The Values of Leftovers in Dance Research

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Abstract

Existing cultural heritage content can be seen as a form of leftover and when reused can open up new creative possibilities and understandings of the value of culture. These leftovers can be remised and revived, offering a form of renewal. In particular dance practices and scholarship have become more interested over the past decade in questions about what remains, what is lost, and what can be done with remains. This interest can be seen as an answering back to Schneider's (2011) proposition about the persistence and remnant of performance. Using Europeana Space (2017) a major three-year EU-Funded project, concerned with the reuse of cultural heritage, we consider the leftovers of the project now that it has ended and how these remnants open up questions around cultural memory, the body and archives.

Key words:

Introduction

Our focus in this paper is on dance and its role within a major European Commission funded project, Europeana Space[1]. We explore the contribution dance made to the project's core activities and questions, to the project's leftovers, and consequently, to the wider discourse on dance's remains. Europeana Space was concerned with exploring new ways to reuse and 'monetize' cultural heritage content and aimed to develop digital methods for creative engagement, in particular with content accessed via Europeana - an onle respository for cultural content, referred to as Europe's 'digital library'.[i]

The increased ubiquity of recording technologies has ushered in new modes and formats for the preservation, and documentation strategies for dance and enabled the reuse and reworking of dance's 'remains' (Schneider 2011). Simultaneously, the 'archival turn' in dance has resulted in a wealth of scholary attention focused on the remnants of process and performance, which are

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[1] This project was a 'best practice network' funded by the European Commissin. It ran from 2014-17 and drew together 27 academic and industry partners from 13 different countries across the member states of the European Union.

considered not only as proxies for the 'real' event of performance, but as valuable resources for evaluating choreographic thinking and processes (see deLahunta, Vincs and Whatley eds. 2015; Louppe et al 1994; Van Imschoot 2005; Whatley 2013, amongst others).

Each of these documentation paradigms demonstrate rethinkings of dance's value. As social anthropologist James Leach points out, the performance is the conventional 'commodity' through which dance is traded (2014). Drawing attention to that which remains focusses our attention away from the performance as the primary site of meaning. Moreover, as projects such as Europeana Space are specifically focused on doing things with the recordings and traces of dance rather than the originating performance, the remains accrue value through their repurposing, reimagining and reconstituting in myriad ways, thereby recycling the leftovers to query the status and value of the primary dance event/object/performance.

Spanning a period that has been increasingly turbulent for the creative and cultural industries across Europe inevitably impacted on the work of the project partners. The increasing awareness of a more precarious working environment for artists, the growing resistence to neoliberalism and the British referendum in June 2016 that resulted in Britain's intention to leave the community that had given shape and identity to many working within a culture of European accord, became a shadow hanging over the project. However, this prompted partners to engage in healthy dialogue about how cultural content can be more fairly shared, how content reuse can be facilitated by clear and enabling licensing, and the decision to revise the concept of 'monetizing' to focus instead of 'business modelling'. Monetization seemed out of kilter with the motivations of the project, which were not intended to attribute forms of (economic) value to dance's 'leftovers'. The interplay between open and closed access, between financial and artistic value became the central concerns of the project.

In what follows, we discuss three ways in which leftovers materialize and circulate within and beyond the project. First, we explore the role of archival remains in practices of reworking and remixing, suggesting that dance's digitsed leftovers have value as creative stimuli as well as historical documents. Secondly, we explore how movement experiences arising from engagement with archival leftovers, generate memory traces, leaving their mark in our recollective senses. Lastly, we draw attention to the intangible leftovers that remain at the end of a funded project,

highlighting the value of experiences, thoughts and ideas that do not make it into written, tangible outputs. This triparte examination shows the depth and fluidity of the notion of leftovers, highlighting how they manifest through material objects and actions and immaterial absence via memories.

