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Choreographic sensibility in screen based dance

A thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The principal aim of this research is the critical investigation into the creative processes involved in the making of screen based work in dance and the moving image, with specific reference to the notion of choreographic sensibility. The research process has been located within a climate of evolving production paradigms and the increasingly permeable boundaries of professional roles. A marked increase in educational initiatives and opportunities for showing work within the environment of festival screenings has also coincided with a discernible shift towards smaller scale models of production.

The investigation has been undertaken by means of a written submission and also by the creation of a forty two piece cycle of work submitted on DVD. Selected examples of work from screen based dance and moving image practice have been subject to a process of analysis. This analysis has been informed by critical perspectives drawn from the writings of selected classical film theorists, from influential filmmakers Maya Deren and Stan Brakhage, and from the field of practice theory.

From this analysis, it can be claimed that examples of screen based dance and moving image work have the potential to be read 'choreographically'. Some of the common practices in theatre dance and screen based dance relate directly to the notion of movement material creation. Others must be regarded as relating to an enhanced and more conceptually-oriented range of choreographic practices which are more usually associated with the non dance-specific professional roles of the director, editor and visual artist. A distinctive choreographic sensibility has also been identified in the creation of my own screen based work. This sensibility can be said to be located within a range of improvisationally-oriented strategies. These strategies relate to the processes involved in performance; the creation of movement material; directing and editing, all of which are informed by a body of professionally developed intuitive knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The introductory section of this thesis sets out the research process. It also identifies the research questions and methods employed, and addresses the issue of definition of terms. A brief contextual overview of the development and current positioning of dance work for screen will also be given. This overview draws on a range of practitioner writing, with particular reference to the work of Douglas Rosenberg. Relevant discourse in the field will also be explored in the form of a literature survey. This survey can be separated into two distinct subsections. The first subsection examines the range of literature available for research purposes at the start of this research process in 2004. The second reflects the rate of development relating to this emergent field, and is concerned with the range of material which has come into existence over the course of the last three years. All of this material will be examined with the aim of determining the nature and scope of pre-existing research activity. It will also be examined as a means of establishing a specific context for my own exploration, and thereby demonstrate how that exploration can add to the knowledge base of the field in best practice. As a further research strand, a range of screen-based dance festivals, symposia and conferences will also be identified as making an important contribution to the field.

Within the context of recent debate in the field of screen-based dance practice, Bob Lockyer recently delivered a lecture entitled 'Where Has All the Dancing Gone?' Here, Lockyer put forward the assertion that, over the course of the last twenty years 'dancing disappeared from dance film' (2006, www.dancecamerawest.org).[1] Viewed from the context of my own investigation, Lockyer's assertion could be subject to an alternative reading. This relates to the pace of development which has taken place within choreographic practice for screen over the past two decades. In such a reading, the unprecedented pace of growth and change evident within screen based dance practice has outstripped the dance community's ability to articulate and define it within recognisable terms. This analysis is in accordance with Rosenberg's assertion that, in order to provide a critique of screen based dance work 'we must be willing to jettison, or at the very least, suspend the medium-specific language of dance' (2000, www.dvpg.net/ essays.html, p.3). As a starting point to the process of exploring this expanded range of activity, Rosenberg has identified a defining characteristic of the ontology of screen based dance work. Rosenberg states that what viewers see 'is no longer simply "a dance"' (undated, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.5). He elaborates that it is, primarily 'a film or videotape, the subject of which is dance'. The implications for this, he asserts, on choreographic practice are that, '"Choreography" as such, becomes relevant only as source material for the visualization and recorporealization of the body in the four dimensional state' (p.10). While Rosenberg's ontologically-oriented characterisation of screen based dance can be

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[1] This lecture was presented by the Dance Camera West dance film festival in Los Angeles in February 2006.

regarded as contentious, his approach has particular relevance to my own enquiry into the specificity of screen based choreographic practice. Rosenberg argues that a rethinking of traditional choreographic practices within a screen context is required, stating that,

> In order for the video or cine-dance to live, its original (the 'choreography') must be effaced or sacrificed in favour of a new creature.
>
> (Rosenberg, undated, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.10/11)

The process of identifying and articulating the myriad forms that this 'new creature' appears to be assuming provides a clear focal point for this enquiry. Rosenberg has further asserted that the current era can be characterised as one of 'post-dance, in which dance is displacing its own identity by eagerly merging with other existing forms and its own mediated image' (2000, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.1)

Rosenberg's assertion provides a grounding for exploration which is of great significance to this investigation. This concerns the relationship between traditionally accepted notions of dance practice, and the evolving nature of choreographic practice within a screen context.

Set within this context of cultural, technological and creative change, this research is aiming to identify the creative processes involved in the making of screen based work in dance. The notion of locating an identifiable choreographic practice, or what I term choreographic sensibility within a screen context has been highlighted

as an area of particular significance. To this end, a range of screen based creative processes will be explored from within choreographically-relevant parameters. An additional focus on contemporary production models will be selected as a means of fully contextualising these creative processes and locating them within current debate from the field.

Therefore, the overarching aim of the enquiry is to locate an identifiably choreographic sensibility within screen based dance. This aim will be pursued by means of two distinct avenues of approach. Firstly, through the written work presented here, specific examples of literature, histories and themes underpinning contemporary screen based practice will be examined. This examination will be undertaken as a means of identifying a range of approaches, practices and procedures with the potential to be read from a choreographically-aware perspective. Secondly, a selection of screen based dance pieces has been created. This creative work locates the enquiry within the realm of practice-as-research, and is presented on DVD.

The notion of locating an identifiably choreographic sensibility within screen based practice is fundamental to this research. For the purposes of this enquiry, the term 'choreographic' refers to the composition of visual material in ways which can be read as relevant to a creative lineage deriving from the traditions of dance making. This field of practice encompasses a wide range of approaches including engagement with temporal and spatial concerns; use of non-linear narrative forms and the structuring of work with recourse to recognisably choreographic devices

such as accumulation, repetition and theme and variation. A facility for the development of rhythmic patterning; the notion of kinetic resonance, and the issue of pattern recognition are also identifiable as choreographically-relevant functions. As a means of determining the totality of choreographic process within a screen context, a range of related approaches deriving from the traditions of filmmaking and visual arts are also included. These include the construction of image within the frame; the use of editing and the use of technological means in the composition of elements within the screen space. It is important to note that this investigation into the choreographic within a screen-related context should not be interpreted as an attempt to marginalise or create distance from the specific traditions and heritage deriving from dance. It can instead be seen to represent the importance of exploring how that heritage can accurately be articulated. This process of exploration is located within an increasingly convergent screen-related context, which currently lacks terminology specific to the task of characterising its own hybridised development. In addition, this enquiry is set within an academically-related landscape of burgeoning growth in relation to the areas of dance for screen. The enquiry can therefore be read as an outward-looking measure of confidence within a nascent, yet rapidly expanding, field of scholarly enquiry. The application of dance-derived criteria to work falling within the broad classification of moving image can therefore be read as a manifestation of this level of confidence.

The written component of this thesis engages with a range of approaches. Written texts relating specifically to the genre of dance on screen will be reviewed in a

later section of this chapter, with the aim of locating my own enquiry within the field of current research. A range of relevant discourse is examined in Chapter Two, as a means of establishing a set of critical frameworks and evaluative mechanisms for the subsequent analysis of screen based work. This range includes practitioner writing in the fields of dance and filmmaking, discourse from the field of practice theory, and selected writing from a number of classical film theorists. Screen based work created over the course of the latter half of the twentieth, and early years of the twenty first century, will be subject to a process of analysis in Chapters Three. This analysis has been undertaken with the aim of locating an identifiable choreographic sensibility in the works. The analysis has been undertaken from the perspective of informed spectatorship which allows for the application of a range of choreographically-relevant evaluative criteria to a range of work which has not necessarily been created with choreographic forethought or intent. In Chapter Five, my own programme of practice-as-research has been subject to examination and evaluation. This evaluation has been undertaken from the standpoint of a clear engagement with my own choreographic intention, manifest throughout the creation of the work. The process of analysis undertaken throughout this research also necessitates a re-examination of the relationship of choreographic practice, as manifest within a screen context, to traditional notions of dance. This relationship is explored in Chapter Six.

The starting point for this investigation is situated within the field of dance work created for viewing within a screen based context. At the time of writing, no standard terminology has been established in order to refer to dance work created

for the screen. A wide range of terms has been used to identify and classify this emergent field, such as video dance, dance film, cine dance, and television dance. Katrina McPherson has observed that any terminology used in relation to this emergent field must encompass a range of practices. McPherson notes that these practices meld '*avant-garde* approaches to dance making with innovation in video art, film and television-making' (2006, p.xxx). In acknowledgement of this expansive operational territory, I have chosen to adopt the term screen based dance throughout my writing. This term provides for a broadly based characterisation, which is less directly linked to specific screening contexts, such as film or television. This term is also less suggestive of any material properties or historical and cultural associations suggested by the terms video or cine dance. Bob Lockyer has acknowledged the growing range of opportunities to show work on an ever-expanding range of screens, such as computer monitors and video mobile handsets (Dodds, 2004, p.x). This expansion reflects the nature of current screen based choreographic practice which necessarily encompasses a wide range of divergent and highly specialist areas of operation. These areas include the creation of work for multi-screen installation; for online viewing, and the integration of live performance with screen based imagery. While acknowledging and respecting this diversity of practice, this enquiry is not aimed at exploring the specifics of any given branch of this emergent field. Instead, it is primarily concerned with the identification of areas of commonality. Such areas have the potential to be read from choreographically-relevant perspectives, and are applicable to the creation of work across this operational terrain. The term moving image work has also been adopted as an umbrella classification for the wide

range of work created on, or for, film, video and digital and web-based media. This term is used in acknowledgement of the widely divergent and distinctive range of material properties; developmental histories; operational conventions and bodies of discourse relating to each branch of this field of production.

Much has been written by academics such as Sherril Dodds on the historical development of dance on screen (2004), and a number of key texts in this area are examined in this chapter's next section. My own investigation is primarily concerned with the contemporary context for creation and performance of screen based work. The investigation also has a strong focus towards work created by means of non-traditional production methods, which is a currently under-represented area of dance research. The possibilities for such research are enhanced by the increasing availability of low cost filmmaking equipment in the form of digital video cameras, high powered home computers and editing software programs. In Britain and internationally, opportunities to create and study screen based dance work are emerging.[2] A rapidly growing field of creative activity is being fostered by academic involvement. This is apparent in the form of dance-related university-based courses, together with the introduction of dedicated practice-based options within specialist dance training establishments. The continuing proliferation of screen-based dance festivals at a national and international level is also currently building a globally-based infrastructure of

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[2] At the American Dance Festival's Screendance: State of the Art Conference held in July 2006, presentations were made relating to the work achieved in integrating courses relating to screen based dance within the university sector in the United States (Bromberg, 2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html p.62-81), and courses are in operation in Britain such as the Post Graduate Dance for the Screen course which has been run by London Contemporary Dance School.

presentational opportunities. Here, a culture of cross-artform pollination is discernible. This trend is also in evidence globally within a climate where many short film festivals are presenting dance work programmed alongside other genres, such as animation, drama and video art. At the time of writing, increasing numbers of emerging and established film festivals are including programmes of work created either for or by mobile phones with video capability. Within this context of rapid growth, the theoretical perspectives underpinning and relating to this field of emergent activity is inevitably and rightly situated some way behind the rate of change in practice.

The shifting landscape revealed by the far-reaching processes of change related to contemporary moving image production problematises many areas of traditionally-oriented choreographic functioning within a screen based context. New paradigms are required as the emerging economy of domestically-produced dance work for screen calls into question pre-existing notions of professional practice. These shifts parallel traditions associated with the filmic *avant-garde*, which can be identified through the writing of filmmakers Maya Deren and Stan Brakhage. Through their writings, both have set out their concept of the notion of the 'amateur' as derived from the Latin word 'amator', meaning 'lover' (in McPherson, 2001, p.144 and McPherson, 2005, p.18). Both Deren and Brakhage assert the advantages of this status for an artist who retains the ability to prioritise a commitment to creative development and freedom, as opposed to the servicing of an externally-imposed commercial imperative. This tradition is further explored in Chapter Five in relation to the creation of my own work. Recent developments in

digital technology also mean that this pattern of production is now available as an operational choice for the creators of screen based dance. Film editor Walter Murch[3] believes that the advent of digital technology has the capability to revolutionise the way in which image makers are categorised, and likens its development to the historical introduction of money to the essentially agrarian economy prevalent in the middle ages. To this end, he states that this 'media currency' has the potential to 'create a kind of "middle class" that's neither filmmaker nor consumer' (Koppelman, 2005, p.335). While Murch's analogy relates primarily to a production context, the implications of work which can now be made to broadcast standards by unfunded artists inevitably requires an economically-oriented reassessment of much creative activity previously categorised as 'professional'. These developments are also explored with specific reference to the production practices associated with the creation of my own work in Chapter Five.

At the start of the research process, only three key texts were in existence which engaged with the field of screen based dance. Many areas of overlap are evident between these works in terms both of contributors and of subject matter. In Britain, the earliest contribution in full book form to the field of dance for screen is *Parallel Lines* (1993), published by the (then) Arts Council of Great Britain. The work comprises a series of essays and interviews, and is defined as 'a collection that

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[3] Murch is best known within the film industry for his work as an editor on films such as Francis Ford Coppola's The Conversation (1974) and more recently on Anthony Minghella's The English Patient (1996) and Cold Mountain (2003), and for his writing on the process of editing, set out in In the Blink of An Eye (2001)

stimulates possible ways of understanding dance and dancing on television' (Bell in Jordan and Allen, 1993, p.vi). Analysis of screen based work by Pina Bausch and selected examples of Music Television (MTV) related dance in music videos are featured. However, the work is primarily focused on presenting a particular stratum of state-funded dance and its relation to television and broadcast media in Britain. Historically, this reflects a period where four terrestrial television channels were dominant. This also evokes a world where dance and television represented two entirely separate and distinct fields of specialist knowledge and working practices, hence providing a rationale for the title of the book itself (p.vi).

