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Introduction

The *Spherical Dances*¹ are dedicated to human *hope* and thus to movements that oscillate between realities and fictions.

According to Ernst Bloch, *hope* [etymologically *hopen*: to hop, jump, fidget restlessly] is a movement that escapes the palace of fateful events. It eludes the *again and again* and explores the *desiderium*, the *daydream*s of people.

The *Spherical Dances* take place along vanishing lines, vectors and forces – notated in four assemblages of texts, images, notations and spatial indices. The decoding processes of the dance score are a-linear and decipher spaces of physical movements dedicated to *hope*.

Sequences, accentuations, selection and focus from the four assemblages are subject to the reading and realization by the dancers and choreographers. The resulting movement modes in the dances depict a space of *hope* – oscillating between subjective movement routines and searching movements.

Spherical Dances do not contain any rules on music, the scene or the actual space. It can be choreographed for an empty space or as part of interactions in theatrical or performative contexts.

> 1 The dance quintet score was created as part of the PEEK research project AR640 and was performed on 8.10.2023 with the dance company Of(f) Verticality, in cooperation with the Chorus Sine Nomine under the direction of Johannes Hiemetsberger with the motet *Spem in alium* by Thomas Tallis and with Hanne Pilgrim with piano pieces by Matthew Shlomovitz. See also: www.cieoffverticality.com (1.11, 2024)

The score maps dance movements The thematic space: hope

The score *Spherical Dances* describes, draws and designs movements in a thematic space of *hope*.

Hope comes from the Middle Low German "*hopen*" or to hop; to jump or fidget restlessly in anticipation. Etymologically speaking, hope is a movement, a physically inspired moment. "*Hopping*" means swinging your own body weight up, being in the air and coming back down to the ground.

In an attempt to demonstrate *hope* as a principle of human coexistence, the philosopher Ernst Bloch outlines a more complex movement, consisting of *moments of expansion*, the most immediate nearness, activation, inwardly aimed, of what may be allied to them outwardly, allied by heart, the unexplored deside-rium, the sober look at daydreams and breaking through from the palace of fateful events.²

The desiderium, the only honest attribute of all men, is unexplored. The Not-Yet-Conscious, Not-Yet-Become, although it fulfils the meaning of all men and the horizon of all being, has not even broken through as a word, let alone as a concept. This blossoming field of questions lies almost speechless in previous philosophy. [...]The huge occurrence of utopia in the world is almost unilluminated explicitly. Of all the strange features of ignorance, this is one of the most conspicuous. [...]This means: an overwhelmingly static thinking did not name or even understand this condition, and it repeatedly closes off as something finished what has become its lot. As contemplative knowledge it is by definition solely knowledge of what

Primarily, everybody lives in the future, because they strive, past things only come later, and as yet genuine present is almost never there at all. Bloch, Ernst: *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Chapter 1–32, Frankfurt am Main 1998, Suhrkamp. Translation: Bloch, Ernst: *The Principle of Hope*, Introduction: www.marxists.org/archive/bloch/hope/introduction.htm (1.11. 2024)

² Further text passages:

It is a question of learning hope. Its work does not renounce, it is in love with success rather than failure. Hope, superior to fear, is neither passive like the latter, nor locked into nothingness. The emotion of hope goes out of itself, makes people broad instead of confining them, cannot know nearly enough of what it is that makes them inwardly aimed, of what may be allied to them outwardly.[...]

Everybody's life is pervaded by daydreams: one part of this is just stale, even enervating escapism, even booty for swindlers, but another part is provocative, is not content just to accept the bad which exists, does not accept renunciation. This other part has hoping at its core, and is teachable. [...]

Let the daydreams grow even fuller, since this means they are enriching themselves around the sober glance; not in the sense of clogging, but of becoming clear. Not in the sense of merely contemplative reason which takes things as they are and as they stand, but of participating reason which takes them as they go, and therefore also as they could go better. [...]

can be contemplated, namely of the past, and it bends an arch of closed form-contents out of Becomeness over the Unbecome. Consequently, even where it is grasped historically, this world is a world of repetition or of the great Time-and-Again; it is a palace of fateful events, as Leibniz called it without breaking out of it. Occurrence becomes history, knowledge re-remembering, celebration the observance of something that has been.

And likewise the Here and Now, what is repeatedly beginning in nearness, is a utopian category, in fact the most central one; even though, in contrast to the annihilating circulation of a Nothing, to the illuminating circulation of an All, it has not yet even entered time and space. Instead, the contents of this most immediate nearness still ferment entirely in the darkness of the lived moment as the real world-knot, world-riddle. Utopian consciousness wants to look far into the distance, but ultimately only in order to penetrate the darkness so near it of the just lived moment, in which everything that is both drives and is hidden from itself. In other words: we need the most powerful telescope, that of polished utopian consciousness, in order to penetrate so.

In choreographic terms, *hope* would then be a very specific type of movement and physicality on the borderlines between body and immediate proximity, the real and the fictional, between ground and air, dark and light, past and future, inside and outside: a-dramatic, i.e. the dance movement did not build up the drama, but sought the expansion of the dark moment, the closest proximity as the point and starting point of a dissolving movement that escapes repetition.

How does one orient oneself in a *movement of hope* initiated in this way? How can this movement, which dissolves the conventional reference to body and space (body is interior space, real space is exterior space), be maneuvered in time and space and what options does this space offer?³

In 2006, the American philosopher Jonathan Lear published a study on the Crow Indian chief *Plenty Coups*, in which he examines the decline and transformation of the Crow Indians. According to Lear, radical hope anticipates "*a good for which all who cherish such hope have so far lacked adequate terms of understanding*." (Lear 2023, 155, own translation). In light of the destruction of the Crow Indians' traditional way of life, he poses the question of how hope can continue to exist in a time of ontological vulnerability.