Dance in the context of Cultural Heritage

To equate cultural heritage with 'leftovers' may seem to be a misunderstanding or at least an undervaluing of the considerable care and labour that is involved in safeguarding our past. Culture, values and traditions are past from one generation to the next; what is considered important is protected and preserved. We won't know what was forgotten and lost along the way, or what was deliberately destructed, so our cultural heritage is what survives. What is available for protection is what we are able to inherit; the leftovers. Cultural heritage is not only material objects, buildings and artefacts. Intangible cultural heritage includes immaterial human expressions including rituals, traditional crafts, social practices and dance.

In 2003 the UNESCO Convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage declared that oral traditions, performing arts, social practice among other 'domains' were to be safeguarded and preserved in the same vain as tangible artefacts. This reflects a shift in the attitudes towards cultural heritage which moves away from one that is static and linked to monuments or objects to one that is fluid, flexible and considers the body as relevant and an integral part of cultural heritage. UNESCO has implemented measures that highlight that documentation, transmission and other educational frameworks around intangible cultural heritage are at its focus. The discourse of 'cultural heritage' was very present within the Europeana Space project, but not without discussion about the politics of cultural heritage and its role in European identity construction. European identity in the context of the European Commission is partly built upon how we value and fund work on creating, reusing, preserving, sharing and in some cases recalibrating the structures that support cultural heritage. However, cultural heritage is inevitably ideologically-loaded. For example, UNESCO's safeguarding programme, which determines what constitutes 'masterpieces' worthy of preservation, has been challenged by dance ethnographers and anthropologists who have understandably argued against the instrumentalisation of cultural resources implicit in 'heritage' creation that draws on IPR, ethical and monetary considerations. As dance anthropologists Andree Grau and Georgiana

Gore have discussed, 'heritage is constructed within the frame of Western consumer capitalism where 'culture' is part of the economy. Heritage is packaged, priced and sold to the public, including the inheritors themselves. Landscapes, buildings, artefacts and cultural knowledge are selected, promoted and framed. Those who make the selection influence what is selected and it may be argued that only those domains that are easily packaged and contribute to the self-aggrandisement of the selectors are chosen' (2014, p119).

Dance has tended to resist being packaged in a way that makes it easy to price and sell[ii]. Indeed, its resistence to a singular mode of documentation, classification and preservation means that the leftovers are scattered across multiple places so are hard to locate, or search in a systematic way. Relatively recent experiments with documenting dance online through digital archives and other archival-type projects have addressed alternative modes of preservation to some extent (see Bleeker (ed) 2016), but many dance practices and not only those practiced by specific cultural groups remain undocumented and outside of the traditional repositories of cultural heritage (Madhavan, 2016, 99). The desire to preserve and share, presupposes that heritage belongs to everyone, whilst it is inextricably enmeshed with the identity of specific groups or people. As dance anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler warned, what results is the 'appropriation by the world' of intangible cultural heritage (2001). Moreover, cultural heritage is not limited to the transmission of themes and events emerging from the past. Dance finds presence in communities in different ways and in some cultural groups the concept of past, present and future has no relevance and therefore problematizes the idea of what is 'past' dance practice.

Returning to dance within the European context, dance is a form of art that can transcend national borders across diverse European cultures. Moreover, dance takes place in and outside theatres; it is an art form, social practice, and an expression of tradition. Whilst our work in Europeana Space considered dance in its widest sense, the primary source for accessing digital dance content was Europe's online library of cultural content, Europeana. There are numerous records in Europeana that reference dance and there are myriad images of dance and some videos of dance, deposited by different archives and collections spread across Europe. Whilst the variety of these dance 'leftovers' is a potentially rich resource for exploring the diversity of dance in its many forms, the sheer variety (of format,

quality, provenance, permissions for use – as well as content) made it challenging to work with. Consequently, for the purposes of working with quality video content to be able to build tools in the project for demonstrating the possibilities for reusing dance content, we selected to focus on contemporary dance. Our discussion on the factors that influence thinking about 'leftovers' in dance is thus located in the field of contemporary dance.