Television dance is used as specific term of reference throughout, and camera choreography is also suggested as an alternative means of describing dance work created for the screen. Michael Kustow asserts that 'all films are camera choreography' (p.87). Dave Allen notes the appearance of a nascent genre by stating 'in recent years, contemporary dance has explored the relationship between itself and the moving image' where artists have specifically 'addressed themselves to the nature of the medium' (p.26).

A historical overview of dance on television is presented. This begins with the original experiments with live broadcasting at the BBC. The institution's relationship with the presentation of ballet-oriented work is charted, moving through to a range of work by artists and companies operating within the field of contemporary dance within the late twentieth century. This focus effectively provides a snapshot of a particular strand of funded British contemporary dance

during the 1980s and 1990s. Artists and companies such as Richard Alston and Rambert Dance Company, Siobhan Davies, Ian Spink and Second Stride and London Contemporary Dance Theatre are foregrounded. The book chronicles the experimental process undertaken by these companies and artists in translating their theatre-based dance work into a product suitable for broadcast on national public television.

The debates covered by Jordan and Allen's book relate primarily to the issues of programming and commissioning dance on television. In relation to the issue of viewing experience, there is also a focus on the perception of the inherent inferiority of filmed dance as opposed to the visual experience presented by live performance. The conclusions reached by many of the contributors on this issue can be converted into positive starting points for my own investigation into the field. For example, the necessarily mediated nature of filmed movement work need not be regarded by makers or viewers as an artistic constraint (p.19). This issue of mediation can arguably be reappraised from within a contemporary context as an essential element of the craft of screen based choreographic practice.

Dave Allen outlines the difficulties faced by dance artists in having their work represented on television in Chapter One of *Parallel Lines*. Allen attests that dance is experienced as a niche interest in a high-cost industry primarily concerned with viewing figures and as a purveyor of commodities (p.5). While Bob Lockyer writes that 'in a perfect world, it is the choreographer who should direct'

(p.144), Allen's analysis underscores why this has so rarely been the case in broadcast work at this period.

The dominant ethos throughout the book is that of the traditional view of fitting pre-existing dance work within the technically-oriented frame of the television industry and its related working practices. This is exemplified in Chapter Six, 'Stage Dance on Television', where Bob Lockyer outlines his approach to the filming of dance, in which 'the camera script is the production bible' (p.141). Other, more dance-centred strategies are represented by Stephanie Jordan's interview with the long-standing collaborative team of Siobhan Davies, David Buckland and Peter Mumford. Davies, Buckland and Mumford discuss the adaptation of one of Davies' pieces for television. In the course of the filming process, the dancers were allowed to continue through a fourteen minute take with a hand held camera. This strategy allowed for minimal intrusion and disruption of the dancers' performance (p.176). This more open-ended and investigatively-oriented approach is one which resonates more strongly with my own creative practice. Further parallels are explored in relation to the creation of my own work in Chapter Five.

Sherril Dodds' work *Dance on Screen, Genres and Media from Hollywood to Experimental Art* was originally published in 2001, and reprinted in 2004. Dodds delineates the historical development of dance on film and television and its interrelation to popular culture through a variety of channels. These include Hollywood musicals, MTV and contemporary advertising. Much of Dodds' analysis is geared towards defining screen based dance as a distinct and emerging genre,

which she characterises as 'the dance of the camera and the cut' (p.89). Dodds' investigation challenges the predominant cultural viewpoint privileging live dance performance over screen based work. The investigation also explores the cultural biases and critical resistances existing in relation to technologically mediated performance. The examples of practice which Dodds selects are drawn mainly from televised dance output broadcast on British terrestrial channels during the 1990s. This focus includes the series *Tights, Camera, Action! 1* and *2* and *Dance for the Camera 2* and *3*. This relates to Dodds' overarching approach, which is predicated towards establishing a concept of 'television' dance. This approach is made explicit in her use of terminology, and characterised as, 'the symbiotic relationship of dance and television' (p.174). This approach is also apparent in her investigations relating to aspects of televisual culture and postmodernism (p.95). To this end, Dodds examines the experience of television viewing, and its implications for dance, as opposed to a theatre-based spectatorship experience. This bias towards a televisual identification locates Dodds' work historically within the timeframe of the 1990s. This period reflects an era when commissioning of dance work within the television industry reached a high point (Lockyer in Dodds, p.xi). In the introduction to the 2004 edition of the book, Bob Lockyer acknowledges the more recent shift in emphasis away from a televisual focus. Lockyer also acknowledges the impact that digital technologies have had on screen based dance. This impact includes the increased opportunities for showing and distributing dance work on an increased range of screens, such as computers and mobile phones. Dodds also acknowledges that there are many further avenues of enquiry to be pursued in relation to the screen-based dance genre.

These include 'the links between video dance and *avant-garde* film, video art, dance photography' (p.174). Several of these interconnection points are further explored within Chapters Two and Three of this thesis.

Envisioning Dance on Film and Video published in 2002, is edited by Judy Mitoma. This collection of writings on a wide variety of approaches to filmed dance pieces brings together a mosaic of personal testimonies. These testimonies cover an enormous range of widely disparate areas, such as archiving; ethnography; MTV and Bollywood. The anthology is structured in eight sections with an accompanying DVD of relevant work, and deals with the historical sweep of the film industry from the late nineteenth century onwards. The development of dance as part of a broadcasting tradition in the United States is also foregrounded. It shares with *Parallel Lines* a discernible preoccupation with the translation of pre-existing stage-based work created by established dance artists. This task is approached from a predominantly technical and television industry-led standpoint. Contributions are included from producers, directors and editors on their experiences of preparing dance for broadcast media.

Contributions on dance created solely for the purpose for onscreen viewing include the work of Maya Deren and Hilary Harris, as discussed by Amy Greenfield. Greenfield writes of the influence these film makers have exerted on the legacy of dance film (p.21). The artists Eiko and Koma reflect upon their own screen based practice which they liken to the minority interest of poetry within the wider whole of the publishing world (p.88). Dance artists such as Victoria Marks,

Bill T. Jones and David Rousseve write on their own experiences in creating work for screen, consequently producing a highly personalised reflection on individual practice. The writing therefore functions as a series of snapshots and access points to a range of approaches relating to historical, geographical and artistic content.

Over the course of my own research process, a range of material relating to screen based dance has come into the public domain. These include two recent texts by established British practitioners accompanied by DVDs of related work. *Anarchic Dance* (2006), is edited by Co-Directors of Divas, Liz Aggiss and Billy Cowie, with Ian Bramley. The work is structured as an anthology and includes material from a wide variety of contributors. Each contributor explores the interdisciplinary work created collaboratively over the course of the last twenty five years by Aggiss and Cowie. Reflecting the scope of this *oeuvre*, the work is approached from a diverse range of standpoints. The issues of reconstruction of work and the legacy of expressionist dance are among areas under consideration. Aggiss and Cowie's contribution to the field of screen based dance practice is addressed from a number of perspectives. These include an essay by Sherril Dodds which examines the legacy of expressionism and the grotesque as manifest in selected examples of Divas' screen based work. While Dodds is primarily concerned with highlighting stylistic and historical influences apparent within the work, she makes mention of the 'dynamic rhythmic style' of camera work deployed within *Motion Control* (2002) (p.134). This emphasis resonates with Cowie's input on aspects of Divas' development of choreographic language.

Cowie's examination of rhythmic structuring within choreographic practice, characterised as the development of an 'internal musicality' has particular relevance to my own investigation of screen based choreographic practice (p.93), and is explored further in Chapter Five. *Anarchic Dance* illuminates the significant and highly distinctive contribution made by Aggiss and Cowie to British and international dance. The anthology provides an insight into the balance of their creative working practice, with screen based work functioning as one element located within a much wider spectrum of artistic territory.

Katrina McPherson's *Making Video Dance* (2006) provides a wealth of practical information on the processes involved in the creation of a particular strand of screen based dance work. The writing follows a pathway determined by the stages involved in the production process. This model includes planning, pre-production, shooting and editing through to screening and distribution. Quotations from a range of screen-based dance practitioners are interspersed throughout the text. Each of these relates to a specific area under investigation, such as the role of the choreographer during a shoot and the use of location filming. In her Introduction, McPherson acknowledges the rapidly shifting landscape of screening and distribution outlets available to the makers of screen based dance. Here she states that 'there are arguably many more opportunities to make work *not* for broadcast than there are for broadcast' (p.xxviii). McPherson also notes that 'there is absolutely no reason that you must base your process on the conventional film and video production model' (p.88). Furthermore, in an essay which prefaces the work, Bob Lockyer also acknowledges the radical changes brought about by the

introduction of digital technology. Lockyer outlines the implications of these changes for the creators of dance work for screen, encapsulated in the assertion that it is now possible 'to become choreographer, director, cameraperson and editor all in one' (Lockyer in McPherson, p.xxi). However, much of the writing and subject matter reflects McPherson's own background within a particular model of traditionally-oriented moving image production. This presupposes a very particular approach to the creation of collaboratively-driven work, which is apparent in the outlining of the directorial role and of the involvement of a creative team. This approach reflects a national context which has traditionally privileged such production models within funding and broadcast agendas. McPherson notes that 'I wrote this book because I could not find one like it' (p.xxvii), and the work clearly fulfils the need for written, practical resources on the making of work in this emergent field. This remit is also augmented by the inclusion of a wide range of practitioner writing, as presented in the form of quotations. McPherson also charts her own shift towards a more improvisationally-based approach to the creation of work. In outlining the benefits that this approach can afford, she observes that an improvisationally-oriented approach can deliver 'the most perfect and exciting moments of video dance, full of energy, excitement and with a sense of aliveness that is hard to achieve in any other way' (p.54). This emphasis on the benefits of an improvisationally determined creative process has particular relevance to the development of my own practice and is also explored in greater depth in Chapter Five.

A notable characteristic relating to the pace of development within the field of screen based dance is the emergence of a range of specialist articles and academic writing available on line. A cross over point between material available in print-based publications and via the internet is discernible. A large volume of material has also recently come into the public domain through the medium of web-based publication.[4] Examples of this trend are provided by The New York-based Dance Films Association Inc which disseminates a range of writing on screen-based dance through a bi-monthly e-zine (www.dancefilms.org/Abouteducation.html). In Britain, the web portal *videodance.org.uk*, which has been developed and maintained by Katrina McPherson and Simon Fildes, has emerged as a significant convergence point for the dissemination of material relating to dance work for screen (www.videodance.org.uk). This site contains links to articles by Erin Brannigan, Bob Lockyer and Charlotte Miles, among others. In addition, the *videodance* portal contains links to the web site of United States-based video artist and academic Douglas Rosenberg. Rosenberg has posted online a series of articles and conference addresses with particular relevance to current debate within screen based dance. The main ideas outlined in these articles, such as the relationship of dance to its mediated screen based representation, and the requirement for a culture of critical discourse relating to screen based dance work, were referred to briefly in the previous section of this chapter. Rosenberg's site also houses the documents and papers generated as

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[4] This trend is evident in relation to Portland Green's article 'A Space for Dance' (2005, p.8-12) which appeared in *Dance Theatre Journal* , and was, in addition, made available online, and also Karen Pearlman's 'A Dance of Definitions' (2006,www.realtimearts.net/rt74/pearlman.html), and my own articles 'Down There For Thinking' (2007, www.realtimearts.net/rt77/whyte_screendance.html) and 'Post-Dance, Everything is Choreographic' (2007, www.realtimearts.net/article/80/8661) for the Australian arts magazine *RealTime*, which is available in both print-based and web versions.

part of American Dance Festival's 'Screendance: The State of the Art' conference,

held in North Carolina in July 2006. The volume of written material generated by

this event constitutes a major contribution to resources within the field, and

provides a significant overview of current scholarship in the area of screen based

dance. Papers presented include contributions from academics and practitioners

from Britain, Australia and the United States. These papers cover a wide ranging

remit on a diverse spread of territory. This includes a report on dance for camera

within an academic context in the United States; observations on framing the

body; an investigation of dance work created for online viewing; dance within

mainstream film and an exploration of cinematic presentations of Butoh.

Two of the contributions to the above have particular relevance to my own

investigation. These are Alla Kovgan's exploration of choreographic practice within

a cinematic context, and Karen Pearlman's investigation of editing as a

choreographic device. Kovgan sets out the inclusive premise that screen based

dance works 'are no different from any other films that use choreography as their

language' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.49) Kovgan expands on this

proposition by outlining three main areas of screen specific choreographic

practice. Firstly, the use of *mise-en-scene*, characterised as 'the process of

choreographing space within the frame' (p.50). Kovgan suggests that this function

of practice is closest to the activity of traditional stage-based choreography, in that

'both suggest creating of structures for movement occurring in actual physical

space in time' (p.50). Secondly, the creation of image sequences through editing.