³ See also: Addendum P⊓ Practicing Spaces

The kindness of the world exceeds our finite capacity to comprehend. The emphasis here is not on some secret source of kindness, but on the limited nature of our finite conceptual resources. This assumption is [...] an appropriate attitude for finite creatures like us. Indeed, it seems strangely inadequate [...] to believe that all the kindness of the world is exhausted and captured by our present understanding of it.⁴ (Lear 2023)

4 Lear, Jonathan: Radikale Hoffnung, Ethik im Angesicht kultureller Zerstörung, Berlin 2023, Suhrkamp, p. 180 (own translation)

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How to use the score

Spherical Dances configure dance movements by means of text, image and dance scores on the theme. They unfold from the processes of deciphering, scanning and incarnating this score. Movement is understood here as a broad spectrum of physical phenomena, impulses and mechanics, i.e. not only the mechanically visible movement of human limbs, but also inner movements such as breathing, changes in tension, perceptions, spatial references, contacts, touches, points in space and time.

In re-actions to their view and their interpretation of the material, dancers invent movements and (temporal) spaces. Their subjective routines are the starting point and means for the invention of possibly unfamiliar modes of movement, unforeseen qualities, variations and fragmentations. Such the matically arranged re-action chains appear analogous to the dramaturgy of hope - a dramaturgy that seeks to shape and change re-action chains from the conditions of reality.

The score for *Spherical Dances* comprises a medially and historiographically inhomogeneous collection of different materials and media on the subject of hope. This heterogeneity of elements is based on old maps such as e.g. the Hereford Mappa Mundi from the early 14th century.⁵ In this map, the geography of the world with the topology of ancient myths, the history of the Bible, the cosmos, religion, demons, winds, cities and buildings, this world and the hereafter were drawn on a surface (in the form of a cattle hide). The inseparability, the blending of reality and fiction, of knowledge and belief, requires a deciphering and looking that stages overview and detail in a variety of ways.

Although the arrangement of the materials in the *Spherical Dances* score is linear, one after the other and in a sequence, it aims at subjective synchronizations of the individual parts. The following image shows an example of such synchronization through repetition, variation and superimposition of elements from the score. Some parts of the picture are black due to the large number of overwrites, others reveal words and outlines, and signs. Overall, the superimpositions give rise to other spatial arrangements such as condensations, blackening, individual strokes, clusters of signs, shimmering through, outlines and reversals than in the chronological arrangement of the individual steps along the "paper".

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⁵ www.themappamundi.co.uk (1.11. 2024)

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Image example for overwritings: Lukas Philippovich ng Rose Breuss and Lucas Cranach ("Judith with the head of Holofernes")

The four assemblages of the score, labeled S P @ M⁶

The score *Spherical Dances* is made up of four assemblages. According to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari⁷, the term assemblage is understood as a structure of unformed, destratified forces emanating from objects, in this case artifacts. Assemblages are not collections of similar things, but mixtures and practices that open up new spaces by making territories decipherable and re-codable. They stimulate human potential for action and function here as a field of experimentation for body repertoires outside (individually) established movement routines.

In the assemblages $S\Sigma$, $P\Pi$, @, MN laid out here, action strategies for movement compositions are unfolded. They configure an open space of hope with an operative set of instruments and are to be used according to desire. Reading and deciphering the texts, the images and dance notations become an important formative (not just preparatory) moment in the imagination and creation of movements, scenarios and spaces of *hope*. In the four assemblages:



- 6 S P @ M: a variation of the Latin word [spem], hope.
- 7 Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari: A Thousand Plateaus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Minneapolis, London 2005, University of Minnesota Press

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8 The Greek letters refer to the movement chorus, see $\Sigma\pi\epsilon\mu.$

are various artifacts, including music and text excerpts, biographical narratives, historical photos, spatial-philosophical thought sketches and spatial configurations. They are to be treated operatively, i.e. they stimulate and inspire action. In *Spherical Dances*, actions are always related to physical movements, including gestures, breaths, tensions, poses, postures, spatial dissolutions, touches, shifts in weight, approaches, transitions and points in time.

S∑ Spherical Dances design the dance movements; *P∏ Practicing Spaces, @ Annotations* and *MN Materials* are intended as an addendum to the score.

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Overview

$S\Sigma$ Spherical Dances/Dance Scores

Spherical Dances – Dance score for dance quintet

- I Gravitational forces in the air *Swing-Imaginaries*
- II Reading Grete Wiesenthal's Etudes *Swingfigures*⁹
- III Idiosyncratic bodies Spherical head
- IV Energizing scripts Whispering, as if one were a shell
- V (Ex)Change in Trio Constellations alone, in pairs, in threes
- **VI** Notated fragments

Spherical Dances – Dance score $\Sigma \Pi EM$ for movement choir

- Σ Scenarios of hope
- Π Leontjew groups
- **E** Choreographic variations
- ${f M}$ Scenarios of dissolution

⁹ Leonhard M. Fiedler and Martin Lang (eds.): Grete Wiesenthal, *Die Schönheit der Sprache des Körpers im Tanz,* Salzburg 1985, Residenz Verlag, p. 147–150.