Reusing and Remixing Leftovers

Core to the project was a series of 'pilots', which focussed on different sectors within the creative and cultural histories – games, open hybrid publishing, interactive TV, photography, museums and dance. Each pilot brought together an interdisciplinary team to explore and build 'tools' for users to access and reuse cultural content. One of the ways that the potential of tools for engagement with cultural heritage was explored was through a series of six hackathons. The Dance Pilot hackathon was a hosted with CIANT, a centre for art and new technologies based in Prague. The three-day event in November 2015 brought together dance artists, technologists and scientists to explore and develop new ways to engage with dance content. Questions about reuse are central to many of those working in the field of dance. Artists are often inspired by the work of others and engage in 'reenactment, restaging and reperformance' (Bench 2016: 159) 'reconstruction' (Hodson 1996) or 'remixing' (Fogarty 2014) of previous works. Each of these terms can be understood to denote a slightly different approach, yet there is slippage between them and no clear-cut way of articulating when one work becomes another, meaning that dance has a particularly fluid form of translation.

The hackathon participants used dance content from Europeana in the development of new tools and performances, exploring the various ways to work with digital content. Films and images were re-configured through technical and bodily responses. Rather than working with a focus to replicate the work's original form, akin to the forms of 'reenactment' discussed by Schneider (2001), Lepecki (2010) and others, most of the content used was short fragments of film or static images, fragments of movement, which were re-located within new technologically enabled environments. For example, one group of participants used sensor tracking to produce striking aesthetic images, generated through the movement of the dancing body, reconfiguring existing content into new forms. Another team integrated dance

images into the construction of a virtual world. This team used brain mapping technology to create a system whereby the more relaxed a viewer became, the more content was revealed in the virtual world, cultivating a stimulating relationship between the physical body, online world, and dance's past. This merging of temporalities, and confluence of physical and virtual experience brought fresh perspecitves to the content and reframed its value. Whilst the notion of online dance content might conjure images of stable, archived and dormant materials, used as reference points or proxies of the 'real' thing, the hackathon enabled a revaluing of content. It became creative stimuli, lived material and new aesthetic forms.

Building on the experiences of the hackthons, Europeana Space developed another tool called MuPop (derived from 'pop-up museum'), which uses a multiscreen technology to allow audiences to control what is on the screen. The Dance Pilot held an event where a set of 'leftovers' in the form of images sourced from Europeana were collected, curated and displayed on the screen. This virtual exhibition was used as a stimuli for dancers, who responded to the images as they were controlled by the audience through their smart phones, cultivating a three-way conversation between the audience, performer and screen. The virtual, interactive exhbitions thus draw on leftovers, which are used as stimuli for co-creating and experiencing dance in the present. The static images become dynamic, leading to new ways to experience the 'lived' potential of archival content. In other words, the dancers were reembodying archival records as they appeared and disappeared in unplanned and unforeseen ways. Although a characteristic of this event was its inevitable fragmentation, connections between images and dancers, between images and other images, and between the dancers dancing created connections that invited new ways of experiencing the diversity and richness of dance. The digital images and the virtual exhibition doesn't bring back the body, nor does it attempt to remove the body, rather it enhances the representation of the live moving body.

In the activites of the hackathon and MuPop, the archival material is no longer secondary to the live event, but a rich source of new creative activity. Working with dance in this way proposes an alternative form of reworking to the 'turning back' (Lepecki 2010: 29) that has been the focus of much writing about dance's 'archival logic' (Bleeker 2016: 199) and relationship to its past. Fragmented moments are

reused and remixed into new forms, disrupting linear conceptions of time and the idea of a historical leftover.

Digitising dance and generating records on platforms such as Europeana is important for establishing a tangible history for the form. However, these leftovers also provide stimuli for new movement and choreographic explorations as they are resources and new representation of dance. In such cases we might begin to unravel the notion of leftovers. Whilst dance recordings and images might be the remnants of a single moment in time left behind by artists of the past, these traces are not always 'left' alone. Collected, curated and digitized, they come to occupy a resting place within repositories, however, digitization gives rise to a state of potentiality, meaning the life of the moment captured in the document is not fully exhausted or 'over'. The notion of the leftover in relation to performance implies the prioritizing of an event, with that which remains standing in second place. However, reuse and remixing practices revalue remains, unsettling the singular value of the event and pushing at the edges of the the concept of 'leftovers'.

