not believe I could anticipate. Reflecting on my work would not only shed light on my initial inquiries, but on how these inquiries had developed, changed, or expanded in the span of over a year's worth of investment into this project.

- 1. How did I implement a methodology that was collaborative in nature? In what ways did the collaboration enhance the creative process and in what ways was it challenging?*
- 2. How did I implement a methodology that immersed the dancers and myself to question and reflect on our ideas, thoughts, and opinions about the connection between touch and relationship, especially in terms of how touch can be used as a communicative form of expression? When was this methodology most successful and in what ways could it be revised?*
- 3. How did I facilitate the collaborative development of movement material in which touch-based sensations were the primary content? How did we gain a more deeply honed sensitivity toward touch? What did this look like? What could be explored more in another creative process? How and why?*
- 4. How did I convey "meaningful, complex, and compelling" work through movement to an audience using the medium of film? In what ways did choices surrounding the screendance enhance this goal? In what ways did these choices restrict it?*
- 5. How can I use this research to further develop and articulate my intentions for meaningful creative process, which, for me, is grounded in the invested engagement of dancers, to guarantee a sense of immersion in my future work?*
- 6. What did I learn about myself as an artist? About my creative work? About where I am in my development, especially in reflection of the characteristics of my artistry that I articulated at the beginning of this paper?*

I used all the information collected through the videotaped discussions, the oral feedback, journaling sessions, raw footage, and the finalized edit of the film, *Petrichor*, to inform my reflection on these core evaluative questions about my research.

CHAPTER IV

REFLECTION

In this chapter, I will be evaluating my study in reflection of all its stages, with subsections parsing out the differentiating phases: the workshop phase, the rehearsal phase, the production/development phase, the editing phase, and the final presentation. The evaluation of this study has provided me with deeper insight into myself as an artist through the fusion of my three recent creative inquiries: collaborative process, touch-based partnering, and the medium of screendance.

Conception and Design

The conception of this study was grounded in many of my values about dance, creative process, and education. I wished to design a study that kept the integrity of these philosophies at the forefront while focusing on the fusion of three recent creative inquiries about touch-based partnering, collaborative process, and the medium of screendance. I wished to design a study that brought these inquiries together. Reflecting on my process, I feel that I achieved this goal of fusion in the design and implementation of the study, as I see that the collaborative process I intentionally planned provided me with a unique way to facilitate the exploration of touch-based partnering and ultimately offered a rich platform for the creation of a screendance. My selection of Jimee Banks and Christopher Slayton as my two collaborating dancers had significant impact on how the study unfolded, and I was extremely impressed by their maturity and dedication throughout our process together, which allowed us to deeply and rigorously investigate touch-based partnering through a collaborative methodology. Their mature dedication

was also evident in their performances for the film, as they both were always willing and focused throughout the filming process as well. Jimmie and Chris, though they had never worked together before, were open and honest from the beginning of the workshop phase, through both conversation and the embodied activities, with a willingness to become vulnerable to each other in order to connect at a deep physical level. I had sought their comfort with vulnerability as a goal for their progressing connection with one another from the conception of the study, and I feel strongly that these two dancers, in particular, embodied my foundational belief about the power of vulnerability in performance. They were also enthusiastic toward me as a facilitator and about collaborating together within a process that required them to hone a sophisticated intuition through touch.

The Workshop Phase

The workshop phase was an extremely rewarding part of this process for me and I am glad that I designed the study to include this phase at the beginning of the project. My goals in the workshop phase, as outlined in Chapter III, were as follows: first, to establish physical and social rapport between the dancers and me, orienting the dancers to the project; second, to provide the dancers with exploration for the development of partnering skills and a more deeply honed sensitivity toward touch; and third, to expand the dancers' partnering vocabulary by encompassing a variety of idiomatic practices.

As I evaluate the Workshop Phase, I have considered each of these goals and how I used my reflective tools as we worked toward those goals and accomplished them. In terms of the first goal to establish a rapport between us and orient the dancers toward our process together, I have come to see a lot of value in the conversations that we had early

on in the workshop phase, promoting open dialogue and comfortable space for authentic physical exploration of touch-based movement. We began the entire workshop phase with the first of two videotaped discussion sessions, in which my goal was for us to develop a strong working relationship that supported self-reflection and dialogue, orienting ourselves to the kind of questions I was planning to ask throughout our creative process in regards to touch, relationship, collaboration, and performance for the medium of screendance. The conversation lasted about an hour. For a list of questions I asked the dancers, please refer to the outline in Chapter III, page 62. I viewed the discussion before the second videotaped discussion and took notes on what was said by the three of us in response to each question.

By reading through my notes and viewing the discussion multiple times since the initial review, I have come to see how some of the discussion points relate directly to our work throughout the process and how some of the ideas discussed in this first interaction actually continued to be relevant and meaningful, especially as we came toward the themes/motifs we ultimately focused on for the screendance, *Petrichor*.

For example, one of the questions was “*How do you define the term ‘touch?’ How do you see it as similar or different from the term ‘partnering?’*” I found that through this question, we came first toward a conversation about the significance of touch as creating meaning between two people, or as Jimmie described, “touch has weightedness; touch is never meaningless.” We continued into a conversation about different understandings of touch, including the symbolic idea of “being touched” by something, or how the energy between two people can connect or “touch.” I referred to this in our discussion as “touching energies,” and through this, the three of us discussed visual

contact, the importance of seeing and the nature of seeing another person in order to create meaning. Chris made a comment during this part of the conversation that struck me. He said that his opinion was that the term “touch” referred to a specific point of contact while the term “partnering” encompassed a larger concept of many points touching, rolling, or sliding with more “intensity and involvement.”

Answers to this question, in reflection, have evoked, for me, imagery about the connectedness of two bodies and two human beings through touch, as well as the importance of visual contact, which became important in the work. Jimmie also described the idea of connectedness through the universe, speaking toward atoms and the way in which energies bounce off one another within the universe. I know we came back to this point, in particular, later in our process and I definitely pulled from it in the making of *Petrichor*.

Later on in our first discussion, we considered the following set of questions regarding collaboration, such as: *How do you work as an artist? As a choreographer? As a student? What is the optimal learning or creative environment for you? Have you ever worked in a collaborative environment? Can you describe any of these instances? Do you have any assumptions, thoughts, expectations, or questions about how we will work collaboratively with one another? How do you see collaboration as affecting the choreographic process?*

I found this set of questions to be a rich area of our discussion and came to learn that Jimmie and Chris both felt a need to connect personally to movement in order to remember it and invest in it, which is something that I myself continually seek as a dancer and that I seek to cultivate very early on in any choreographic process. They

seemed to believe that a collaborative process focused on task-based activities would require them to invest personally because they would need to use improvisational and compositional methods to arrive at meaningful content and therefore experience more ownership of the material by creating their own interpretations for it and relationships to it. Jimmie, at an earlier point, had also pointed out to me that improvisation was a practice for her that allowed her to feel capable of not only moving her body freely, but also capable of being creatively engaged with her mind. We briefly discussed some ideas about differences between collaboration and a dynamic that I described as “partnership.” We came to an agreement that there was a distinction between a collaborative relationship in which both people were providing artistic input as well as physically creating and performing movement, versus “partnership,” in which one person is the “choreographer” or creative decision maker with others as movers who provided feedback without being in a leadership or decision making role. In a “partnership” dynamic, we agreed that the “choreographer” could listen to the physical feedback of the dancer(s), but a majority of the artistic ideas and activities were led by that person alone, rather than as a collective. In this project, we agreed that the type of collaboration we would be undergoing was the first type, in which all the participants would provide artistic input into physically creating and performing the movement, the only difference we saw with either scenario was that I, as a facilitator, was in charge of continually progressing toward the big picture and would not be performing the movement in front of the camera, but would be performing in the operation behind the camera.

The second goal of the Workshop Phase was to use the time to train the dancers in some physical foundations of partnering as well as to hone their sensitivity toward touch.

Within the Workshop Phase, we moved through four different “units,” in which I facilitated a combination of idiomatic studies alongside task-based and cross-idiomatic activities. Our idiomatic studies focused first on Contact Improvisation, then Country Swing, then Latin Cha Cha, and finally Modern/Contemporary Partnering alongside cross-idiomatic partnering experiments and the practice of hybridity. We spent approximately a week (or two workshop sessions) on each unit. A detailed outline of the Workshop plan for each unit can be found in Appendix C. I found that as we moved through each unit, Jimmie and Chris continued to find more comfort in being vulnerable with one another, and this came out particularly during specific activities. We ended up focusing our Contact Improvisation unit quite a bit towards the APDR (Active and Passive Demand and Response) concepts that I outlined in Chapter II from Steve Paxton’s 1975 article. As I mentioned in Chapter II, we found that, in particular, the AD+AD relationship was compelling to us, and worked to refine the AD+ AD dynamic of aggression, or as someone in the talk-back described it, ‘struggling together,’ over the course of the workshop, rehearsal, and production phases. We affectionately termed the AD+AD dynamic as “dance wrestling,” and this became a primary idea that we used to film shots for *Petrichor* because it offered a rigorous perspective on touch that was visceral. The AD+AD dynamic allowed Jimmie and Chris, from my observation, to challenge their natural tendencies to be “observers” in the relationship and instead, required them to take action, make choices, and take responsibility not only for their own actions, but for reacting to choices by the other person. This was a benefit of these explorations that Chris mentioned during our final lecture-demonstration.

The Country Swing unit, I found, provided Jimmie and Chris with a wonderful buoyancy in their partnering; a quality of tension and pressure, elasticity, that I saw permeating all their work together from that point forward. They found connection through their arms and hands, and expression not only of the points in contact with one another, but also of the negative space surrounding those points.

The Cha Cha unit gave us insight into rhythm, tempo, and internal timing. We played with using the basic Cha Cha rhythm to create meter inside of their Contact Improvisation sessions, and then we ultimately explored how to set up internal timing between Jimmie and Chris using Cha Cha rhythm as the common thread. I found that these activities triggered them to move away from a sense of rhythm and timing that was becoming too easeful or lethargic. Another interesting result of our unit with Cha Cha was that the rhythm of Cha Cha aided them in understanding the elasticity of Country Swing, and thus provided their Contact Improvisation sessions not only a more varied sense of rhythm, but also a greater ability to take risks through the use of elasticity.

Throughout these units, we also considered the nature of seeing one another. Since Country Swing and Cha Cha are social dance forms, eye contact and the nature of seeing the other partner is a significant component, especially since the lead and follow roles are quite defined. The ability for them to see each other and practice the act of taking visual inventory, I believe, allowed them to have a toolbox for seeing during Contact Improvisation, which does not delineate lead and follow and also does not put as much emphasis on seeing as it does on feeling. For the purposes of my study, I was interested in honing their ability to move in and out of seeing, to take moments of visual pause, to initiate movement through the nature of their seeing one another as well as

through feeling. As Jimmie had described in our first videotaped discussion, we sought to uncover not only a physical practice of touch, but also visual and energetic applications.

Our last unit was a consideration of “Modern/Contemporary partnering,” especially as it capitalized on hybridity. We dove into full weight sharing most deeply in this unit, where I facilitated their experience of different lifts, dips, and aerials while identifying touch properties such as spiraling, tension, momentum, boost, and leverage as significant components of the weight share. During this part of the phase, we also looked at examples of screendance films and videotaped recordings of dance pieces with partnering that I found inspiring - including excerpts from Pina Bausch’s *Café Müller*, William Forsythe and Dana Caspersen’s *From a Classical Position*, Momix’s *Fandango*, Jiri Kylian’s *Sleepless*, and Anna Teresa de Keersmaeker’s *Rosas Danst Rosas*. We discussed what was effective in terms of the touch-based relationships, the technique of the partnering, and the elements of film as enhancing the experience through movement.

The Rehearsal Phase

As we finished the Workshop Phase, we shifted to the Rehearsal Phase, in which the dancers and I transitioned our focus toward curating movement phrases and structured improvisations that began to uncover themes, motifs, and movement qualities, which continually were being refined into the Production and Development phase. The main topic of metaphoric material that we were defining was a journey, through a physical connection to another being, from a void within the space/time continuum toward a harmonic relationship with the natural environment. We began, in this phase, to clarify imagery of the universe, the natural world, and scientific concepts such as atoms

colliding, chemical bonds, etc. However, these concepts did not come to full realization until the ending of the Production Phase.

Through the APDR activities, we had previously uncovered an aggressive quality of “dance wrestling” that we found intriguing and wished to explore further. During each rehearsal, I facilitated the dancers’ practice of this “wrestling” relationship, giving them cues about how to work through the challenge of the physicality, staying safe, yet evoking a visceral sense of aggression throughout our investigations. I also facilitated the dancers to continue refining their rhythmic qualities with Cha Cha while working inside of “dance wrestling” as well as inside of another improvisational structure that we called “transform/break.” In “transform/break” sessions, Jimmie and Chris did not attempt to combat each other through an AD+AD dynamic, but instead worked cooperatively to either transform points of connection into other points or to spontaneously break connection in order to reconnect in a new way.

Through these varied activities, we also discovered qualities that opposed the aggression of AD+AD, such as the qualities of passivity, tenderness, and careful touch. Aside from finding these through the “transform/break” improvisations and some of the phrase work we were creating, we also explored a soft arm, hand, and wrist focused improvisation that I simply called “arms.” We worked through all three of these improvisation styles to build movement material. At times through the rehearsal phase, I would offer them a starting point in movement. For example, *Petrichor* includes a recurring phrase where the two of them are standing, facing each other, with their fingertips touching each other’s foreheads lightly. This was a gesture I provided them as a starting place to create the resulting phrase work, which I saw them beginning to find

earlier in our Rehearsal phase, and was also a touch gesture that I have, for a long time now, found to be a gesture of intimacy and care. At other times, I would give them a verbal prompt instead of a physical starting point. For example, during one rehearsal, I had them create a movement phrase using the prompt “*begin in a place of vulnerability.*” The resulting phrase is featured in one of the outdoor scenes I used for *Petrichor*, in which Chris begins by standing, facing Jimee, with his hand on his head and her hand on his shoulder.

Through these various improvisations, we started to build motif upon motif into larger conceptual designs. We also mixed and matched motifs from various phrases and improvisations to craft variations. For example, the fire scenes in *Petrichor* (where there are layered images of the dancers rolling on the ground with each other as well as images of the dancers sitting on the ground) were not all the same phrase work, but, in fact, variations of the same material mixed and matched into different orders.

We worked through building our movement material in the Rehearsal Phase for about three weeks in total, from the beginning of October through the end of October. We began filming during the last week of October. We conducted our second videotaped discussion on November 14th, in the midst of our Production and Development phase.