Addendum

P∏ *Practicing Spaces / Orientation in open space*

- ••• The smooth and the striated space
- ••• Close-up space / animality
- ••• **>** Vectors and numbers
- ••• >> Spatial repertoires

PII Orientation of the body: three cardinal axes
PII2 Touch – connection of surfaces
PII3 Clearing – space in clearing
PII4 Vectors – forces in space
PII5 Displacement space – changes of location
PII6 Turning inside out – The glove of Wittgenstein
PII7 Perception – Perception itself is non-spatial
PII8 Inside and outside
PII9 Experience of groundedness – or no ground under your feet

- P∏10 Network of spatial correspondences rhythms
- P∏11 Life of distance and location distances
- P∏12 Topological network references to the real immediate surroundings
- P∏13 Spatial key rotated axes
- P∏14 Kinesphere Labanotation
- **P∏15** Orientation rising of the sun
- P∏16 Immovability of the point/location standstill
- P∏17 Spheres rich mythological overtone series

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••• > Annotations

MN Materials

••• >> Spem in Alium by Thomas Tallis

- •••> Photos by Sascha Leontjew
 - Grubenunglück (Mining accident)
 - Die Last (the Burden)

• Ein Mensch wird geboren (A human being is born)

S_Spherical Dances

for Dance Quintet

In order to achieve hope, daydreams stand alongside the usual reality. This holds the wishes for reality. With the help of the involved mind, the longed-for, the not-yet-happened speaks into the routines and repetitions. This means making a space (of expansion) out of a moment/a point in time/a suspension. The dancer Grete Wiesenthal formulated a movement principle that shows analogies to the previously formulated movement dramaturgy of hope. Wiesenthal writes:

And we now come, I think, to the essential and most beautiful thing in the art of dance in general – the utilization of tension in the upward and downward swing, [...] to glide into the resolution of the half-knee position without faltering. [...] And to float freely in space by not flattening out and losing the tension, but by realizing it, giving it new impetus.

(Wiesenthal in: Fiedler, Lang, 1985, p. 149, own translation)

The score *Spherical Dances* for dance quintet illuminates and expands this free-floating moment in the momentum, in the submerged momentum. The space created in the expansion is left to the momentum, or at least it is kept from a familiar target point. The notation materials reflect Wiesenthal's swing technique and the concept of the *spherical head* from the few written statements of this dancer and choreographer, which are thus fragmented. The fragments were used to create the choreographic drawings and movement spectra of the score.

Notational Materials:

I Gravitational forces in the air – Swing-Imaginaries

II Reading Grete Wiesenthal's Etudes – Swingfigures¹⁰

- IIa) Follow a Simple *Swing*-figure
- **IIb)** Make a preparing drawing experiment
- IIc) Often fate, the silent poison of the blood, breaks into a productive unfolding
- IId) Is it possible to make a weight-bearing body part swing?
- IIe) A series of sample drawings show different ideas and *swing-imaginaries*.

III Idiosyncratic bodies – Spherical head

- IIIa) Experimenting extensively with the Spherical Head
- **IIIb)** Figure and variations, examples
- **IIIc)** The greatest demand on stability balances
- *IV* Energizing scripts Whispering, as if one were a shell
 - IVa) #1 26 Swing- and balance motives
 - IVb) Angular momentum of rotating balances

V (Ex)Change in Trio Constellations – alone, in pairs, in threes

- Va) Use your swing-ideas/imaginaries and balances in a specific constellation.
- Vb) "Run" a *swing-course* as a floor pattern in a Group constellation.
- VI Notated fragments

¹⁰ Leonhard M. Fiedler und Martin Lang (Eds.): Grete Wiesenthal, *Die Schönheit der Sprache des Körpers im Tanz*, Salzburg 1985, Residenz Verlag, p.147–150.

I Gravitational forces in the air – Swing-Imaginaries

Swing is a movement describing an arc: Upswings and downswings



Space Variables On all sides. Light, increasing to large swings

Seizes/Scales small, middle, large swings Accents, Change of Tension Light and large Utilising the tension in the upswing and downswing

II Reading Grete Wiesenthal's Etudes -Swing-Figures

IIa) Follow a Simple Swing-figure

But the word "simple" understood as a result of choice and evaluation, namely to distil the most essential movement out of the multiplicity of movement possibilities and to appropriate it, that does make certain demands.

(Wiesenthal in: Fiedler, Lang, p.147, own translation)

The following *swing-figure* is constructed through up and downswings of different seizes and impacts. It simulates a fictive linearity - drawn on a plane paper. For experimentation it is imagined in a three or multi-dimensional space, where axes are constantly changed.



Variables

Continuous and Dotted Lines

In Labanotation dotted lines mean that body parts are moved passively through an impact of other body parts. To a certain extent the momentum creates a passive moment – a change to a more released tension – in a swinging movement. Give this moment a specific dedication. Physically it might mean weight into a passive moment, which seems to be contradictory.



IIb) Make a preparing drawing experiment

Take a pen and "swing" the figure on paper. Repeat it many times. After many repetitions close the eyes and draw it blind on paper. You might get a sense for directional accents (more an accent into a direction that a concrete and fully guided space direction) and you might "hum" it in a certain rhythm. Use different speeds.



IIc) Often fate, the silent poison of the blood, breaks into a productive unfolding.¹¹

11 Oft bricht in eine leistende Entfaltung das Schicksal ein, des Blutes stilles Gift: wir aber rühmen die Herzen, deren Haltung die Stunde der Zerstörung übertrifft. Marien-Herz, verkündigtes, du glühst scheinender auf in diesem Zeitenwinde. Du blindgeweintes. Doch um solche Blinde geräth der ganze Raum ins Schaun und grüßt

Das reine Ding, das dauernder erbaute,

die eingewendete Figur... da ordnet das eine Angeschaute sich neu die plötzlich schauende Natur. (ibid., 131)

The movement of the basic figure can vary in all possible directions, levels, sizes and accents. It can be fragmented and (re)-started from different parts of the body. The chronology of 12345678 can be dissolved and/or rewound. The numbers can "jump" from one body part to another body part, can change its axis and can be positioned in a three-or multidimensional imaginary space.



manoevered through a constant directional change in different points of the figure.

IId) Is it possible to make a weight-bearing body part swing?

For example, the foot on which one stands?

IIe) A series of sample drawings show different ideas and swing-imaginaries.