Thirdly, the uses of technological and effect-driven techniques to 'choreograph

movement in the space of the frame as if on canvas' are cited as additional

categories of practice (p.52). As Kovgan's writing has particular relevance to my

own research activity, it is explored in greater detail in Chapter Three. Karen

Pearlman outlines the proposition that choreographers and editors share a

kinaesthetic and intuitively-based approach to the structuring of on screen

movement. This approach is characterised as thinking 'somatically' (2006,

www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.57). Pearlman asserts that the choreographic

strategies and knowledge involved in the creation and shaping of movement

phrases could also be put to use within the parameters of traditional, and non-

dance related, editing processes. These, she asserts, pertain to 'the movement of

emotions and of events which also have cadences, pulses, breaths and shifts of

emphasis' (p.56). Pearlman's writing on the concept of kinetic empathy and an

intuitively-oriented and choreographically influenced approach to the process of

editing has particular relevance to the creation of my own work. These notions are

outlined in greater detail in Chapters Two and Five. In his own paper, 'Proposing a

Theory of Screendance', Douglas Rosenberg addresses the community of makers

and theorists of screen based dance. Rosenberg notes that ' we have not made

the effort to begin to parse screendance into frames of reference as other art

forms have done in order to create a context for discourse' (www.dvpg.net/

essays.html, p.12). Karen Pearlman notes that a framework for critical evaluation

was developed during the conference. This framework arose from the

philosophically-oriented enquiry 'is dance on screen a dance art, a cinema art or a

visual art? (2006, www.realtimearts.net/rt74/pearlman.html, p.2). The resulting

investigation by a conference working party produced a model with the potential

for application across the range of screen based dance work. This model comprises 'a diagram of three overlapping disciplines: dance, cinema and visual art' (p.2). The model also has particular significance as an evaluative tool within the remit of my own research into screen based choreographic practice. To this end, it will be applied to the range of work subject to analysis in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

An additional element of the research process has been my attendance at a wide range of screen-based dance-related events. These include the London-based festivals, Constellation Change 2005; Dance on Screen 2004 and 2006 and dancefilmday in 2005. A significant adjunct to this research activity was provided by the Kinetic Fields screening and symposium at Chisenhale Dance Space in London in May 2006. This event specifically addressed the link between screen-based dance practice and its relation to the legacy of the filmic *avant-garde*. Also, attendance at the South East Dance and IMZ-organised Dance Screen Brighton in June 2005 afforded exposure to a range of international work and wide ranging debate. A particular focus on the need to develop a language of critical discourse relating to screen based dance practice emerged as a focal point from the Open Source Video Dance Symposium held at the Findhorn Community in north east Scotland in June 2006. In addition, in June 2007, the Moves Screen Choreography Conference, hosted by Manchester Metropolitan University as part of the Moves Festival of Movement on Screen, proved to be of particular relevance to my own investigation. A number of conference presentations related directly to context-specific functions involved in screen-related choreographic practice. These

included papers on the choreographic impact of framing choice, and the uses of repetition within the editing process.[5] Full details of all festivals and events attended as part of the research process are included in Appendix B.

This investigation into the nature of screen based choreographic practice has coincided with a seismic shift in the creation, distribution and evaluation of screen based dance work. The scale of this shift is related to the increasing accessibility of digital filmmaking equipment and its consequent impact on the range of production options available to the makers of moving image work. Evann E. Siebens and Keith H. Doyle have noted that small scale models of production are increasingly in evidence within screen based dance. These models are more usually associated with practices and traditions relating to the visual arts, and characterised as 'the artist model...with a single maker overseeing all elements of the piece' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.59). Siebens and Doyle also note that this development, in which 'the categorization of work is moving in multiple directions', is discernible against a backdrop of more traditional film and television industry-oriented models of production (p.59).

The introduction of dedicated study opportunities and the rapid expansion of screening networks and contexts are also altering the way that screen based dance is created, shown and viewed. These developments are reflected in the rapid expansion of research activity within the field, and are particularly apparent when viewed with regard to the range of literature relating to the genre. The

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[5] These papers were presented respectively by Steve Hawley of Manchester Metropolitan University and Simon Fildes of the University of Dundee.

earliest examples of key texts are concerned to a greater or lesser extent with the historical development of screen based dance. *Parallel Lines* and *Envisioning Dance on Film and Video* share a strong concern with exploring the practice of translation of pre-existing stage based work to a screen based context. Together with *Dance on Screen,* these three core texts reflect the historical tone of their respective time periods. This is apparent in the focus on work created and produced by well established and funded artists and companies, and mediated by the demands of the television industry. The more recent publication *Making Video Dance* acknowledges the radical changes brought about in screen-based dance production by the increasing accessibility of digital video equipment. However, the writing is still strongly predicated towards privileging traditional film and television industry-oriented methods of production. My own investigation does not seek to duplicate these areas of exploration. It proceeds instead from a starting point which acknowledges the historical legacy of screen based dance practice without a need to explore this body of work in depth. It also proceeds from the supposition that the debate within the dance world has advanced sufficiently in recent years to allow screen-based dance work to be considered as a genre in its own right. This supposition bypasses any implicit oppositional framing of dance work created for the screen in relation to live dance performance. Instead, this enquiry is clearly located within a contemporary context of moving image production. Within this context, the growing impact of domestically-produced, sometimes unfunded work is determining a rapidly evolving culture of convergence across traditional boundary and genre demarcations. This notion is explored in further detail in Chapters Three and Five.

More recent research activity explores issues of particular relevance to my own investigations. These include Alla Kovgan's exploration of choreographic practice within moving image work, and Karen Pearlman's outlining of editing as a choreographic practice. My own investigation synthesises this wave of recent research within the field and provides an overview of established and emergent research findings. My own investigation also moves the field of discourse into new directions in three distinct areas. Firstly, the issue of lack of terminology relating to choreographic practice for screen is addressed. This focus on the identification of terminology specific to the genre has afforded the opportunity for precisely-targeted research findings, in the form of evaluative criteria, to be applied to an extensive programme of screen based work. Secondly, my own process of analysis and evaluation of this work also draws on the dual perspectives of the informed spectator and the choreographic practitioner. This dual perspective provides for a breadth of approach within the research process. This approach encompasses written analysis together with the application of choreographically-aware compositional strategies to a programme of practice-as-research. Thirdly, the work created as part of this programme represents a particular model of contemporary production. This relates to a single authorial vision and corresponds to traditions and practices associated with the visual arts. This model exemplifies trends currently evident within the wider field of dance work created for screen, as outlined by Siebens and Doyle (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.59). It also provides an alternative production option to much screen-based dance work which has been subject to analysis and evaluation in previous studies in the field.

In the following chapter, a range of practitioner writing on film and theoretical texts

from the fields of film studies and philosophy is explored. This exploration has

been undertaken in order to inform and to broaden the critical parameters

underpinning the enquiry. The range of writing subject to examination brings

together established practitioners in the filed of *avant-garde* film, such as Maya

Deren and Stan Brakhage, with more recent scholarship from the field of screen-

based dance, as represented by the work of Karen Pearlman. This critical

underpinning provides a framework for the subsequent analysis of work in Chapter

Three and Four, and for the analysis of my own work as presented in Chapter

Five.

Chapter Two
Contextual and Critical Perspectives on Screen Based Dance and the Moving Image

2.0 Introduction

In order to address the aims outlined in the previous chapter, the specificity of choreographic practice within a screen context is now examined in greater detail. This examination relates to the aim of characterising an identifiably choreographic sensibility, which can be discerned by the viewer, in operation in the creation of moving image work. It also draws upon a wide range of practitioner writing from the areas of dance and film, and on a range of other sources from a variety of relevant fields. The notion of a spectrum of choreographic practice specific to a screen context is also explored.

The writing of selected classical film theorists is also outlined, in order to contextualise the development of screen-based dance as an emerging genre.[6] The field of film studies has developed rapidly in a variety of new directions throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first century. Writers such as Christian Metz (1974), Laura Mulvey (in Penley, 1988) and David Bordwell and Noel Carroll (1996), have mapped out new approaches in differing eras of the field's development. However, a significant historical parallel can be drawn between the period in which the classical film theorists were writing and the current emergent status of contemporary screen-based dance. This parallel is evident in the theorists' attempt to define the characteristics of film as an art form distinct from

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[6] The terms classical film theory/theorists have been adopted in recognition of the historical importance of this work within the field of film studies.

theatre and literary practices. This process mirrors the contemporary emergence of screen-based dance as a form existing independently from live dance performance.

The concepts of filmmakers Maya Deren and Stan Brakhage are also examined. Deren's ideas, in particular, are highly significant to any investigation of choreographic practice within a screen context. In appropriating the term, 'choreographic', which is used throughout her writing, Deren defines it explicitly within a screen-based context. This effectively broadens its use beyond the confines of traditional parameters of the role of step-maker. This expanded usage of the term encompasses a conceptually enhanced model of creative engagement which is fundamental to the theoretical underpinning of this enquiry.

A range of ideas and themes emerging from contemporary practice theory are also examined. The diversity of approach characteristic of contemporary practice theory provides a model for the exploration of an array of disparate functions and processes. This model is particularly relevant to the investigation of the differing strands of professional function comprising screen based choreographic practice. The significance of editing as an aspect of choreographic function is also addressed through the ideas of film editor Walter Murch. Furthermore, recent research by Karen Pearlman from the field of screen-based dance is explored. This research focuses on the somatically-oriented overlap in function between the dance-trained artist and the film editor. The notion of professional intuition in contemporary art practice, as outlined by Susan Melrose, is also examined. The

concepts outlined by Melrose, Murch, Pearlman and emerging from the field of practice theory all share a discernible focus on an intuitively-governed approach to creative practice. This approach has been selected for investigation in recognition of its significance in the creation of my own programme of practice-as-research. In this respect, the notions set out in this section provide a critical framework underpinning the subsequent examination and evaluation of my own screen based choreographic practice. The links between the concepts and debates outlined in this chapter and the programme of analysis of a range of moving image work in subsequent chapters are also outlined.

2.1 Choreographic practice within a screen-based context

In her exploration of the emergent body of dance work created specifically for screen, Sherril Dodds has stated that this nascent practice is 'inscribed with discourses from the fields of dance, television and other visual, kinetic and technological practices' (2001, p.170). Any examination of a range of practice in choreography for screen therefore requires to be contextualised within a contemporary framework. To this end, Betty Redfern has stated that 'the work of even the most highly creative artist grows out of the habits and thoughts and feelings integral to the society to which he belongs' (1983, p.38). Many artists creating work in dance, film or video over the last ten years have found their practice to be affected by the rapid rate of development and the increasing accessibility of digital technologies. The scale and impact of these developments have been characterised by Ghislaine Boddington as 'a similar process to that of the industrial revolution' (2000, p.17). Arguably, artists who remain outside of any

level of direct technological engagement are operating within an irrevocably altered cultural context. Francis Sparshott asserts that even dance artists who continue to create work without recourse to the use of a camera are affected by the proliferation of screen-based options, as 'they are now dancing in a world where the new possibilities are familiar, both to themselves and to their public' (1995, p.451). Ripples from these waves of change can be identified in convergence points occurring across a range of contemporary artforms, including dance, film and video practice.[7] The possibilities afforded by the utilisation of digital technologies represent a significant nexus point where dance and screen-based media have the opportunity to intersect.

A range of characteristics relating to choreographic practice is now identified as a means of investigating this nexus point from the perspective of screen based dance. Fundamentally, choreographic practice engages with space and time. It lies outside the scope of this chapter to reproduce the wide range of debate relating to the issues of spatial and temporal engagement within current choreographic practice. However, it is worth noting that this in itself reflects the primacy of these properties in relation to the field of dance making. Writing from the perspective of the expert practitioner, Merce Cunningham defines dance as 'movement, and its opposite, in time and space' (in Sheets-Johnstone, 1979, Foreword).[8]

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[7] These three fields have been collectively characterised as 'the motion arts' by choreographer and theorist Kenneth King (2003, p.114).

[8] The choreographic interrelation of time and space has been theorised by a wide variety of writers, and has been given particular relevance from a phenomenological perspective in the writings of Suzanne K. Langer (in Copeland and Cohen, 1983) and Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1979).

The specificity of role and function of the choreographer is also of particular importance. The following characterisations of current practice by a range of artists and writers explore the dynamic use of the term.

Dance artist Victoria Marks expresses the view that 'the rest of the world doesn't see the choreographer as a thinker and conjuror so much as a step-maker' (in Mitoma, 2002, p.210). Francis Sparshott has acknowledged this narrowly traditional summation of the choreographer's role, encapsulated in the statement 'a choreographer is merely someone who devises routines for dancers to perform' (1995, p.392). The latter definition can undoubtedly be accepted as accurate when placed at one end of a spectrum of choreographic practice. However the use of terms such as 'routines', 'dancers' and even 'perform' can be broadened out to encompass a multitude of creative possibilities when viewed in the light of the range of options available to contemporary moving image makers. Rosemary Butcher provides a starting point for the investigation into this expanded range of options. Outlining a more open-ended definition of this professional role, Butcher states that a choreographer is someone 'who makes movement-based work that is not necessarily regarded as a dance, i.e. not work that carries all the expectations and limitations associated with the word "dance" '(in Preston-Dunlop, 1995, p.85). This opening out of operational possibilities has implications across a range of practical outlets. Butcher's view, however, can perhaps be usefully contextualised within the historical perspective of the last thirty to forty years. In particular, this can be seen to relate to the aftermath of the experimental dance

work undertaken by the artists associated with the Judson Church in New York. Deborah Jowitt states that the creative legacy of these artists 'radically redefined what constituted a dance and being a dancer' (in King, 2003, p.xvii). Viewed in this light, any exploration of the role of choreography within contemporary screen-based practice needs to proceed from such a starting point of open-ended creative possibility. A key feature of choreographic practice in the post-Judson era is the move away from codified dance steps towards a more pedestrian movement vocabulary. This vocabulary has been characterised by Kenneth King as 'colloquial, everyday movement' (2003, p.162). It has also been characterised by Yvonne Rainer as a 'more matter-of-fact, more concrete, more banal quality of physical being' (in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.328). This legacy of engagement with non-virtuosic and gestural dance can be found in the work of a range of contemporary dance artists such as Lea Anderson and Yolande Snaith. Commenting on her own practice Anderson states 'look at sport or just people...and see it as movement' (in Preston-Dunlop, 1995, p.415). In a definition which moves the debate even further from the traditions of the step-maker, Snaith describes her own choreographic practice as 'the working together of images rather than steps' (in Watson in Preston-Dunlop, 1995, p.411). The importance of cross-artform and multidisciplinary work in the post-Judson era also allows for an opening up of choreographic practice. This counters the tendency, as described by Rainer, for dance to exist as 'the most isolated and inbred of the arts' (in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.326). Within the context of the digital age, the relation of dance to interdisciplinary practice has also provided Kenneth King with

a useful choreographic analogy when he states that 'as a dancemaker I program structural and organisational options' (2003, p.4).