Whilst UNESCO's safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage might run the risk, as acknowledged previously, of commodifying cultural practices, attention on the preservation of intangible forms, such as dance allow for their inclusion within large repositories facilitate their continued circulation, thus allowing for non-singular and non-linear forms of existence within what Schneider refers to as "a more porous approach to time and art – time as full of holes and gaps and art as capable of falling or crossing in and out of the spaces between live iterations" (2011: 6).

The artists and dancers whose work, bodies and images were reembodied and remixed in the hackathon and through MuPop could perhaps never have imagined how their coporealities would be extended into the twenty-first century. In a similar way, the experiences of the hackathon participants will extend into new thinking and practices beyond the temporal parameters of the event. In some ways the hackathon structure was quite focused on tangible outcomes. Teams were encouraged to develop concrete ideas and prototypes which could be developed into business plans. Yet, the intangible remains of the event are just as valuable. Conversations, lived experiences, memories and traces of thinking are valuable leftovers in the minds and bodies of the participants.

The leftovers of these bodies can lead to a new way of engaging with the corporeal knowledge. As the activites of the Dance Pilot revealed, the physical event in relation to the virtual exhibition challenges the fetishization of the object; the digital platform offers a diferent way of searching, finding, accessing content thus making the traces of the dancing body more visible. The work in bringing the digital and the live dancing together draws attention to the generative potential of leftovers, and gives rise to a complex interplay of imagination, memory and presence. Furthermore, the relations between users, digital content and dancing bodies cultivates novel leftovers in the form of relational cognitive and corporeal memories.

Memory Traces

Representations of the past are a fundamental shaping force of the present cultural productions and are built from cultural memories. Astrid Erll (2008) suggests that history is another mode of cultural memory and categorizes memory on two levels, thorugh the individual and the collective. With the MuPop and Hackathon we saw cultural memory constructued through the individual dancing body within a larger collective that was relating to the objects that sit within the Europeana cultural heritage portal. In both situations the temporality of the dancing images and the technology influenced the dancer's choreographic choices and the body was a moving 'memory object' (Whatley 2016:65). As Whatley (2014, 2008) argues, dance does not leave any 'hard copies', so if we regard the body as a corporeal institution that holds memories, the dancing body constructs a form of cultural memory through the leftovers that reside in it.

Whilst many exhibitions are displayed temporarily, the particularly short-term form of instantiation is central to MuPop. Its temporary manifestion attributes it a particularly performative quality. Furthermore, as with performance, the ephemerality of each instantiation draws attention to the qualities of experience and exchange. In particular, the description above shows how dance's role in the larger exhibition framework is specifically focused on cultivating experiences, rather than offering a stable object to be viewed. The interactive role of the audience plays an important role in the exhibition's ontology. Each instance of MuPop is different to the previous one, as audience members change, so too does the content, movement and aesthetic. One result of this is that the triangulation between viewer, dancer, and

digital images produces a form of relationality that cannot be replicated via the production of a stable document or image.

This foregrounding of experiences and events returns us to the conversations about the important revaluing of corporeal experience indicated through UNESCO's rethinking of what might constitute cultural heritage. In some ways, the re-embodiment of content in the hackathon and the role of dance in MuPop could be seen as bringing the practice full circle – through documentation and back to the body. However, this would over-simplify the relationship between content or document, the archive and corporeality. As Bleeker points out, the association of the archive with "places where things come to rest" (2016:199) has been rethought by recent practices in dance, which demonstrate a new archival logic, one of (re)generation and (re)production (2016: 199).