Through turning the sheets in the hand the same directional set up is turning in space. Cut a square in a paper and use it to rotate the figure. Playfully movements with different body parts, work with repetitions and changes. Proceed accumulatively, improvisationally. The continuous and dotted line concept seems a bit puzzling. It creates or simulates an awareness for the passively moved body parts in the swings, especially in the larger scales.

The schematic figures can be used as a guide for the composition process. The sample drawings can be used for markers in the memorizing processes of the improvisations/rehearsals. Through marking body parts, notating directional courses and accents it becomes visible how you align the figure in space and operate with it. Before you fix movements, look to *III*.

III Idiosyncratic bodies – Spherical head

Spherical Head - Feet/Balls - Knees - Middle/Ring and Little Finger - Ribs

In experimenting/improvising/incorporating/practising *swings* try to emphasize a *spherical head*, which is to be "as if banished in a gloriole" and to "feel its way into the space in such a free-floating spherical way." (ibid. p.147, 148, own translation)

Sense a *spherical head* and make the sensation the initiator of movements. Follow a *spherical verve* and use its kinetic energy of linearly moving or rotating body parts. The reactions can follow in any other body parts than the defined 5 body parts. Idiosyncratic patterns are wished. About the back leaning upper body is said that Grete Wiesenthal had a stiff back and she used it for back swings. The individual bodies strength and weaknesses can be used for patterning idiosyncratic *swings*.

IIIa) Experimenting extensively with the Spherical Head

Follow the *spherical head* sensation with the whole body, with whatever movements it wants to produce. Use fingers/knees/(ball of) feet/rips as re-active body parts where possible. Create body states.

Specifics of body parts:

Head

The starting point for the development of the motoric repertoire is experimentation with the spherical head. Wiesenthal used the expression to perform the swinging, floating element in dance, "whereby the utmost possibility of stability had to be explored and experienced" (ibid. 147, own translation). The posture of the head is to be a gloriole in a free-floating spherical way.



Knee

The knees play an essential role in the transitions and modulations of tension in the upward and downward movement. Grete Wiesenthal describes a series of exercises in which she defines "knee positions":

- № 1 Rotation in low knee position with closed knees straight posture
- № 1 Rotation in low knee position with closed knees moving posture

(ibid. p. 148, own translation)

Follow Wiesenthal's further explanations:

I will now pass over a number of important exercises in the knee positions, in the stretched posture in the lunge, etc., and turn immediately to the more complicated swinging exercises in the knee, which belong only to the sequence of my exercises.

Swinging up and down in half knee position

This swinging exercise is also a tension exercise, because the beauty of the movements lies in the correct expression of tension, namely: to glide from the tension required by the whirling upward swing into the resolution of the half-knee position without stagnation.

(ibid. p. 149, own translation)

Fingers (accentuated)

Ring and middle finger, little finger

Change constellation of fingers in leading the arm or reacting with the arm.

Feet/balls

The swing sets the foot in motion, it is barely on the whole sole.

Ribs

The bow of the *swing*-drawing is found in middle aged Jesus on the cross representations. The bows make the rip arches visible; at the same time, they are the place of breathing.

Complex coordination







light, lively jumps



rising up/down movement

-----24------





figure as sphere, touching



rotating axes in the swings





-----26------

IIIc) The greatest demand on stability - balances

In this way, a sequence of movements was created that places the greatest demand on balance, namely that of achieving the stability that is still possible in this position with the greatest extension and swinging out of the body in all directions, in the horizontal, in difficult cross positions.

(ibid. p. 149, own translation)

Create demanding/demanding balances, which you used in *swing*-experiments. Fix them and use it for the following exercises in *IV*.

IV Energizing scripts – Whispering as if one were a shell

[T]he whispering in the ears, one listens to oneself as if one were a shell, [...], by God it is not easy to uncover the human face within oneself.

(ibid. p. 167)

IVa) 26 # Swing and balance motives

Use the following Wiesenthal Exercise/Exercise Repertoires as a foil for further experimentation/ improvisation. Create 26 short cuts synthesizing your experiments: motifs, simple and complex movements, in standing, kneeling, in turns, in jumps, in walking and running.¹²

#1 Balance Exercise №1

2 Balance Exercise № 3

- # 3 Turning in deep knee position № 2 with closed legs
- # 4 Turn in low knee position N $_{2}$ 3 with body bent back
- # 5 Turn in low knee position $N^{}_{2}$ 4 with body bent back and arms raised
- # 6 Exercise Nº 3 and Nº 2 combined

¹² view also: VI Movement Fragments

Swinging turn in waltz rhythm – swings of lighter category

SPHERICAL DANC

7 № 1 with skirt unfolded
8 № 2 in horizontal position
9 № 3 without skirt
10 № 4 with skirt thrown

Chinellenetudes with light jump – first category

11 № 1 jumped to the front
12 № 2 jumped to the side
13 № 3 jumped to the side in a cross position
14 № 4 jumped to the side in a circle

The big swings

15 № 1 Amazon swing # 16 № 2 Cross swing with closed knee # 17 № 3 Crossed swing # 18 № 4 Crossed swing # 19 № 5 Swing with arms/straight out # 20 № 6 Swing with the chinellae # 21 № 7 Swing with the bird's wing # 22 № 8 The big swing # 23 Exercise sequence № 2 Arm exercise with swinging the whole body and swinging the feet back to the floor

Turns at the knee

- # 24 Nº 1 Turn in low knee position with closed knees straight posture
- # 25 $\mathrm{Ne}\,1\,\mathrm{Rotation}$ in low knee position with closed knees moving posture
- # 26 Swinging up and down in half knee position

(ibid. 148, 149, own translation)

Follow Grete Wiesenthal's suggestion:

The whole complex of exercises to achieve this ultimate stability consists of a sequence of balancing and swinging exercises, in particular based on bouncing and swinging in the low knee positions. (ibid.148, 149, own translation)

IVb) Angular momentum of rotating balances

Use the repertories of the balances you fixed (body positions exposed to balances) to "move" them into the space, to "jump" and "rotate" the body and integrate them into your *swing*-courses.

torques





V (Ex) Change in Group Constellations – alone, in pairs, in threes

Our Dances: And whether we want to dance in twos or threes or in larger groups, we either feel it from the music or it is determined by the idea of the dance.

