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# Siobhan Davies RePlay: corporeality and materiality in the online environment

## ABSTRACT

*This article discusses the digital dance archive Siobhan Davies RePlay to explore how the dancer's making and performance process translates to an online environment, to ask what is lost and what is gained? It will consider how the digital environment captures and transmits the material form of the 'object' and how RePlay seeks to convey something of the mutable nature of dance rather than a static, unchanging digital resource. The article will focus particularly on one aspect of RePlay, which more than any other part of the archive reveals the process of design and its role in conveying the artistic vision of the choreographer (Siobhan Davies) and the whole creative team involved in the archive development. These 'kitchens' are designed to provide users with a different experience of two dance works: Bird Song (2004) and In Plain Clothes (2006). Named 'kitchens' as a reference to a process involved in the construction of a dance work that is analogous to 'cooking', the kitchens were designed to enable the user to 'peel back' the many layers within the creative process of making and performing a dance. These two very different digital objects are designed to offer a visual way of comprehending the structure of the dance; the relationship between dance, sound, costume design and scenography; and to offer access to the dancer's own observations and reflections on their making process. Score-like in form, they also can be reactivated or reconstructed by the user, in physical or virtual space. But ultimately each exists as an aesthetic object in its own right, whilst offering a novel approach to distributing dance and the knowledge that is embodied within the dance.*

## KEYWORDS

dance  
digital archive  
Siobhan Davies  
choreography  
scenography  
design

1. The team at Coventry University included two research assistants: Ross Varney and David Bennett.

## INTRODUCTION

Since the early twentieth century when Russian impresario Serge Diaghilev (1872–1929) spearheaded a revolution in the role of design in theatrical dance performance, there has been a close relationship between dance and design. The role of scenography in creating a particular environment, aesthetic frame or mood ground can significantly influence the reading of dance. For staged performances the design is therefore an integral part of the theatrical experience. When dance moves out of the theatre into different spaces, including ‘online’ spaces, the relationship with the audience changes. Moreover, an online environment allows dance to be more playful and inventive in its modes of transmission and we the audience become more active in the choices we make about when, what and how we view. Consequently, the ways in which dance has embraced the increasing ubiquitous presence of screens in our lives in general has prompted dance-makers to respond to the differences in how we engage with performance and to consider new kinds of relationships with design concepts and practices. Dancers are thus participating in the changing nature of spectatorship in inventive ways because of the new demands on audiences and/or ‘users’ since dance has embraced advances in technology, which allows dance to be communicated and distributed in new ways.

This article will focus on one project that has explored and exploited the way in which an online environment provides a space to rethink the way in which dance is made, documented and circulated, and how design can play a particular role in the method and form of dissemination. The project, Siobhan Davies RePlay, is the United Kingdom’s first digital dance archive and one of very few worldwide. Launched in 2009 with funding support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, the archive features the work of British choreographer Siobhan Davies, who has been making work since the early 1970s, so has made an important contribution to the development of contemporary dance in the United Kingdom. RePlay includes more than 5000 digital objects, ranging from video to photographic images, audio recordings, scholarly articles, marketing materials and associated text-based materials. Much of the content is video, including many of the full productions in performance, in recognition that accessing dance on film is always difficult, partly because of the lack of filmed records of dance from the past and partly for copyright reasons. RePlay is free to access, enabling a wide user community to benefit from the archive although users have to register to view some of the more sensitive content including the large collection of rehearsal tapes.

Rather than a simple re-presentation of the ‘live’ dance on screen via an archival structure, the development process of the project exposed how creating a digital archive requires careful decisions about design at all levels – at the level of how material is organized to create the back-end architecture and most importantly the design of the ‘front-end’ user interface, not least because with RePlay there was no pre-existing hard copy archive. The archive is thus not a facsimile of the live and offers a more interactive experience. The screen becomes the viewing environment and we were mindful that the ‘content becomes a screen creative practice’ (Oddey and White 2009: 13) and design decisions would effectively constitute a ‘screen choreography’ in the choreographic organization of visual imagery, sound, text, memories and scores (Whatley 2010).