What I found most successful about this phase of our process was that it gave us yet more time to go back to activities and concepts we had initially explored in the Workshop Phase, but with a fresh view on those ideas through a newly-refined lens through practicing the same improvisations again and again as well as developing choreographed movement material that could be dissected and reordered to create variations that was purposefully cross-idiomatic.

The Production and Development Phase

The First Film Shoot - Studio 353, Hallway

At the end of October, we conducted our first film shoot in the Gerlinger Annex studio 353. The choice to film was somewhat spontaneous and earlier than anticipated, but I suggested to Jimmie and Chris that we try filming some of the phrase work and concepts we were considering, because I felt that conducting a “practice film shoot” would provide us more insight into what we were exploring and what was coming forward as significant. Ultimately, I did use a couple of shots filmed in the final version of *Petrichor*, but a majority of the footage we captured during this first shoot does not appear in *Petrichor*, as this shoot was mainly intended to begin our practice of filming, rather than act as the time when a majority of our useable shots would be captured. In reflection, I think that the first film shoot did exactly what I thought it would do - it gave us a moment to pause our rehearsal process and to frame the material we had been curating through the camera lens. This, in turn, allowed us time to reflect upon the movement material as well as the raw footage, at which point, we went back into our subsequent rehearsals with more ideas for how we wanted to develop the material before the next film shoot. The first film shoot, overall, transitioned us from a rehearsal mindset into a production and development mindset, which I feel we were ready for because we had spent a significant amount of time workshopping concepts and then refining them in previous rehearsals. I recognized the themes and motifs mentioned previously beginning to arise after the first film shoot, and I wanted to investigate how filming would actually help those themes and motifs become more fully realized within the performance of the dancers.

We spent the first film shoot mainly in the hallway that leads to the green room inside of the studio theatre because we had been exploring a lot of physically rigorous movement in the freedom of the studio space and we were intrigued to see how this rigorous movement would translate to a confined space and what metaphorical relationships would come out of the confinement. We also were intrigued to use the ladder in the hallway as a tool for filming from a bird's eye perspective. This hallway is quite narrow with one cement wall and one wooden wall. The green room door is at the end, and perpendicular to the door is a metal ladder affixed to the wooden wall, which leads up to the booth for our studio theater. The hallway is able to be lit by one overhead light, but when we filmed in the space, we chose instead to use a multi-bulb floor lamp, which had rotating light fixtures that we could manipulate to create various shadows and effects.

I was interested to see how Jimmie and Chris could perform the “wrestling” improvisation inside of a very narrow, constricted space, since we had only explored these improvisations in an open studio space that did not confine them. We filmed multiple takes of these improvisations and I moved around the hallway to capture them in a variety of angles. I found that the shots captured were quite intense, and the hallway made it difficult for me to create distance between the camera and the dancers. The biggest drawback to this was that the camera would regularly capture the dancers at such close proximity that the shot was mainly of their torsos, which I found to be less interesting than I had hoped.

Then, I climbed up the ladder and filmed them from a bird's eye perspective. When I filmed them from this perspective, we tried a slow “transform/break”

improvisation where I prompted them to begin by lying down on the floor with their heads together and improvise with a slow, liquid quality until they found their way to standing. I felt that these shots were much more intriguing than the shots in which I was operating the camera in the hallway with the dancers, since I was able to create more distance, and thus, frame them more effectively.

The footage I captured during this bird's eye improvisation was the material I chose to use at the beginning of *Petrichor*, and was some of the only footage from the first film shoot that ended up in the final film.

During the first film shoot, we decided to have Jimmie costumed in ivory pants and a beige tank top. Because the pants were full length, I decided I wanted to expose more skin on Jimmie's upper body, so we cut the tank top into a cropped top. Chris wore a long sleeve tan shirt he brought and tan shorts, which contrasted with Jimmie's outfit, because he was covered on his upper body, but had more skin exposed on his legs.

These items set up the foundation for our costume collection, which became an interesting element of our working process and of *Petrichor*. As we worked from one film shoot to the next, we continued to change the costumes, having Jimmie and Chris trade items of clothing. We also slowly added in more color and texture to the wardrobe, initially starting with soft and neutral, and ultimately incorporating pattern, durable fabrics, and autumn colors such as burnt orange, army green, and mustard yellow. This became significant to the symbolism in *Petrichor*, in which the costume changes symbolize both the entangled and timeless nature of their relationship, and in a way, draws on the question of whether Jimmie and Chris are two different people, or if they are, at times, reflections of one another, or perhaps two parts of a singular, whole being.

The Second Film Shoot - Studio 353

After the first film shoot, we reviewed the footage and continued with a developmental rehearsal to work the material further in preparation for our second film shoot. The second film shoot was again in studio 353, but this time, we did not use the hallway at all, opting instead to use the open studio space itself.

In this film shoot, we changed the costuming by having Jimmie and Chris completely trade outfits. We put Chris in the cropped tank top and linen pants, while Jimmie wore the long sleeve shirt and shorts. When I realized the symbolic possibilities of having the two dancers trade clothing items, I became excited and I knew that this was something I wanted to explore further. The dancers agreed that it seemed strangely coincidental that all the clothing items, including the pants and shorts, fit them both equally well. They felt that if it was possible to share clothing based on their similar height and build, that it would add to the metaphor of being entangled, intertwined, and in a constant state of moving through touch-based partnering. These particular qualities and symbolic possibilities had been coming forward in our rehearsals together, so the costume-switching seemed to be a natural progression of those ideas.

During the second film shoot, we again used the multi-fixture light to manipulate shadows and effects in the space. I even laid the light down on its side, instead of standing it up in the typical way, so as to create a “footlight” effect, giving them the appearance of being lit by a fire or a low flashlight. The idea of being lit by a fire inevitably came back later in the production phase during our third film shoot in Deadwood.

We filmed Jimmie and Chris performing one particular phrase of material several times, which began with a series of traveling movements and ended with a long sequence in which Jimmie was lying passively in Chris's lap, while Chris manipulated her hands and stroked her hair. This section of the material is the movement that appears in the ending of *Petrichor*.

In addition to filming this phrase of material, we also did some soft arm and torso improvisations, where the goal was for Jimmie and Chris to remain essentially in one place, but to interact mainly through their upper body. During one improvisation, Chris began by taking Jimmie's face and slowly rotating it toward the camera. I stopped them and asked Chris to begin the improvisation again with this same motif. From there, I chose to film them from multiple angles, having them begin the improvisation each time with this face-turning. This motif became essential to *Petrichor*, and appears two times in the piece because I had a strong reaction to the image and found it very potent. In my perspective, it was one of the only times within our rehearsal process in which Jimmie and Chris deliberately are looking at something other than the internal relationship between each other. They are, in this moment, intentionally and simultaneously looking at something beyond the frame of the camera, which has begged the question, for me, *what are they looking at?* Other face-focused motifs emerged from this one, which can be seen inside the fire scenes used for *Petrichor* and other outdoor footage from our third film shoot. However, this motif remains one of the only times when something external draws their focus.

The Third Film Shoot - Our weekend at Deadwood

A majority of our filming was planned for the weekend we traveled to Deadwood, Oregon. This weekend, Jimmie, Chris, and I drove to Deadwood, Oregon, to the Brainard family property. Since I know the family who owns this property, we were able to camp in their RV for two days and conduct several filming sessions around the property, which is approximately forty acres of posted mountain wilderness. The property has several unique features, including a stream, a long, winding, rural roadway, a fire pit, steep mountain trails, and an abandoned house that was built in the 1920s and occupied until the 1990s by the Brainards.

I knew that this weekend of filming would consist of the most trial and error, but that it would also be important to accumulate a lot of footage for the editing phase. I determined that the process of trial and error in our filming at Deadwood would be the most effective way for me to understand the capabilities of the camera in capturing the relationship between Jimmie and Chris. So, I prioritized an open mind in order to not lose any opportunities for recording, since I could not know for a certain fact what would be a compelling shot until we recorded and viewed it.

On the first day of filming, we filmed all afternoon and into the early evening hours (approximately 10 AM to 5 PM). We conducted three separate sessions - one afternoon session, one twilight session, and one nighttime session. During our afternoon session, we hiked into the mountain trails above the camping area and filmed a lot of phrase work on the trail, surrounded by luscious, moss-covered forest. Many of these shots are seen in *Petrichor* - including close-up images of Jimmie and Chris facing each other with an out-of-focus green expanse in the background. I enjoyed filming in this

location so much that we tried several experiments in the space, including recording movement with the dancers out-of-focus and the background in-focus, instead of the other way around. I experimented from this point forward with moving in and out of focus as a cinematic technique to enhance the visual experience of touch-based partnering. We decided to play with in and out of focus shots because of our environment, which was so green and luscious. We wanted to see how the relationship between Jimmie and Chris would look different if they were out of focus while the background was in focus.

I also captured diegetic sounds throughout the day using a shotgun microphone attached to my camera while filming. It was raining on and off all day, which created a soothing auditory backdrop for their performances. The quiet rain and forest sounds can be heard threading in and out of *Petrichor*, which became significant to creating a sense of harmony in nature and evoking many different images of nature through sound when I created the sound score.

After we finished in the forest, we walked down to the field and began capturing movement in this wide open space that had mountains in the background. We started by trying wide-angle shots with the dancers very far away from the camera, but I found these to be difficult because the space was so vast that the two of them seemed extremely small and insignificant if I was too far away with the camera. From there, I moved much closer to them. Once I got closer, we captured a particular image that is seen in *Petrichor*, in which Jimmie and Chris are circling their arms and spine, releasing their head weight and falling backwards out of the shot.

Before we ended our afternoon session, we moved to the roadway and filmed with the camera set up on an angle so that the bend of the road could be seen behind the dancers. Jimmie and Chris explored one phrase of movement that had multiple lifts, since the tar allowed them to have more stable footing for lifts than the uneven grassy field had provided. I found the visual qualities that the roadway provided to be effective - enough space for the dancers to move in with a variety of color and an interesting angle for the camera to capture. We took a break from filming to eat and review the footage, but I knew I wanted to go back to the roadway with the camera to get even higher quality footage because we had just started to find ease of movement for the dancers in this location and I had worked out some kinks for myself in terms of camera angle and lighting.

In our twilight session, we filmed again on the roadway, but this time, I explored holding the camera, filming the dancers while moving with them. I was excited by the results of this experiment, as I felt it gave the visual an even more actively engaged quality. I began doing more handheld camera work after discovering this throughout the rest of our filming sessions, including during our fourth film shoot in studio 353.

The last location we shot in during our twilight session was inside of the abandoned house. Though none of these shots appear in *Petrichor*, I found the house to be a completely different challenge. The lighting in the house was unique - natural light came through the windows, but it was much darker in the house than it was outside. There was one light switch that still worked inside the living room of the house, but I found the colors and the overall lighting to be less than ideal. The space was in a state of extreme disrepair, so I did not feel comfortable asking Jimmie and Chris to perform certain

movements inside the house. The house also had a lot of debris and trash, which I was hesitant to capture on camera, as I felt it would take away from the visual experience.

It is interesting to me that the house ended up being less compelling to me during the filming for *Petrichor*, since I had filmed at Deadwood one other time in the Fall of 2016 to create my screendance, *Deadwood*. The screendance, *Deadwood*, was filmed almost entirely inside the house, and for that project, I found the house to be extremely inspirational. But for *Petrichor*, the house felt alien and unnecessary. I believe that this is because the focus of *Petrichor* and the entire process leading up to it was a study about touch and relationship between two bodies, whereas my inspiration for creating *Deadwood* was about the dancers' relationship to the space, where the house was an eerie influence on them as I sought to evoke questions about what spirits or imprints were dwelling in the house. It was a reminder to me that the content of the work at hand does indeed dictate what spaces feel appropriate and enhancing.

Once we finished filming in the house, it had become dark outside, so we went back to the RV for another meal and continued review of the footage. It had been our plan all along to build a fire in the fire pit at nighttime and experiment with filming by the fire. We had discussed how the warm, crackling embers of the fire would add a beautiful and intimate element to the material that Jimmie, Chris, and I had been developing.

After taking the second break, we were successful in building a fire and we conducted our nighttime film shoot around the fire. It was extremely dark at the campsite. The fire was truly the only light outside at that point, so we had to film quite close to the fire in order for the camera to capture Jimmie and Chris. I experimented first with filming them from across the fire pit - so that the camera was capturing the two of

them through the flames and embers. Then, I moved the camera and filmed on the same side as Jimmie and Chris, so that the fire could be seen to the side of them. I found that this angle gave Jimmie and Chris a backlit glow, which I thought evoked the beautiful, intimate quality for which we had been hoping. In addition to filming phrase work by the fire, we also filmed some “transform/break” improvisations as well as a Cha Cha rhythm improvisation. A lot of these shots were featured in *Petrichor*, since I found our nighttime shoot to be extremely effective for capturing intimacy and transitional imagery between the ‘void’ and ‘nature.’ This filming session was my personal favorite of all the shoots we conducted.

On the second day of filming, we conducted one last film shoot prior to leaving Deadwood. We returned to the roadway, but filmed some phrase work on an angle where the dancers were between two trees. These shots also appear in *Petrichor*. We then moved down to the stream and finished our film shoot by the stream, recording both phrase material as well as soft upper body improvisation. Several shots from the stream as well as diegetic sounds captured by the stream are featured in *Petrichor*, at the point when the film transitions from the fire scenes and into the outdoor scenes.

Overall, filming at Deadwood provided us with a sense of harmony and tranquility with nature and I found that the physical connection between Jimmie and Chris became even more sensitive and intimate. For example, when we were filming by the creek and I had asked the dancers to perform an arm/torso improvisation, I noticed, while operating the camera, that their movements seemed to be in tune with the sound of the water rushing down the stream, and even I felt influenced by a calm sensation of being in harmony with nature. We reflected that this was due to their sense of connection not only

to each other, but to the larger universe surrounding us - a theme that we came back to in our fourth film shoot and that ultimately shaped a conceptual direction in my editing of *Petrichor*.

During all four of our filming sessions at Deadwood, we continued to experiment with having Jimmie and Chris trade clothing items. We added to the wardrobe a flannel shirt, a mustard yellow shirt, a pair of army green pants, a pair of teal pants, a tan t-shirt, a gray sweatshirt, and a tan tank top. Looking closely at shots throughout *Petrichor*, one will see that Jimmie and Chris are constantly wearing different outfits with these clothing articles as well as the neutral articles from our prior shoots. I feel strongly that the changing of the clothing subliminally adds to the intertwined, connected, and infinite nature of their relationship as portrayed in *Petrichor* because the dancers are metaphorically tied to one another through their exchanged clothing – as if, at times, they are reflections of each other, or perhaps they are two parts that combine to create a singular, whole being.

