

### **Abstract for *No Mute Bodies*.**

This article addresses the relationship between ‘the word and the move’ where the body is presented as the site of discourse, never mute and continually speaking of its meaning and of its presence. The spoken word is proposed as inextricably linked to and part of the movement of the body and co-extensive with it and the distinctions between verbalised use of word and the body speaking its own meaning examined. The article uses a posthuman approach throughout, concerned with immanence, becoming and mutuality of mind/body.

Three examples of practice are used to support and problematise proposals made. Yael Flexer’s *The Living Room* helps examine the use of word in-between performance and the everyday, and from the hybrid, multiple subjectivities of the dancers. The author’s *Emerging Never Arriving* is used to analyse the idea of dancers’ voices emerging and moving within narratives of exclusion and entry. In the final section Jonathan Burrows’ *Rebelling Against Limit* is used to examine the idea of the score and how the dancer emerges into narratives of becoming.

**Discourse, In-between, Narrative, Emerging, Immanent, Hybrid, Resistance.**

## No Mute Bodies

### A Site of Discourse

The body at all times speaks of the progress of its movement within and through environments, marking it as a site of meaningful discourse, both a meeting of and the origin for multiple subject trajectories. The moving body is a dynamic presence, not one caught and set within the idea of 'I', although it is still charged with narratives of identity. As Lizzy Le Quesne observes (2015: 103) "we move, and the world moves. Each sentient body must collude with, resist or negotiate multiple influences".

The language that the dancing body speaks is not contained within a particular syntax, even though that might be indicated by the lexicon of specific genres. José Gil (1998: 168-9) argues that as dance is beyond syntax it does not relate to meanings outside of body movement and that "everything is displayed in expression, there is nothing hidden, no background." He considers dance "a sort of levitation that carries within it and presents to everyone the key to the intelligence of the body". Gil maintains that this is true whatever score is imposed on or required of the dancer and that dance always exudes a "residue that is not formalizable". He goes on to claim that "dance is the quintessential mockery of signs and forms that set themselves up in place of meaning of the body". This is not to suggest that there is some meaning beyond meaning, as it were, that dance achieves through a transcendental state. What it does point to is the possibility that dance, embodied and embedded, is itself a form of resistance to reductive inscription through which movement becomes a series of symbols.

The material body, always in the process of interrelated, exteroceptive and interoceptive movement, is a site of continual discourse, and I propose that, as part of that discourse, the use of spoken word is intrinsic to, not separable from the meaning of the body in movement, its voice. Distinctions will be made between the use of words as a score, or a form of scripted dialogue that dancers are required to, in some way, interpret or perform, and those that arise from realisations dancers uncover in the course of improvisation and somatic exploration and these distinctions will be addressed through examples of dance practice. It will be maintained throughout that in the nomadic progress of the dancing body within and through environments, and the discourse which is always coextensive with that progress, the dancing body is never mute and speaks of its presence whilst resisting fixity. From the outset I intend that 'voice' will be used to refer to the continual and processual language the body speaks through and with its movement. 'Spoken word' will refer to the actual use of forms of articulated, spoken language, which, as Jonathan Burrows (2010: 185) suggests, is "...the primary means of communication for most of us".

As a site of discourse the body is an interactive part of a dynamic environment, a proposition that signals body/mind as an active and indissoluble principle. Discourse, in this context, also points to the processes of the body being in continual dynamic exchange with the material conditions of its own emergence, providing the means for becoming subject of its own narrative. The moving body remains the irreducible centre of emergence of a sense of self in dance so that whatever trajectories, movements, becomings, traces or shifts of ground occur, the nomadic textures associated with these trajectories emanate from and in some senses return to the body and its materiality within an environment. As Gil observes,

the body resists imposition of signs and symbols that obscure or overlay its meaning. The body at all times speaks its presence and the use of word in the form of spoken expression is part of a fluid totality of processual, expressive exchange. Anne Cooper Albright (1997:124-5) points out that “voice ... immediately calls forth bodily presence, and recognises the performative nature of that presence” bringing “language, memory and history into the public domain”.