This opening up of the concept of choreographic practice includes an engagement with time and space; the use of non-virtuosic, everyday movement, and a technologically-influenced cross-disciplinary approach to image-based creation. It also provides fertile ground for the meeting of contemporary choreographic practice with other screen-based media. Frederick Ashton has provided a striking image in his identification of a key requirement for image making. Ashton has stated that, 'the thing that a choreographer really needs is an eye. He has to do his training through his eye' (in Dominic and Gilbert in Preston-Dunlop, 1995,p.423).[9] This image of visually-oriented creative acuity, relating to the composition of stage or screen space, has obvious parallels with the professional functions of the visual artist, film-director, cinematographer and editor. As a further examination of choreographic function, the capability to keep track of and to develop different movement elements is identified by Stuart Hopps. This is characterised as the ability 'to look at the stage for the duration of a scene ... and to hold in your eye the simultaneous shifting strands of activity' (in Preston-Dunlop, 1995, p.427). The level of constructional complexity revealed within this time-based dimension of choreographic practice highlights further areas of commonality in the roles of the film director and editor.[10] John Bishop likens the

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[9] Ashton's statement demonstrates that this function of choreographic practice is applicable across a model of dance making which encompasses work created within the traditions of classical ballet in addition to that made within the field of contemporary dance.

[10] The role of editor holds particular significance for the examination of choreographic practice for screen. To this end, the work of Sergei Eisenstein, in his characterisation of the nature of montage, will be examined in more detail in section 2.3 of this chapter. Karen Pearlman's research into the

function of the camera itself to that of a choreographer, stating that it 'defines a space, places subjects in the space, and moves them through that space' (in Mitoma, 2002, p.246). Margaret Williams approaches the issue of moving image creation from the perspective of the film director. To this end, she asserts that 'if you design movement, then you're choreographing' (in Mitoma, 2002, p.214). This is an activity which she characterises as taking place in a wide variety of filmic contexts, from battle scenes to everyday pedestrian movement. Espousing a view which may be regarded as contentious within the dance world, Francis Sparshott has stated that, 'all human beings move ... the extension and concentration of such movements is already dance' (in Sheets-Johnstone, 1984, p.195/6). In the post-Judson-era, however, the progression away from codified dance technique toward a more functional movement style has created a new creative climate. Within this climate, further overlap and blurring of traditional boundary definitions can be discerned between dance and screen-based practice.

Further expanding this line of enquiry, Roger Copeland has written of Hans Namuth's film from 1950 of Jackson Pollock executing an action painting on to a glass surface while filmed from beneath. Copeland refers to the unintentional outcome of this collaborative experiment as 'one of the world's most significant *dance* films' (Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.308). Sherril Dodds has written extensively on the specific nature of dance content within contemporary screen-based dance practice. She outlines its existence in relational terms, which comprise a range of elements including the 'motion of the physical body, the

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somatically-oriented overlap in professional function between the dance trained artist and the film editor is also outlined in greater detail in section 2.4

camera and the cut' (2001, p.171). Dodds' definition requires to be viewed from within an increasingly convergent context of contemporary art making. From this perspective, it can usefully be examined in relation to a range of screen based work by reading, as Copeland has done, across artforms. In this vein, Michael Kustow has stated that in relation to the operational choices made in the course of creating screen based work, 'all films are camera choreography' (in de Marigny in Jordan and Allen, 1993, p.87). Dodds' definition can therefore be read as an elaboration of Kustow's assertion, when viewed in relation to current screen based practice.

It is possible to discern a spectrum of choreographic function and practice from this range of practitioner and theoretically focussed writing. Located at one end of this spectrum is the traditional step-making role of the choreographer, as articulated by Sparshott. This role assumes a number of professional conventions, such as the use of codified, step-based movement vocabulary on a dance-trained human body. At the opposing end of the spectrum, as exemplified in Kustow's assertion, the non dance-trained film director retains ultimate responsibility for all decisions relating to the synthesis of creative and technical elements. This polarisation of creative function has found expression in screen-based dance practice in the traditional demarcation of roles for the choreographer and director. This polarisation is further exemplified in Michael Kustow's characterisation of the choreographer who enters 'an alien environment with a finished piece of work and then television comes along and does television to it' (in de Marigny in Jordan and Allen, 1993, p.95).

A number of developments in relation to both dance and screen based practice have, however, enabled an opening up of new creative possibilities and territories. In the post-Judson era, the narrowly traditional definition of the choreographer as step-maker is just one of a multitude of creative options available to dance makers. Much contemporary dance work created during the last thirty years has problematised the assumption of the use of codified dance steps, theatre-based performances, and performers with specialist dance training.[11] The increasing accessibility of digital technology has effectively democratised a formerly highly specialised area of technical expertise. These developments have contributed towards the creation of a highly fertile common ground of screen based practice. It is in this area of commonality where overlaps of function are finding opportunities to manifest themselves.

2.2 Critical perspectives: the classical film theorists

Noel Carroll has written of the desirability of an interdisciplinary approach to film-related discourse, stating that,

> ideally, film theorists of the future will be genuinely interdisciplinary in the sense that they will have at their command the genuine expertise of a practitioner in more than one discipline.
>
> (Carroll in Bordwell and Carroll, 1996, p.41)

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[11] These developments have been specifically addressed in relation to screen-based dance practice bywriters such as Sherril Dodds, and characterised in the assertion that 'critics who dismiss video dance for its lack of established dance techniques need to reconsider the evaluative criteria of what constitutes "dance" '(Dodds, 2001, p.125).

This idea has obvious significance to the genre of screen based dance. Sherril Dodds has advanced the argument that in view of its 'hybrid character' any enquiry into its nature requires an interdisciplinary approach (2001, p.174). This interdisciplinary ethos is employed in the following section of this chapter. To this end, the particular suitability of movement work to a screen based medium is viewed in relation to the work of selected classical film theorists.

Siegfried Kracauer has observed that, 'as Rene Clair puts it: "if there is an aesthetics of the cinema ... it can be summarized in one word: "movement" ' (1960, p.34). The seminal importance of movement to screen-based practice has been examined and acknowledged by a wide variety of writers, such as Joseph Anderson (1996) and Gilles Deleuze (1985), in a range of disciplinary fields. From a historical perspective, the pioneering photographic work of Eadweard Muybridge, Etienne-Jules Marey and others reflected and reinforced a preoccupation with capturing and displaying hitherto unseen aspects of movement. To this end, Douglas Rosenberg has argued that Muybridge's photographic motion studies 'anticipated what we have come to call video dance by some one hundred years' (undated, www.dvpg.net/essays.html. p.9). In addition, Luke McKernan has stated that cinema 'began with the study of motion' (in Williams, 1996, p.108). This preoccupation became woven into the narrative development of cinematic language. Béla Balázs states that within the popular Hollywood genre of the Western, 'galloping horses, jumping, rapid travel, running, climbing, swimming, became the most important elements of a film story' (1952,

p.25). This emphasis on physicality has endured, and is reflected in the contemporary popularity of martial arts-influenced fight choreography and set-piece action sequences within mainstream feature film production. Further opportunities to develop the form are afforded by the interplay of elements involved in representing the human body within a screen space. In terms which have particular resonance for screen-based dance practitioners, Roberta McGrath writes that cinema 'is the space in which bodies and spectres, both real and fantastic, meet' (in Williams, 1996, p.15). The potential presented by digital technology for the future development of cinema has also led to a re-appraisal of the medium in the early stage of its development.[12]

Debates drawn from the classical film theorists have been selected as a focal point in the investigation of screen based choreographic practice. This selection has been made in acknowledgement that their work was produced in an era when the form of cinema was in a state of emergence and flux. These writers were therefore able to comment on the development of cinematic grammar and conventions. These developments include the changes involved in the move from silent film to talking pictures, the development of the *avant-garde*, and of the hardening into convention of the mainstream narrative form. Each of these theorists also writes of a strong sense of possibilities for the future development of filmic art. This resonates strongly with the potentialities inherent within screen-based dance as an emergent genre. Certain key ideas from the output of each writer have been summarised in the following section.

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[12] This trend is discernible in the series of Slade lectures at Cambridge University, January-March 2006, by Sir Ian Christie entitled 'The Cinema Has Not Yet Been Invented ' (2006, www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/press/dpp/2006012001)

Hugo Münsterberg, as one of the first writers to attempt a major definition of the specific characteristics of film, approached the task from a psychological perspective. Writing in 1916, Münsterberg identified as a key characteristic of the medium its ability to represent inner emotional and mental states, such as memory and imagination. Thus, he asserted, the relationship between an instance of concentrated attention contained the potential to translate filmically into a close-up. Münsterberg stated, in terms echoed by contemporary writers and practitioners such as Peter Greenaway, (2003, www.petergreenaway.co.uk/ essay3.htm) that film 'will reach greater heights the more it learns to free itself from the shackles of the theater (*sic*) and to live up to its own forms' (2002, p.174). He also highlighted the parallels between the non-linear profusion of mental processing and the myriad potentialities of filmic representation. To this end, he stated that,

life does not move forward on one single pathway. The whole manifoldness of parallel currents with their endless interconnectedness is the true substance of our understanding.

(Münsterberg in Langdale, 2002, p.95)

Writing in the mid-twentieth century, Béla Balázs defined in more detail the distinguishing properties of film. These he characterised as differences of dimension and scale within the composition of a frame; subdivision of shots with their differing angles and perspectives and with montage construction, in the

composition of disparate shots. He viewed montage as an art form in itself, which was capable of the highest levels of creative expression, and characterised as 'the mobile architecture of the film's picture-material' (1952, p.47). Balázs elaborates on this image in his description of the function of a 'good' director, who 'does not permit the spectator to look at a scene at random. He leads our eye inexorably from detail to detail along the line of his montage' (p.31). Balázs was also particularly concerned with exploring the many creative potentialities of the close-up, not least its ability to reveal the minutiae of human expression. In this vein, he asserted that,

the new theme which the new means of expression of film art revealed was not a hurricane at sea or the eruption of a volcano: it was perhaps a solitary tear welling up in the corner of a human eye.

(Balázs, 1952, p.31)

In common with many of the classical film theorists, Balázs highlighted the potential for development within what he termed 'one of the rarest phenomena in the history of culture: the emergence of a new form of artistic expression' (p.22). He further identified the associative style adopted by contemporary *avant-garde* filmmakers as a potential way forward within the medium. He stated that this style 'will not really play its fructifying part in film art until some future time, when the development of the sound film and talkie will have taken a new, genuinely filmic direction' (p.158).

Siegfried Kracauer elaborated on the theme of the particular suitability of certain subjects and states for filmic treatment. To this end, he cited a range of examples including phenomena otherwise invisible to human perception; extreme variations in scale and speed; transience and ephemeral perceptions; exaggerated mental states, and what he termed 'the flow of life' (1960, p.71). This latter example he characterised as 'an incessant flow of possibilities and near-tangible meanings' (p.72). Kracauer combined this key image with an identification of the primacy of motion within cinematic language. He asserted that,

film renders the world in motion ... by dint of its very nature it is a succession of ever-changing images which altogether give the impression of a flow, a constant movement ... Movement is the alpha and omega of the medium.

(Kracauer, 1960, p.158)

This preoccupation with movement carried Kracauer into an examination of the suitability of dance to filmic contexts. Prefiguring the theoretical emergence of screen-based dance as a specific genre, he argues that dance is an activity specifically suited to cinematic treatment. Kracauer asserts, however, that this applies only if the movement arises from its context, as 'part and parcel of physical reality' (p.43). Kracauer viewed attempts to adapt pre-existing dance works for screen as unsuccessful. He states that this process of adaption 'can either indulge in a completeness which is boring or offer a selection of attractive details which confuse in that they dismember rather than preserve the original' (p.42/3).

From among Sergei Eisenstein's output of writing on film, and in particular dating from the 1940s, a number of themes and concerns emerge as particularly significant to this investigation. These include issues relating to composition within the screen space and the practice of montage creation. In relation to the latter category, Eisenstein links an identification of the primacy of movement within a cinematic context to the issue of montage. This linkage is encapsulated in the assertion that

> *all* cinema is montage cinema, for the simple reason that the most fundamental cinematic phenomenon - the fact that the picture moves - is a montage phenomenon.

> (Eisenstein, 1991, p.110)

Much of Eisenstein's writing resonates with aspects of contemporary screen based choreographic practice. There is a strong emphasis on movement imagery and the processes of assembling a cinematic or videodance body, as outlined by Sherril Dodds (2001) and Amy Greenfield (in Mitoma, 2002). Further outlining the practice of montage editing, Eisenstein states that its allusive and fragmentary nature is capable of generating a sense of wholeness. This, he asserts, is achieved through the use of what he terms 'its suggestiveness' (p.150). He states that this selective focus 'has features that are capable of evoking a sense of the totality of conception' (p.150). In terms that prefigure the work of the cognitive film theorists such as David Bordwell and Noel Carroll (1996), Eisenstein also writes of

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the concept of a 'dynamic' understanding of the process of creation involved in making any art work. This process is characterised as 'forming images in the mind of the spectator' (1991, p.302). Eisenstein outlined the notion that the director, like the visual artist, creates a pathway for the viewer's eye to travel across the screen space. To this end, he states that 'in cinema the word 'path' is not used by chance. Nowadays it means the imaginary path followed by the eye' (p.56). In addition, the compositional role of the director, and its resulting effect on the viewer, is described as a process consisting of ' "the eye taking a walk" across the plane of the screen' (p.22).