(Grete Wiesenthal in: Merker Heft 2, 1910 OTH/ZM, own translation)

Va) Use your swing-ideas/imaginaries and balances in a specific constellation.



Vb) "Run" a swing-course as a floor pattern in a Group constellation.

irregular symmetries, changing tensions



VI Notated fragments of realized movements

by Kai Chun Chuang, Damián Cortés Alberti, Marcela López Morales, Maria Shurkhal, notated by Rose Breuss in Labanotation.



The following notations show the dancers' movement inventions for the exercises:

As the movements described by Wiesenthal only reproduce certain actions of the body, the notations also remain fragmented, i.e. movement motifs of individual body parts are recorded here, which can be supplemented in different ways. Nevertheless, due to their stability, even in different body constellations, they contribute considerably to an identifiable gesture language.



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------54------











#1 Exercise 1 Balance



#2 Exercise 3 Balance



#14 Nº 4 jumped to the side in a half circle by the lower legs





#15 Amazon Swing



#20 Swings with arms straight out



#22 № 8 Big Swings and turns



#22 № 8 Big Swings

••••••

-----4





#4 Nº 1 Turn in low knee position with body bent back



#21 № 8 Swing with the birds wing

#24 № 1 Turn in low knee position with closed knees – moving posture



#24 № 1 Turn in low knee position with closed knees – straight posture



#15 Amazon Swing



Detail from: "Last", Sascha Lentjew

-----42------





for Movement Choir

Scenarios of hope

The movement choir configures scenarios of hope. The idea is simple: movement images from the current *palace of fateful events* are excerpted. The world (including the media) is full of them. The movement groups by Sascha Leontjew¹³ serve as a model, e.g. *Grubenunglück* and *Last*. The dramaturgy of the movement group concentrates on the (resolution) of "disastrous" situations, which are tied to phantasmatic scenes. The photographs by Sascha Leontjew¹⁴ can be used or supplemented by scenarios of daily political events. Or – depending on the possibilities and interests of the members of the movement group – a repertoire of "doom" images can also be created from the imagination of the actors in group improvisations. The final scene, which represents a doom, is then formed in the collective improvisation. What is exciting in this case is when the flow of movement is stopped, when the image is "there".

One variant of the development involves creating repeatable, reversible sequences from the improvisational flow. By keeping the group improvisations short, the improvisational process can be retraced and memorized. It is advisable to develop a chain of repeatable group images. These can then become the subject of improvisations, so that a common repertoire is formed over a series of rehearsals. Four to five different movement images are needed for the movement choir of *Spherical Dances*.

¹³ Sascha Leontjew, born in Rīga in 1897 and murdered in Mauthausen in 1942 by the National Socialists.

¹⁴ Vienna Museum, online collection, sammlung.wienmuseum.at/objekt/480254-grubenunglueck-der-schule-sascha-leontjew (1.11. 2024)

In this phase of development, the focus is on memorizing and creating the images through the movement choir – not yet on the exact creation, nor on the resolution and further development of the movement images. Entries and exits to the respective group images can vary. The images are formed in a smooth, i.e. non-prefigured space from the actors' movement memories. (see the addendum to the score $P\Pi$ Practicing Spaces)

∏ Leontjew-Groups

- Grubenunglück (Mining accident)
- Die Last (the Burden)
- Ein Mensch wird geboren (A human being is born)

Another way of working out the Leontjew groups is that the actors involved do not know the overall picture, but only their own path and the body position to be reached in an initially unclear overall situation. They also know the physical-spatial relationships to their fellow actors in the immediate vicinity of the position they want to reach.

Mining accident by Sascha Leontjew¹⁵:

15 "Grubenunglück" der Schule Sascha Leontjew, Wien Museum, Online Sammlung , sammlung.wienmuseum.at/objekt/480253-grubenunglueck-der-schule-sascha-leontjew (141. 2024) SPHERICAL DANCES

1 Standing and with sunken chest, head and arms hanging. Hands slightly tense and fingers digging into the thighs.

1

- **2** Lying sideways with legs bent, arms stretched out above the head, face to the floor, right hand touching the left foot of the standing person.
- **3** Lunge with the right leg: chest bent back, mouth open and left hand fist-like in the mouth,

as if in a suppressed cry. Right hand pulls diagonally upwards, fingers spread as if to grasp something. The head is turned slightly to the left, forward into the picture.

- **4** Behind them is a person bent low on their knees, clutching the chest of the "screamer". She twists her upper body and wants to rescue the person, leaning towards her.
- **5** A person sitting half on her knees with a pained expression on her face is holding on to her right shoulder with her left arm. The weight is more on the left knee, the right is raised and bent.
- **6** Behind them a group clinging to each other. Standing. They form a head line with different inclinations and orientations.

----<u>4</u>7.....

E Choreographic Variation

The repertoire of the individual pictures is always made up of certain positions and movements throughout the development of the pictures, such as the hanging position in the group picture Last. It is a repertoire that can be remembered and will vary in scope depending on the group. An image then becomes a script for action modes. For example, in *die Last*:



"Die Last", Schule Sasscha Leontjew, Wien Museum, Online Sammlung¹⁶ 16 sammlung.wienmuseum.at/en/object/480255 (1.11. 2024) In the position of a slight knee bend and with her arms stretched above her head and linked, the performer seeks the back of the neck of a fellow performer. This person stands behind the performer, who embraces their neck. The position of the person to be embraced can be varied in different positions and physical-spatial contexts, e.g. lying down or sitting, so that the hanging position must adapt to the changed body position. The actor in the hanging position could then be realized on the person lying down; the neck to be embraced would lie beneath her and the whole situation would be completely changed.