Built by a team of researchers led by myself,<sup>1</sup> working in close collaboration and with cooperation from Davies and her company, the scale and

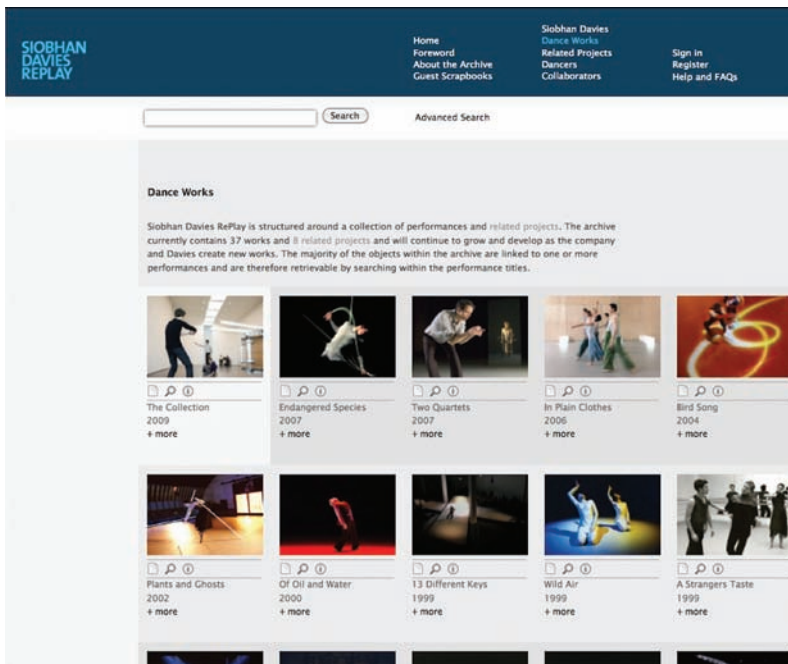


Figure 1: Screen grab from Siobhan Davies RePlay.

demands of the project were both exciting and daunting. The creation of the archive became a curatorial process, requiring decisions about what to keep in and what to leave out, the range of content and how the archive should (or would) represent the work of a dance artist who continues to make work, so would need to be continually updated and refreshed as her creative process continues to evolve as she generates new work.

## ARCHIVE, DESIGN AND THE 'KITCHENS'

Design was an integral part of the archive thinking and development process and RePlay has frequently been described as an aesthetic object in its own terms. We were, however, mindful in building the archive that there needed to be a balance between offering a comprehensive and unedited collection that was available to all, for the purpose of individual research, investigation (in the true spirit of an archive) and pleasure – and the desire to create a beautifully designed object that would not only encourage a deeper appreciation of dance but would stimulate new kinds of representations of dance in an online environment. For the purposes of this article I am going to focus on one particular component of the archive for its intentional experimentation with design as a mechanism and mode of construction for documenting and effectively re-enacting the making and performance process involved in dance-making.

By exploiting the design possibilities within the archive, and to provide the user with a different way to engage with the dance, we built two micro sites for the archive, which we named 'kitchens'. These kitchens allow users to explore two dance works, to see how they were made: *Bird Song* (2004) and *In Plain*

*Clothes* (2006). Each kitchen provides a visual map of the dance work, bringing together all the source materials that were drawn on and combined to make the work from the composer, designer, dancers and so on (the 'ingredients') and to show how Davies constructed the dance (the 'cooking') thus offering the user an opportunity to further investigate the multitude of processes at work during choreographic creation. Each element shows how the contributions made by the dancers, artists, designers and collaborators separately and then collectively influence and help create Davies' work. Each kitchen is therefore an interactive presentation that lays out the digital resources in an alternative way specific to the dance work. These works were chosen because in each case there were many records of the construction process, which were retained by the creative team and offered to us, the archive team. My aim will be to demonstrate how these digital objects within the archive raise questions about how the corporeal dancing body is rendered through different technological and design processes to reveal hitherto hidden aspects of the dance, and simultaneously expose something of the material nature of the many components that together pull together what is a complex structure – the dance.