The Second Videotaped Discussion

After filming at Deadwood, Jimmie, Chris, and I recorded our second videotaped discussion on November 14 that lasted approximately forty minutes to reflect on our process so far together and in preparation for our last filming session together. We discussed what we had perceived from the first three filming sessions, what we saw coming forward in the work, and what we wanted to do in our last filming session.

Jimmie and Chris both felt that they were seeing a distinct contrast between the images we had captured inside versus outside. They felt that the inside imagery was

warmer, less sharp, but more intense in regards to the movement qualities explored. The outside imagery, on the other hand, felt for them to be less intense, more harmonious, yet sharper image quality and busier in regard to the colors, textures, and backdrops. One word Jimmie used to describe her opinion of filming outside was “distilled.” She felt that the material we captured outside was a distillation of our process together. This information was useful to me because it aided me in understanding what else could be filmed and where we should film before we concluded our filming phase for the most well-rounded variety of footage that could most effectively shape the editing of the film.

We had previously discussed within our rehearsal process and earlier filming shoots the concept that Jimmie and Chris’s relationship through touch existed in a ‘void’ in time/space as well as the concept that Jimmie and Chris became harmonized with nature through touch, it was not until this second videotaped discussion that we solidified how we saw these motifs and themes developing for the film. We discussed at length in this videotaped conversation the idea of the indoor footage representing a type of “void” in time/space, in which the two of them existed “at the beginning of time,” in the vacuum of the universe, entangled through touch with one another. We discussed how the outside footage was obviously in the natural environment, representing creation, nature, and their relationship not only to each other, but also to the earth and the universe. We felt that the film could take the two of them through a journey from the void and into nature, representing either the creation of life or the connection between humanity and the universe. We saw that at times, Jimmie and Chris were two distinctly separate characters, engaged in an entangled relationship with one another, but we saw that at other times, the two of them seemed to be reflections of one another, or even that the two of them were

physically connected to the extent that each was one part that together made up a singular, whole being. I became inspired by the ideas circulating amongst the three of us, and I suggested a couple of ideas for a last film shoot, in which we could film material to bridge between the symbolic “void” and expanse of “nature.”

We talked about using some stage lighting in the studio to open up the vastness of the void. Chris was curious to see how vast and expansive we could make the void. I felt that using the stage lighting not only would do this, but could also give some subtle hints about environment, since depending on the angle of the camera, the high-side lights would be captured in the shot, giving the space almost an illusion of orbiting planets or stars, balls of light that appeared in the shots as the dancers moved among them.

I also mentioned that we could explore filming not only “wrestling” improvisations in the freedom of the black marley theatre space, but also the harmonious “transform/break” improvisations, and we could explore improvisations that began with wrestling and transformed into harmony—symbolizing the transition from void to nature. Overall, we felt that it was more productive at this point in our process to explore and capture at the same time, as we continued to come to a more refined idea of what was significant within the material the more we filmed with it.

The Fourth Film Shoot - Studio 353, stage lighting

During the final film shoot on November 19, 2017, we set up the stage lighting, creating a warm amber look using the high-sides. We also set up a shin light on a box that could be moved around the room, depending on what we were trying to draw attention towards. We set up the elevating cherry-picker machine, so that I could stand

up on it with the camera and capture their movement from a bird's eye angle, since we had found the bird's eye perspective from our first film shoot to be effective and wished to experiment further with this concept in the larger, open space of the studio theatre. We filmed a lot of movement while I was up on the cherry picker, and then I came down and filmed movement with them while doing handheld camera work. The cherry-picker shots as well as the handheld shots can be seen in the first half of *Petrichor*, as the movement transitions from the "void" into the fire scenes. The bright orbs of the high-side lights can be seen in some of the revolving shots, which I found effective in providing the void with a little more spatial context that I could use in editing to give the audience a hint at the idea that something was being "created" between the two dancers through touch inside of a vacuum in the space/time continuum. These orbs, for me, symbolized the by-products of the physical connection between Jimmie and Chris, perhaps even symbolizing their life force. I also saw the orbs as related to the sparks of the fire that we captured during our fire pit filming session and as symbolizing the energetic output of Jimmie and Chris's entanglement in a way that carried a sense of purity to me.

The Editing Phase and the Creation of *Petrichor*

After we conducted our fourth and final film shoot, I ended regular meetings with Jimmie and Chris in order to focus on the editing of the film. I chose to edit my footage using Adobe Premiere Pro CC on my Macbook laptop. I stored all of the raw video footage and all of the drafts of my work on an external hard drive. Once all the film shoots were complete, I had approximately four hours of footage in total, which I ultimately distilled into a ten-minute film.

Organizing the Footage

When I began the editing process, I first organized all of the footage into Adobe Premiere Pro CC, by uploading it to a new file and creating “bins” for each film shoot. Bins, in Adobe Premiere Pro CC, are file folders that the editor can create to organize footage. The unique thing about bins is that the editor can place the same file in multiple bins. For example, if I had a bin labeled “Close-Ups” and I had a bin labeled “Forest Scenes”, I could place a relevant clip into the “Close Ups” bin as well as into the “Forest Scenes” bin. This way, the clips that are relevant to what the editor is looking for are easily accessible while editing in multiple categorized locations.

Once I created my initial bins, I created a second set of bins for each film shoot. These bins would serve a different purpose for me in organizing the clips. I then spent some time looking through each video clip and I used the editing tools to trim out any sections of each clip that did not contain relevant movement material - for example, sections with bloopers, or sections where I was cueing the dancers to begin performing movement sequences or improvisations. I then filed the newly trimmed clips into their second corresponding bin based on the originating film shoot. This way, I had both the raw footage taken directly from the camera in its original state in one set of bins as well as the newly trimmed footage in a second set of bins, which made my process in editing much faster once I started compiling clips on the editing timeline in Adobe.

After I trimmed each clip and organized the clips into new bins, I labeled each clip with a description, this way, I could easily find the clip I was seeking. I labeled clips based on the movement phrase of improvisation being performed, or the angle of the camera, or even the take number (i.e. “close up phrase A, take two”).

The Sound Score - Editing in Garageband

Once I organized all the footage, I had a much better idea of which clips I found the most effective in terms of creating the arc of the piece from the void to nature. I was considering how to delimit myself in terms of the length of the work, and I came to the conclusion that the best way to choose a length without sacrificing the work's quality was to begin by creating the sound score for the piece in Garageband. This way, if I delimited my work to be ten minutes, I could create a sound score that had a fully realized energetic arc, which could then serve as a road map of sorts for editing the footage. I also knew I wanted to compile a layered sound score that included pre-recorded or simulated sounds, diegetic sounds from my footage, music, and dialogue, all for the purpose of crafting an auditory experience for the listener that evoked a sense of time lapse and the creation of life/connection in the abyss of a space/time continuum. I decided to do this by selecting sounds that would viscerally penetrate the listener's body, especially when played using a theater-style speaker-subwoofer system. For example, I began the score with sonar pinging sounds and underwater whale noises because, I feel these sounds deeply in my gut when I hear them, and they call to my mind images of the deep ocean and a dark lifeless void. The whale sounds symbolized living beings communicating in a way that is unlike humans, but nevertheless is compelling and effective. Similarly, sonar has the quality of searching and finding inside a vast open space. Both sounds evoke a concept of communication, which is exactly what touch is—a form of communication. The sounds also relate to the way I saw the dancers touch because I thought it gave their sustained, fluid movements a sense of meter, or time passing, and in this way, made me feel like they had been existing in this relationship for a long, long time. Similarly, I used

a breathing and heartbeat loop sound, onto which I actually placed a secondary effect that lowered and lengthened the vocal tone by reducing the speed of the loop. To give the score a foundational ambience, I used a track of consistent wind sounds from an old building that was, in fact, created to be a calming background noise promotional for sleep and relaxation.

The first piece of music I brought into the score was “Nebula” by Julianna Barwick, which Pitchfork writer, Marc Hogan, described as “Synths, patient and iridescent, seem to play a more prominent role, and the song's naming suggests an outer space frame of mind. But a slight title tweak could just as easily have had listeners imagining the ocean floor. Whether an interstellar dust cloud or deep-sea murk, it would still sound like a magic place.” I appreciate Hogan’s description of Barwick’s “Nebula” because both deep ocean and outer space were the two ideas I was hoping to evoke at the beginning of the sound score, since Jimmie, Chris, and I agreed that whatever “void” we had created in the studio space seemed to be free of time/space constraint.

In order to transition away from the timeless “void” and into a new concept, I slowly removed each layer - the sonar faded away as “Nebula” was introduced, and then the whale sounds dissipated as “Nebula” built in energy, then “Nebula” itself fades away mid-track, and the listener is left only with a brief moment of the heartbeat and breathing alongside the windy old building. The heartbeat and breathing also faded away as I decided to introduce a new concept that would take the listener away from the void and into the beginnings of life and nature. The wind remained the only consistent sound throughout the first half of the score.

To make this change in imagery occur, I decided to use Maja Ratkje's "The Woods Have Ears," which is a beautifully subtle piece with light chiming sounds that build and hush. I thought that this piece could enhance the fire scenes we filmed, since, in my opinion, this is a piece that felt quite intimate to me, in keeping with how I felt about the fire footage.

Throughout the sound score, I wanted to fade in and out of the same set of sounds - the heartbeat and breathing, the whale sounds, and the sonar, while also pulling in other pieces of music. I thought that fading in and out of the same set of ambient sounds would continue to kindle a subliminal message for the listener, which was a quality that I believed enhanced the themes I was exploring, such as timelessness, infinity, creation, connection to the universe, intimacy, and mutual struggle. I also felt, however, that merely using this set of sounds alongside a couple of augmenting pieces of music would, over several minutes, lull the listener into a soporific state. I wanted to break up the arrangement with a section of dialogue that would draw the reader back to the concepts of touch and relationship as they relate to the universe and the natural world. I also felt that a piece of dialogue relating to these themes we explored in our process might allow the listener to connect more fully to the film. I started seeking out monologues about the universe, man's connection to it, creation, or infinity. I came across, quite quickly, the famous astrophysicist, Neil DeGrasse Tyson, in an interview by a TIME reporter, in which the reporter had asked Tyson to answer the question, "What is the most astounding fact that you can share with us about the universe?" Tyson's response was as follows:

The most astounding fact is the knowledge that the atoms that comprise life on Earth, the atoms that make up the human body, are traceable to the crucibles that cooked light elements into heavy elements in their core under extreme temperatures and pressures. These stars, the high mass ones among them, went

unstable in their later years. They collapsed and then exploded, scattering their enriched guts across the galaxy. Guts made of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen and all the fundamental ingredients of life itself. These ingredients become part of gas clouds that condense, collapse, form the next generation of solar systems, stars with orbiting planets. And those planets now have the ingredients for life itself. So that when I look up at the night sky and I know that yes, we are part of this universe, we are in this universe, but perhaps more important than both of those facts is that the universe is in us. When I reflect on that fact, I look up—many people feel small because they're small and the universe is big—but I feel big, because my atoms came from those stars.

I immediately connected Tyson's words with what Jimmie, Chris, and I had been discussing and embodying throughout our process together. I felt that not only Tyson's words themselves, but also the gravity, pace, and low tone with which he said them would fit extremely well with the overall arc of the sound score. I decided to embed this monologue into the second half of the score and from there, build in more layers that evoked imagery of nature. When Tyson said "the ingredients for life itself," I wanted to have the heartbeat and breathing sound start to become audible again, so I faded it slowly back into the score throughout Tyson's dialogue. I also slowly faded in the sonar sounds to continue the thread of the deep ocean/outer space concept, since this was what he began speaking about - stars, atoms, and elements. I lowered the volume on the Ratkje track while the monologue was playing, but wanted to keep it audible enough that it continued to create a transition into imagery of nature. To continue enhancing the theme of nature, I then layered in the track "Lecture" by Nick Cave and Warren Ellis, from the soundtrack for "Wind River" (2017). To finish the score, I continued to fade in and out of the three sounds - the wind, the sonar, and the heartbeat/breathing - while also swelling the volume for the layered sounds of "Lecture" and "The Woods Have Ears." At the very last part of the score, I faded each sound out, until the heartbeat/breathing was the only sound left. I decided to end the score with an inhale from the breathing, rather than an

exhale. I thought that the inhale encompassed the idea of taking life in and being part of the surrounding universe.

Once I finished the sound score, I exported it as a file and uploaded it to the Adobe Premiere Pro CC file. When I was editing the footage, each clip had corresponding audio embedded in the file, so I edited the diegetic sounds alongside the footage - deleting diegetic sounds that I did not want in the score, lowering volume on certain sounds so that the sound score was more prominent, and, at times, raising the volume on diegetic sounds, such as the crackling of the fire, in order to emphasize these sounds alongside the sound score. This became significant to adding nature sounds into the work, such as the crackling of the fire or rain sounds, and it also became significant for adding sounds the dancers made while we filmed, such as footsteps, breathing, etc. I felt that having those sounds connected to some of the footage allowed me, as a viewer, to connect to the sensations of their touch and their movements more readily, since I could not only see it, but I could also hear it.

Editing the Footage in Adobe Premiere Pro CC

I began editing my footage by choosing what shot I wanted to begin the piece. I decided that the clip of Jimmie and Chris on the ground in bird's eye view was a soft and intriguing introduction that allowed me, as a viewer, to ease into the work and become immersed in experiencing it. I also chose to begin the sound score, and then slowly fade in the image of Jimmie and Chris, in order to orient the viewer to the work and allow the prominent sound of the sonar pinging to saturate the space first. I envisioned, from the beginning of my editing, that this work would be on a large screen with a theater-style

speaker system that would allow me to play with how the sounds carried throughout the space, similar to watching a movie in a cinema, so I wanted to create an immersive experience in which the audience could get lost. I thought this type of experience would most readily connect them to kinesthetically empathizing with the dancers' touch and would also enhance the dancers' intimacy with one another for the viewer.