DAT



"Ein Mensch wird geboren", Schule Sasscha Leontjew, Wien Museum, Online Sammlung" 17 sammlung.wienmuseum.at/en/object/480256 (1.11. 2024)

M Scenarios of dissolution

Once the movement layers of the dance quintet and movement choir have been developed, the *Spherical Dances* are staged.

The material that has been developed in each case should be remembered as a stable repertoire so that it can be experimented with. The dancers of the dance quintet become part of the movement choirs. They are outwardly the same but vary in the sequences in relation to their specific repertoires. The themes and staging techniques formulated so far are familiar to all the performers and are used in the composition processes.

The scenes are constructed in three parts: they consist of the creation of dramatic situations, the tense pause/the unclear moment of reaching a situation and the surprising resolution. The latter is initiated by the dancers. They construct continuations and develop a further space through their creation of *Spherical Dances*-Tanzquintett. The movement chorus creates space or pauses, stands in the way, contracts, follows the dancers, imitates them, disappears and brings the audience into the scene.

P I_Practising Spaces/Addendum

Movement routines and repertoires take place in spaces. Every dance practice uses distinct spatial indexes with a repertoire of definitions and orientation strategies to define the space and time of (dance) movements. Indexes and spatial repertoires are used to provide orientation in the execution of movement and serve as an active design element in the composition of movement in space – both as a spatial reference system for those moving and for orientation in the joint movement in a pas de deux or in group constellations.

Dancers are trained to execute directions in complex sequences and memorize them. If the exploration of movement changes, as in the dynamic, "process-protected" *space of hope* configured here, other, a-canonical spatial repertoires become necessary. In *Spherical Dances*, spatial repertoires of canonical dance techniques are extended by more everyday spatial repertoires. What spatial orientation does the moving body have in the immediate and unpredictable *space of hope*? Does the orientation take place between known metrizations and unconscious modes into the open? What is an open space? In which space does the *sober daydream* of hope take place? We walk on the street and at the same time play with thoughts and images that for moments have nothing to do with our immediate surroundings. We are familiar with the play of movement at the spatial-temporal boundaries. A few selected spotlights on spatial models show us familiar repertoires that are available for selection in the rehearsal processes of *Spherical Dances*. The title *Practising Spaces* refers to the mode of doing, of "doing spaces".

Practising Space 1

The Smooth and Striated Space by Deleuze/Guattari

In *A Thousand Plateaus, Capitalism* and *Schizophrenia*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari describe two different spatial concepts in the chapter *The Smooth and the Striated*.¹⁸ A rough overview table outlines the characteristics of the two spatial concepts:

¹⁸ Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix: A Thousand Plateaus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Minneapolis, London 2005, University of Minnesota Press.

Smooth space	
(experiential/somatic movemen	t)

Striated space (coded movement)

	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
is open, irregular	is subject to an order
desert, sea	is dimonsional matric
is unectional	is dimensional, metric
and trajectories	
for example: the nomad performs localised	
operations with changes of direction	
unlimited in all directions, nomadic	sedentary, instituted by the State apparatus
is an affect space	is a space of possessions
materials refer to forces	shapes / forms organise a matter
intensive space	extensive space
corresponds more to felt – entanglement of	•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••
fibres comes about through pressing	is a fabric, according to Plato the paradigm
and patchwork	for "the kingly science" – weaving of threads
has themes, symmetries, resonances	horizontal – vertical
occupied by intensities, winds and sounds,	covered by the sky as a scale and the resul-
tactile and sonic forces, and qualities	ting measurable visual qualities
spreads a continuous variation	events are plannable and predictable
haptic	visual
acoustic, presentic space – presentic	
no history of smooth space – is a pure pre-	ballmark of history and contingency
sence without memory	number of mistory and contingency
local perception	total perspective, able to perceive many
	other places from one point of view

(Deleuze/Guattari 2005, 496-522)

The concept of smooth and striated spaces clarifies and emphasizes transitions and passages between the two contrasting types of space. The two models do not form a simple opposition. They are not conceivable as the local or the global. A smooth space can be incessantly striated under the action of forces. But new smooth spaces can also emerge in the midst of indentations/stripes. Slow or fast movements in the striated space are sufficient to create a smooth space again.

The theoretical approach of Deleuze/Guattari is interesting in relation to a space of hope. The *Great Again and Again* structures the *striated* space. In the suspension of routines, the *space of hope* is smooth, not prefigured. It becomes a presence beyond the routines of movement, rather on the basis of routines of movement and exists in the movement just created as the result of a re-action.

In a *space of hope* conceived in this way, points of reference are not subject to a visual model generated from the long shot. The movements of the actors in the space arise in the "always beginning, in the most immediate proximity."¹⁹ As a result, the action and stage space become a haptic, local, and acoustic space of connections:

The first aspect of the haptic, smooth space of close vision is that its orientations, landmarks, and linkages are in continuous variation; it operates step by step. Examples are the desert, steppe, ice, and sea, local spaces of pure connection. Contrary to what is sometimes said, one never sees from a distance in a space of this kind, nor does one see it from a distance; one is never "in front of," any more than one is "in" (one is "on" ...). Orientations are not constant but change according to temporary vegetation, occupations, and precipitation. There is no visual model for points of reference that would make them interchangeable and unite them in an inertial class assignable to an immobile outside observer. On the contrary, they are tied to any number of observers. [...]