Neither kitchen sets out to explain the work but each offers insights to the research and creativity that goes into the development of a dance work. Each also offers a way of developing graphic 'scores' or representations of dance, which it was hoped users would find valuable as alternative methods to document dance. As digital documents they are also the only tangible records of Davies' making process. Davies is typical of many contemporary choreographers who have careers that began prior to the introduction of simple capture techniques in that there are few if any notated scores of her work and few other traces beyond her occasional personal notebooks and documents relating to the final performance event.

The kitchens also focus attention on the possibilities and limitations of the digital space as an alternative 'venue' or environment for dance, which prompted us to consider what is lost and what is gained through distributing dance in this way. Amongst the gains is the chance to organize and design content in a way that is not possible in the live environment. Another gain is the chance to see one work in conjunction with, or next to, any number of other works to identify, for example, stylistic connections. It is also rare to be able to excavate a dance work in this way, to explore the compositional methods and thinking process of the choreographer and her collaborators – aspects of the dance that are usually kept private and unavailable to a general audience.

What is perhaps lost is the kinaesthetic connection and live exchange with the performers; and the communal, relational experience of viewing dance in a live setting. There is also the inevitable reduction of a 3D live experience to a 2D version and for some viewers this can diminish their experience. There can be a sense of loss when the 'mystery' of dance is revealed. Some viewers prefer to know that the elusive and inexplicable properties of the dance are preserved. Elsewhere on the archive the user can view a large number of rehearsal tapes or 'scratches' as the dancers named them. These tapes provide a unique access to the dancers working through movement tasks in a studio context, gradually forming the choreography. More than any other part of the archive, we can witness the dancers developing their craft, revealing the intelligence that goes into decisions about how to make dances. The making process is now also beginning to enter the live space as Davies is opening access

to the rehearsal stage. There have been a number of early experiments and more recently Davies has created a project entitled 'Side by Side' (<http://www.siobhandavies.com/sidebyside/>) in which two artists from different disciplines (dance and craft) investigate the act and process of making, to research how art forms grow and evolve. The artists have met regularly and some of their process was witnessed by viewers during several public showings. The aim was to draw attention to the creative partnership and rehearsal process, without any requirement to make a 'product'.

Both kitchens also draw attention to the parallels between dance and scenography. Although I am not suggesting that Davies demonstrates a preference for abstraction, the concern for how the structure of the human body, and how that structure shapes and creates resonances in the choreography, informs the way that many scenographers respond to the dancing body on stage; one of best examples being Oskar Schlemmer (1888–1943), whose experimental series of dances in the early part of the twentieth century continue to influence today's artists in their exploration of how the dancer/actor relates to the spatial environment. In both kitchens the physical body of the dancer is very present through still images and video and through the dancers' own textual references to their somatic experience, but abstract marks, lines and shapes feature strongly in the design, reflecting David Ward's observation in *Bird Song* when he states that 'the film that developed was an abstract film of points, lines and planes of colour'.

### KITCHEN 1: *BIRD SONG*

The first of the kitchens, *Bird Song*, developed through several design iterations (see Figures 2 and 3: *Bird Song* kitchen).

The creative team for *Bird Song* includes Sam Collins (design), Genevieve Bennett (garments), Adrian Plaut (lighting), David Ward (contributing artist) and nine dance artists. Davies began rehearsals with the dancers listening to phrases from the songs of birds. Later, short pieces of music were introduced into the rehearsal process. The rhythms and textures of these became embedded into the dancers' bodies, creating a clear physical language. By the time the music that would be heard during the performance was introduced the dancers had developed a more embodied rhythmic response. The

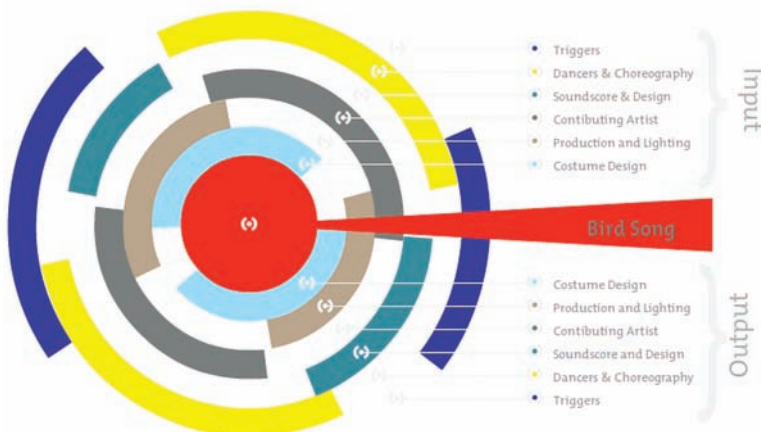


Figure 2: *Bird Song* kitchen.