Within the dark void, I layered shots to impact a sense of time by placing clips on top of one another and adjusting the opacity level so that both clips were semi-transparent. This video editing effect is particularly interesting to use when two layered clips contrast each other in terms of either camera angle, distance from the subject matter, and/or color. Throughout editing for *Petrichor*, I played with changing the color of clips. For example, at the beginning, I purposefully made certain clips have a blue hue while other clips have more of an amber or neutral hue. This way, when layering with opacity, each clip was able to be seen and distinguishable. The layering effect requires the viewer's eye to both decode the actions and visually bounce between the two moving images, which allows the viewer to interpret the significance of simultaneously occurring (yet distinctly separate) events, impacting their experience of time as the viewer loses a sense of singularity and order; what happens first and what happens second becomes blurred. I wanted to create a sense of timelessness in the void right away, since I knew I wanted the work to start inside of the void and ultimately expand into the "created" world of nature, focusing on how Jimmie and Chris's relationship evolved through touch as they symbolized both human connection and the atoms of the universe colliding, just as Neil DeGrasse Tyson would describe later in the sound score. When looking for clips to overlay on top of one another, I was focusing mostly on the negative space in the base

clip in comparison to where the action was taking place in the layered clip. For example, if most of the negative space was on one side of the base clip, I would try to find a layering clip that had action occurring in that area of the screen. That way, the two images could be seen simultaneously.

I thought it would be more effective to add some color with a foreshadowing about the evolution into the natural environment at some point fairly early in the piece, since all the void clips are mainly in neutral hues of black/tan/amber, whereas the later nature clips are quite a bit more colorful with pops of green, red, blue, and yellow. In order to give the audience time for their eye to adjust to a new color range, I added in the clip of Jimmie and Chris's hands. It was a bit darker of a clip considering it was one of the clips recorded outdoors (almost all of which were extremely bright and colorful). I thought this would tease at the transition without jarring a viewer's eye, which would likely become adjusted to the dimmer, more intimate lighting of the void.

In order to fully realize the transition from void to nature, I began pulling clips from our fourth film shoot, in which we used the stage lighting and I filmed Jimmie and Chris while moving around the space with them, contrasting their actions by often traveling with the camera in the opposite direction. The movement of the camera meant that I captured the bright orbs of the stage lighting at various points while filming, which I actually thought added to the sense of atmosphere surrounding Jimmie and Chris, and again, hinted at the fact that their dark, vacuous environment was beginning to expand and change.

In terms of the actual movement material up to this point, I wanted to pull from both improvisational structures, such as the wrestling, and the various phrases that we

had created and recorded while in the studio space. It was straightforward for me to pull from a wide range of movement material, since we recorded almost everything multiple times and with different technical components for filming, such as angle, movement of the camera, etc. At this point in the editing, I was focusing not only on the symbolic experience of the viewer as I designed a film that took them on a visual journey about touch and relationship, but I also was focusing on the variety of energetic qualities in the movement for dynamic vitality and development. I felt it was important to move between many different qualities, such as the aggressive quality of the wrestling alongside the softer, sensitive qualities of the arm and torso improvisations. I was purposefully trying to evoke the sense of timelessness and lasting connection between Jimmie and Chris, which, to me, meant that they needed to move in and out of various qualities in a montage, rather than being strictly linear about their relationship and how it was continually unfolding.

One of the longest clips in the entire piece is actually in the middle of the work, when Jimmie and Chris are holding hands in a type of knot and circling each other. I decided to leave this clip as it was originally filmed and I did not do much to add an effect or trim its duration. It was, in my mind, the perfect long-duration clip for leading into the fire scenes, since the color palette was amber, the movement was harmonious, and the energy level was calm, yet intense.

I chose to transition into the fire scenes during the quietest part of the sound score, since I felt the crackling of the fire deserved its own moment in the work and the overall sense I got from these clips was intimate, soft, and in some way secretive. I felt that it was important for Neil DeGrasse Tyson's monologue to introduce the idea of

transitioning from void to nature, so I held off using too many nature clips prior to the beginning of his monologue.

In order to adjust the audience's eye to the outdoor scenes, I decided to introduce an improvisational section between Chris and Jimmie while slowly fading in the color of the clip to its full saturation. I was intrigued by the relationship between the clip I chose (in which Chris and Jimmie slowly explore each other's upper bodies within a background of trees) and the words of Neil DeGrasse Tyson, who, at this point, was speaking about man's connection to the universe. There is one point in this set of improvisations where Jimmie puts her head on Chris's chest and releases her arms, which gave me a distinct sense of trust and yielding. Interestingly, Tyson, in this moment, says that "the universe is within us," which, for me, seemed like a kind of intimacy in this connection with the head of one being in the heart of another, or perhaps that the complex and vast landscape or "universe" of one's human mind dwells within their heart and can also be shared between hearts. In this way, I see the symbolism as linking mind, body, and soul.

Two gestural motifs appear throughout the piece--touching foreheads and the pressing together of hands as if in prayer. These motifs appeared throughout our process and I felt that both gestures signified care and intimacy, though not necessarily romance or sexual desire. Jimmie, Chris, and I had discussed during our workshops and rehearsals about how to create intimacy between a man and a woman in contact without confining the relationship to a sexual or romantic one. We thought it would be important to leave the implications of the touch ambivalent enough that they could be interpreted by the viewer, rather than implied within my editing. I wished to edit the work to be an abstracted narrative, as conveyed through touch-based partnering, that reflected on

astrophysical elements relating to the universe and humanity's connection to the universe. We had purposefully created and refined movement ideas with these considerations in mind, especially as we became clearer about what the themes of the film were going to be during our production/development phase, especially in the time right around our second videotaped discussion. The two gestural motifs—touching foreheads and pressing palms together in prayer are both examples of the type of touch images that felt visceral and relatable to me, while holding true to our process together. I used shots with these motifs throughout *Petrichor* in order to create a sense of movement theme and variation as well as create symbolic significance about the unfolding relationship between two thinking, sensing, feeling bodies and the universe surrounding them.

One of the most effective edits, in my opinion, that I made for *Petrichor*, that demonstrates the capacity of film to enhance movement, is around 7 minutes and 30 seconds, when an image of Jimmie and Chris facing to the right of the screen transitions in color from a blue hue into a bright natural hue. The transition occurs as the two slide into a second plié with their arm reaching out in unison. I thought moments like this were effective because I was able to use changes in color or camera angle to draw attention to specific touch moments. Another effective edit that I see, in reflection, is a subsequent sequence of movement in which Jimmie and Chris are performing a choreographed phrase of material that includes some unison alongside some weight sharing and full lifts. We filmed this phrase in multiple locations -- on the roadway in Deadwood as well as inside the studio. I was able to edit the phrase so the viewer could see the movement occurring in two different locations at the same time. Jimmie and Chris wear opposite outfits in the two different shots - outside, Jimmie is wearing the flannel shirt, whereas inside, Chris is

wearing the shirt. As I said earlier, I thought that trading the clothing represented their timeless, intertwined relationship. I also felt this editing technique of switching between shots within the same movement phrase added to the idea of timelessness.

I knew I wanted to bring in the clip of Chris manipulating Jimmie's head as she laid passively on the floor because I thought it was quite contrasting to a lot of the other clips in terms of its energetic quality, which struck me, but I was not sure for quite a while at what point in the work I thought this image made the most sense to be included. It was such a contrast to the actively engaged and even at times aggressive movement qualities that I knew it would need to be a clip used to create a significant transition in tone. I finally chose to use the clip for the transition into the ending. I decided to fade into a prolonged black screen before slowly fading in this new image. That way, the viewer would have a sense that a new idea was being introduced and was able to adjust to it. I felt that Jimmie's passivity could be interpreted as death or sleep, which, to me, held significance, since the work had been, up to this point, about a journey toward life and the birth of nature through two touching entities. The "circle of life" concept came to my mind, and I thought that an effective way to conclude the work would be to use certain touch motifs that had occurred throughout the work to bring the narrative full circle, back to a sense of death, life, and nostalgic memory. This is why I chose to use a blank screen twice in the ending, to evoke a sense of time passing, and why I chose to bring back the semi-translucent opacity of images overlaying the scene of Chris picking up Jimmie's lifeless hands with more and more desperation. From the beginning of the editing process, I knew that the shot of Chris moving Jimmie's head to face the camera as both looked off into the distance was extremely compelling to me. I decided I wanted this to

be the ending of the work, since it brought to my mind the inference that Jimmie and Chris could see beyond the vast abyss of the “void.” It made me question what they saw out there and why. In combination with the last few breaths in the sound score, I thought this would be a compelling ending.

Evaluation of Editing

If I had had more time to edit prior to the presentation of the film, I would have received more feedback from others, and continued to add and refine editing choices. For example, as I described earlier, I felt that I had made some effective choices toward the end of the work, which I think I could have considered how to do more in the beginning and middle. I feel less than satisfied about the beginning of the piece, and I think this is where I would focus most of my energy if I went back to edit further. For example, the lighting for the first film shoot was less than ideal, and I wish I had been able to capture the same material (the bird’s eye view of Jimmie and Chris on the floor” with a nicer quality image. I also think the work would have benefited from a bit more collaging of movement phrases, such as the collaged section toward the end that I described earlier, which I found so effective. I also would likely add a few more nature scenes into the beginning, just to provide the viewer with a little more foreshadowing about the transition from “void” to “nature.”

The Title *Petrichor*

I edited the entire film, exported a rough draft, and made more edits as I received feedback prior to the presentation. I titled the screendance *Petrichor* because of the

meaning behind this word. *Petrichor* is a combination of the words ‘petra’ and ‘ichor.’ In Greek, ‘petra’ is a stone and ‘ichor’ is a reference to what ancient Greeks believed as the blood of the gods, which they thought to be a golden liquid substance. *Petrichor*, from its original etymology, refers to a stone covered in the blood of the gods. *Petrichor*, in contemporary English, has come to refer to the smell of rain hitting dry earth.

I chose the word because I thought it was a beautiful and mysterious word, which referred to a concept of natural phenomena, a colliding between two contrasting types of matter. When one thinks of touch, it follows that touch is the location for a collision between different forms of matter – two unique elements, entities, or beings.

The Final Presentation - “An Evening of Dance”

I presented my screendance and choreographic process in a public event entitled “An Evening of Dance” on January 19, 2018. This evening included the following program order:

- The premiere screening of *Petrichor*
- A lecture-demonstration about our collaborative process together with Jimmie and Chris as performing artists and myself as narrator/facilitator
- A guided talk-back with the audience using Liz Lerman’s Critical Response method

Lecture-Demonstration

Jimmie, Chris, and I met to prepare for our lecture-demonstration and the talk-back. We decided to walk the audience through three main activities that developed from our Workshop phase. The purpose of the lecture-demonstration was to give the audience some further insights into our process together with an additional opportunity to begin dialogue with the audience, which would continue into the talk-back portion of the

evening. I had hoped that including the lecture-demonstration would allow the audience some time to let the experience of the film wash over them and also gain a deeper understanding of our process so that they would be ready and willing to offer feedback and ask questions in the talk-back with more depth. Jimmie, Chris, and I further decided that the best way to facilitate the lecture-demonstration would be for me to ask questions and give prompts to Jimmie and Chris live in front of the audience, so that they could authentically respond. The following outline were the notes I prepared for how I would facilitate the lecture-demonstration.

I explained briefly to the audience about the various stages of our creative process: the workshop phase, the rehearsal phase, the production/development phase, and the editing phase. I specifically spoke to the goals of the workshop phase and the units that were studied during this phase. I then introduced Jimmie and Chris, explaining to the audience that I would be asking the two of them to answer questions live and then I would ask them to present physically embodied examples of exercises relating to those prompt questions which we had found significant to specific points in our creative process.

The first question I asked to Jimmie and Chris was: *Tell me about what you've been drawing upon throughout this process and especially toward the point in the process where we were preparing for and in the midst of filming.* Jimmie and Chris then discussed the beginnings of the process and the exercises we did with APDR. I then asked Jimmie and Chris to perform the following improvisations: first, Ad & Pr; second, Pd & Ar; and third, Ad & Ad. I explained about Passive/Active and how it helped Jimmie and Chris to understand how to listen and react to one another in physical contact.

Then, I asked Jimmie and Chris a second question: *Tell me about your experiences inside of the Passive/Active exercises.* The two responded to this question, explaining about rigor, getting out of one's comfort zone, and becoming comfortable with intimacy in touching one another. I then asked the audience: *What did you see?* I received responses from several members of the audience, some of whom felt that they saw different relational dynamics coming about through the various APDR activities.

I continued by asking Jimmie and Chris to perform a Transform/Break improvisation, then Wrestling improvisation to further demonstrate how we expanded upon the original APDR activities.

I asked Jimmie and Chris a third question: *Tell me about your experiences inside of the Wrestling improvs.* The two of them responded and explained how the wrestling opened them up to an entirely new dynamic with one another. I finally asked them one last question: *Tell me about the three idiomatic studies - Contact Improvisation, Country Swing, and Cha Cha.* Jimmie and Chris explained how the units influenced their movement vocabulary and their interactions with their partner. Jimmie and Chris then performed the original Cha Cha phrase I had taught them during our workshops and later performed cross-idiomatic explorations of Cha Cha deriving from this phrase, including the metered Cha Cha improvisation.

I asked the audience questions throughout the lecture-demonstration and finally asked the audience if they wanted to know anything else about the dancers' process together, where specific elements of the film came from, etc. I had a couple of audience responses asking to see some examples of Country Swing, and we demonstrated a short example of that study as well.

The audience members responded based on my questions throughout, which was a nice way to bridge between the presentation of lecture-demonstration and the more interactive talk-back that was to follow.

Talk-Back

Jimee, Chris, and I met to prepare for “An Evening of Dance,” where we also discussed how we would like to facilitate the talk-back and decided the best approach was to loosely use Liz Lerman’s Critical Response method to guide the audience through the discussion. We took the following steps from Liz Lerman’s Critical Response methodology: The discussion starts with the audience providing affirmative words or phrases about the work they just viewed. The artist(s) then ask the audience questions about the work or relating topics. Following this portion, the audience is given the opportunity to ask the artist(s) neutral questions about the work or related topics. Finally, the audience is given the opportunity to offer opinion-based feedback or to ask opinion-based questions to the artist(s), with the artist(s’) permission.

Affirmations

We began with affirming words of phrases. The audience expressed the following words during this portion of the talk-back:

- Tension
- Turbulent
- Dependency
- Dynamic
- Hands
- Skin
- Shape
- Face

- Surface
- Heat
- Flow

I was delighted to hear some words that had been relevant to my research coming forward, such as the word “tension,” which I used during the workshops to explain Country Swing and various other exercises, as well as within the rehearsal process as we began to uncover themes such as aggression. “Skin” was also a concept I had considered in depth in the second chapter of this paper as well as with the dancers while we honed their sensitivity toward touch. “Flow” is yet another concept I felt strongly about within our process, since I see Contact Improvisation as a form of partnering that trains the dancers to be in a state of flow with each other. Lastly, “hands” is a word that I felt related directly to our work with social dance forms, since the connection between the two partners’ hands is the main source of perceivable information in social dance, and I have been fascinated within this study about how hands can communicate through touch and how I could utilize this in a collaborative work surrounding touch.