Bleeker draws attention to dance practioners' and scholars' reticence towards the idea of archives which she suggests arises in part due to dance's existence "only in the doing" (2016: 200). The examples discussed so far have certainly highlighted the centrality of the moving body, however, focussing value solely on the moment of moving runs the risk of neglecting the central role of memory in the way we experience and value dance. Whilst the moment of moving (perhaps in response to filmed stimuli) offers unique phenomenological experiences, it is through memory that these experiences persist. Therefore, we might say that lived experiences continue to exist outside of the moment of occurrence, albeit in a different form. Moreover, suggesting that lived experience can continue to 'exist' as memory might propose a rethinking of dance's singular ontology.

Bleeker extends discussions from philosophers Brian Massumi and Alva Noë to draw connections between lived abstraction, enactive approaches to perception and the experiences of engaging with archives. She suggests that the approaches from Massumi and Noë offer a "radical relational approach to what objects are" (2016: 201). Bleeker explains that she views these approaches as 'radical' because they offer more than simply a suggestion that relationality occurs between object, receiver and environment. She writes, "More than that, lived abstraction and enactive approaches to perception illuminate how objects exist in how they can be grasped as sets of relationships" (2016: 201).

To explain the notion of lived abstraction Bleeker uses the example of a plié. She suggests the movement can never exist in its entirety, as the start of the plié has

ceased to exist before the end (2016: 200). She elaborates that the notion of lived abstraction describes an entwining of the lived experience of the body and cognitive mechanisms[2], which is particularly present in movement. However, as she goes on to point out. "movements like the plié mentioned above do not really disappear but persist in the embodied knowledge of both performer and perceiver" (2016:202). The notion of 'embodied knowledge' is therefore intrinsically linked to memory, which might entail concrete recollections of 'steps' or sequences, and less concrete, perhaps more fragmented memories of sensations, interactions, conversations and so forth [iii].

Despite their centrality to our experiences, memories are not linear. They often manifest in our perception in non-linear and opaque ways. The traces of our attention to particular images, discussions, physical responses, and ideas continue to circulate and manifest in new contexts. Their existence is intangible and therefore it is possible to suggest that memory traces are also a form of abstraction as they are in motion, and coherent only in relation to the previous moments of their manifestation. Whilst Bleeker's discussion of abstraction focuses on the moment of perception, the notion can be extended to memories, a form of 're-lived abstraction'. If, as Bleeker suggests, movement is the "phenomenon par excellence" (2016: 2000) of lived abstraction, memories of movement can be seen as a further abstracted, re-lived recurrence of this lived experienced.

Research Remains

So called 'memory institutions' aim to systematize memory, in order to facilitate circulation. The systems and the cultural heritage institutions and the relationship with its subjects, in this case, performances and artists, come into sharp focus as we examine the liminal space of what remains when a project like Europeana Space ends. Memories of the process, exchanges and experiences are valuable traces. For example, the indepth exchanges regarding the tensions between open and closed access, ''monetization' and European identity remain with the team. Questions arose that could not be 'answered' through the development of tenagible outputs, but left us thinking more deeply about the socio-economic contexts within which we work and their relationship to our own value systems.

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[2] It should be noted that much dance scholarship (Fraleigh 1987; Rouhiainen 2008; Sheets-Johnstone 2010) has challenged the idea that the mind and body are distinct.

Thinking about memory traces within the frame of cultural heritage raises questions about the notions of tangible and intangible. It seems clear from the previous discussion of events and experiences that these notions are not binary or fixed. For instance, preserving intangible cultural heritage involves ensuring its tangibility, either through archives or by allowing for the potential for reperformance. Memory traces, however, offer different forms of intangibility, perhaps partly to do with the way that they are, at times, ungraspable.

So can we think of memories as leftovers? As the call for this special issue makes clear, performance practices challenge the association between leftovers and material objects (Gough and Foellmer 2016). Further drawing attention to the value of immaterial remains through memory demonstrates how the notion might extend into new domains. Some scholars, such as Bleeker (2016), argue that memories have a unique form of presence that is independent form materiality. Offering a similar idea in different terms, Andre Lepecki (2010) has articulated the potential to think of the body as an archive, a corporeal repository of traces, memories and experiences.