Eisenstein also examines the practice of montage construction, highlighting the importance of 'not so much the sequence of segments as their *simultaneity*' (p.86). This concern with simultaneity is a discernible theme running through a range of contemporary screen based practice, and will be examined in more detail in Chapters Four and Five. Eisenstein outlines the distinctions between the processes involved in micro-montage, which he characterises as the assemblage of individual shots, and that of macro-montage. This he describes as 'a compositional combining of several *scenes*, of whole *parts* of a complete work' (1991, p.109). This totality of compositional effect through montage is further explored through the concept of vertical montage.[13] Eisenstein likens this progression to the structure of an orchestral score, with adaption to moving image by means of an 'audio-visual score' which requires 'a "staff" of visuals' (1943, p.64). This notion is further developed in the concept of polyphonic montage.

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[13] Deren also makes use of the term 'vertical' in relation to narrative progression, as outlined in section 2.3.

Here, he asserts, various compositional strands are woven together into a synergistic whole. Each strand then advances in a way which develops its own internal integrity 'while being at the same time inseparable from the overall compositional progression' (1991, p.330).

2.3 Critical perspectives: Maya Deren and Stan Brakhage

In section 2.1, a range of writing was examined relating to the spectrum of choreographic practice within a screen context. Issues highlighted include the areas of commonality in function between the professional roles of the choreographer, director and editor. These issues will now be explored from the perspective of expert practitioner writing. In particular, the ideas of Maya Deren and Stan Brakhage will be examined in greater detail. These two filmmakers have been strongly associated with the traditions relating to the American *avant-garde*. The links between *avant-garde* filmmaking and dance for screen have been identified and investigated at events such as *Kinetic Fields*.[14] In addition, Deren has been claimed as a pioneering figure within the traditions of both *avant-garde* filmmaking and screen-based dance practice. Through her writing, Deren has addressed a number of issues of great relevance to this enquiry. These include models of narrative progression and an exploration of the nature of screen based choreographic engagement.

Deren's concept of narrative progression has particular significance for the makers of screen-based dance work. First put forward as part of a symposium on poetry

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[14] *Kinetic Fields* was a one day symposium hosted by Chisenhale Dance Space, London, in May 2006

and film in 1953, her ideas were not initially well received. However her ideas have been subject to a more recent process of critical re-evaluation.[15] Deren characterises the concept of 'vertical' narrative progression as an associative, poetically-oriented exploration of the feeling states around a particular subject. In this state, the meanings inherent within the 'ramifications of the moment' are investigated in depth (in Jackson in Nichols, 2001, p.64). This image of 'vertical' progression was presented in contrast to the notion of 'horizontal' advancement. Deren characterised the latter as conventional linear narrative development, identifiably moving forward from one action-oriented point to another. Much has already been written on the issue of narrative progression within screen-based dance work. Sherril Dodds has outlined the relationship of various narrative categories, such as syntagmatic and paradigmatic, to dance work created for screen (2004, p.106). However, Deren's non-linear model of associative layering characteristic of 'vertical' progression has obvious significance for any analysis of such work. To this end, Deren's model will be applied as an evaluative framework to a range of pieces in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

Dai Vaughan has noted the difficulty of addressing the professional function of the film editor in the absence of a body of specialist discourse. To this end, he states that,

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[15] Annette Michelson has read Deren's model in relation to aspects of Roman Jakobson's writing in the field of linguistic theory (in Jackson in McPherson, 2001, p.65). Within the global screen-based dance community, parallels have also been identified between Deren's model of vertical progression and Deleuze's notion of the 'time-image' by Erin Brannigan (2002, contents/02/22/deren.html) and Tracie Mitchell (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.25)

even those who wished to discuss the editor found themselves somehow unable to do so. There was no tradition to draw upon, no corpus of received wisdom: simply no way of talking about films which would enable the editor's work to be mentioned.

(Vaughan cited in Ondaatje, 2002, p xi/xii)

Dance artists engaging with a conceptually-oriented approach to the creation of screen based work face a similar disadvantage to that of the film editors outlined above. In this regard, no terminology and little specialist discourse currently exists to describe or define their role. An investigation of Deren's appropriation of the term 'choreographic' to characterise her own approach to filmmaking can usefully illuminate this issue.

Deren has stated that cinema possesses 'a unique capacity for creating new temporal-spatial relationships' (in McPherson, 2005, p.29). She has further asserted that developing filmmakers would profit by studying either dance or music, which she characterises as 'the time arts' (p.131). Deren's linkage of the compositional processes common to dance, music and film is further explored in her writing. She asserts that her own conception and arrangement of visual elements are analogous to the way that a musical composition or dance work 'are composed of the elements of their respective forms' (p.159). This emphasis on form functions as a key component in Deren's articulation of her approach. With relevance to the analysis of much contemporary screen based work, she states that a formally-oriented compositional engagement can allow non-dance specific

movement content to be characterised as choreographic. Furthermore, she states that this process can be achieved by the interrelation of movements 'both immediately and over the film as a whole, according to a choreographic concept' (p.225). Deren appropriates and utilises this conceptually-oriented notion of the 'choreographic' in relation to her own screen based practice. Her characterisation, however, moves beyond a partial engagement with context. In this regard she asserts that choreographic practice for screen necessitates 'the use of the medium itself' (p.255). Deren states that this is achieved in her own films by means of an active exploration of the characteristics of the screen based context, which function as an integral element of the work. To this end, she has asserted that,

> the camera is not an observant, recording eye in the customary fashion. The full dynamics and expressive potentials of the total medium are ardently dedicated to creating the most accurate metaphor for the meaning.
>
> (Deren in McPherson, 2005, p.255)

This approach is presented in contrast to Deren's views on the more conventional filmic treatment of pre-existing dance work. She asserts that while dance 'would seem to profit most by cinematic treatment, (it) actually suffers miserably' (p.29). Her remedy for this is to move entirely beyond the conceptual framework of theatre dance towards an entirely screen-specific engagement. To this end, she states that a closer interrelation of the artforms of dance and film at a conceptual and operational level could provide a more fertile direction for new initiatives. This

is encapsulated in the assertion that, 'there *is* a potential filmic dance form, in which the choreography and movements would be designed, precisely, for the mobility and other attributes of the camera' (p.29).

Moira Sullivan has explored the differences in choreographic process required to create work within the contexts of theatre and film. She states that,

> the dance choreographer works within an essentially stable environment. Once the stage has been set, he is concerned with the arrangement of human figures on it, with their movements within that set location. The film-maker, however, arranges whatever he has in his frame - including the space, the trees, the animate and even the inanimate objects.
>
> (Sullivan in Nichols, 2001, p.216)

This area of difference has also been addressed by film maker Stan Brakhage. Brakhage has written with specific reference to the movement of the natural elements in Deren's *A Study in Choreography for the Camera* (1945), asserting that,

> when she pans across the trees in the beginning, they 'strobe' because she was shooting at the wrong speed. The effect is magical...They are in a state of dance.
>
> (Brakhage, 1989, p.98)

The notion of 'a state of dance' is an extremely significant concept in the investigation of screen based choreographic practice. It effectively moves beyond traditional parameters of choreographic engagement to allow for a range of evaluative strategies to be applied to human and non-human visual elements alike. In addition, Brakhage's view that the creative process is strongly informed by a focus on physical engagement has great relevance for the investigation of choreographic practice for screen. To this end, he has stated that art 'is the expression of the internal physiology of the artist' (in McPherson, 2001, p.124). This view finds further expression, with relevance to both filmmaker and viewer, in the assertion that 'as the eye moves, the body is in movement' (p.131). Brakhage has further expanded this physiologically-oriented characterisation of screen based work to specifically address the nature of screen-based dance. Here, he conjectures that,

> cinematic dancing might be said to occur as any filmmaker is moved to include his whole physiological awareness in any film movement - the movement of any part of *his* body in the filmmaking.
>
> (Brakhage in McPherson, 2001, p.132)

Brakhage's notion arrives at a characterisation of screen based dance which is far removed from a conventional choreographic standpoint. However, it has enormous significance for an enhanced understanding of the processes involved in an identification of choreographic practice for screen.

2.4 Contemporary practice and theory

A range of issues emerging from the field of practice theory and contemporary screen-related practice are now examined. Practice theory is informed by a disparate range of disciplines, including philosophy and the social sciences. Charles Schatzki has observed that while there is no 'unified practice approach', this field is primarily concerned with the analysis of 'arrays of human activity' (in Schatzki, Knorr Cetina and Von Savigny, 2001, p.2). The range of function explored within the field therefore has particular relevance to the enquiry. In this regard, the issues examined provide an approach to the identification of the differing processes comprising screen based choreographic practice. The notion of pattern recognition and an open-ended and intuitively-driven creative approach, as addressed by Andrew Pickering, Karin Knorr Cetina and Charles Spinoza, are explored. From the field of contemporary screen-related practice, the writing of film editor Walter Murch and the recent research by dance artist and film editor Karen Pearlman are also examined. Murch and Pearlman's ideas have been highlighted in recognition of the pivotal role played by editing as a function of screen based choreographic practice. This finds expression in Rosemary Lee's view that 'the "real choreography" takes place in the edit suite' (in Lockyer in Mitoma, 2002, p.159). This view also echoes the prominence of the editing process in the creation of my own screen based work. Susan Melrose's articulation of the notion of professional intuition is also outlined. This notion runs as a unifying thread throughout the section, linking ideas from the field of practice theory with Murch and Pearlman's approach to editing.

The role of professional intuition has been addressed by Susan Melrose within a context of contemporary performance making. In *The Eventful Articulation of Singularities - or, Chasing Angels* (2003, www.sfmelrose.unet.com/ chasingangels), Melrose characterises an expert-practitioner ethos comprising, 'ethical engagement, sensing, intuitive play, drive and attitude' (p.2). In *Who Knows - and Who Cares (about performance mastery)?* (2003,www.mdx.ac.uk/ www/epai/virtuosity/performancemastery), Melrose proposes that these attributes could be integrated into a creative modality employing ' "sensing", "resonance" and "recognition of empirical fit" operating through a multi-dimensional schematics or pattern recognition' (p.2). From the field of practice theory, the writing of Karin Knorr Cetina can also be applied to the working practices of the arts practitioner/researcher. Knorr Cetina posits the question 'how can one theorise practice in a way that allows for the engrossment and excitement - the emotional basis - of research work?' (in Schatzki, 2001, p.175). She expands the enquiry to include, 'what characterization of practice might make the notion more dynamic?' (p.175) In terms which have a clear resonance with Melrose's notion of the professional 'sensing' and 'intuitive play' of arts practitioners, the issue is addressed by noting 'the dissociative dynamic that comes into play when practice ceases to be a procedural routine' (p.178). Knorr Cetina also introduces the concept of 'a chain of wantings' (p.186). This, she argues, problematises 'the traditional vocabulary of motives, intentions and actions,' by suggesting, 'whole series of moves and their underlying dynamic' underpinned by 'a libidinal dimension of knowledge activities' (p.186). In terms which, again, strongly

resonate with the process of artistic creation, Knorr Cetina states that this chain of wanting, 'implies a continually renewed interest in knowing that appears never to be fulfilled by final knowledge' (p.186). Andrew Pickering has observed that visual interfaces developed partly as a result of the failure of artificial intelligence to recognise patterns, and therefore characterises the phenomenon of pattern recognition as, 'one of the mental tasks that human beings are especially good at' (in Schatzki, 2001, p.169). Walter Murch also acknowledges the importance of pattern recognition within the process of film editing. Murch, echoing Melrose's earlier assertion, states that his own practice is concerned with 'the search for patterns, at both the superficial and even deeper levels' (in Ondaatje, p.10). The issue of professional intuition is also echoed and expanded in Murch's writing. He has identified three stages of his own approach to his craft, beginning with a set of technically and logistically-oriented tasks, and ending with an analytically-based approach to composing material. The intervening stage, which Murch refers to as 'the "performance" of editing', is characterised as comprising a series of more subjectively-oriented processes (in Koppelman, 2005, p.206). This stage of the process is described as involving a range of specialist procedures, including,

> selecting takes ... putting them in their proper places relative to each other, and intuiting how long to hold each one before cutting to the next.
>
> (Koppelman, 2005, p.206)

Murch makes explicit his own reliance on intuitive processes as part of his professional role. He states that editing is 'not so much a putting together as it is a

discovery of a path' (Murch, 2001, p.3/4). This assertion recalls Knorr Cetina's concept of a libidinally-motivated dynamic process, which comprises a chain of wantings and a 'continually renewed interest' (p.186). Murch elaborates on this sense of open-endedness within his process by asserting that, 'wanting something just gives me the starting point. I expect the material itself to tell me what to do next' (p.109). This reliance on a subjective and intuitive approach reaches its natural conclusion as he states that,

> sometimes...this process reaches the point where I can look at the scene
> and say, 'I didn't have anything to do with that - it just created itself.
>
> (Murch, 2001, p.50)

Murch's writing on his own practice as a highly specialised film editor can usefully be applied to the notion of editing as a function of choreographic practice, not least when he states that editing 'is a kind of frozen dance' (p.94). Elaborating on this image, he states that, in relation to his own editing practice, which takes place within the context of feature film 'characters can be *seen to think* at even the subtlest level, and these thoughts can then be choreographed' (p.143). Much of Murch's writing on the particular craft of editing, as distinct from the director's role within feature film production, is directly applicable to this choreographic sensibility. Murch's practice is also revealed to have much in common with the operational choices facing the choreographer working within a screen-based context. This is apparent in the assertion that the process of editing is 'a mosaic in three dimensions, two of space and one of time' (p.268). Further establishing

areas of common ground with screen-based dance editing, Murch poses the question, 'where do you end the shot?' (p.267). This is an issue which carries particular weight in the editing of movement work. In providing an answer, the explicitly performative element of Murch's cutting practice is made clear in the assertion that 'at the moment of making the choice it is more spontaneous, like performing a musical improvisation' (p.239).