2. Some of the descriptions of the dance works are taken directly from the descriptions provided on the archive.

overarching structure of the piece sees clusters of sound, light and motion spiraling in towards a pivotal solo (the song of the Australian Pied Butcher), then spinning out again towards the far edge; like a galaxy with the song of the bird as its gravitational centre.<sup>2</sup>

We began the kitchen by considering how the screen design could capture something of the thinking that went into the design for the dance. By ‘design’ we were thinking in broad terms, giving thought to the spatial design as created through the choreography as well as the specific design elements contributed by the designers (costume, sound and lighting). Design is such a strong feature of the dance and what we most wanted to capture was the circular design that shaped the choreographic structure. Initial drafts plotted the journeys made by different dancers across the stage space against a background of concentric circles, which became the predominant design feature in the final designs (see Figure 2).

The whole work was set ‘in the round’ with the audience seated on all sides of the performance space, and very close to the dance, which in itself was relatively novel for Davies’ choreography at that time (although later the dance was reworked for presentation in proscenium arch venues) and the dominant pathways that dancers used through the space were also circular. We wanted to highlight the staging of the dance within the performance environment, the floor patterns created by the dancers as they moved through the space and to respect the three elements that act as a container for the circular pathways: the square space of the building; the audience enclosing it on four sides; and the dancers in the middle. Dancer Sarah Warsop remarked on this in her section in the kitchen, noting that:

... with the potential that every thought and action can be seen [...] The performers are encased, creating a particular environment in which the character and rhythms of the piece can exist and evolve. And the audience hopefully experiences some of the subtleties and complexities which are often missed when viewing dance from the front only.

(in Bird Song kitchen, 2009)

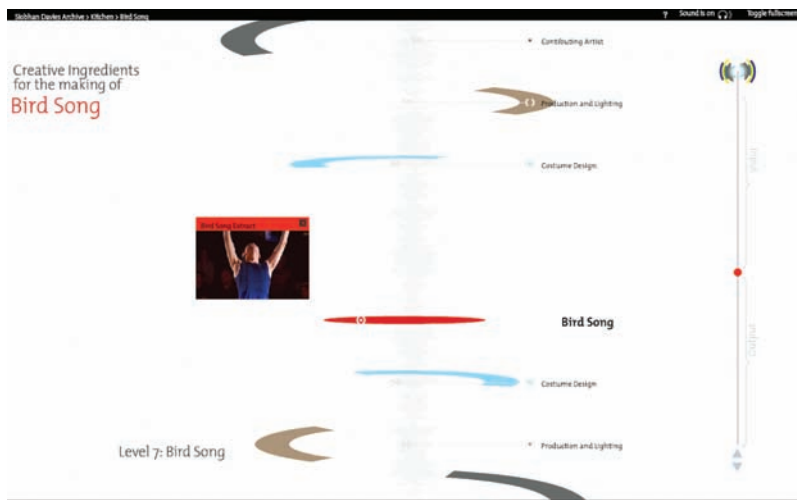


Figure 3: Bird Song kitchen.

It was also important for us to find a way for the design to illuminate the rather complex movement structures in order to mirror the way that movement phrases were made, remade, broken up and reconstructed through the dance, to help the viewer 'see' more of the deep structures of the work. A final aim for the design of the kitchen was to explore how users could arrive and choose to see the 'whole' but would then be able to explore one ingredient, whether it was a particular dancer's journey or the development of the sound; something that is not possible to see when viewing the dance in its performance context. So in some ways the kitchen could provide an alternative to the more familiar dossier that constitutes any one performance work, which ordinarily includes the performance programme notes that precede the dance, the performance itself and the critique or review that follows the live performance event, so is linear in its organization. In the kitchen, viewers can choose the order to view, how long to stay with any one 'ingredient' and move between viewing the whole dance, seeing early designs, sketches and reading reflections of the dancers before, during and after the performance. The conventional process of dance creation, performance and documentation is therefore disrupted whilst it simultaneously reveals layers of the dance that are not normally available for public viewing.