I found several of these words also made me contemplate new ideas in reflection of this study. For example, the term “turbulent”, in my opinion, brings to mind a state of flow that does not remain at one energetic level, but fluctuates in a surprising manner. I believe this is the type of flow that Jimmie, Chris, and I discovered and intentionally refined through the APDR exercises, which impacted the making of *Petrichor* immensely. In reflection, the word ‘turbulent’ describes the concept of the universe appropriately, and I see this word as relating directly to the description of the universe that Neil DeGrasse Tyson speaks about in *Petrichor*.

The word from the list, “face,” has since drawn my awareness to the amount of shots within *Petrichor* that do use the dancers’ faces as a primary focal point, whether because of visual contact or physical touch. Faces are a focal point that both receive and reflect communication, and touching someone’s face or making eye contact with someone are both examples of opportunities to express comfort with vulnerability and the making of connection. The word “heat” emphasizes the type of relational dynamic we created through *Petrichor*, and makes me wonder if the imagery of the two dancers next to the fire pit were, perhaps, some of the most potent or memorable images for this audience. I know they are for me. Heat is something that humans are naturally drawn to as an element supporting life.

Questions from the Artists

When we were planning this talk-back, we decided that each of us would come up with a question to ask the audience. We wanted each question to focus on a different aspect of the project: screendance, collaboration, and touch-based partnering. The following questions were what we asked the audience:

Lila: I’m interested in your thoughts about the use of a camera to capture the dancers’ relationship through touch. How did you see the camera and the medium of screendance as impacting your experience of their relationship? How was it similar or different to what you saw live through the lecture-demonstration? I’m interested in your opinions here as well as your observations.

Chris: What is your impression of the three artists that collaborated on this work and their working relationships? How do you view relationships to self, others, and environment as played out in this process?

Jimee: After seeing the film and the lecture-demonstration, are you thinking differently about the significance of touch both in terms of dance as well as for everyday life? If so, how and why?

Many answers from the audience intrigued me and like the prior affirmations given, gave me new thoughts and ideas in reflection of the study. I will reflect on each of our questions separately in terms of the audience's response.

When I asked the audience the first question about the medium of screendance and how it impacted their experiences of the work, I received several striking responses. One audience member described the film as “stitching” various points in time together in a way that was unique to the abilities of film as an expressive medium. This was something that I chose to do while editing *Petrichor*, since I wished to create a feeling of time passing nonlinearly. Another audience member explained that the medium of film offered a more intimate view inside the relationship between the two dancers because I was able to use different camera angles, settings, and other elements to provide details that might not otherwise be seen. This comment reminded me of Douglas Rosenberg's comments about the camera's ability to be a microscope for the editor. Yet another audience member referred to the element of sound as being “visually crisp,” by which I take her to have meant that the sounds enhanced the visual experience of the film for her. She followed up by saying that she could both hear and see a sense of “stress” in the work, which again reminds me of the themes we explored in our rehearsal process about tension and aggression, as well as soft, careful touch. A last audience member described the shaky nature of the camera when I was doing handheld recording. This shakiness, in his opinion, enhanced the aforementioned idea of stress, and he described it as “building” throughout *Petrichor*.

When Chris asked his question about collaboration and what they saw of it within the short glimpses from the film and the lecture-demonstration, we again received several intriguing responses. A first audience member explained that there was a contrast between what seemed to be a respectful collaborative process between the three of us versus her emotionally stressful interpretation of the film. She explained that this sense of stress gave her the impression that though the two dancers were focused on physical contact, there were at times moments of loneliness. A second audience member explained that because of the collaborative process, including my work behind the camera, she felt that at times, the film was a duet, but at other times, the film was a trio between the two dancers and an observing onlooker behind the camera. She described it as if someone was “peeking” into the relationship between the two dancers. She then explained that she, herself, felt like a fourth party, a viewer who was seeing not only the duet between the dancers, but also the third, invisible onlooker behind the camera lens. She expressed that it was an “interesting back and forth”, which gave her a “ghostly” feeling. I was intrigued by her comment and agreed that there was a back and forth between duet and trio. In fact, I recall during one footage review session, Jimee, Chris, and I agreed that the times when I was actively engaged with moving the camera as the dancers worked, the resulting shots were dynamic and interesting. Perhaps this was because the collaborative nature of the trio - dancers and camera - became more evident in these shots. This same audience member explained that the sense of trio not only came through for her during shots where the camera was moving alongside the dancers, but also in the fire scenes, in which she felt like the figure behind the camera was observing the two dancers through the flames. In relation to this, a member of the audience

mentioned the narrative of Neil DeGrasse Tyson and how this narrative, for her, honed in on the symbolism inside the work, which satisfied her and gave her a renewed interpretation about loneliness as he was describing the depth of the universe.

The audience's response to Jimmie's question about touch, which was the last of our three questions to be asked, drew me yet closer to new reflections on this study. One audience member explained that after seeing the lecture-demonstration about APDR, they were wondering what "active" really means. The member used this phrase: "What is the tone of active?" I am still pondering this question, but I am struck by the word "tone." It reminds me of my earlier descriptions about the "nature of touch" or the "nature of seeing." I am wondering whether, through engaging with questions about the "nature of touch" and the "nature of seeing" throughout this process, if Jimmie, Chris, and I were in fact coming closer toward questions about the "nature" or "tone" of being active and what it meant to take action. I think we indeed did become more aware of what active, sensitive engagement with a partner through touch looked and felt like. I reflected on this even further by looking back at my writing on this study, and found that in Chapter II, I first mentioned the "nature of touch" in the following statement:

In my project, one of my main goals was to hone my two dancers' sensitivity toward touch and to allow this newly enhanced awareness to become the fodder for the creative work. I sought to guide the dancers toward experiencing such sensitivity with one another, ultimately using that understanding to create meaning for the audience through our questioning about the nature of the dancers' touch, the implications of the touch, and the value systems embedded within the touch. In order for the dancers to understand these aesthetics and mechanics of touch, I designed my project to isolate touch as a sensory experience that then was conveyed through film.

In conclusion, I am wondering if, to some extent, one of the understandings we came to within the study was the nature of active touch as a sensory experience that then was conveyed through film.

This idea of active touch was reinforced by a second audience member's comment about a specific scene toward the end of *Petrichor*, in which Jimmie is passively laying on Chris's lap, while Chris struggles to place her hands together and wrap them over his head several times. The member said that this particular scene stood out to her because it gave her an immense feeling of loss, and even violence, as if the weight of Jimmie's lifelessness was pulling Chris down. She said the scene conveyed so many emotions, which could be interpreted as loss, anger, or even illness, and expressed that all this felt very powerful to her. I am of the opinion that this scene was likely impactful to this audience member because it was in stark contrast to the idea of active engagement with the other partner, since Jimmie remained passive and lifeless throughout the scene, while Chris was trying repeatedly to move and manipulate her arms. In contrast to this statement, another audience member, later on, commented that even within the active engagement of the wrestling, they did not sense conflict between the two partners so much as intimacy and struggle together, which felt different to them.

Yet another audience member expressed that they were impressed by the "constancy" of the touch throughout the work, describing it as "very close," "very proximate," and "intersecting personal spaces." I agreed with his statement, recalling how one of my main goals in the study was to rigorously explore touch as an expressive modality. To me, the constancy of their touch was a rigorous pursuit and one that we focused on throughout our process.

We then received a comment about the level of trust and comfort between Jimmie and Chris, which made movements that could be interpreted as “awkward” or “taboo” feel beautiful and enjoyable to watch. I appreciated this statement, as I feel Jimmie and Chris, over time, shed their hesitancy and became comfortable with vulnerability, which was another main goal of mine, since I believed it would allow the resulting work to be more compelling. To go along with this, an audience member explained that one striking aspect of the touch, for them, was to see the amount that Jimmie and Chris touched faces or used their heads/faces to touch each other. The member said that the face and head seems to be one of the most vulnerable places on the human body, and to have that level of connection was moving. I recall smiling at this statement, since, in my opinion, one of the most intimate and vulnerable types of touch is face-to-face touch, or exposing the head to another’s body. Earlier in this chapter, I described a moment in *Petrichor* in which Jimmie placed the top of her head on Chris’s chest and released her arms backward. I found this shot to be extremely compelling because of how vulnerable and liberated Jimmie felt to me through this type of touch.

Questions and Comments from the Audience

I received a few questions from audience members during the last part of the talk-back. One question was about my selection of the two dancers in regard to their genders-whether I had taken into consideration prior or during the process the fact that they were a male and a female. As I have already discussed in this paper, I selected my dancers based on other factors, with gender being a secondary and relatively insignificant aspect of my selection process. However, the consideration did come into play as we moved

through our process together. Most prominently, we sought to uncover forms of touch that were intimate and rigorous without necessarily being sexually or romantically driven. I have found, through my review of the audience's feedback, that not a single person described the work as "sexual" or "romantic" and no one used words like "love," "lust," or "infatuation." I have concluded that, in our pursuit to create a work that focused on the intimate capacities of touch without confining it to romance or sexuality, we did indeed succeed, according to the audience response I did receive.

A last question that was asked by an audience member to Jimmie and Chris was about their experiences of the social dancing activities in comparison to the Contact Improvisation activities. The audience member wanted to know if either Jimmie or Chris felt more of a connection stemming from one or the other. Chris explained that he felt more of a connection to Contact Improvisation because of the open-ended nature of the form and freedom to share with a partner. Jimmie, on the other hand, described how she felt the social forms had impacted her ability to work in Contact Improvisation. She explained that the social forms gave her a structured practice with physical listening, which she could then translate to Contact Improvisation as a way to feel more comfortable and vulnerable with Chris. In turn, Chris explained that he felt the opposite - that the open-ended form of Contact Improvisation allowed him to feel more ready to take on the structure of social forms. An audience member then commented that they wondered how Contact Improvisation was performed when there was no set "rhythm." The two dancers described to her how they felt an internal rhythm with each other and, in fact, having this internal rhythm rather than an external rhythm helped them to focus on their partner, rather than the constraints of time. This is why, when we tried

improvisations using externally provided, metered Cha Cha rhythm, the task was quite exhausting for the two of them, but, when they were able to establish the Cha Cha rhythm internally, this evoked an entirely new style of Contact Improvisation for them, which felt both rigorous and satisfying.

Conclusions about “An Evening of Dance”

In conclusion, “An Evening of Dance” was a wonderful part of this process for me as a researcher. Not only did it provide me and my dancers with a goal that oriented the entire process towards an ultimate “performance,” but it gave me the additional ability to share and discuss the questions and considerations I have been researching with a group of people who, for the most part, had no prior connection to my project. They gave me a fresh set of eyes and ears, which, as I had hoped, offered a continuation of the collaborative process towards which Jimmie, Chris, and I had invested so much time and effort. I believe it is important here to also mention that a large majority of my audience during “An Evening of Dance” were non-dancers, or at least people with little or no prior experience in academic dance research, since many of them were my friends from my job at a local country club, and I know for certain that they have little to no academic dance experience. Many others were students of mine from the DANC classes, and they had expressed to me that my event was the first academic dance event they had ever attended. Many of the audience members expressed that this event was the first time they were able to witness and discuss Contact Improvisation or hybridized “modern dance” partnering. For many of them, it was their first time seeing a screendance. Although there were certainly members of the audience with significant dance experience, I approximate that

at least half of the audience members were newcomers to the field of academic dance research. I feel proud that I was able to facilitate such a deep and thought-provoking discussion about my research with such a mixed group of people coming from all walks of life.

Evaluation and Final Thoughts on the Process

At the end of Chapter III: Methodology, I articulated how I evaluated my project through collecting reflective information as well as by outlining six questions that guided me through the evaluation of my study. In this section, I will answer the first five questions in order to evaluate the process as a whole and to conclude my final thoughts on the reflection and evaluation of my study. The last question will be answered in Chapter V.

How did I implement a methodology that was collaborative in nature? In what ways did the collaboration enhance the creative process and in what ways was it challenging?

I implemented a methodology that was collaborative in nature through a focus on using the dancers' input to shape the culminating work by providing them with tasks that would encourage their choreographic creativity through a cross-idiomatic vocabulary of movement. I encouraged playful investigation of hybridity between idioms first by guiding them through idiomatic studies and, second, by facilitating tasks for blending these idioms together. The three of us had a commonality in that our training was primarily in modern dance, so the foundation of our creative process was deriving from a modern dance aesthetic, thus, we used our idiomatic studies to enhance our pre-existing intuitions about modern dance movements and value systems.

I also implemented a methodology that was collaborative in nature by beginning with an acclimating conversation that encouraged the dancers to share information that was personal. This conversation shaped an equitable environment in which we strove to understand each other and use our individual strengths toward the aims of the project. We created an environment where all three of us could feel comfortable with vulnerability, which came in many forms, including through physically demanding tasks such as the APDR activities and our resulting interest in the Active Demander and Active Demander dynamic. Comfort with vulnerability also came about through our continued dialogue, which, over the course of our process, grew to include deeper and more personal conversations about topics surrounding collaborative approaches to choreography, our study of touch and partnering, how to draw meaning from movement, and how to convey this meaning to an audience.

We developed an equitable environment that fostered comfort with vulnerability alongside a process designed to challenge our preconceived notions about partnering idioms and move beyond those traditional boundaries, all for the purpose of coming to a deeper and more sensitive awareness of touch and partnering.

The use of collaboration in my project did indeed enhance the creative process overall and ultimately the creative work. In any collaboration, I find that there are both challenges and rewards, but I have found with this collaboration, the rewards far outweighed the challenges. I was impressed and humbled by the innovative mindset that Jimmie and Chris brought to the entire process and I also found a renewed energy toward my research as I saw that, through a collaborative approach, my role as a facilitating artist helped me to find leadership and a focus on the big picture while entrusting my dancers

to create quality work and perform fully immersed in their personal understanding about the meaning conveyed in the work.

How did I implement a methodology that immersed the dancers and myself to question and reflect on our ideas, thoughts, and opinions about the connection between touch and relationship, especially in terms of how touch can be used as a communicative form of expression? When was this methodology most successful and in what ways could it be revised?