The spoken word itself has physical properties. The production of sound is a complex of operations in the shaping and placing of the tongue, lips, and mouth with the sound emerging from within the body as a burst of displacements and dispersions of air, of moisture and of sound waves that have their own physical signatures. The unique properties of the spoken word are shaped by the properties of the body that produces it. The effort of production, the constantly shifting and adjusting combinations of musculature and the minute animations of the person’s body contribute to an overall sense of an embodied, emergent presence, part of a bodily identity of which Cooper-Albright asks “What happens to the bodily identity when it is accompanied by an autobiographical voice – a verbal “I” that claims a subjectivity of its own? How closely intertwined with its own physical reality is the “self” of that dancing body?” It is a complex question, made more so by the need to always differentiate between using the term ‘voice’ to describe the continually emerging presence of the dancing body, its discourse with and between environments, and the delivery of spoken word.

Thinking of the body’s voice as the delivery of spoken language can risk conflating it with the actual sounds made in the process. Sound becomes privileged, separated from its expressive totality, or placed into a separate sensory experience, rather than understood as

co-dependant on other sensory experiences. It is a problem that social anthropologist Tim Ingold (2011: 136) addresses when he writes of the environment we move in as “...not sliced up along the lines of sensory pathways by which we enter into it...” emphasising that each of us, as an “...undivided centre of movement and awareness...” is immersed in conditions that are not tied to any “...specific sensory register”. He proposes that: “sound and light...are infusions of the medium in which we find our being and through which we move” (2011:138). Ingold is particularly relevant here because he does not differentiate between environments, or separate them in terms of, say, performance spaces, urban spaces, rural spaces and so on, but encourages a more holistic, inclusive approach with the body always the centre of “movement and awareness”. Paula Kramer (2012: 167), writing about her work in what she terms “nature space” points to the decentralisation of the dancer “coupled with a clear sense of the human body and its materiality amongst other materials, which supports creative movement practice...” Both Ingold and Kramer are proposing the same co-extensiveness within the medium through and within which we move, and which I maintain is true for the sound that the spoken word produces. The spoken word is also movement and awareness, despite it having no apparent visible presence and seeming to become absent as soon as it is uttered. The use of spoken word in dance, whether as poetic collaboration, scripted utterances, sounds emerging from improvisational explorations or combinations and variations of each of these, already brings with it a dynamic materiality that requires recognition. As Elizabeth Grosz suggests (2011:20) “the living body is itself the ongoing provocation for inventive practice, for inventing and elaborating widely varying practices ... for making art out of the body’s capacities and actions”.

The three sections that follow will examine the use of the voice of the body and spoken word as co-extensive and dynamic. Whilst questions concerning inscription and balances of power will always remain over the use of scripted, or received composed materials, the main thrust is towards affirmation of the use of spoken word as it arises from, with, and through movement. I suggest that for such affirmation to have weight and definition, to be of value in exploring and developing use of the spoken word in dance, two things must be present. The first is that representation from dancers themselves, drawn from their expression of their own bodily intelligence, should be present in this article. This is met through the use of what dancers themselves have to say about their experience within the examples of practice offered, and in the choice of examples from work made by practitioners who are themselves dancers: Yael Flexer and Jonathan Burrows. The second is that what is proposed belongs within a posthuman, affirmative, inclusive, and non-dualistic analysis, elements that are particularly consistent with, though not exclusive to somatic practice.

### **Speaking the In-between.**

As has been proposed, use of spoken word in dance does not solely imply movements constructed to facilitate the performance of words, but a more shifting, symbiotic relationship between uttering words and the voice the body always articulates through its movement. Yael Flexer is a choreographer and dancer who has an acute understanding of that relationship, and of its dynamic materiality. Though she would not claim that her work is specifically posthuman, Flexer nevertheless provides evidence for other practitioners of what a posthuman approach offers.

Flexer uses spoken word in a wide variety of forms and ensures that any text is carefully interwoven into an overall structure, where the physicality of the spoken word complements, rather than dominates. She understands and makes use of the physicality needed to produce speech, as well as recognising the overall physical density and movement of sound itself.<sup>1</sup> At times she uses the first language of her performers and herself, indicating hybrid multiple subjectivities in the dancer. I maintain that Flexer's work is, in this respect and others, an important example of a posthuman approach, recognising the body as responsive, autopoietic, and radically immanent.