The circularity that is such a dominant feature of the dance is what first greets the user in the kitchen. A series of concentric circles rotate on the screen in different colours, each is clickable and will open a different ingredient of the dance. Clicking on any one will dissolve the vertical circular design and replace it with a horizontal or sagittal circular design so that the dimension and orientation changes. The user can gain a visual sense of being 'in the dance', situated within the circular pathways rather than viewing them from a distance. The screen/stage space thus gives way to a series of images related to a particular ingredient, which appear initially as small images that scroll on a carousel, rotating horizontally on the screen at a speed that can be controlled by the user. Each image can be clicked on to reveal more information and more related content and can be maximized or minimized on the screen (see Figure 4).

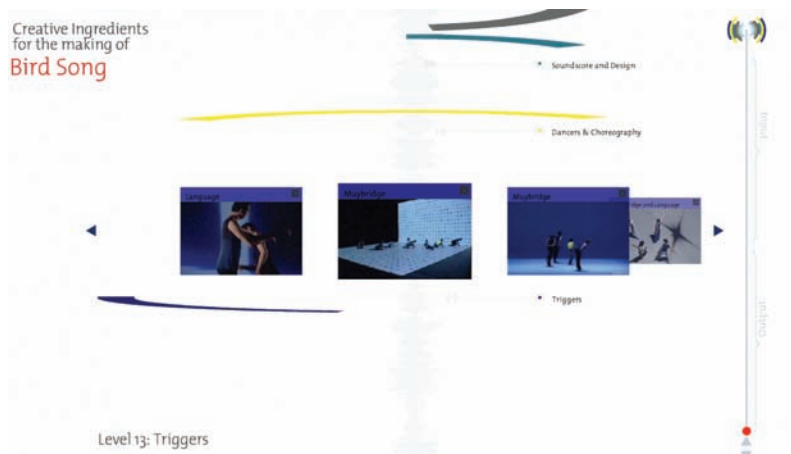


Figure 4: Bird Song kitchen.



Designing with various planes and perspectives in mind followed what was a similar development process for Davies when she began choreographing, taking inspiration from David Ward's records of his creative process. He noted:

So, the first thing I saw was this formal statement of a surface or plane: in this instance a flat, square, horizontal plane. This plane could be seen by the audience from any point of view – there was no ideal viewpoint. I accepted this exposed, horizontal surface as the primary visual presence and decided not to introduce any other surfaces or planes, either vertical or horizontal, into the work. Early thoughts of introducing objects were also quickly put aside. Everything had to happen on the floor and the floor was therefore not only the dance floor, it was to be understood as a very large horizontal screen. The dancers were to be performing on a horizontal screen and the sole visual addition to the dance would be light. Understanding the floor as a screen first and a floor second led to all the principal light activity taking the form of projections from directly above with the projector attached to the ceiling pointing straight down. It was as if we had taken a cinema and rotated it through 90 degrees and the dancers were dancing on the cinema screen, bathed in the light of a film.

(in *Bird Song* kitchen, 2009)

Ward's reference to thinking of the stage space as a screen and the performers dancing on a cinema screen connected well with how we were designing the screen for the kitchen in the archive.