In relation to the first question, I aimed to cultivate immersion in the dancers and myself through the use of a collaborative methodology. I specifically designed the methodology to support our constant process of reflection, self-awareness, and individual leadership in order to create a work that was imbued with personal insights about touch and partnering from my dancers and myself. Collaboration required investment and in turn, investment supported immersion. Touch-based partnering is a modality in dance that also requires investment, and it follows that immersion in the act of partnering enriches it to convey meaning to a viewer that is complex and wholesome. Jimmie, Chris, and I first found immersion through our conversations, which supported us to be active participants both in terms of the movement practice as well as the practice of feedback and sharing thoughts, opinions, and ideas. Immersion later came about through the rigor of the movement practices--both the idiomatic studies in the workshops and the curating of movement material in the rehearsals demanded the dancers to be present and to constantly integrate moments of leadership and initiation with moments of responsiveness and flexibility. If, as Erin Manning states, touch both invents and is invented at the same time, the malleability of Jimmie and Chris's dynamic certainly shaped their understanding of how touch can be used as a communicative form of expression.

This methodology was overwhelmingly successful in my goal to create immersion for the dancers, but I also see points of revision that could yet further enhance the process. For example, one way I could have created immersion for the dancers was to take even more opportunities to not only rehearse pre-existing movement material in the outdoor spaces where we filmed, but to in fact create material in those spaces, which I feel would have aided them to develop material that connected their relationship through touch even more deeply toward their surrounding environment.

Another way we could have explored yet more immersion would be to take more time for reflection – for example, if the dancers had more opportunities to reflect on a day’s activities in writing or through a videotaped discussion. I found the opportunities I gave the dancers to reflect both orally and in writing helped them to come back to the embodied activities with more vigor later. I saw this renewed vigor engaging them in a performative presence that helped us to identify what abstracted narratives, motifs, and themes were coming forward as potentially salient for a viewer.

How did I facilitate the collaborative development of movement material in which touch-based sensations were the primary content? How did we gain a more deeply honed sensitivity toward touch? What did this look like? What could be explored more in another creative process? How and why?

I facilitated the development of movement material in several ways during the rehearsal phase. First, I took note of the improvisations that Jimmie and Chris had articulated as most noteworthy and I asked them to continue refining these structures, not only to define exactly what dynamics were coming forward in each of the improvisational structures selected, but also in order to find options for interweaving improvisational structures together for aesthetic juxtaposition or emotive transformation. Second, I guided them to begin creative choreographed phrase work by asking them to

“begin in a place of vulnerability” or to repeat small movement sequences (affectionately referred to as ‘nuggets’) that were sourced from improvisations with the intent to sequence them in a memorable order. Last, I helped them practice pre-existing movement ‘nuggets’ that had derived from our earlier idiomatic studies in the workshop phase in order to either shape choreographed phrase work or to integrate with an improvisational structure. For example, I had taught Jimmie and Chris how to perform a complex Country Swing movement that is a set of arm manipulations. We reviewed this movement later on in our rehearsal phase and embedded it into one of the phrases they choreographed.

Through my observation, I have found that we gained a more deeply honed sensitivity toward touch not only as a general concept, but mainly in the way that Jimmie and Chris came to contact one another with a quality that was natural and familiar, a quality that at times made me see them not as two separate beings, but as reflections of one another, as two distinct parts that made up one whole entity. This sense of familiarity did not only come through when Jimmie and Chris were moving harmoniously, but, in a unique way, it also came forward when they were moving combatively, or, as one audience member described it, ‘struggling together.’ The struggle I observed in Jimmie and Chris was not one of awkwardness, unfamiliarity, or lack of necessary skill, but rather one of individual drive and motive, mutual effort, and deconstructed dynamism. Jimmie and Chris, through a prolonged practice with this form of converged struggle, were able to exist in that state for significant periods of time at a high level of athleticism.

In another future creative process, I would find several ideas worth exploring further. First, I believe that this type of creative process could be effective for any group

size and I would be interested in creating a large group work with similar methods. I also would find it worthwhile to develop a cross-idiomatic movement vocabulary through the study of partnering idioms other than the three I selected for this project. For example, I wonder what type of work would come about through an initial study of ballet pas de deux, Bachata, or Viennese waltz. I also have found Steven Paxton's APDR concepts to be an extremely rich platform for making work, and I am sure I will continue to explore these more in future processes.

How did I convey “meaningful, complex, and compelling” work through movement to an audience using the medium of film? In what ways did choices surrounding the screendance enhance this goal? In what ways did these choices restrict it?

I see *Petrichor* as meaningful, complex, and compelling first because I know about the process surrounding it – a process of rigorous study about touch-based partnering and a process that developed material and performative quality through collaboration. I also see *Petrichor* as meaningful because of its thematic content— instead of using touch-based partnering to convey a romantic or lustful relationship, we focused on using the intimacy and intricacy of the touch to create a metaphor about man's connection to the universe. This, for me, was a different approach to human relationships and emotions than I had attempted to convey before, which felt new and exciting to me. Last, I see *Petrichor* as complex and compelling because of its subtlety. Jimee, Chris, and I focused so much on developing a sensitivity toward touch and a mature use of touch that we did not find it necessary to “show off” for the camera or make use of advanced partnering “tricks.” The subtlety of the touch between Jimee and Chris makes *Petrichor*, in my opinion, far more relatable than it would have been if we had gotten caught up in the virtuosity of tricks.

The decision to create a screendance as our culminating product certainly steered and ultimately enhanced my goal to convey “meaningful, complex, and compelling” work through touch-based partnering. From the beginning of the process, we knew and were guided by the fact that due to the medium of screendance, we were free to develop structured improvisations and choreographed movement phrase work without sequencing those individual chunks of material into an A-B order, as we would have needed to do for a piece created for live performance. This was an enhancing freedom of our process, as it allowed us to curate and refine without worrying how each segment would fit nonstop into the whole. It also allowed us to mix and match phrase work and improvisations as we came to see intriguing connections between the material we were curating. The screendance also enhanced our thematic content – since when we saw the movement captured through the camera’s lens within the two sites we selected, we came to a greater understanding of that movements’ overarching meaning and it was at this point that we began to storyboard the arc of the work. I do not believe our meaning-making would have occurred remotely the same way if we had not been able to review footage and see first hand how the sites we selected, the angles of the camera, the movement of the camera operator, and the lighting surrounding the dancers impacted the potential meaning of movement we had already created.

These are just some examples of how the screendance enhanced the goals of our creative research. There are also several ways in which the screendance restricted our process. However, before I discuss these restrictions, I also wish to acknowledge an important distinction about ‘restriction’ that I have come to see in reflection of this study: ‘restriction’ is often seen as an obstacle, a negative, something to be avoided, yet, in a

creative process, an artist often intentionally builds restrictions into the choreographic process in order to define the process and clarify it. I see the restrictions of this project to have had this exact result – by being restricted and by intentionally restricting, we were able to more deeply attune ourselves to the work at hand.

One of the largest restrictions we faced was that of time. We felt it was important to film as many times as we could while maintaining the quality of the film sessions. The more we filmed, the more we came to understand what was important in the process and what we needed to do to capture those important aspects through film. Since I had limited prior knowledge about DSLR camera operation, the time we spent in filming was often a mixture of my own trial and error process to uncover my own understandings about the logistics of the camera alongside a trial and error process of artistic choices with the movement segments we were aiming to capture. These artistic choices were twofold. On the part of the dancers, they were constantly needing to work around and with the camera while also focusing on one another and their surrounding environment. They were making performance choices in relation to how they perceived the camera as capturing them. On the part of myself as camera operator and facilitating artist, I was seeing the dancers not only through my own eyes live on-site, but also through the camera's eye. I had to go back and forth between seeing them for myself and seeing them within the camera. I had to make choices in negotiation of both these viewpoints simultaneously. I had to adjust the camera's components to enhance their performance, often live while in recording mode. I had to be honest with myself when, despite the beauty, maturity, or emotional drive of their movements, the camera was simply not capturing them in the way I had hoped. In these moments, the honesty I needed to have

was paired with quick thinking and decision-making in order to move forward with filming.

How can I use this research to further develop and articulate my intentions for meaningful creative process, which, for me, is grounded in the invested engagement of dancers, to guarantee a sense of immersion in my future work?

I will speak to this question even further in the Conclusion, but this research has helped me draw some important conclusions as well as fresh questions that I see as impactful to future works. I have found a renewed clarity about the importance of developing theme and motif from an early stage. Although Jimee, Chris, and I did not identify the ‘meaning’ or ‘narrative’ we wished to convey until later in our process, we had been working from quite a specific movement vocabulary. This vocabulary was developed from my intentional design of the workshops and from its further refinement in the rehearsal phase. This movement vocabulary defined the curated material into physical terms, and it was from that point that we were able to come to see it for its metaphorical potential. In another recent choreographic process of mine, in which I used similar methodologies to facilitate the dancers in creating movement, I found that we identified the movement vocabulary in physical terms quickly, which brought ease to our understanding of it in metaphorical terms later on.

Because both of these processes were collaborative in nature, the material was significantly developed by the dancers involved, and it was through this creative ownership that I saw them become invested in the resulting work. This investment was not only personal to each of the dancers, but was communal – they became invested in one another. Because they were aware of one another, they found a sensitivity in the

movement material, which in both cases, was material full of subtleties that only a truly mature and unselfish dancer could thoroughly embody.

I have one final thought I continue to come back to as I think about this thesis and other works I have created in the past. This is the thought that one of my most essential goals as a facilitating artist is to, on the one hand, gain the respect and trust of my dancers early on, so that they will take risks in the comfort of an equitable environment under my direction, while, on the other hand, I also need to make them feel respected and trusted by me, so that their full potential as contributors will come forward unapologetically. I intentionally sought this for myself, Jimmie, and Chris, and I now know that this type of rapport occurred. A similar rapport seemed to happen in the more recent work I created, and I was impressed by the extent to which this rapport enhanced the dancers' immersive performances.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The last of the six questions I asked myself at the end of Chapter III:

Methodology was as follows:

What did I learn about myself as an artist? About my creative work? About where I am in my development, especially in reflection of the characteristics of my artistry that I articulated at the beginning of this paper?

I set out to “gain a greater understanding of myself as a facilitating artist through the fusion of three areas of inquiry: collaboration, touch-based partnering, and screendance.” Reflecting on this study has drawn me toward more understandings about my research as well as more questions for future creative processes. All of my reflection has been for the purpose of coming to a greater understanding of my artistic process rooted in collaborative methodology, the modality of touch-based partnering, and the medium of screendance. I described, in the Introduction, my identity as an artist based on my philosophies and experiences in dance. I wished to design a study that reflected these philosophies, while pushing myself into new territory through a unique fusion of the three aforementioned artistic research interests. I had hoped that the thesis project would provide me an opportunity to focus on this fusion with the depth and rigor it deserved because of the project’s scope and design.

One of the intentional elements I designed for the project was the collaborative methodology for crafting movement material, which, by its nature, required me to build upon the two dancers’ perceptions and movements in order to mold the work more closely through their subjective experiences. Working collaboratively with Jimmie and

Chris, felt natural and enhancing to the goals of the project. *Petrichor* became compelling to me as a viewer because of the immersion and investment that Jimmie and Chris offered. I saw evidence of their immersion throughout our process together, in their ability and willingness to express to each other and to me exactly who they perceived themselves to be and how they saw themselves progressing. The themes about the timelessness of the universe and the journey from void into nature stemming from our process together reflected their investment in shaping the work.

Once we presented *Petrichor* and the lecture-demonstration about our process, the members of the audience expressed that they saw a clear connection between Jimmie and Chris at a deeply physical level as well as an emotionally symbolic level. This type of connection is difficult to manufacture and by my observation evolved through collaboration that promoted comfort with vulnerability.

From this study, I have a renewed understanding about the impact a collaborative process can have on the resulting work and I now have many tools available to me from my experience in facilitating this study that will support collaboration more effectively in future creative processes. For example, I am understanding the significance of the “workshop” phase for crafting the work by providing us the opportunity to explore salient movement concepts without the pressure of beginning within a ‘rehearsal’ mindset and I know I will be including these types of initial explorations in the future such as for dance classes that I teach and for future creative processes.

I recently drew upon these renewed understandings about collaboration for a new project. My dancers, in this more recent rehearsal process, underwent a similar collaboration with me, in which I facilitated their creation of movement through

prompting and conversation, but, I also developed a sense of structure for the work because I crafted the sound score prior to the beginning of our meetings. I also sought opinions on how the work should evolve while maintaining that foundational sound score as a structure. My encouragement of their feedback undoubtedly gave them a deeper connection to me, to the work, and especially to one another, as they became an integral part in shaping the work and their investment in it was visible within their performances. I see how this investment, even in the rehearsal process, imbued their performances with an awareness of each other, of the audience, of the music, and of themselves. I was thrilled because I felt a sense of ease throughout this newest process, and I know it is because I have a renewed understanding about collaboration directly resulting from my thesis research. I also found that my intentions for this newest work were much clearer both inside my own mind and in my facilitation for the dancers, which allowed us to finish a lengthy work quicker than I expected, providing me time to envision such other elements as the lighting and costume design for the piece. I see these new points of clarity in my artistic process to be directly relating to the editing for screendance - since, in editing for screendance, I was focusing not only on the physicality of the movement and its relation to the sound score, but I was simultaneously manipulating color, angle, lighting, background, shapes, structures, and time. The practice of editing has definitely shown me the importance of having clear ideas about the impact of elements such as lighting, costume, and the stage space, for both screendance and for live performance.

In addition, I am continuing to see touch and touch-based partnering as a modality within dance that holds a myriad of possibilities. I have concluded that in this thesis project, I was able to facilitate types of touch relationships that I had never explored

before--namely through Paxton's APDR activities and the fusion of idioms which came to inform one another through Jimee and Chris's embodied interpretations. I was unexpectedly struck by the audience's comments on the "tone of active" and how this played a role in our process together, drawing me closer to understanding that active engagement with touch is a pursuit in the creative process and can be interpreted by an audience in fine detail. I was struck as well by the concept of "struggling together" rather than "conflict," and how "aggression," "stress," "intimacy," and "loss" seem to have gone hand-in-hand for these viewers as juxtaposing, yet simultaneously existing themes within *Petrichor*. This, again, led me to the understanding that the viewer's mind can see and interpret multiple ideas at the same time, which opens up so many possibilities for me as a choreographer to create complex, layered work, whether for screendance or for live performance.

This brings me to reflect on the medium of screendance, which is, in my mind, both a conveyer of intimacy as well as a sieve that concurrently draws the viewer closer, while remaining sequestered from the viewer. I was fascinated by the audience's interpretation of my role behind the camera and how I was, at times, added as a third figure into the space of the work. I am wondering now how I could have either concealed or furthered this idea in *Petrichor* if I had considered it earlier in the process. I also wonder how I could either conceal or further the idea of an outside, invisible figure in a future process for film. This concept yet again reminds me of the human brain's ability to interpret multiple layers at the same time, and how screendance lends to that potential.