(Deleuze/Guattari 2005, 494)

Striated space, on the contrary, is defined by the requirements of long-distance vision: constancy of orientation, in variance of distance through an interchange of inertial points of reference, interlinkage by immersion in an ambient milieu, constitution of a central perspective. It is less easy to evaluate the creative potentialities of striated space, and how it can simultaneously emerge from the smooth and give everything a whole new impetus.

(ibid. 494)

¹⁹ See introduction to Spherical Dances

Practising Space 2

TERICAL DANCES

Close-up, haptic space

In Spherical Dances, only the (physical) movements of the actors create the space. Physical routines with their concrete movement gestures take place in the striated, historical and structured space. One could also say that the striated space consists of a multitude of individual movements, of memorable body gestures. Although the movement in the haptic, close-up and smooth space appears as open movement, it also takes place on the basis of the metrics and scaling of movement routines. It occurs on the basis of a specifically available repertoire. The space of a movement is therefore charged with time (of the remembered); the not-yet-happened opens up a space in a searching movement.

As the movements of the dancers do not take place in a homogeneous and rigid reference system, local operations become components of the choreographies and scenic dissolutions. As in the spatial representation of events in nomadic art, a close-up space revolves:

[T]he twisted animals have no land beneath them; the ground constantly changes direction, as in aerial acrobatics; the paws point in the opposite direction from the head, the hind part of the body is turned upside down; [...] the whole and the parts give the eye that beholds them a function that is haptic rather than optical. This is an animality that can be seen only by touching it with one's mind, but without the mind becoming a finger, not even by way of the eye.

(Deleuze/Guattari 2005, 494)

Practising Space 3

Vectors and numbers

In the *hope space*, metrics, scaling and sizes are subject to change. Points, lines and surfaces are located in the inner and outer space of the moving body. The interior space encompasses not only the anatomical, organic (interior) space, but also the space of proprioception. It enables the body to determine its positions and locations (including those of parts), but also includes the perceived external space. To put it simply: the co-dancer perceived in the course of movement, for example, becomes part of the scaling of the space. The movement combines the perception of one's own body with the perception of the co-dancer. This dancer can be mobile in space, so that the fixed point or reference point of the movement in space changes. I move in relation to a (moving) point whose movement I cannot foresee, but to which I react in my movement.

In geometrically conceived space, directions of movement are concrete, as if they were pre-drawn; like in a city map. You can move along pre-drawn and real lines. But if the space is formed by local, mobile, temporary events, concrete directions become vectors, vanishing lines, forces. They do not run in a prescriptive metric determination (from fixed point to fixed point). The (reference) points are subordinate to the lines and trajectories. One moves and stops at points, depending on the reaction to the moving situation - like the nomad who adapts his direction of movement to nature or danger, for example.

Distance takes the place of normative size.

Distances are not, strictly speaking, indivisible: they can be divided precisely in cases where the situation of one determination makes it part of another. But unlike magnitudes, they cannot divide without changing in nature each time. An intensity, for example, is not composed of addable and displace-able magnitudes: a temperature is not the sum of two smaller temperatures, a speed is not the sum of two smaller speeds. Since each intensity is itself a difference, it divides according to an order in which each term of the division differs in nature from the others. Distance is therefore a set of ordered differences, in other words, differences that are enveloped in one another in such a way that it is possible to judge which is larger or smaller, but not their exact magnitudes. For example, one can divide movement into the gallop, trot, and

walk, but in such a way that what is divided changes in nature at each moment of the division, without any one of these moments entering into the composition of any other. Therefore these multiplicities of "distance" are inseparable from a process of continuous variation, whereas multiplicities of "magnitude" distribute constants and variables.

(Deleuze/Guattari 2005, 483)

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Quantities are recorded in numbers. Numbers therefore do not have the function of measuring out an ideal space using a system of points. In smooth space, the number is a counting number (not a counted number). It distributes itself in space. A simple example: The space is the closest proximity. It has no point of view that lies outside, so it is not subject to a model scaled from the total. I move near a hand, between bodies, along a wall, i.e. in relation to fellow dancers and the concrete objects of the space of movement.

The abstract line is the affect of smooth spaces, not a feeling of anxiety that calls forth striation. (Deleuze/Guattari 2005, 497).

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Practising Space 4

Spatial repertoires

This excerpt summarizes some spatial ordering systems that are familiar to us from our everyday and dance routines. We use them in the imagination, initiation and execution of movement and mix them as required. Movement is both body- and space-related and always relative to a reference system. For example, if I am on a ship, I cannot move and yet I continue to move. If my hand, which I am not moving, rests on another hand and this hand moves, then I am moved, moved in such a way that I may adapt my body weight if I want to maintain contact with the other, moving hand.

Dance notation systems configure body and movement spaces. In the following, excerpts from spatial harmony/Choreutics have been taken into account. This forms the basis of Labanotation, which is used in this dance score. The conception of this dance script by Rudolf von Laban makes it possible to define each body position precisely in terms of space and time. However, Labanotation also formulates a series of movement principles that can be applied here in the operative processes. These in turn also refer to some general space-forming aspects familiar to us in everyday life20. The indexes listed below are intended to illustrate that human movement consists of a multitude of different transitions between body and spatial perception, which can be used in the creation processes.

$P \prod 1$ Alignment of the body: three cardinal axes

Three cardinal axes underpin our physicality/corporeality. As bodily axes, they divide the space surrounding us phenomenally into up and down, right and left, front and back. This is how the space that envelops us is "aligned". And this "alignment" in relation to the body can be transferred to the surface as an elementary grid of order.²¹



²⁰ See also Dünne, Jörg and Günzel, Stephan: *Raumtheorie, Grundlagentexte aus Philosophie und Kulturwissenschaften*, Frankfurt am Main 1996, Suhrkamp

²¹ The cardinal axes were previously intended to prove the absoluteness and existence of empty space. See also: Krämer, Sybille: *Figuration, Anschauung, Erkenntnis, Grundlagen einer Diagrammatologie,* Frankfurt am Main 2016, Suhrkamp

$P\Pi 2$ Touch – connecting surfaces

The experience of touch includes the experience of separation.²²

P∏3 Räumung – Raum im Aufräumen

(The literal translation is clearance - space in the tidying up. The word game Raum – Aufräumen only works in the German version.)