Charles Spinoza has written that, 'practices tend towards their own elaboration ... regardless of our explicit intentions' (in Schatzki, 2001, p.200). This notion of an expansive and self-generating array of activity finds endorsement in Murch's view on directing practice. In relation to this professional role, Murch has stated that, 'the most important distinction is whether you allow the process to become an active collaborator in the making of the film' (in Ondaatje, 2002, p.217). Murch thus promotes the sense that the reining in of this natural tendency towards elaboration is a choice between options. Murch's statement also suggests that this choice potentially requires more effort than engagement with a more organically-oriented procedural interplay. Spinoza has also asserted that ' once skills become habitual, they continuously draw us to recognize things relevant to the skill or practice that before we could have passed over' (p.200). This assertion finds endorsement in Murch's characterization of his editing practice. In attempting to promote flexibility and spontaneity as a means to enhance intuitive function, he records that he takes note of, 'chance juxtapositions of images'. These juxtapositions, he asserts, occur and, 'are revealed in the process of working with the material as it is actually shot' (p.220). This approach, Murch believes, places

him closer to the working practices of a documentary filmmaker. This, he asserts, manifests in the deliberate eschewing of any preconceptions relating to a pre-determined end point for the material. This stance is encapsulated in Murch's assertion that, 'I treat footage as if it's a found object ' (in Koppelman, 2005, p.325).

Recent research by Australian dance artist and editor Karen Pearlman has focussed specifically on the relationship of choreographic practice to the shaping of image based material through editing. Pearlman emphasises the overlap in function and approach between the dance-trained artist and the film editor in the assertion that both 'think "somatically" ' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.57). This, Pearlman attests, arises from a basis of intuitively-oriented neurological functioning, common to both professional roles. To this end, she states that 'various brain functions that respond physically to movement ... inform their intuition' (p.54). Pearlman asserts that her professional background in dance has equipped her to respond in this way. Furthermore, she states that this influences her editing practice to the extent that 'my body tenses and relaxes responsively to what I see' (p.55). This, she attests, is analogous to the professional role of the film editor in working with movement material. Here, she argues, a film editor also utilises physiological response 'as a form of thinking or intuiting about what duration, emphasis or direction ... feels right'. Echoing Deren's appropriation of the term 'choreographic', and Murch's characterisation of a 'frozen dance', Pearlman characterises an editor's professional function as one which 'actively "choreographs" movement'. This choreographic engagement is characterised as a

dynamic process, which comprises differing strands of function. She asserts that within a choreographically-oriented reading of the editing process, fragments of material are purposely connected. This, she attests, requires an engagement with a number of choreographically-derived processes, which include an attendance to 'rises and falls of emphasis, direction and speed changes, size, shape and performance' (p.55).

Pearlman has further explored the choreographic potential of the editing process by focussing on the rhythmic component of screen based visual composition. To this end, she has identified three distinct rhythmic categories within film editing. These she identifies as 'event rhythm, physical rhythm and emotional rhythm' (undated, www.dancefilms.org/Abouteducation.html ,p.1). In Pearlman's investigation of this concept, she asserts that the element of physical rhythm is frequently privileged within screen-based dance. Pearlman elaborates on this notion by outlining the primacy of internal rhythmic patterning, achieved by means of the cut itself. This, she attests, is essential to accessing the intrinsic phrasing of the movement material.[16] In terms which echo Murch's notion of "the performance" of editing', Pearlman expands on the physiologically-oriented musical correspondences inherent within the process, which she describes as 'Singing the Rhythm'. This process is further characterised by Pearlman as 'tuning one's own

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[16] This issue has also been explored by a number of British screen-based dance practitioners, including Billy Cowie and Katrina McPherson. Cowie emphasises the primacy of what he refers to as the 'internal musicality' of movement phrasing, arguing against the imposition of externally-driven compositional constraints by stating that 'it is all too easy to let a choreography hang on a musical framework' (Aggiss, Cowie with Bramley, 2006, p.93). McPherson also emphasises the relationship between editing movement material and musical composition, stating that in the assembling of footage 'the clips become like notes, phrases or samples that can be repeated and looped' (2006, p.188).

physical rhythms to the rhythms being perceived in the filmed material (undated, www.dancefilms.org/Abouteducation.html, p.3).

2.5 Conclusion

A series of key ideas identified in the previous sections will be applied to the analysis of a wide range of work in subsequent chapters. These include the notion of a spectrum of choreographic practice for screen, where a number of conclusions can usefully be drawn relating to the contemporary context of moving image production. Any investigation of contemporary screen based choreographic practice requires to be located within a historical context. This context acknowledges the impact of the conceptually-oriented creative strategies and technologically-mediated potentialities available to dance makers operating in the post-Judson era. In Chapters Three, Four and Five, a range of moving image work will be examined in order to determine its relationship to, and location within, the spectrum of choreographic practice.

With regard to the writing of the classical film theorists in relation to choreographic practice, there is a discernible shared preoccupation with defining the essential nature of the filmic medium. This manifests in the exploration of themes such as the expression of inner states; the expressive potentialities inherent within the technical capabilities of the medium; the importance of establishing a separate identity distinct from theatre practice, and an appreciation of the possibilities afforded by a non-linear approach to image creation. These ideas will be examined in relation to a wide variety of moving image work, which is analysed in

subsequent chapters. In particular, the writing of these theorists will be used as a means of establishing a set of evaluative criteria to determine the specificity of work to its screen context. This evaluative mechanism will be utilised in order to distinguish screen based choreographic practice from processes deriving solely from traditions associated with live theatre-based performance. In Chapter Four, Münsterberg's concepts of non-linear progression are applied to the work of Wim Vandekeybus, while Balázs' setting out of the notions of scale have particular relevance to the work of Édouard Lock. In the same chapter, Kracauer's views on the necessity of movement arising from context are applied to the work of Lea Anderson and Rosemary Lee. Eisenstein's notions of polyphonic montage and simultaneity are examined in relation to the work of Becky Edmunds and Katrina McPherson respectively. Eisenstein's outlining of the nature of micro and macro-montage creation is also explored and adapted in relation to choreographic practice for screen in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

In relation to the concepts of Deren and Brakhage, it is noteworthy that Deren's writing elaborates on several of the key issues addressed in section 2.1, such as a preoccupation with the primacy of time and space. However Deren's outlining of these issues moves beyond these concerns to set out her own notion of an identifiably screen-related choreographic sensibility. In particular, Deren's articulation of this territory can be seen to advance the debate in relation to engagement at a conceptual level with the medium. In Chapters Three, Four and Five, these concepts will be applied to the analysis of a range of work as a means

of determining the nature of choreographic process occurring within a screen context.

The issue of professional intuition, as articulated by Melrose, is a pivotal concept in relation to the creation of my own programme of screen based work. While it is not possible to assess the level of engagement with intuitive processing in the analysis of work by other practitioners, it is equally impossible to address my own creative process without recourse to this notion. This concept is therefore examined in Chapter Five in relation to each stage of development of my own programme of practice-as-research. This intuitively-governed approach to the processes involved in composition through editing is also of prime importance in the creation of my own work. To this end, Murch and Pearlman's writing on an improvisationally-oriented approach are examined in relation to my own editing practice in Chapter Five. The approach to the analysis of an array of processes, exemplified by the writing from the field of practice theory, provides a model for the identification of the differing strands of function involved in screen based choreographic practice. This array of function, which includes the notions of rhythmic patterning; kinetic resonance and pattern recognition, as outlined by Murch, Pearlman and Pickering respectively, is outlined in further detail in Chapter Six.

In order to address the issue of identification of choreographic sensibility, a programme of analysis, underpinned by this range of critical perspectives, will begin in the next chapter. This analysis will be applied to a range of work drawn

from a variety of genres within the field of moving image production, including

animation; video art; music video and feature film.

Chapter Three
Moving Image Practice:
an Analysis

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on identifying aspects of choreographic practice, particular to a screen context, occurrent across a range of moving image production. To this end, work from a variety of screen-based media, including animation, music video, video art and feature film, will be examined. In order to illuminate this practice, the writing of Maya Deren, Stan Brakhage and Sergei Eisenstein, as outlined in Chapter Two, will be drawn upon. The analysis will explore the extent to which a choreographic impact can be detected in the creation of work which has not necessarily been designated as screen-based dance. This notion has particular significance in relation to the writing of Alla Kovgan (2006, www.dvpg.net/ essays.html, p.49 –53), as outlined in Chapter One. Kovgan's system of categorisation includes the use of a range of functions associated with film production and visual arts practice. These include *mise-en-scene*; composition by means of editing and composition of visual elements within the frame. This range of classification will therefore be employed as a means of evaluating work from a choreographically-oriented perspective. Links between the range of moving image work examined and examples of contemporary screen-based dance practice analysed in subsequent chapters will also be identified in order to highlight common choreographically-relevant sensibilities. Biographical details of the film makers referred to in this chapter are included as Appendix D. It is also worthy of note, however, that while the range of moving image examined within this chapter

would not necessarily be regarded by its creators as screen based dance, it is apparent that such boundaries are becoming ever more permeable. Viewed from within the parameters of contemporary screening contexts, curators such as Alla Kovgan for the Kinodance Festival in St Petersburg and Pascale Moyse for the Moves Festival in Britain are selecting work from across a range of moving image categorisations. This strand of curatorial policy-making has seen the inclusion of work drawn from non dance-designated genres, such as animation and feature film, to the specialist forums of the global screen dance festival circuit (undated, www.kinodance.com/russia and undated, www.movementonscreen.org.uk).

3.1 Animation, music video and video art

British director Peter Greenaway has argued that most current film functions primarily as 'illustrated text' (2003, www.petergreenaway.co.uk/essay3.htm). He elaborates that the conventions of narrative cinema have failed to move beyond the literary structures employed by writers such as Dickens and Tolstoy in the 19th century, and subsequently adopted by the pioneers of cinema, such as W.D. Griffiths, in the early part of the 20th. Greenaway also posits that the most interesting developments in the field of moving image have taken place in other genres such as video art, animation and Internet-based work. To this end, he states that 'new technologies have prepared and empowered the human imagination in new ways' (Internet 2). Greenaway's expansion of the range of possibilities for the future of screen based practice has obvious implications for those working in the field of screen-based dance. Consequently, a range of work from the non-text-based fields of animation, music video and video art will now be

examined. This examination constitutes the first stage of investigation into areas of convergence between aspects of screen based choreographic practice and the creation of moving image work.

This investigation begins with an examination of the work of New Zealand-born visual artist and kinetic sculptor Len Lye, whose output spanned most of the 20th century. Lye created a visually distinctive style of animation by using a range of techniques such as painting and scratching to inscribe markings directly onto celluloid. This resulted in the creation of the so-called 'direct film' which was created without using a camera. Lye's works are often a visual response to, and synchronised with, a particular piece of music. In this regard, there are conceptual parallels with an animated feature from the Walt Disney Studios, such as *Fantasia* (1940). This is discernible in a shared concern with manifesting a visual representation through on-screen movement to a specific musical stimulus. In contrast to Disney's choice of classically-oriented music and popularly recognisable visual imagery, Lye's artistic concerns remained entirely with the *avant-garde*. In *Colour Cry* (1952), Lye uses a blues track performed by Sonny Terry. He contrasts blocks of vivid colour which fill the screen space, with floating spheres and mutating vertical lines and grid patterns. There is a constant sense of fluidity and expansiveness to the piece, suggestive of the musical cadences of Terry's harmonica, and with a sense that the visual landscape extends beyond the limits of the screen. Lye's imagery, with its hypnotically and constantly shifting travelling pathways, appears to trick the viewer's eye into this sense of movement across and beyond the screen. *Free Radicals (*1958), makes use of African drum

music, setting starkly monochrome visual elements against the rhythmic changes and dynamics of the musical beat. Many of the visual and stylistic features of *Free Radicals* are revisited in *Particles in Space*, from 1979. In the later piece an abstract soundscape is generated by Lye's kinetic sculptures, freeing the onscreen movement from the harness of a pre-existing musical structure. In both works, scratches, specks and particles coalesce and disintegrate, mimicking natural processes such as flocking birds and rising bubbles. Rapidly evolving string-like structures generate into star formations and rotate through three hundred and sixty degrees. Both pieces resonate strongly with a sense of the inherent instability of matter and of physical form, as particles cohere and then re-amass in constant motion. This sense of motion permeates Lye's work, made manifest by the graphic elements themselves, as well as through the movement pathways created for viewers' eye. This exemplifies Kovgan's notion of choreography through the use of visual effects, characterised as choreographing 'movement in the space of the frame as if on canvas' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.52) Lye's output has been highly influential on many artists working in different disciplines. An example of his stylistic influence within a contemporary screen-based dance context is explored in Chapter Four, by means of analysis of Magali Charrier's *Tralala* (2004).