To conclude, I see collaboration coming forward in all the parts of this research: first, the creative process in the studio between Jimee, Chris and I; second, the physical

connection my two dancers had with each other; third, our work with the camera; and fourth, our presentation and discussion with the audience. To come to a greater understanding of myself as an artist has been a collaboration between myself, my dancers, and my viewers. This network of collaborations to understand my artistry will undoubtedly reach beyond this project; it is a collaborative endeavor to find meaning in the self through others, a proposition that both Victor Frankl and Erin Manning articulated towards the way in which humans create meaning and identity. As Manning states:

The proposition is that touch—every act of reaching toward—enables the creation of worlds. This production is relational. I reach out to you in order to invent a relation that will, in turn, invent me. To touch is to engage in the potential of an individuation. (xv)

To simultaneously find and create meaning through others is, perhaps, the most crucial component of my artistry as a choreographer and one that I know I will continue to refine in the future.

APPENDIX A

HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH LETTER



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

DATE: July 26, 2017 **IRB Protocol Number: 07102017.010**

TO: Lila Reid, Principal Investigator
Department of Dance

RE: Protocol entitled, "Seeing Touch: Using a Collaborative Process to Convey Touch-Based Sensations and Experiences in Screendance"

**Notice of Review and Determination-Not Human Subject Research
as per Title 45 CFR Part 46.102 (d-f)**

Research Compliance Services has reviewed the proposed project identified above. Based on the project description and materials provided, the study activities do not meet the definition of research with human subjects according to Title 45 CFR 46.102 (d-f).

You may conduct your activities as described without further IRB review. However, should the nature of your interactions with individuals or the nature of your project aims be modified, you will need to contact Research Compliance Services to determine if further review and approval is required by the University of Oregon Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Should you have any questions regarding this determination, please contact Research Compliance Services at ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu or (541)346-2510.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carolyn J. Craig'.

Carolyn J. Craig, PhD, CIP
Senior Research Compliance Administrator

Research Compliance Services
University of Oregon

CC: Shannon Mockli, Faculty Advisor

COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS ● RESEARCH COMPLIANCE SERVICES

677 E. 12th Ave., Suite 500, 5237 University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97401-5237

T 541-346-2510 F 541-346-5138 <http://rcs.uoregon.edu>

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APPENDIX B

PARTICIPATION CONTRACT

Participant Contract for Lila Reid's Thesis Research Project

Last revised by Lila Reid on 05/31/2017

By signing, I _____, agree to the following terms of participation in Lila Reid's Master of Fine Arts thesis research project. Lila's grounding Statement of Purpose for her project is printed below as a way to summarizing the nature and capacity of my involvement in the project:

The purpose of this study is to gain a greater understanding of myself as an artist through the fusion of three areas of inquiry: collaboration, touch-based partnering, and screendance. I seek to understand how touch-based partnering could be fodder for a collaborative process to curate movement material for the creation of a screendance. I developed the design of the study to merge these inquiries into one project that allow me to investigate my interests as an artist with depth and rigor. In the study, I will facilitate a collaborative methodology for the creation of an original screendance that conveyed themes of touch and relationship in a meaningful way. The two dancers participating in the study and I, as facilitator, will investigate, through collaborative interaction, sensory aspects of dance partnering as elements that shape the creative work. We will engage in orienting movement workshops to hone the dancers' awareness and use of touch properties. In the subsequent rehearsal process, we will employ a methodology for collaborative choreography using a newly heightened sensitivity toward touch and relationship. Movement material will be developed by the dancers and facilitated by me. Ultimately, the dancers and I will film the movement material. I will independently use all the collected footage to create an original screendance for the purpose of curating our artistic process together and exploring how I can convey touch-based experience through this medium. The editing process will aid me in reflecting on how our collaboration impacted the development of a screendance about touch and relationship. We will premiere the screendance at a thesis presentation event. Following the screening, the dancers and I will conduct a lecture-demonstration distilling significant aspects of our process and we will hold a talk-back with the audience based on Liz Lerman's Critical Response methodology to provide me with yet more insight into the aims of the project.

I understand that following the guidelines below is essential in my full participation and commitment to the project:

Time Commitment

1. I understand that my full participation in all events occurring from September 1, 2017 - February 15, 2018 is crucial for the success of the project. I will be available (residing in the Eugene, Oregon area with reliable transportation) for the following dates and time commitments. I understand that all scheduled events will be decided based on mutual availability of all participants.

a. Two three-hour sessions per week lasting for a total of four weeks, from September 1, 2017 to September 25, 2017. These rehearsals will take place in Gerlinger Annex at the University of Oregon.

b. Two two-hour sessions per week lasting for a total of seven weeks, from September 25, 2017 - November 17, 2017. These rehearsals will take place in Gerlinger Annex at the University of Oregon.

c. Flexibility on the following Saturday and Sunday dates: November 11 & 12, November 18 & 19. I understand that these are the anticipated dates for filming and my full availability is required to ensure successful shoots.

d. I will not be making any holiday travel plans for the week of December 4-9, 2017 until Lila has given me approval to do so, based on whether or not we need to have any additional meetings. We will schedule these meetings based on mutual availability during this final examination week of the Fall 2017 term.

e. I will be available to schedule a meeting the week of January 9-12, 2018 for a viewing and feedback session of the final film.

f. I will be available to attend and participate fully in the final, publicized showing on or around January 26, 2018. This film screening will be scheduled well in advance.

g. I will be available for one final meeting to participate in our last discussion session during the week following the public screening (January 29-February 2, 2018). This will be scheduled based on mutual availability.

Participation Expectations and Responsibilities

I understand that Lila is seeking dancers who are excited to engage in a process that focuses on the following elements. I am ready and willing to fully invest myself in this process.

- A study of touch-based partnering.
- A study of relationship as deriving from touch.
- A study of the nature of touch, embedded value systems of touch, and human experiences as drawn from and brought to touch.
- A study that utilizes a collaborative methodology for developing movement material, in which I will be working cooperatively with Lila and other dancers throughout, actively engaging in crafting choreography.
- A process that will require me, as both dancer and collaborative artist, to perform movement material and be filmed for the creation of a screendance.
- A process that will require me to reflect throughout, both verbally and through written journaling.
- A process that will require me to be a mature, poised problem-solver.
- A performance opportunity that will ask me to invest my own personal input and emotive qualities into the development of the material and its expression.
- A performance opportunity that will challenge me to try new things and become comfortable within vulnerability.
- A performance opportunity that seeks a develop a sense of authenticity in the final work for film through capturing me as a thinking, sensing, feeling human being in motion on camera.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

APPENDIX C

WORKSHOP UNIT PLANS

SUMMER SESSIONS

Depending on how we progress through these activities, I have kept Workshops #7 and #8 relatively open and subject to change, since I anticipate certain activities will take a more significant portion of time than others, which means we may need to layer certain activities into the next session.

Week 1 - Familiarizing with Concepts of Touch through Improvisation and Contact Improvisation

(September 1 - 6)

Workshops #1 + #2 (6 hours)

- *1st Videotaped Discussion* (approx. 1 hour)
- *The Flow* (from Anne Bogart's "Viewpoints", an activity with five elements that brings awareness to dancers' use of space and relationships in space to one another)
- *"See and respond" improvisations* (Dancers improvise simultaneously and "try on" each other's movement throughout", creating opportunities for new movement ideas and a heightened awareness of each other)
- *Attraction and Repulsion improvisations* (improvisations based on the concept of attraction, where one person is attracted to the other. Same improvisation based on repulsion).
- *Eyes closed finger following and guided walking* - the dancers take turns guiding each other around the room with eyes closed. Facilitated by me.
- *AEO And Pulse Breath* (dancers sense each other's breathing by harmonizing with one another to sounds of A, E, and O. "Pulse breath" is an improvisation where dancers stand in proximity and move based on simultaneous inhale/exhale, etc.)
- *Bread dough* (passivity activity where one partner lays on the ground and tries to be completely passive as the other manipulates their, moves them, and reorients them in space).
- *Dragging and Pulling* (across the floor, each partner has the opportunity to drag the other one by investigating how to pull different limbs, etc. The partner on the floor tries to remain completely passive, having dead weight).
- *Me!* - An improvisation where dancers support each other's weight to ground and support weight back up to standing. The dancers take turns in each role.

- Body Conversation (dancers stand back to back through a guided exploration of points of pressure - feeling pressure from bones, muscles, the ‘small dance’, etc.)
- *Counter-balance explorations* (guided - arm holds, placements of the feet).
- *Counter-balance while walking* (à la Trisha Brown).
- *Pressure and tension exploration* (facilitated exploration where dancers experience counter-balance or tension with one another, then experience finding points of pressure by sending weight inwards to the center. They then explore moving between pressure and tension).
- *Developing momentum through pressure and tension* (as a precursor to some “swing dance” concepts, this is an extension of the prior activity and becomes an arm manipulation game, which uses momentum to move through pressure and tension in the arms, similar to the look and feel of swing dancing).
- *Skin, muscle, bone improvisations across the floor* (This is an activity I learned first from Walter Kennedy. Dancers improvise individually across the floor with the concepts of skin, muscle, or bone).
- *Discussion and deconstruction of skin, muscle, bone using BEST model* (This an extension of the prior activity, which I developed in Fall 2016 during my independent study with Shannon Mockli). Using the BEST model [see Appendix C], I ask the dancers a series of neutral questions about their interpretations of skin, muscle, and bone. They embody concepts based on the model and provide me with oral feedback. Then, we try having the dancers improvise in and out of contact from the concept of “skin”. They provide me with additional responses).
- *Proximity improvisations* (An improvisation about counterpoint in which dancers move in proximity and make choices to compliment, highlight, be a background for, or become the center of attention in any given moment. This type of activity was conducted by Shannon Mockli during the Fall 2016 Composition III course. I distinctly remember she used the phrase “set up a relationship and find yourself in a position of vulnerability. Then we would watch how the dancers made choices and let the relationship unfold).
- *Improvising in and out of touch* (a continuation of the prior activity, but now, dancers are able to move in and out of contact).
- *Rolling point of contact* (basic principle of Contact Improvisation - “CI”).
- *Sliding point of contact* (basic principle of Contact Improvisation).
- *Orbiting* (A term I use to describe the idea of moving around your partner through rolling and sliding points of contact. Orbiting can be explored as an activity in the center of the room or as an across-the-floor).
- *Changing levels while in contact* (A facilitated exploration that draws the dancers’ attention toward how they can use rolling, sliding, and orbiting to change levels while in contact, though not necessary at the same time. A precursor to learning about lifting in CI).

- *Pressure and release* (An activity that can be done across-the-floor and later explored in the center, which is more complex. Dancers are asked to explore finding a point of pressure, then agreeing upon releasing pressure to break contact. This may be used as a means of initiating momentum or sudden change in dynamic. In later explorations, as dancers gain trust with one another, we may try ‘spontaneous pressure and release’, in which one dancer may choose to release pressure spontaneously, without warning their partnering. This requires a quick self-organization that is characteristic in CI).
- Steve Paxton’s *Active and Passive Demand and Response* (as mentioned in Chapter 2, I am interested in exploring these concepts with the dancers by facilitating their explorations of certain relationships. For example, one of them could be the active demander and one could be the passive responder, etc.)
- Basic principles of *transferring weight and taking weight* (Some of the examples below are ways to learn basic weight sharing and are deriving from CI as well as partner yoga).
 - Stable structures and climbing
 - Flying angel
 - Backward angel
 - Airplane
 - Banana roll
 - Backwards banana roll
- *Resolving a transfer of weight* (I intend to talk them through not only how to initiate and be successful while sharing weight, but also how to resolve weight and take your own weight back).
- *Improvising through a weight transfer* (This is a challenging step for dancers, typically, in which they are asked to improvise in contact and execute weight sharing moments throughout, without stopping to talk, prepare, or practice ahead of time).
- *Partner stretching* (A great ending activity after so much physical exertion, the dancers share physical connection to aid in stretching).

Week 2 - Developing Energetic Use of Momentum, Tension, Pressure, Leverage, and Spiraling through a study of Country Swing Dance

(September 7 -12)

Workshops #3 + #4 (6 hours)

- Review of first week’s unit through an independent, partnered improvisation
- Review of weight sharing principles and examples from last sessions
- Discussing and embodying how to safely drop someone (rolling out of weight transfer. This is something I learned from Brad Garner).

- Switching gears to Country Swing unit
 - Talk about basic characteristics, lead and follow, relationship with music, etc.
 - Talk about use of tension, leverage, and momentum
 - Provide video example
- I will give moments throughout these workshops for the dancers to play with new concepts and we will also work with performing movement to music as we progress
- *Country Swing basics - an exploration of tension and pressure*
 - In and out motion
 - How to move around in a circle
 - The Dance Position versus The Practice Position
 - Lead and follow roles
- *Country Swing basic turns - Finding flow through momentum*
 - Underarm
 - Double underarm
 - Beltline
 - Behind-the-back
 - Behind-the-back version 2
 - Over-the-lead's-head turn
 - Cuddle turns
 - Cuddle stop to spin away
 - Cuddle turns across the body
- *Country Swing "fun moves" - Finding rebound, elasticity, and speed*
 - Slingshots
 - Fannypack
 - "Sun"
 - Hip push
 - Over the head walk
 - Beltline with dive under
 - Up and over the head
 - Throw away turns
- *Country Swing basic dips and intermediate tricks - Where spiraling, leverage, tension, and momentum meet*
 - Promenade turns
 - Promenade turns with mutual orbiting
 - Pretzel
 - Free spins
 - Zouk dip
 - Neck dip
 - Basic dip with leg support
 - Basic dip without leg support
 - Cowboy dip
 - Center dip
 - Cuddle dip

- Arm behind dip
- Extended dance practice with music, facilitating a play with transitions and improvising sequences of steps
- Experiment with changing lead and follow roles (have each dancer learn both roles for various steps)
- As necessary, review basic Country Swing steps, turns, and “tricks” from the outlined syllabus above
- More music practice
- Discuss lead and follow roles for weight sharing, advice for bases and flyers, and building trust in Country swing weight-sharing
- *Advanced Country Swing lifts, dips, tricks, and aerials:*
 - Through-the-legs dip
 - Groundspin
 - Death drop
 - Candlestick
 - Can opener
 - Swing flip
 - From the ground jump-wrap dip
 - Swing flip to shoulder lift
 - Duster
 - Shoulder sit
 - Fallen Angel
- *How to incorporate these advanced actions into social dancing*
 - Signaling
 - Resolving and transitions
- More practice with music to understand how to time weight sharing as it fits the music (i.e. when do you dip the person in order to hit the sweet spot at the end of a song?)