P∏4 Vectors

directed forces in space, in a body, in a group

P∏5 Path space

changes in a person's location over the course of an existing time period



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P∏6 Turning inside out – Wittgenstein's glove:

By turning it inside out, a glove of the right hand can become congruent with that of the left hand. (Mirror phenomena between right and left side)

²² The psychoanalyst and cultural theorist Luce Irigaray points out the repression of the feminine in common concepts of space. A decisive aspect of the spatial is the experience of touch and separation. "[T]he experience of being contained and of touch refers to the prenatal situation, the mother-child relationship and the sexual act." (Dünne, Günzel 1996, 204.) Irigaray, Luce: "Der Ort, der Zwischenraum", in: Jörg Dünne and Stefan Günzel: Raumtheorie, Grundlagentexte aus Philosophie und Kulturwissenschaften, Frankfurt am Main 1996, Suhrkamp, p. 244–261.

²³ The sign, the slur, means "to touch".

P∏7 Perception

Perception itself is non-spatial, but it is assigned a place in space.

$P \Pi 8$ Inside and outside

only exist as separate spaces in Euclidean space. For our perceptual experience, however, they form a primary unit.

Т

$P\Pi 9$ Experience of groundedness – or no ground under your feet,

e.g. air jumps or body weight on other bodies.²⁴

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••••••

$P\Pi 11$ Distances – Experience of being located

- **X** near/bent
- N far/stretched²⁵

P∏12 Topological networks

references to the real, immediate environment are established via synaesthesia (hearing, touching, feeling, moving)

P Π 13 Space key from Labanotation²⁶

The body aligns itself in several directions when interacting with other bodies. Someone is in front of me and I walk towards them; someone calls out behind me, I turn around while walking and wave to this person while continuing to walk forwards. The body thus twists in multiple directions on its own axis and acts in several directions simultaneously.



²⁵ **X** and **N** are signs from the Labanotation for bent, stretched; small and large distances.

²⁶ Seven keys clarify the spatial reference system of the movement directions of body parts. The distinction between bodyrelated and space-related axes plays a role here. When the torso is twisted, for example, the shoulder and hip lines each point in a different direction, so that the directions of the arms and legs must be determined in a rotated axis. The most famous example of rotated axes is Vaslav Nijinsky's choreography *L'Apres Midi d'un Faune*. The dancers walk forwards and backwards in profile towards the audience, but the torso and hand gestures are turned forwards towards the audience. See also: Hutchinson, Ann. *Labanotation: The System of Analyzing and Recording Movement*. New York 1991, Routledge.

*P***∏**14 *Kinesphere* – *Icosahedron*:

The icosahedron is the Platonic solid that is used as a directional system in Labanotation to determine the exact positioning of the body. It is closest to the sphere. There are 27 spatial directions. Front-back, side/right-side/left, diagonal (front/right/diagonal-forward/left/diagonal-back/right/diagonal-back/left/diagonal = 8 directions. These can lie on three spatial planes, which are referred to as high/middle/low = 24 directions. In addition, there is the non-direction at the place: at the place/highat the place/middle-at the place/low = 27 directions. The following written experiment is suitable for a schematic understanding of the body directions:



Rudolf von Laban: Dimensionale, Schräge²⁷

P∏15 Orientation

also the alignment with the rising of the sun. Orient here means the cardinal point east.

²⁷ Laban, Rudolf: Choreographie, Jena 1926, Diederichs, 14.

$P\Pi 16$ Immovability of the point/place – standstill

I am the fixed place around which everything revolves. As with astral reference points, which are perceived as fixed, the immovability of the point (place) causes the sky to revolve around a fixed place.

P∏17 Spheres

According to Peter Sloterdeijk, the Sphaira was the image of cosmic totality. Every point, no matter how distant, is integrated into the center; nothing stands apart.

Because the centered whole brings everything inside by relating every remote point around it to itself as the center, the sphere never forms just a motionless block; it is pulsating with the relational life of the center and the abundant correspondences between the epicentric points. (Sloterdeijk 1998, p. 119, own translation)²⁸

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••• >> Spem in Alium by Thomas Tallis

••• Photos by Sascha Leontjew

"Grubenunglück" der Schule Sascha Leontjew, Wien Museum, Online Sammlung sammlung.wienmuseum.at/objekt/480253-grubenunglueck-der-schule-sascha-leontjew (1.11. 2024)

"Die Last", Schule Sascha Leontjew, Wien Museum, Online Sammlung

sammlung.wienmuseum.at/objekt/480255-die-last-schule-sascha-leontjew (1.11. 2024)

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••• >> Sascha Leontjew, biography

Alexander Leontjew was born in Rīga in 1897. He was a dancer, choreographer and ballet master at the Vienna State Opera from 1928-1930 and became famous above all for his interpretation of Joseph in *The Legend of Joseph*. Lilian Karina writes in *Tanz unterm Hakenkreuz*²⁹ that he saw the meaning of the art of dance "in the fact that it gave him supernatural powers and enabled him to make contact with the inner lives of other people and distant events" (Karina, Kant 1996, 72). Leontjew was murdered in Mauthausen in 1942.

²⁹ Lilian Karina/Marion Kant: Tanz unterm Hakenkreuz, eine Dokumentation, Berlin 1996, Henschel.



SPHERICAL DANCES

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