A consideration of choreographic sensibility within a screen context can also draw upon the relationship of movement to the genre of music video. Research into this area has already been undertaken within the field of screen-based dance scholarship. However, a focused exploration on the work of an individual artist can

provide particular insights into the notion of choreographic practice for screen.[17]

As a director of both music videos and, more recently, feature films, Michel

Gondry has worked in collaboration with choreographer Blanca Li for *Around the*

World (1997). Gondry has also generated a range of work within his music video

output without the services of a designated choreographer, but where a

choreographic eye is arguably in evidence in the overall composition of the piece.

In *Star Guitar (*2002), the work takes the form of the view from a train window.

While the viewing position remains constant throughout, the landscape is

constantly moving and changing, subtly linked to the musical development of the

track. Gondry uses a mixture of real footage and computer generated imagery,

which has been extensively manipulated post-production. This results in an almost

poetic approach to the synthesis of often visually unappealing elements, as the

train passes through a run-down, post-industrial and at times semi-derelict

landscape. Differing beats within the musical track are reflected in the number of

visual elements represented at any given time, and the distorting effect of speed

and motion within the image of the train journey are represented by the looping

and extending of visual material. The piece achieves realisation of an apparently

simple concept through the complex arrangement of visual elements, in response

to musical stimulus. The image of the journey through continuously unfolding

landscape, viewed from an unchanging single vantage point, promotes a strong

sense of expansiveness and motion which is strongly communicated to the viewer.

This sense of physiological engagement resonates with Stan Brakhage's assertion

that 'as the eye moves, the body is in movement' (Brakhage in McPherson, 2001,

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[17] Existing research in this area includes analyses by Theresa Buckland (Jordan and Allen, 1993)
and Sherril Dodds (2004).

p.124). Brakhage's own filmmaking aspiration to create, 'a "music" for the eyes' is also brought to mind (p.211). *Star Guitar* also provided a strong influence on the creation of my own work *15.12* (2006), which is discussed in further detail in Chapter Five.

In *Come Into My World* (2002), which Gondry directed as a promotional video for recording artist Kylie Minogue, a street scene is created. Here, a series of recognisably everyday elements are manipulated to absurdist levels, creating what Gondry himself refers to as 'a complex urban choreography' (2003, DVD notes). The piece utilises a gestural and non-specialist movement vocabulary. During the course of the video, which was filmed in a single continuous take, Minogue completes four circuits of a looping pathway. Initially emerging from a shop doorway, she is seen negotiating her way around and through a number of distinctively recognisable characters and situations. Each is engaged in a variety of activities found in a contemporary city street setting, such as skateboarding, bill posting, shopping, walking and driving. Each time that Minogue repeats the circuit, passing the original point of entry, an additional version of herself appears to join in the circular progression. This proliferation is echoed and repeated in the doubling, tripling and, in some cases, quadrupling of visual elements and passers-by evident in each circuit. Gondry uses a variety of strategies to this end, in some cases simply multiplying each element by adding an additional figure to the increasing subset of traffic-wardens, lovers seated on a bench and bill-posters. A man in a wheelchair can be spotted at several different points in the act of crossing a road, placed in differing spatial and temporal relationships to the

viewpoint of the camera. Elements also reappear at different points in the cityscape, such as a green Smart car, which negotiates a cumulative path within the circuit. Minogue's movement also develops with each circuit, as a dropped clutch bag is retrieved by a later version of herself at the same location. An initial solo spin at arms length from a lamppost develops with each progression into a complex interweaving of ducking under and around, and of interaction with the original figure. The clear colour coding aids in the process of identification of each of the elements, and in tracking the increasing levels of visual complexity as the video progresses and builds. In *Come Into My World,* a reading in relation to choreographic practice moves into recognisable post-Judson era territory, as referred to in Chapter Two. Everyday, minimalist movement of the human body is firmly embedded as a creative focal point in the work. The compositional layering of visual elements is developed by the identifiably post-modern choreographic strategies of repetition and accumulation.

The use of a moving camera is particularly striking in British-based video artist Tony Hill's *Downside Up* (1984). In this work, the constantly travelling camera captures a variety of scenes, some of exterior rural or urban locations, and some in intimate and domestic interior spaces. Scenes vary from day to night, often featuring families or children engaged in inconsequential pastimes such as watching television, playing with puzzles, riding bikes or on a fairground carousel. The scenes featured have a documentary, rather than dramatised, feel. Hill's conception and execution of the camera movement provides an arresting example

of framing and visual interaction, as the camera is continuously in the process of rising or lowering. A kinetic quality reminiscent of slow-motion bungee-jumping or of a seesaw action is in evidence, as the camera must always reach the height of its ascent before beginning a descent. As the gaze of the viewer is positioned with that of the camera throughout, a strongly physiological viewing response is engendered. Initially, scenes appear as though the camera has emerged from an underground starting point, by travelling up through darkened strata of rock, grass or floorboards. Hill later develops motion beyond this seesaw effect and has the camera travel up and overhead to present an inverted visual perspective, while simultaneously playing with timing to speed or slow its journey. A swinging midpoint is reached, poised between upper and underworld dimensions, as scenes are contrasted from an upright or inverted placing in relation to the camera's journey. Aural effects are used playfully, effectively and evocatively, with sounds from nature in outdoors scenes contrasted with street and traffic noise. A telephone repeatedly rings and is answered during a quick series of swings between interchanging scenes. The quality of the sound is also changeable in relation to the proximity of the camera positioning, which reinforces the effect of motion for the viewer. Hill's technical and conceptual achievement with *Downside Up* lies in the creation of what appears at first to be sequential glimpses of naturalistic settings which are gradually manipulated into a highly constructed world. This world is seemingly at odds with the nature of physical reality, and realised without any deviation from the minimalist trajectory of the constantly moving camera. Parallels with Hill's work and contemporary screen-based practice

are investigated in Chapter Four, through an analysis of Simon Aeppli and Nic Sandiland's *Exosphere* (2002).

In *Laws of Nature* (1996), Hill takes a more overtly lyrical approach to the filming of a natural environment, with interwoven shots of sky, water, trees and rocks. Hill also employs a soundtrack made up of natural effects and of the wordless singing of a female voice. Images of animals and flowers are contrasted with the extremes of the seasons, in shots highlighting the whiteness of snow and the yellow of dandelions. Hill also places a variety of human figures within his landscapes. Framing is concentrated in a number of instances on extreme close-up shots of disembodied feet and hands, as they find a means of habitation and interconnection within a natural setting. Tactile exploration is also augmented by other senses as ears and tongues make contact with rock and bark. Many of the human presences appear as ghostlike multiple-images, as they travel along pathways, or through rocks, suggestive of the impermanence of the human lifespan in contrast to the surrounding landscape. In a number of strikingly framed sequences, feet repeatedly step over a ground level camera position. A pair of legs and feet land, planted within the open vista of a landscape, arriving with a jump from an overhead vantage point. The camera tracks the progress of this figure as it walks, sometimes following behind, or moving ahead, highlighting the progress of its moving shadow. This interplay between the motion of the camera and the human subject is also used in a sequence where a running figure weaves through a group of trees in a curving pathway, captured by the also-moving camera, creating a doubled sensation of motion within the static landscape. Hills

also makes use of technical means to speed up motion beyond normal physical limitations as a female figure turns, impossibly quickly, framed through a grouping of trees. Hill's use of a minimalist movement vocabulary, consisting of running, walking, spinning, jumping and lying is particularly successful when placed against the visual richness of natural locations. Hill's work has served as a strong influence on my own practice, particularly in relation to the series of nature-based works such as *Mid-October* (2005) and *April/May* (2006), which are discussed in Chapter Five.

The range of approaches apparent in the use of movement within this cross-section of work requires contextualisation in the light of the characteristics of choreographic practice already outlined in Chapter Two. In addition, they require to be considered from within the parameters of Kovgan's classification of screen based choreography. While this range of work is not concerned with the making of dance steps, the artists all share a level of engagement with spatial and temporal composition within a screen space. This engagement, however, is expressed in a range of divergent ways. In Lye's animation, no human bodies are visible on screen, and the intersection with choreographic practice lies directly within the artist's manipulation of graphic elements in relation to musical and aural accompaniment. In addition to locating the work within Kovgan's definition of screen based choreography through technologically-mediated visual composition, further choreographically-related links can be identified within the conceptual framing of early film theory. Sergei Eisenstein has written that 'the art of plastic composition consists in leading the spectator's attention through the exact path

and with the exact sequence prescribed by the author of the composition' (1943, p.148). This function of leading the viewer's eye through the screen space can also be clearly discerned within Lye's work. Considered from a choreographically-aware perspective, this practice could also be described as choreographing the pathway of the viewer's eye, and is also notably achieved by Gondry and Hill, in *Star Guitar* and *Downside Up*. In *Star Guitar*, Gondry retains a single static camera position while landscape changes and unfolds continuously in relation to the viewing perspective. In *Downside Up,* the use of a constantly-moving camera supersedes the primacy of the human body as a compositional element within the work. In Gondry's *Come Into My World* and Hill's *Laws of Nature*, a reading in relation to choreographic practice moves into identifiably post-Judson and post-modern compositional territory. Minimalist, non-specialist movement vocabulary is utilised as an integral element within the work, and set against recognisably urban and rural locations, respectively. This effectively exemplifies Deren's outlining of the ways in which non-dance specific movement content can be characterised as choreographic, which is described as an interrelation of movement within the structure of a work ' according to a choreographic concept' (in McPherson, 2005, p.225). The physical journey of the camera undertaken in *Come Into My World,* together with the accretion of visual elements, also provides clear illustration of Kovgan's notion of choreography through the use of *mise-en-scene*, characterised as 'choreography of space within the film frame' (2006, www.dvpg.net/ essays.html, p.49). Maya Deren has also stated that 'the best study for the embryonic filmmaker is one of the time arts - i.e., the dance or music' (p.18). The

inventive marriage of musical and visual structuring evident within Gondry's work endorses the importance of this point of creative intersection.

3.2 Feature film

While a variety of intersection points are readily apparent between choreographic practice and a range of non-text-based work created for screen, the next section of this chapter will examine a range of examples of feature film production which have been created over the last twenty years in Europe and North America. The use of movement and dance within a context of dialogue-driven narrative progression sets a particular set of creative challenges for the film maker. All four of the films examined take a non-traditional approach to the issue of narrative structure, albeit manifest in a wide variety of strategies and approaches.

Philip Szporer has written that the Canadian director François Girard began his filmmaking career 'as a video artist working experimentally with short dramas, architectural films, and dance films and video' (in Mitoma, 2002, p.172). This background and supporting knowledge of dance are apparent on a variety of levels in *Thirty-two Short Films about Glenn Gould* (1993), which is subsequently referred to as *Thirty-two Short Films*. The film conforms at a basic level to the convention of a chronological progression which charts a man's life from childhood to death. Girard, however, moves beyond a traditional, literary-influenced engagement with biographical narrative by adopting a purposely fragmented structure. This structure mixes conventions, textures and formats into a distinctively filmic synergistic whole. The process of fragmentation also reflects

aspects of Gould's character and life, which are structurally linked and determined by his playing of Bach's Goldberg Variations.

Girard's links with screen based dance are apparent both stylistically and operationally in a number of the film's sections. Distinctive use is made of a moving camera as it circles around the character of Gould in the section entitled 'Practice'. As Gould 'conducts' the polyphony of voices comprising his radio documentary, the camera slowly circles downwards and towards him from above. Gould's character is also filmed in slow motion, with arms moving, his attention entirely absorbed within the playback of his own performance inside a music studio. The section of the film titled '45 Seconds and a Chair' places the seated figure of Gould within an otherwise empty room. Here, the camera pans in to an extended facial close-up, as Gould's gaze locks with the camera/viewer, before his eyes close. The same wordless and visually striking minimalist sensibility is utilised in the opening and closing sections of film, where, the lone, black-clad figure of Gould is set within a frozen snowscape. A contrast in scale is made evident, as the vertical figure first approaches and then recedes from the static camera position, which is set within the expansive horizontal of the whitened plain.

Writing on the effectiveness of the process of montage, Eisenstein has written that an image 'enters the consciousness and perception *through aggregation*' (1943, p.23). By means of proximity and accretion, *Thirty-two Short Films'* disparate sections achieve a similar end, thereby illustrating Eisenstein's view that as spectators, 'we are accustomed to make, almost automatically, a definite and

obvious deductive generalization when any separate objects are placed before us side by side' (p.14). *Thirty-two Short Films* can also be seen to conform to Eisenstein's outlining of the notion of both micro- and macro-montage. These notions are characterised respectively as the assemblage of individual shots, and 'a compositional combining of several *scenes*, of whole *parts* of a complete work' (1991, p.109). The compositional structure of the film can also be seen to relate to Deren's articulation of the choreographic within a screen context. Deren's linkage of the compositional processes common to dance, music and film finds strong resonance within the work, where the layering of visual material corresponds to a musical framework (in McPherson, 2005, p.159).

British director Mike Figgis' *Timecode* (2000) splits the screen into four sections, with each housing a single, continuous take. Each of these takes has been filmed simultaneously on digital video in real time over the course of ninety three minutes. Gregory Currie writes on the perception of time in relation to film viewing that 'film ... does not represent things as co-occurent with our watching' (1995, p.281). *Timecode* explicitly and purposely uses technological and artistic means to move into an expanded realm of viewing engagement. Figgis' background and experience as a musician and composer are apparent in the film's execution. This is also evident in his chosen method of composition, which is the arrangement of ideas on music sheets. In its simultaneous progression, *Timecode's* four coexistent narrative segments fulfil Eisenstein's definition of the function of a strand of montage, which he states is 'to build the *total line* as well as to continue the movement within *each of the contributory themes*' (1943, p.65). Figgis'

concept, however, dispenses with any need for cutting between shots. It thus makes strikingly innovative use of the filmmaking possibilities afforded by digital technology to create new narrative possibilities.