Circles also say something about the circularity of the movement – the sense of circular space, fluidity and sequential action, which characterizes Davies' movement vocabulary. The series of coloured concentric circles is organized into 'input' or 'output' to reflect the many layers that make up the broad structure of the dance. Input refers to the source of the ideas and the information that was brought together to go into the making of the dance and output shows how ideas are manifested in different sections in the dance, in the final designs and so on. Initial inputs are found leading into the centre, to the *Bird Song* solo, with their evolution found leading away from it, so the solo is seen in the middle of the screen. Either the moving coloured segment of the circle or the text is clickable. Each is a different raw ingredient, organized into:

- Triggers – which includes a series of Eadweard Muybridge's writing and his famous images of human motion, a talk by Steven Pinker on the popular website TED, Lewis Carroll's poem 'Jabberwocky', and a series of Davies' own notes.
- Dancers and choreography – comprising textual reflections by the dancers of the choreography, their experiences making the dance and images of the dancers.
- Sound score and design – including graphs of sound waves and source materials drawn upon by Andy Pink, including notes about the anatomy of the ear and the mechanics of hearing based on a talk given to the dance artists.
- Contributing artist – notes by David Ward including his references to the importance of the line of light and shadow in his research for the work.

- Production and lighting – comprising notes by Adrian Plaut that provide detailed descriptions of the decisions made and the inventive lighting aspects sourced for the dance. The notes also provide an insight to the way in which the dancers develop a shorthand for the structure of the dance, naming sections that are cues for the performers but do not feature in any information provided for the audience (via the programme etc.). Sam Collins's sketches for the design of the stage space and the lighting design, projection, production and lighting are also included. According to Collins,

The key to the design of *Bird Song* was how to integrate David Ward's wonderful ideas of light and shadow into the space of the dancers without impeding on the freedom of their movement [...]. The idea was to use the horizontal expanse of the dance floor – to turn it into a changing canvas, the floor would become the field, the dancers the figures within it.

(in *Bird Song kitchen*, 2009)

- Costume design – including the designer's portfolio of previous work, sources, sketches of fabrics and designs, and initial ideas of fabric construction (see Figure 5).

The central ingredient in the sequence is the extract from *Bird Song*; the central solo. Each of the above ingredients leading to the solo is then repeated in reverse order to provide access to a range of images and texts that relate to the output, showing how the ingredients are 'cooked' as part of the construction of the dance. Some of these images are stills from the performance to illustrate particular aspects of the dancers' performance and the lighting, stage or costume design. The screen is thus designed to visually represent the principal design concept of the dance.



Figure 5: *Bird Song kitchen*.

The user can move between input and output, to see, or to be reminded of how a particular input set off an idea that is visible in the final dance. Notes provided by the dancers invite the user to adopt this viewing strategy to find out how information received and recorded during rehearsals finds its way into the choreography. The dancers' notes also expose the ways in which the structural design of the dance fed into the design of the kitchen. For example, Gill Clarke reflected:

Inevitably there is a certain linearity in the experience of performing, a narrative journey that one begins with the audience at the opening, living the unfolding experience through to the close, whether one is on stage or witnessing from the edge. In *Bird Song* however, the structure led towards a centre and then back out in its second half, and so one had the feeling of re-visiting sounds, spaces, communities where one had been before, yet with their energetic and emotional charge altered by the experience lived in the interim, and through shifts in tone of sound or light.

(in *Bird Song* kitchen, 2009)

Both kitchens also draw attention to the parallels between dance and scenography. Although I am not suggesting that Davies demonstrates a preference for abstraction, the concern for the structure of the human body and how that structure shapes and creates resonances in the choreography, informs the way that many scenographers respond to the dancing body on stage; one of best examples being Oskar Schlemmer (1888–1943), whose experimental series of dances in the early part of the twentieth century continue to influence today's artists in their exploration of how the dancer/actor relates to the spatial environment.

### **KITCHEN 2: IN PLAIN CLOTHES**

*In Plain Clothes* is a significant work in Davies' career as it was the first piece to be performed in her new building, Siobhan Davies Studios in South London, and signalled the beginning of a new phase in her work that was much more keenly concerned with the environment and context for making and showing her work. Both Davies and the dancers wanted to mark the new studio, to begin to fill it, not only through the activities of rehearsals but also with the sediment or memory of conversations and ideas that help to make a new work. By presenting it in the studio Davies was able to recreate in performance the intimate conditions of a rehearsal and share with her audience 'the myriad acts of coordination that go into a simple phrase of choreography' (Mackrell 2006). It was a yet further move towards a closer relationship with the audience who would be witness to the subtlest of the dancers' movement. As Jenny Gilbert reported: 'That I could almost hear the dancers' bones clicking, catch every nuance, almost feel their breath made the whole thing more personal' (Gilbert 2006).