Drawing attention to memories as sites of value returns us to question about how performance, dance, and research operate within current poltical and economic ecosytems. For instance, projects such as Europeana Space opearate within particular political and economic frameworks, which might appear to place value on tangible outputs, yet such projects also facilitate a space of exchange and interaction that will continue to inform practices, and shape thinking in ways that cannot be captured through the experiences and memories of those who participated in the project and its multiple activities.

Europeana Space aimed to make a difference for a wide cross-section of the European creative and cultural industries workforce. Whether or not those aims have been fully realized will take time to assess but as with all projects of this nature, when a project ends there is a dual experience of bringing closure to an intense period of work whilst experiencing sometimes unexpected affects and consequences. There are inevitable leftovers in the form of draft plans for events or outputs that didn't fully materialize, and leftovers that seed new projects and partnerships. In this case the leftovers transform and the cycle begins again, producing yet more leftovers. These leftovers sometimes emerge much later and accrue value in new and unexpected ways. Dance occupied a unique position within

the project because of its resistance to being experienced 'without a body' and introduced wider discussion about the place of embodiment within the generation, preservation and reuse of digital cultural content. Whilst digital technologies are changing the way that dance is made, performed and consumed, the development of new ways to store, access and share dance content is shaping a new discourse around dance, data and corporeality, as we have discussed. What is emerging is thus a growing corpus of dance leftovers; sometimes deliberately shared to increase access to the processes of dance making and performing.

To conclude, reflecting upon the Europeana Space hackathon and MuPop highlights how the reuse of dance content can be seen as a reimagining of leftovers. However, considering the digital archive as a site of generative potential, rather than a place where dance comes to rest, challenges the notion of the leftover by highlighting how dance's remains can be reframed as mobile, fluid and existing in zones of potentiality. Considering these practices led us to think through how lived experiences generate leftovers in the form of corporeal memories, which continue to evolve, move and circulate. As dance practitioners and researchers are developing new ways to argue for the value of the immeasurable, the conversations, interactions and unwritten thoughts that give rise to the dance gain more interest. As an artform that is both intangible and tangible, dance produces leftovers that are frequently rich with nutrients that seem to invite reactivation and renewal. The dancing body in relation to digital tools contributes to the dialectic process of memory creation and puts forward ways of rethinking the past and how this relates to the now. Lastly, acknowledging the traces of the project that did not become tangible further contributes to our claim that memories are a valuable form of leftover, which extend beyond the time and output requirements of the project.

The short-term nature of most research funding means that projects are conducted over discrete periods of time. A series of concrete outcomes are generated and distributed. In the case of Europeana Space, multiple prototypes were developed, some will be developed and sustained whilst others will disappear. In addition to project 'products' there are also multiple traces of the research that extend beyond the execution of the project. The discourse of 'impact' that is cloaking so much research, particularly within the British context, has required researchers to track, measure and evidence the impact of a project. The ongoing need to argue for the value of research as economic pressures bite has shifted away from a common

understanding of the instrinsic value of research to a focus on evidencing social, economic and cultural impact beyond the academic environment. In this context, leftovers can transform from what might have once been discarded to what can be considered to have value in new ways.

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[i] See the description for <u>Europeana</u>: https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/europeana-european-digital-library-all

[ii] This debate has been particularly interesting for dance artists who are confronted with questions about how to sustain their work, particularly in a context of austerity. Some dance artists have shared their views on this theme in talks and other presentations, sometimes in poetic ways, see for example Jonathan Burrows' talk in 2016 that alludes to this situation:
http://www.jonathanburrows.info/#/text/?id=188&t=content

[Vi] Movement memory is discussed often in dance, from a biomechanical and philosophical viewpoint. See for example Brandstetter (2015) Poetics of Dance: Body, Image, and Space in the Historical Avant-Gardes