Flexer's work is often performed in more intimate venues, the close proximity of spectators to dancers offering a particularly visceral experience. She makes full use of the opportunities provided by these proximal relations to transmit the sheer effort involved in movement, through the sound of bodies in contact, in the process of movement, through cadences of breathing made under exertion, as a result of the shaping of musculature, in the effort of weight brought to bear on limbs placed in precarious relationship to balance, and the exertion of extended physical engagement. This is also the body speaking, and its voice, for Flexer, remains rooted in the very act of moving. When seeking for a differentiation between the body speaking and the use of the spoken word, this is an example of where it might lie. The dancers who work with Flexer are physically highly articulate, and Flexer engages this by counterpointing bursts of virtuosity with aspects of everyday physical exertion. The spoken word mirrors this physical exertion and is consequently located, for Flexer, in the uncertain, shifting ground in-between performance and the everyday. Elizabeth Grosz (2001: 91) writes of the in-between as "...the locus for social, cultural, and natural transformations..." and "...the space in which things are undone, the space to the

---

<sup>1</sup> Yael Flexer also uses specifically commissioned music, for example in *The Living Room* by Nye Parry performed onstage by the cellist Karni Postel as an interactive medium.

side and around which is the space of subversion and fraying, the edges of any identity's limits" (92). Flexer's use of the spoken word is typically subversive, de-stabilising, essentially nomadic in the sense that it is, as Braidotti proposes (1994: 36) "...not fluidity without borders, but rather an acute awareness of the nonfixity of boundaries."

In *The Living Room* (Flexer: 2010) there are examples of a number of different modes of use spoken word: revelations, invitations, challenges, interjections, questions, a manifesto, an epilogue, exchanges and provocations between Flexer as 'author' and other dancers. The delivery of each shift of emphasis and mode is clearly structured, carefully weighted and interwoven with the movement. This interweaving is clear even when the dancers are notionally still. They listen attentively and actively as they absorb the movements and sounds around them. The complex mixture of uses of spoken word might seem to suggest tight control, even artifice, and the dancers do project their 'text'<sup>2</sup> with awareness, clarity and sensitivity, but never at a remove from themselves. And the words spoken are not imposed, or imported, but result from the techniques Flexer uses in devising her pieces, part of which include the use of a dramaturg. The dancers are actively involved in generating their own text. Consequently, the spoken words emerge as part of a fabric of movement within which the dancers *are* different voices rather than *speak in* different voices.

Flexer is always concerned with communication with spectators, and in an interview (Flexer: 2013) she said "When I think of text, the first thing is about the ability to directly affect and be in contact with the audience". She went on to suggest that it provided "a kind of layer in some ways, so that maybe movement would otherwise only be read in a certain

---

<sup>2</sup> In the final section of this article, Jonathan Burrows' exchanges with the author on score and text are considered.

way, it just gives a little more depth". Placing the spoken word as an active and dynamic part of exchanges between spectator and performance confirms that it occupies a role in pointing to the in-between, where she is "playing between expectation (what the work is supposed to be) and realisation". I suggest that in Flexer's work the always present voice of the dancing body and the use of spoken word provide a provocation for the spectator, asking where the spoken word emanates from, to whom it belongs, and for what purpose. These are the destabilising, subversive effects of Flexer's blurring of boundaries, the space in which things are challenged and undone.

Spoken prologues are a signature feature of Flexer's work and she writes of these being delivered "close to the frame, in-between the auditorium and the main central stage area" (2013: 170). Flexer summarises her use of prologues as follows: "they spatially (and temporally) act as a bridge, fraying the fourth wall and intimating a shared or porous space between the stage and the auditorium, audience and performer, the performance spilling over its edges onto the audience's designated space" (2013:170). In *The Living Room*, the dancers respond to what she says in the prologue and are invited to do so. The mix of subversive humour and revelation they contain also invites the spectator to enter into the prologue on an active basis. Flexer suggests this encourages "reflection in the spectator, emphasising the transitions between action, reflection, sound and silence" (Flexer: 2013).