The work is performed by nine dancers with music by composer Matteo Fargion, design by visual artist Sam Collins, garments by clothes designer Sandra Bamminger, lighting by Adrian Plaut and contributions from several professionals from other fields outside of dance who watched some of the rehearsals and talked about their own work with the company. These included Susan Hitch (linguist and broadcaster), Sarah Wigglesworth (architect of

Siobhan Davies Studios), Dan Pearson (landscape architect) and Francis Wells (heart surgeon). Some of these conversations triggered the foundation phrases of the piece and a number of the professionals also gave a talk about their own work before selected performances. Dance artist Deborah Saxon explained how this worked from her perspective: each of her [Davies'] contemporaries, seeing movement from a different perspective, influenced the genesis and growth of the piece by bringing observation, energy and humour to the rehearsal process.

Other speakers joined this process, which meant that audiences were able to hear what was often a personal talk by someone that appeared to have no connection with the performance but which encouraged curiosity and prompted audiences to find unexpected connections between the subject matter of the talk and the dance that followed. This unusual partnering of talk and dance led to the most significant design feature of the dance – the use of the image of the diptych or a 'hinged pair' whereby the performance and the talk sat side by side, related in some ways but not explaining each other. By referring to the idea of the diptych, Davies was recalling a tradition in art that was popular in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but rarely since although some modern artists have reclaimed the term in more recent times (e.g. Andy Warhol). But Davies is the first choreographer to explicitly use the term in this way.

Susan Hitch prepared a programme note for the performances and reflected on her own experience stating that:

Watching the dancers was crucial to the collaborators' sense of what we were doing: every dancer is physically different, differently made, differently expressive. Traditional disciplines of dance often make uniformity by restriction: a dancer may only make this gesture in one way, beautifully defined and exactly prescribed by history. But the Siobhan Davies dancers work individually on a common project, each discovering what they can do and making a whole in the process. Matteo [Fargion] started with very simple folk songs, which each dancer took and translated into gesture, note by note, soundlessly; and then they tried them together, the same song, the same rigorous grammar, different gestures. And for me this was just what the collaborators were trying to do: each of us talked about our own discipline, but finding that the more exactly we tried to do it, the more we drew together with the others.

(Hitch 2006)

The diptych or 'hinged pair' idea is also the main design feature of the kitchen on the archive. The screen is divided into two halves. On one there are continually changing extracts from recordings of the performances and on the other are a randomly chosen series of videos and stills, which were drawn down from the notes, drawings, source ideas, rehearsals and designs from all those who contributed to *In Plain Clothes*. Also included are the series of talks that were part of both the performances and the rehearsal process. As Davies explains, 'It is a playful memory of the multiple exchanges, parallels and disturbances that we felt when we placed different sets of knowledge side by side' (in *In Plain Clothes Kitchen*, 2009). So scores, rehearsal tapes, texts and designs, included as both formative and finished elements, sit next to performance recordings.

The user finds an experience that is more like a game than the kitchen in *Bird Song*, with vertical lines moving across the screen connected to small images at the end of each line that can be 'caught' and which then replaces the film playing in one of the two larger screens. The user can speed up or slow down the motion of the lines but the images at the end of the line are not easy to catch so serendipity plays a role in what is 'found' or 'caught' and viewed together side by side. Each image is a still from a short video, which plays and when it ends the page 'turns over' to the next extract (see Figure 6).