Week 3 - Working with the Pelvis, Refining Rhythmicity, and Exploring Non-Western forms through a study of Cha Cha

(September 13 - 18)

Workshops #5 + #6 (6 hours)

- *Introduction to basic elements of Cha Cha - Becoming acquainted with rhythm and style in Non-Western partner dancing*
 - Counting, rhythms, hip movement, overall style
 - Video examples
 - Practice rhythms with basic cha cha step together
 - Rock steps and cha cha cha steps
 - Walking steps
 - Lock steps

- Arm styling
- *Basic Cha Cha steps and sequences - Rhythm, pelvic movement, and stylization*
 - Cha Cha Basic (forward and backward)
 - Cha Cha Basic (side to side)
 - Cross breaks
 - Advanced cross breaks
 - Pivot
 - Three point turn
 - Pivot three point turn
 - Underarm turn
 - Cha Cha Basic with under arm pivot turns
 - Triple lock step
 - Cross body lead
 - Sequencing multiple underarm pivot turns in a row
 - Hip swivel step with changing direction turn
 - Rope spin (a cha cha basic step with an underarm turn that continues into a second turn, in which the follow turns behind the lead and they rotate on one quarter)
- *Intermediate/Advanced Cha Cha phrase - Incorporating basics along with more rhythmic play, directional changes, and confidence within speed*
 - Learning these advanced skills of Cha Cha phrasework will take a significant amount of the workshop to learn.

Week 4 - Incorporating Contemporary/Modern Dance Aesthetics and Principles into Our Study of Touch and Relationship

(September 19 - 24)

Workshop #7 + #8 (6 hours)

- *Experiencing partnered floorwork* through an extended movement phrase
- Studying and embodying elements of partnering from *Momix's "Fandango"*⁷ with special attention toward how the dancers in the film "invisibilize" effort and transition
- Trying an *affection to aggression activity* (this activity was taught to me by Candace Salyers, a professor at Smith College, who learned from Anna Sokolow when she was a dancer in the company)
- Incorporating *gestural touch in movement phrases* and drawing attention to the curves and lines of specific body parts through touch

FALL TERM WORKSHOP WRAP UP

⁷ *Fandango*. Dir. Lar Lubovich and Barbara Willis Sweete. Perf. Mia Babalis, Sylvaine Lafortune. 1992. *Momix: Fandango*. YouTube, 23 Feb. 2015. Web. 01 June 2017.

Week 5 - The Ways in which Developing Facility for Cross-Idiomatic Partnering Enhances Choreography and Performance

(September 25 - October 2)

Workshop #9 + #10 (6 hours)

- Facilitated activities where the dancers are required to *select memorable moments* from each unit (Improvisation/Contact Improvisation, Country Swing, Cha Cha, and Contemporary/Modern), which may come in the form of touch concepts or conditions, codified steps, or weight sharing ideas tested, in order to *cross-pollinate the ideas in the exploration of sequencing*.
- Facilitated activities in which the dancers will *select one or possibly two memorable moments and deconstruct them* for embedded aesthetic qualities of touch, value systems of touch, and human experiences through touch. With this information, the dancers will *repurpose the selected moment to develop a new aesthetic, value system, or human experience through touch*. (For example, dancers may select a short sequence of Cha Cha steps and then repurpose those steps by using a rolling point of contact to perform them. In this way, the dancers are marrying concepts from Contact Improvisation with codified steps derivative of Cha Cha).
- *Guided learning of a cross-idiomatic phrase of material*, as developed by me.
- Improvised explorations by migrating concepts derivative of one idiom and exploring them for the purpose of another idiom. (For example, I might facilitate the exploration by saying “What would change if you utilized the concept of tension and pressure from Country Swing alongside the rhythms and step patterns of Cha Cha?”)

APPENDIX D

AN EVENING OF DANCE POSTER



An Evening of Dance — An evening of choreographic works and creative research by Lila Reid

Friday, January 19, 2017
8:00 PM
Gerlinger Annex
Studio #354

Featuring:

Jimee Banks and Chris Slayton in "Petrichor" - an original screendance duet.

Guest artist, Lindsey Spratt, in "a fortiori" - collaborative solo project.

Free admission


UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
School of Music and Dance

APPENDIX E

AN EVENING OF DANCE PROGRAM



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UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
DANCE DEPARTMENT
PRESENTS

AN EVENING OF DANCE

RECENT CHOREOGRAPHIC
WORKS AND CREATIVE
RESEARCH BY LILA REID

O
UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON
School of Music
and Dance

FRIDAY, JANUARY 19 2018
8:00 PM
GERLINGER ANNEX #354

AN EVENING OF DANCE

Hello and welcome to An Evening of Dance - a special event showcasing recent choreographic works and creative research by Lila Reid, in collaboration with dancers.

In the first half of this evening, I will be sharing with you my recent thesis research with dancers Jimée Banks and Christopher Slayton. In the second half of the evening, I will be premiering a work-in-progress solo project with my dear friend and colleague, Lindsey Spratt. There will be a reception after the show in the lobby. Please take the opportunity to enjoy refreshments, catch up with friends, and ask me or my dancers any questions about the work presented.

I am pleased to have you all here tonight to share this evening with me. I have spent the last year and a half preparing for tonight and I could not be more excited.

When I came to the University of Oregon for graduate school, I had a budding interest in collaboration as part of my choreographic process. I also had begun exploring the complexity of dance partnering and the significance of touch as a form of embodied expression. I have since pursued these topics within my Master's coursework and come to feel strongly that a choreographic process based in collaboration can enrich the creative product, especially when that product is tackling concepts of touch and relationship.

As I have moved through my past two years as an MFA student and GE, I have also delved more deeply into the realm of dance for new media and dance for the camera. With the support of my Dance and Cinema Studies professors, and especially my thesis chair, Shannon Mockli, I have been able to explore and expand my knowledge of screendance and the medium of film.

My thesis research has come to be a merging of these three artistic inquiries: collaborative methodology for choreographic process, the significance of touch and partnering as embodied expression, and the medium of film for creating works of dance. This is a reflective process for me as I learn more about myself as an artist and dance educator.

Tonight, I will be premiering the culminating screendance of my thesis research, entitled *Petricbor*, featuring Jimée Banks and Christopher Slayton as my two collaborating performers.

After the screening, we will present to you a brief lecture-demonstration about our choreographic process. Finally, we will

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



Jimée Banks is a recent graduate of the University of Oregon (Class of 2017) with a bachelor's degree in Dance and Spanish. While at the University, she participated in multiple dance productions as well as in the University of Oregon Repertory Dance Company during the 2015-2016 season. Jimée also spent a term abroad in Argentina, learning the Spanish language alongside the social dance form of Tango, which has influenced her explorations of partnering in her career as a choreographer and dancer. In the Fall Loft 2016 production, Jimée premiered her first piece, "Juntas", a work about being together but not the same. Later in the spring of 2017, she produced her second work based in chance procedure, titled "White Noise". Jimée now teaches classes for the Oregon Ballroom Dance Club and participates in dance events around the Eugene/Springfield area.



Christopher Slayton is originally from Sacramento, California, but grew up in the coastal town of Brookings, Oregon. He attended Brookings Harbor High School, graduating in 2014. During his early years in Brookings, Chris spent most of his free time participating in sports such as soccer, basketball, and baseball. Shortly before high school, Chris began his study of the martial arts style Taekwondo, where he practiced self-defense under the tutelage of A.J. Geldersma. He continued with these studies until his high school graduation, and achieved his first black belt. Along with this practice, Chris was a part of his school's concert band, pep band, and jazz band, where he played all four years on the trumpet. He later began his studies at the University of Oregon in winter of 2015 and is now a junior who has been a part of several dance productions at the Dougherty Dance Theatre as both a dancer and a member of the production crew. Chris has participated in three works for the Spring Student Dance Concert, one for Faculty Concert, and a few of the department's Loft concert pieces throughout the years. He is currently rehearsing in two different pieces that will be presented in Winter Loft 2018. Chris will graduate with the Class of 2019 as a Dance major.

**University of Oregon
Department of Dance
Faculty and Staff**

Full-Time Faculty:

Steven Chatfield, Christian Cherry, Brad Garner, Rita J. Honka,
Habib Iddrisu, Walter Kennedy, Shannon Mockli

Part-Time Faculty:

Sarah Ebert, Florabelle Moses, Lindsey Salfran

Musicians:

Glenn Bonney, Gustavo Castro, Markus Johnson,
Gus Russell, Samuel Taylor

Technical Director:

James McConkey

Emeritus Faculty:

Jenifer Craig, Bruno Madrid, Susan Zadoff

Graduate Teaching Fellows:

Lila Reid, Darion Smith

PRODUCTION CREW

Faculty Advisor: Shannon Mockli
Music Director: Christian Cherry
Production Crew: Jimée Banks,
Sarah Cook, Abbey McBride,
Wylar Scamman, Chris Slayton,
Darion Smith, Lindsey Spratt

House Manager: Lila Reid

Poster, Program, Social Media: Lila Reid

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website: http://danceorg.wixsite.com/danceoregon

email: danceorg@uoregon.edu

AN EVENING OF DANCE

guide the audience through a talk-back session, in which we will ask the audience questions as well as receive questions from the audience.

After a 10-minute intermission, you will see the premiere of *a fortiori*, a work-in-progress solo performed by guest artist, Lindsey Spratt.

Lindsey and I began working on this project together in October. We have choreographed and rehearsed all the material via Skype, since I live here in Oregon and Lindsey resides in Boston, Massachusetts. Yesterday was the first and only rehearsal Lindsey and I held in person.

I initiated this project with Lindsey because I had some questions arising for me about contemporary womanhood. Lindsey and I attended Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts for our undergraduate. Mount Holyoke is an all-women's college of approximately 2200 students who live on campus all four years. I sought out Lindsey for this project since we not only share bonds through dance and our long friendship, but also through our common experiences as women who spent our young adulthood in the supportive and determined arms of an all-women's environment.

Though Lindsey and I did not seek answers to our questions about womanhood, we compiled this work as a commentary of and as a celebration of female perspective.

A fortiori, in classical Latin, loosely translates to "from a stronger thing". It is a term used in argumentation to assert a proposition with confidence.

I want to give thanks to the University of Oregon Dance Department for supporting this event, and especially to Professors Steven Chatfield, Shannon Mockli, Christian Cherry, and Sarah Ebert. I would like to thank Darion Smith for his unwavering support throughout my time here. I deeply thank Jimée Banks and Chris Slayton for accompanying me on this journey we call the thesis. I couldn't be more proud of them. And last, I thank Lindsey Spratt for flying across the country to visit me, for supporting my research, and for performing to an entirely new audience.

Sincerely,

Lila Alice Reid
MFA Dance '18
GE in Dance

PROGRAM

Petrichor - screening of dance film

Choreographer: Lila Reid in collaboration with dancers
Dancers: Jimee Banks and Christopher Slayton
Videoographer: Lila Reid
Video and Sound Editor: Lila Reid
Soundcore includes: "Relaxing Sounds of Submarines", "Modern Sonar Sounds and other Sounds of the Sea", "Sound Effects Abandoned Building Ambient", "Heart beat + breathing sound effect experiment", "Nebula" by Julianna Barwick, "How Neil DeGrasse Tyson Would Save The World 10 Questions TIME" - speech by Neil DeGrasse Tyson, "Lecture" by Nick Cave from Wind River 2017 soundtrack, "The Woods Have Ears" by Maja Ratkje
Costume Design: Lila Reid in collaboration with dancers
Filming Locations: Gerlinger Annex Studio #353 & Brainard Family Property in Deadwood, Oregon

Lecture-Demonstration

Guided Talk-Back using Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process

~ Intermission ~

a fortiori - solo work-in-progress

Choreographers: Lila Reid and Lindsey Spratt
Dancer: Lindsey Spratt
Sound Editor: Lila Reid
Soundcore includes: "Good Graces" by Zammuto, "relaxing sounds of crickets & katydids on a summer night in the South", "Zed" by Nick Cave from Wind River 2017 soundtrack, "She'll take you places that you never thought you could go" - audio recording by Derrick Jaxn, "Endangered Species" by Dianne Reeves, "Lose Control" by Missy Elliot featuring Ciara & Fat Man Sco
Poem: "The Woman in the Ordinary" by Marge Piercy
Poetry reading performed by: Brianne Waller
Lighting Design: Darion Smith
Costume Design: Lila Reid and Lindsey Spratt

~ Reception in lobby ~

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



Lila Reid is originally from Gray, Maine. Lila attended Waynflete School in Portland, Maine, graduating in 2011, where she was involved with dance, theater, chorus, and jazz band. Lila went on to attend Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts, graduating in 2015 as a double major in Dance and classical Latin. Lila also completed a Teacher Licensure for Dance K-12 in public education. Lila received the 2014 Five College Dance Department Virginia J. Wagner Scholarship for contributions in dance as well as the 2014 Richard A. Johnson Prize for Secondary Teaching as a licensure student. Lila began her Master of Fine Arts in Dance degree at the University of Oregon in 2015. She has been a Graduate Teaching Fellow for the Dance Department for the past two and a half years, teaching undergraduate technique courses in modern, Hip Hop, Contact Improvisation, Ballroom, and more. Lila worked as an Emerging Choreographer with the Sarasota Contemporary Dance Company in Florida last July. She also was on faculty at the 2017 Southern Vermont Dance Festival. In Eugene, Lila also teaches line dance at the Willamalane Adulthood Activity Center for adults 55 and older. Lila is looking forward to completing her MFA degree and is excited to present her MFA thesis research. She additionally is presenting a new work in May 2018 for the Spring Student Dance Concert.



Lindsey Spratt is originally from Cape Elizabeth, Maine. Lindsey attended Waynflete School in Portland, Maine for all four years of high school, graduating in 2011. She was heavily involved in dance, theater, and music, as well as rowing for the school's crew team and working with Amnesty International. Lindsey went on to attend Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts as a double major in Dance and Psychology, graduating in 2015. Lindsey spent one year working for AmeriCorps Vista Volunteer Coordinator for the Emmaus House in Haverhill, MA. Lindsey is currently attending Lesley University in Boston, MA as an Master of Arts candidate for Dance/Movement Therapy. She also works for the Boston Ballet School as a Studio Administrator. Lindsey is looking forward to joining Lila in Oregon for the premiere of their newest work together, "a fortiori".

APPENDIX F

PETRICHOR – LINK TO FILM

https://youtu.be/jVoKzsf9b_c

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