Another example of direct address to the spectators occurs in a long solo in which one of the dancers, Lyndsey McConville, performs what at the start appears to be an autobiographical text. Each statement is accompanied by a movement which Flexer describes as "punctuating the text" (2013) suggesting that it offers contrasting and complementary readings. McConville mixes tenses in her delivery, speaking whilst she

moves in present, future and past. McConville offers a life story: “I’m going to go home, I am home, I’m unhomed, I am going to get married, I am married, I was married, I will have three children, I have three children, I’ve had three children”, but the claims become more and more part of fantasy: “I’m going to have a hit record, I have a hit record, I’ve had a hit record ... I’m going to change the world, I’m changing the world, I’ve changed the world” (Flexer: 2013:179-80). This is mixed with more recognisable, everyday concerns and movements: “I’m going to touch the floor, I’m touching the floor, I’ve touched the floor ... I’m going to do a move, I’m moving, I’ve moved”. Flexer describes this as text that “refers back to the concreteness of the dancing body. The portraiture therefore interweaves and inscribes the dancer as both embodied, physical body and reflexive subject”. Here Flexer is using the spoken word to point to the voice of the body, or at least to provide the opportunity to move between them. Voice and word then appear as in-between performance and the everyday and both speak to, and are correspondent within unstable ground.

Use of the spoken word, in addition to and as an extension of the voice of the body, offers an opportunity for dancers to further express and explore hybridity and multiple-subjectivity, to articulate something of their nomadic presence and sense of un-home<sup>3</sup>. Aya Kobayashi, a dancer who has worked on several occasions with Yael Flexer, recalled how speaking Japanese, her first language, in *The Living Room* gave rise to feelings of instability. She acknowledged that she found speaking Japanese in performance hard and that she could feel self-conscious, even ‘fake’. She wrote

---

<sup>3</sup> Flexer partly relates her approach to ideas of un-home with those of Homi Bhabha. Un-home does not refer here to homelessness, but to the in-between of the public and private, a sense of the uncanny, or ‘unheimlich’ resulting from the dislocations that ensue. Flexer also shares with some of her dancers, Aya Kobayashi for example, a feeling of hybridity arising from immigrant status, as a result of which the body speaks in sometimes conflicting terms.

“It might be something to do with the nature of Japanese language. The tone of my voice gets higher when I speak Japanese and the intonation is quite flat compare (sic) to English, so I feel I am exaggerating my expression too much when I project my voice in Japanese” (Kobayashi: 2013).

Kobayashi provided another perspective on how the physicality of the spoken word operates when she explained that:

“I’m so aware that when language changes, my attitude and mannerism slightly changes from daily life. And I’m speaking from experience in some shift within myself through the last eleven years. I feel I have created my Englishness that doesn’t fit in my traditional, archetypal Aya who speaks Japanese. Speaking Japanese in English context never feels right as I wish. So when I danced the choreographic material in *The Living Room* as I speak Japanese, movement and text didn’t feel integrated” (Kobayashi: 2013).

Kobayashi here reveals that she struggled with the fluctuations between the performance and the everyday, not because it required expression of a fictional role, but through a direct experience of her own hybridity, her own attempt to find a point of equilibrium, and what she described as a possibility to immerse herself in “the permission to be myself ... when I am moving. So I am pretty much following my ‘am-ness’ at-the-presence”. Kobayashi felt keenly trajectories of exclusion and entry both within the business of everyday life and in its expression through movement. My use of ‘trajectories of exclusion and entry’ here indicates the fluid boundaries that posthumanism suggests between performance and the everyday. Kobayashi’s sense of an *identity* remained partially conflicted, rather than as a fusion of cultural experiences. She referred to her habitual everyday movements as a continually

expanding fabric of cultural differences. Kobayashi is, in effect, giving voice to the in-between, weaving threads of performance and the everyday into movement as becoming. Kobayashi represents the posthuman subject, polyvocal and nomadic. She is part of "...a process of redefining one's sense of attachment and connection to a shared world, a territorial space" which "...expresses multiple ecologies of belonging ... in order to acknowledge the collective nature and outward-bound direction of what we still call the self". (Braidotti: 2013:193)

### **Voices Emerging.**

In 2014, as part of my doctoral research, I worked with a group of dancers studying in, or already graduated from Chichester University Dance Department, in making *Emerging Never Arriving* (Duffield: 2014). Using a broadly improvisational, somatic approach we investigated ways in which voice emerges from the body's movement and the interdependence of this voice and the use of spoken word.<sup>4</sup> The dancers began to discover similar trajectories to those revealed in Kobayashi's narratives of exclusion and entry, where, for them, the effect of training seemed to sometimes be at odds with the meaning of their bodies. The dancers became increasingly aware that their movement revealed a non-verbal language and recognised that their dancing had, in some degree, had "...a great deal of activity and movement but ... nothing individual, reflective, discovered" (Starks Whitehouse: 1999: 53) and that to go beyond this "Movement, to be experienced, has to be 'found' in the body..." The voices that emerged from the dancers' investigations were the result of what they 'found' in and from their bodies. One result of this was the use of spoken