Inevitably, this catching of images leads to viewing what might be surprising 'hinged pairs' and results in new, unplanned and unintended relationships between the context for the work (including talks and source materials) and performances (in different venues), reinforcing the unexpected connections provided by the live 'hinged pairs'. Content is varied and includes video, still images, architectural drawings (of Siobhan Davies Studios), design sketches for the performance, rehearsal films and many talks associated with the production. The design invites the user to discover resonances and reverberations; a seed of an idea in a stage design is echoed in the dancer's gestural movement; a spoken phrase is rich with ideas and questions, which are then reflected in the dancer's movement sequence. Words and movements connect in new ways, not in a literal way but in coincidental connections of rhythm, images, descriptions and memories. Images of natural or built environments remind the user that the transformation of the building into Siobhan Davies Studios as a creative space for artists was the starting point for the dance. The same images are then drawn upon as a source for a costume or a movement phrase that makes a journey through the body. Images of natural and constructed pathways made of various materials and set within different contexts suggest that the dancers are wayfarers, making their mark in a new space, and a new building. Perhaps more unexpected are the images associated with the contributing speakers, including ergonomic sketches and stills of heart transplants.

Compared to *Bird Song*, this kitchen is rawer in terms of design but provides a viewing experience that is unusual in that the user can view at the same time on adjoining screens the construction process of the dance and the life of the dance once made and touring. The temporal properties of the dance are



Figure 6: In Plain Clothes kitchen.

emphasized through the design of the kitchen. Each of the paired films runs for a prescribed length, although rarely synchronized and the passage of the lines below the screens emphasizes time as the principal organizing structure. The dialogic nature of the production and its documentation may well have led to Davies' more recent project mentioned earlier, 'Side by Side'.

## CONCLUSION

Building the kitchens provided us with the opportunity to exploit the full capability of the digital archive by designing something that enlivened the screen and found a novel way of translating the temporal, spatial and physical organization of the dance into a visual design. It was important that the kitchens did not produce a template but rather responded to the particularities of each dance. Indeed, both exist primarily as prototypes and could be developed further at a later point. In broad terms, *Bird Song* prioritizes visual and spatial properties whilst *In Plain Clothes* privileges temporal organization. But building the kitchens also stimulated a great deal of discussion amongst the archive team and led us to question the principal purpose and nature of the archive. By deliberately focusing on the design of each kitchen and attempting to reveal the constructional elements in such a detailed way we threatened to undermine our own aim to provide an open narrative whereby users could determine their own journeys through the content and discover for themselves the hidden knowledge within the choreographic structure of any one dance.<sup>3</sup> Initially the excitement of the novelty of the kitchens resulted in them being placed on the home page of the site but we gradually became uneasy about their potential to misrepresent the open structure of the archive. This led to them being removed and placed in a much less prominent place within the description associated with each of the two individual choreographies: *Bird Song* and *In Plain Clothes*. The journey of the kitchens through the archive provides access to the archive team's thinking process, demonstrating how the archive developed through these different stages.

Building the kitchens also drew attention to how a digital archive raises questions about materiality and corporeality. The primary focus of RePlay on the moving body in dance is reinforced through a combination of video, stills of the dancers in performance and many textual descriptions and reflections provided by the dancers. Drawing these elements together within a design that supports bodily expression ensures that corporeality is given emphasis within the archive. In a similar way, we can intuit the materiality of the many objects that make up the dance and consider how their material presence is changed when online, but we can also see how the online archive creates its own materiality. Existing only in virtual space the archive is always in the present even as it brings back dances from the (recent) past. But as artefacts created in a digital format they are also subject to processes that reveal their own history and hence the materiality of file formats, font styles, web design and so on.

Finally, the kitchens are valuable in reminding the user of the intertextual properties of dance and the knowledge that is embodied within dance. They also capture the many different processes that are involved in the creation of a dance and the collaborative actions involved in making the archive, which involved many of the same processes characterized by dialogue, compromise and a commitment to co-design and co-creation. In both kitchens we are able to see what inspires and informs a number of significant artists and as users we can participate too in that artistry as co-creators.

3. Running in parallel with the creation of Siobhan Davies RePlay was another project, funded through the AHRC Beyond Text programme: 'Choreographic Objects', which brought the archive team together with teams of researchers and artists building other digital choreographic objects, including William Forsythe's 'Synchronous Objects' (<http://synchronousobjects.osu.edu/>) and Emilio Greco and Pieter Scholten's 'Capturing Intention' (<http://insidemovementknowledge.net/context/background/capturing-intention>). It was our dialogue with these other projects that stimulated our interest in building the kitchens but also reminded us that each project was attempting to produce a very different output.

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