---

<sup>4</sup> The influence of Yael Flexer's approach to and understanding of spoken word in dance has been influential on my own work and research and this played an important part in *Emerging Never Arriving*.

word as part of improvisation, which often commented on or reflected the movement in process.

My own role became similar to that of dramaturg. Andre Lepecki (2015: 191) explains that a particular imperative of dramaturgy in relation to dance is to help to uncover “...a dancer’s specific body, mode of moving, mode of being and temperament; a gesture’s, or step’s, or phrase’s coherence within its own logic...” and proposes that this is located “...within the overall logic of its articulation with other succeeding, and surrounding gestures, steps and phrases”. Lepecki’s description of the role of the dramaturg offers a key concept, echoing Starks Whitehouse: that the role should assist the uncovering of each dancer’s “specific body” and so its meaning and voice. This is a process without conclusion, a search not for resolution, but more acutely to hear, to register and give expression to the emerging voices of the dancers’ bodies. It is also a part of what Feldenkrais (2010: 14) sees as the need to “...complete and clarify one’s self-image by paying attention to the spatial and temporal orientation of one’s body...” in order to bring about “...a growth in self-knowledge”. In order to avoid confusion here, the voice of the dancing body needs first to be heard before words are spoken, so that the spoken word remains co-extensive with the voice of the body.

Yael Flexer had used spoken language as a counterpoint to other movements, but also as a movement in its own right, a textured and dynamic part of the processual relations of the dancers to each other and to the emerging environments of the dance. In particular Kobayashi’s use of Japanese and Flexer’s use of Hebrew, as well as different languages from other members of the company, drew particular attention to the hybrid, the unhomed, and the in-betweens of transitions between borders. *In Emerging Never Arriving*, one of the

dancers, Sarah Richter-Rose, explored the fact that she was bi-lingual and that German had been the language of her childhood, to explore her own hybridity. This did not provide, for her, the kind of tensions that Kobayashi talked about. It was a consequence of her upbringing and family background, to be used expediently at the moments most appropriate to it. She took the opportunity to actively investigate the relationship of the spoken word to movement through her exploration of the sounds and rhythms of spoken German, during which she searched for “a dialogue between states of being” (Richter-Rose: 2014). Like Kobayashi, she felt a sense of dislocation at first, as if she were watching herself producing an image of herself. She partly resolved this dislocation by looking at the different uses of breath speaking required, how changes of tone, emotion, intent, emphasis impacted on the way breath is taken in, held, and exhaled. Richter-Rose considered the parallel that dance movement requires of breathing, and how different exertions resulted in changed intensities of air. She wrote “Putting these two rhythms together at once and finding out how they can pattern over each other ... allowed me to discover more dynamic qualities ... natural pauses and accelerations arising from necessity”. (Richter-Rose: 2014)

Richter-Rose’s approach to her use of spoken word also benefitted from her analysis of qualities and intensities in her movement which she expressed through ideas of speed and fast-energy, and this was brought to bear on her analysis of spoken language. She wrote that

“I understand *fast* as a change of intention, a channelling of energy into a movement or moment which gives it greater intensity ... moving through something at a greater speed does not (necessarily) give it more intensity or

more importance or more urgency ... *Fast* takes it further, draws it out, charges from a peripheral digit right through the body.” (Richter-Rose: 2014)

She felt that having grown up with German as a language, she had “an innate almost physical understanding of its rhythms and tones”. Her term “fast-energy” became the medium through which she was able realise in her dance movement the effects of speaking in German.

Richter-Rose’s growing awareness of qualities and intensities in her dance movement resulted in a solo that was an expression of the moved-spoken. She extemporized the actual content of her spoken word, so that during the period of development, in the recorded performance, and in the live performance the actual words used were never identical. She described this as follows: “I spoke often about a sense of release, freedom, partings or journeys ... about walking, the flow of time, suspended walking, and steps both physical and metaphorical” (Richter-Rose: 2014). For those who did not understand German, her body spoke through the combination of sounds, textures, and rhythms and provided a strong empathetic connection. Richter-Rose asked: “Could it [spoken word] possibly be called a private virtuosity? Something a viewer is free to share but which does not depend on being witnessed to be alive ... I felt alive in that short-long moment of performance”. Commenting on the whole process she wrote that she was able “to deal with being yourself, the materiality of your own body and the entire context it brings with it, progressing on a personal level which was not revealed all at once”(Richter-Rose: 2014). Richter-Rose’s use of spoken word fused into and through the voice of her body, and was expressed as vital, dynamic and co-extensive with that voice which resulted in her being able to write:

“And so when I move, I find myself. Because when I dance it becomes everything and therefore nothing, or rather I become nothing, so everything falls away and all that’s left are shifts in time and space, a co-responding pattern. That is my presence here”.

### **Resisting the score**

The emphasis in this article so far is towards the use of spoken word emerging from the dancer themselves as an integral part of their movement. Even at its most ‘scripted’, for example in Yael Flexer’s use of prologue and manifesto forms, the dancers she worked with reflected on and negotiated through the material they themselves revealed – and of course, Flexer is herself a dancer and performs in the work. The body remains the script that is being ‘spoken’ and I am concerned about the kind of permissions that dancers allow themselves, and are allowed, when using words that originate from elsewhere. The dancers in *Emerging Never Arriving* were in a constant process of finding what permissions they needed, or had denied themselves and in so doing they made clear distinctions between being scripted, or inscribed with a score, and moving towards what Kobayashi called “am-ness at- the- presence”. (See page 11) I believe this remains a dilemma for the use of spoken word, one which Jonathan Burrows was in part referring to in *Rebelling Against Limit*.

Burrows was developing the performance text of *Rebelling Against Limit* (the preview performance of which was given at the Lilian Bayliss Studio, to an invited audience on 13 June 2013), during email exchanges with the author.<sup>5</sup> The performance itself has a combination of three interlocking elements that provide a form of conversation. As well as

---

<sup>5</sup> Part of the subject matter found expression in that text, which he sent to me on 15 July 2013. The analysis of *Rebelling Against Limit* that follows concentrates on the text Burrows provided in that communication.

the text spoken by a seated Burrows, there is also the piano work of Matteo Fargion, Burrows' long term creative partner and the projected cartoons of Peter Rapp, with whom Burrows has worked before. In the preview at the Lilian Bayliss Studio, Burrows performed a series of complex hand gestures at specific points during his delivery of the text. These gestures seemed almost to punctuate the spoken word, or be in counterpoint with it and they also contained a wry but incisive humour that frequently surfaces in the collaborative work of Burrows and Fargion.<sup>6</sup> There is a constant dialogue between them at a level that does not find direct expression in the spoken word of the text. The performance is full of movement and flows of possible significance within gesture, exchange of glances, moments of suspension. It is a restless experience and one which asks continual questions about the construction and the dramaturgical form of what is being witnessed and the vocabulary being employed.

The text<sup>7</sup> begins with consideration of performance from the perspective of the spectator and then quickly shifts to the performer, although such hard and fast distinctions are blurred. Burrows reminds us of the kaleidoscope of traces that are brought to bear, commenting that

“these traces of buried form sing, speak, dance, think, feel and act alongside every performance we watch [...] manifesting themselves within our own physical memory to direct, re-order and anticipate at sensory-level the flow of what we're seeing”(Burrows: 2013).

---

<sup>6</sup> At a performance at Royal Holloway, University of London, Burrows left out the hand gestures entirely and when asked about this, characteristically deflected the question, talking about shifting balance. Burrows writes about use of text in *A Choreographer's Handbook* (see pp 185-7). The gestures were included at other performances and similar motifs can be seen during, for example, *Counting to One Hundred*.

<sup>7</sup> The version of *Rebelling Against Limit I* received on 15 July 2015 contained no pagination and so quotations cannot include page references, but all come from the same email.

Burrows adds that the minutiae of communication between performers themselves widens the range of traces that affect a spectator, and this is particularly true of his work with Fargion, studded with those exchanged glances and guessed at, possible significances. Burrows then switches the perspective to that of the performer caught, as the spectator is, within the cruel necessities of “our habitual marking out of time”, freedom from which, he asserts, is both immanent and impossible. Both bring to the experience “...all the residues within my body of other texts, film, dance, song, music, touch, motor-pattern...What the body remembers” (Burrows: 2013). He goes on to speak of this accumulation of residues as an embodiment, shaping and giving affect to what can happen commenting that “the performance sings through the spectator, whose own bodily response gives permission for the performers to draw the logic forward towards what might be immanently revealed”.

The vocabulary is not that of the dancer alone, but is mediated through the exchanges taking place with spectators, in the difficult and unstable emergence from the in-between of performance and the everyday. He speaks of a crowded space and the possibility of relative freedoms to choose our pathway between beginning and end. The effect of this opening is not clear cut and, whether intended or not, the lines between spectator and performer are effectively changed, their texture becoming transparent, membranous, in a recognition of shared experience. However, for both spectator and performer, Burrows suggests, there are no permanent solutions, no fixed explanations, no final freedoms, no definitive ‘speaking’ of the score. All still remains both immanent and impossible. It is a trademark of Burrows’ performance, scripting, and writing that things are punctured at the point when they become most abstract. He returns the spectator, the reader and the performer to the moment of entry.

In the performance text, Burrows talks about formal scores and structures, the organisational properties of performance dramaturgy. As is usual, he presents opposing strands; on the one hand, the formality of scores and structures can be overly controlling; on the other, they may be a means of provocation. In any event, what he returns to is the insubstantiality of perceptual shifts and the sense that “the organisational part gives way eventually to [this] sensory realm...” as part of a continual exchange during which “I must ask myself am I the agent of the score or have I become subject to it?” (Burrows: 2013)

Whether or not Burrows chooses ways of working that question his agency within the ‘score’, he remains at the centre of multiple emergences, and of flows of becoming that do not by definition exclude choices over form and structure, but resist ideas of fixity and permanence. He observes that

“The body is also sometimes called a score, being that repository of memory and possibility at a cellular level, which holds within itself a map of where you’ve been and might yet go: the body as an archive of trace elements, configuring and re-configuring themselves on the border between the private and that which is communicated”.(Burrows: 2013)

Burrows moves from this point in the performance text to a series of questions offered from a first person perspective. He asks if he is doing enough to find a working practice which embodies within it the room that he needs to play. He presents himself as caught between play, delight, and the potential for easy self-satisfaction. Burrows is in-between those poles where delight in rehearsal and performance is checked by the need to be certain that he has resolved the dilemma between doing enough and doing too much. He confesses that “between these two uncomfortable positions I catch glimpses of my own

score and all it embodies” (Burrows: 2013). In *Rebelling Against Limit* he speaks of wrestling with traces of meaning, and presents himself as an ‘I’ caught always between control and loss of control; between structures imposed and structures emerging; between delight realised and delight self-indulged; between one thing and the next thing and, I suggest, between the voice of his body in movement and the complexities of using the spoken word that is part of and comes from it.

Burrows reveals “I must always write towards the meanings which will imminently reveal themselves, through the gaps between one possible thread of unfolding connection and the next, in which momentary emptiness I am most myself and most lost” (Burrows: 2013). He weaves an allusive, mercurial complex of meanings he is seeking, of meanings as trace elements, and of meanings masquerading as intuition. I believe he is describing a search for a form of agency, but not that understanding of the term Kathleen Stewart describes as “a beefed-up agency”, which “becomes a breeding ground for all kinds of strategies of complaint, self-destruction, flight, reinvention, redemption, and experimentation. As if everything rests on agency’s shoulders” (Stewart: 2007: 59).

In *Rebelling Against Limit*, Burrows is in part speaking of his creative processes and his struggles to find his body’s voice for them. In our supposed continual proclivity towards looking for or imposing a ‘score’ on the body, Burrows suggests that we must also recognise the insubstantiality of such a concept. He writes that:

“There is an amount of change without which the dancing or moving body seems only to be searching for itself, and it is to avoid this searching that one sometimes turns to a score or structure. Or perhaps it is to avoid this searching that one ... buries them deep.” (Burrows: 2013)

In the final section of the text of *Rebelling Against Limit* Burrows proclaims:

“For this most immaterial and impermanent of art forms in an increasingly disposable global art market, no structure, score, improvisation, material, image, movement or idea can ever matter enough to argue. In this most immaterial and impermanent of art forms we begin and end with the image of a human being walking onstage to endure, resist or confront an audience, whose discomfort reveals something to us about our uncertainty and bloody-mindedness in the world.” (Burrows: 2013)

This article ends here with that image of bloody-minded endurance, with the dancer’s emergence as a solid, resistant, but still transitory form. It is an emergence into narratives of becoming, a desire to begin again. Burrows’ image of the human being “walking on stage to endure” is always one of entrance. The performance, though, seems yet to come, even though the performance has already been spoken: as with McConville in *The Living Room*, the dancer is going to speak, is speaking, has spoken. Whatever use of words we graft onto, demand from, or experience developing out of the voice of the dancing figure, they will always be mediated by this repeated moment of resistance and endurance, returning us to the voice that is always speaking: the meaning of the body.

### Reference List

- Albright, A. (1997) *Choreographing Difference: The Body and Identity in Contemporary Dance*. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
- Anderson, C. (2014). *Working on this project*. [Email].
- Braidotti, R. (1994). *Nomadic Subjects*. Chichester: Columbia University Press.
- Braidotti, R. (2011). *Nomadic Theory: The Portable Rosi Braidotti*. Chichester: Columbia University Press.
- Braidotti, R. (2013). *The Posthuman*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Burrows, J. (2010). *A Choreographer's Handbook*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Burrows, J. (2013). *Hi there and attached you'll find a PDF*. [Email].
- Burrows, J. (2013). *I too sit in a beautiful place*. [Email].
- Burrows, J. (2013). *Hi Alan...* [Email].
- Alan Duffield (2014). *Emerging Never Arriving*. [Performance]. Alan Duffield (Chor). Chichester. Studio Theatre, Chichester University. 16<sup>th</sup> July.
- Ecija, A, M. Bellisco & M.J. Cifuentes, eds. 2010. *Rethinking Dramaturgy, Inerrancy and Transformation*. Madrid: Centro Párraga, Centro de Documentación y Estudios Avanzados de Arte Contemporáneo.
- Beringer, E. Ed. (2010) *Embodied Wisdom: The Collected Papers of Moshe Feldenkrais*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books.
- Flexer, Y. (2013) *In Between Dancing and the Everyday: a choreographic investigation*. PhD Thesis, University of Chichester. Unpublished.
- Flexer, Y. (2013). *Questions on practice*. [Interview]. Interviewed by Alan Frank Duffield. 21 August 2013.
- Flexer, Y. (2013). *Further questions on practice*. [Interview]. Interviewed by Alan Frank Duffield. 30 September 2013.
- Flexer and Sandiland. *The Living Room*. [Performance]. Yael Flexer (Chor). London. The Place, London. 9 March 2010.

- Gil, J. (1998) Trans. Stephen Muecke. *Metamorphoses of the Body*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Grosz, E. (2001). *Architecture From the Outside: Essay on Virtual and Real Space*. London: The MIT Press.
- Grosz, E. (2011) *Becoming Undone: Darwinian Reflections on Life, Politics and Art*. London: Duke University Press.
- Ingold, T. (2011). *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Kobayashi, A. (2014). *Questions on sense of self*. [Interview]. Interviewed by Alan Frank Duffield. 22 September 2014.
- Kobayashi, A. (2014). *Answer to first question*. [Email].
- Kobayashi, A. (2014). *Aya's MA*. [Email].
- Pallaro, P. Ed. (1999) *Authentic Movement*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Ravn, S, Rouhiainen Eds. (2012). *Dance Spaces: Practices of Movement*. Lancaster: Gazelle
- Richter-Rose, S. (2014). *On space, language, group dynamic*. [Email].
- Richter-Rose, S. (2014). *Some further thoughts on virtuosity*. [Email].
- Stewart, K. (2007) *Ordinary Affects*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Sullivan, C. (2014). *Questions on movement*. [Interview]. Interviewed by Alan Frank Duffield. 11 June 2014.
- Whatley, S. Garrett Brown, N. Alexander, K. Eds. (2015). *Attending to Movement: Somatic Perspectives on Living in This World*. Axminster: Triarchy Press.