The film's opening credit sequence is a visual and aural realisation of the overall concept. Set against a jazz score, partly composed by Figgis himself, abstracted shapes of neon light in a variety of colours flash across the four sections of the screen. These alternate with numerals and close-ups of recording equipment display panels, suggestive of a sense of technologically-mediated fragmentation, disconnection and alienation. The continuous narrative begins and ends with a character played by Saffron Burrows, situated in the top right hand quarter of the screen. The narrative progresses as the other three quarters are gradually filled with sporadically interlocking characters and storylines. Although the four visual strands remain in place throughout the film, Figgis has the task of weaving audible dialogue in and out of sections in order to allow the narrative thread to remain comprehensible.

At various points in the film, Figgis has the camera move within each section in turn, leading and directing the pathway of the viewer's eye between each of the four quarters. This also affords the possibility of showing differing points of view centring on the same event, as though seen through the eyes of different characters. Personnel entering the production company offices are shown in different quarters of the screen, filmed from the side and also from the back, thereby creating a disconcertingly unfamiliar multiple viewpoint. Two characters,

inhabiting discrete quarters of screen space, collide, and as viewers we are shown the event from each character's perspective. As a movie pitch takes place in the production offices, viewers see two visual impressions of the same event unfolding, with one screen quarter offering the blurred vision of a single character's viewpoint. The issues of simultaneity and subjectivity apparent within *Timecode* are also examined in relation to their potential for adaption as choreographic devices through analysis of Simon Fildes and Katrina McPherson's *The Truth: The Truth* (2004) in Chapter Four. The same issues are also explored within my own work in the piece *Two Of Space and One of Time* (2006), which is discussed in Chapter Five.

Gregory Currie has written that 'to see *is* to see from a point of view. There is no such thing as nonperspectival seeing' (1995, p.178). This issue is at the forefront of Spanish director Julio Medem's *Lovers of the Arctic Circle* (1998). The work uses a cyclical approach to narrative advancement by alternating sections of the film as though from the viewpoint of each of the two protagonists. Visual images and themes such as coincidence, circularity, the cycle of life and death and the loss and durability of love, recur and develop throughout the film. The work moves beyond engagement with a traditional linear structure as a means of storytelling, instead interweaving a matrix of interlocking symbols and images. Eisenstein has noted that 'a refrain must be presented each time in a new light, with a new meaning' (1970, p.51). Medem uses this image of pursuit as a refrain throughout the film, each time framing running feet, and allowing the camera to move in order to convey a sense of disjointed and frantic motion. Images of flight also recur, in a

variety of guises, from paper aeroplanes to lost footballs, which are filmed in arcing sequences of airborne motion.

Everyday gestural movement in partnership with precise framing is used to advance the narrative. This is particularly apparent in a sequence which places the film's two main characters in close proximity to each other without allowing them to meet. Both characters are alternately seen walking through a public square as though towards one another. One decides on a diversion to a newspaper stand, disrupting the trajectory, while the other moves towards the camera to sit at an outdoor cafe table. Both arrive to sit at adjacent tables. In turn, both glance at figures in the crowd, apparently thinking they have caught sight of the other, and both look to the sky and lower their heads simultaneously as a plane flies overhead. Medem tightly frames the close-ups on heads and faces, contrasting the angle of each gaze. This sequence makes use of naturalistic, gestural movement in a way which moves close to a process of abstraction. This is reminiscent of the work of dance artists such as Lea Anderson in *Cross Channel* (1991), and echoes Anderson's injunction to 'look at sport or just people ... and see it as movement' (in Preston-Dunlop, 1995, p.415). The framing choices and use of close-ups of faces within this sequence was also highly influential in the creation of my own piece *Still* (2005), which is examined in Chapter Five.

In the United States-based director Richard Linklater's debut film, *Slacker* (1991), a large number of characters are shown progressing and interacting throughout the course of a day and night in Austin, Texas. The film's low-key visual style is

firmly rooted in the traditions and conventions of *avant-garde* and independent filmmaking. The performance style is mainly muted and downbeat, suggestive of non-professional performers. This further reinforces a sense that the film is appropriating the techniques associated with documentary form rather than conventional dramatically-oriented filmic production. Throughout the film, the camera tracks a seemingly unrelated stream of characters in their progression through the city streets. Its pathway diverges to follow new narrative threads as they appear, apparently inconsequentially, within the matrix of casual urban interrelations. The pace of the camera's progress matches the unhurried speed of the characters as they walk, cycle or cruise in cars along the arterial routes of the city's streets. A gang of overtly energised children briefly raise the pace of progress as they run and jump from one location to another. At the film's conclusion, a car, containing a group of young people with a home-movie camera, becomes the object of focus. This group is depicted as though from the perspective of the home-made film. This footage is jerky, and the camera is obviously hand-held, and verges on abstraction in its scatter-gun attention to the unrelated minutiae of detail observable from within the interior of the car. This focus includes the ring-pull of an aluminium can, the partially-visible head of a female passenger and the vertical lines of overhead bridge supports framed against the sky. Accompanied by a non-diegetic musical track, suggestive of archly retro-kitsch youthful exuberance, the footage depicts the passengers' journey from the car to the top of an outcrop of rocks. The music stops abruptly in mid-phrase, as the camera is thrown in slow motion over the outcrop in an arcing trajectory of movement. Viewers are presented with a series of images in silence,

suggestive of the camera's view in the process of its descent. Abstracted patterns of light, leaves and sky rapidly alternate before slowing to a series of gently curving lines as the journey, and the film, end in a black screen.

Each of these four films, when viewed from a choreographically-aware perspective, can be seen to exemplify aspects of choreographic practice for screen. Much of *Slacker's* focus lies in following the physical progression of the camera through urban space. However, the pacing of the character's interactions can be read in relation to a post-Judson sensibility. Kenneth King has outlined this in relation to the issue of movement vocabulary as 'colloquial, everyday movement' (2003, p.162), as noted in Chapter Two. It has also been characterised by Yvonne Rainer as a 'more banal quality of physical being' (in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.328). This compositional usage of everyday movement language can also be identified in Gondry's *Come Into My World*. *Thirty-two Short Films about Glenn Gould* contains sequences which have many stylistic parallels with areas of current screen-based dance practice. This is apparent in its precise and minimalist presentation of a range of imagery concerning the interrelation of the human body, internal and external landscape, animation and musical stimulus. In its engagement with the non-linear structure dictated by a musical form, *Thirty-two Short Films*, in common with *Timecode*, provides a striking example of Deren's assertion that the filmic structuring of visual elements is analogous to the way that a musical composition or dance work 'are composed of the elements of their respective forms' (in McPherson, 2005, p.159). This is particularly in evidence in *Timecode*. In the work's attention to the visual interplay between spatial and

temporal elements, Figgis' concept successfully achieves a means of creating a pathway for the viewer's eye across the screen space over the duration of the film. This focus on the composition of visual elements within the screen space is also strongly apparent in Lye's animations. This compositional focus can be read as a choreographically-relevant exemplification of Eisenstein's assertion that 'in cinema the word "path" is not used by chance. Nowadays it means the imaginary path followed by the eye' (1991, p.56). In the sequence where its two protagonists occupy adjacent spaces while failing to meet, *Lovers of the Arctic Circle* also provides a particularly striking exemplification of Michael Kustow's view that 'all films are camera choreography' (cited by de Marigny in Jordan and Allen, 1992, p.87). It is important to stress that these examples of practice are unlikely to be categorised by their creators or the majority of their viewers as dance films. However, areas of choreographically-relevant practice can be discerned. Although no codified dance steps are in evidence, choreographic practice can be identified in a number of ways. It appears in the innovative engagement with temporal and spatial concerns; in the use of everyday movement as a focal element in relation to the frame and the cut, and in the primacy of image-driven rather than text-driven narrative engagement.

Historically, the polarisation of choreographic function in relation to film can be detected in a variety of guises. Much has already been written on dance in the genre of mainstream Hollywood musicals, and, within this field, film historian John Kobal has classified the conventional step-making role as defining the

'choreographer in the true sense of the word' (1983, p.95). This privileging of the traditional occurs in contrast to Kobal's description of the spectacle-driven 'dance directors' (p.95) such as Albertina Rasch and Busby Berkeley, whose work emerged directly from their engagement with a screen context. Berkeley's innovative use of camera angles, which has been characterised by Kobal as liberating the camera 'from its conventional positions of seeing and recording' (p.95), locates his work as a pioneering exemplification of both Kustow's and Dodds' definition of screen choreography. Bob Lockyer has argued that 'in a perfect world, it is the choreographers who should direct' (in Jordan and Allen, 1992, p.144). Hollywood has already provided examples of this phenomenon, very notably in the body of film work created by Bob Fosse. Within his professional output, Fosse has occupied the dual roles of choreographer, in the traditional sense of step-maker, and of director. In *All That Jazz* (1979), Fosse combines both roles and makes use of the conventions of mainstream dramatic form. Dialogue is used as a means of narrative advancement within the film, but Fosse also utilises a number of striking devices which can be located within a more a visually-led tradition of storytelling.

In the film's opening sequence, footage of dancers preparing for a stage-set audition has a documentary feel. A series of close-ups focus on individuals engaged in practising specific movements such as stretching muscles and applying make-up. The film's central character is seen in close-up, crouching at the front of the stage. As the camera moves out and away, the overwhelming number of dancers are revealed, reinforced by an overhead shot emphasising the

density of bodies in motion. Fosse creates, by skilful use of montage, the experience of a 'cattle-call'. A number of devices are used to emphasise the repetitive nature of the processes involved, as movement combinations are repeated by different configurations of dancers. Short sequences of close-ups on individual performers are edited together to collapse a sense of time, and to produce the impression of a continuous stream of interchangeable humanity. The immobile figure of the film's central character is placed at the back of the stage as the dancers leap past him, and the camera is later positioned beneath the dancers as they jump. Much of this imagery has passed into the realm of visual cliché due to subsequent overuse. However, Fosse's level of directing experience is apparent in relation to the film's specificity for its screen context, with fluency and economy of style in visual storytelling greatly in evidence. Maya Deren has written on her adoption of the term 'choreographic' to describe her own filmic work, stating that it can be so categorised in as much as 'the full dynamics and expressive potentials of the total medium are ardently dedicated to creating the most accurate metaphor for the meaning' (in McPherson, 2005, p.255). Fosse's work in *All That Jazz*, while concerning itself thematically with the commercial end of the spectrum of film production, also demonstrably conforms to Deren's criteria. The fluency and economy employed within the pace of editing also locates Fosse's work within the territory of Kovgan's categorisation of screen based practice utilising the 'choreography of movement created through editing' (2006, www.dvpg.net/ essays.html, p.49).

A recent example of a reinvention of the musical form for mainstream Western film audiences was provided by Australian director Baz Luhrmann with *Moulin Rouge* in 2001. While John O'Connell created the steps for the performers, fulfilling the traditional role of the choreographer, Luhrmann's direction encompassed various strategies which can be read as demonstrating a choreographic sensibility. This is achieved using the practice of montage, specifically in the deployment of a high speed cutting rate. The focus on near-abstracted body-parts, transformed by a range of technical effects including slow-motion and purposely jerky movement, creates a dissociative, frenetic visual style. This style can more readily be associated with the genre of music video than feature film. Luhrmann also makes reference to a range of historical and contemporary cultural reference points within the musical numbers in the film. These reference points include the stereotype of the materialistic, gold-digging *femme fatale,* as personified by both Marilyn Monroe in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953) and by Madonna in her promotional video for *Material Girl* (1985). The cast also performs a range of obviously anachronistic pop songs from a timespan of the last fifty years. In a pastiche version of Madonna's *Like A Virgin*, a chorus of dancing waiters utilise the conventionally technical movement vocabulary of high kicks, spins and jumps which comprise the movement vocabulary of much mainstream musical theatre. In particular the scene is reminiscent of production numbers such as the rooftop-jumping chimney sweeps in *Mary Poppins* (1964) and the restaurant sequence from *Hello Dolly* (1969). The film's central musical number uses the dance form of tango, emphasising through introductory dialogue its origin in Argentinean brothels. Luhrmann uses these associations to exemplify the conflict driving the film's

narrative arc, intercutting the development of the number's choreographic content with non-dance related footage. This advances the narrative progression, building, by means of montage, to a simultaneous dramatic and choreographic endpoint. The movement begins as a duet, subsequently rendered as multiple pairings. Overhead shots are mixed with close-ups of the dancers' feet and faces. These framing choices emphasise the extreme nature of the physical closeness required by the choreography and of the emotional and physical intensity of the form. Read from a choreographically-aware perspective, Luhrmann's use of dance in *Moulin Rouge* develops many of the conventions and codes familiar to audiences from the genre of the Hollywood musical. This is achieved by engagement with an overtly commercially oriented style of montage creation. However the viewing experience relies to a large extent on intertextual, or self-reflexive and associative matrix of references rather than a primary engagement with the creative possibilities presented by the filming of movement.[18]

Fosse's dual role as step-maker and camera choreographer can be seen distinctively to encompass the full spectrum of choreographic practice for screen. However, Luhrmann's role within Moulin Rouge appears to be less fully engaged with the potentials and dynamic possibilities involved in screen based choreographic practice. In this regard, Luhrmann's approach appears to favour the more traditional demarcation involved in the filming of pre-set movement material.

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[18] The intertextual matrix of referents evident within Moulin Rouge is the focus of ongoing doctoral research by Clare Parfitt, Roehampton University. This research is due for completion in 2007.

3.3 Key practitioners: Sally Potter and Lynne Ramsay

The work of Sally Potter has particular relevance to the enquiry into areas of convergence of practice within the motion arts. Potter trained as a dancer and choreographer at London Contemporary Dance School in the 1970s and created dance and theatre work for live performance before moving into film production. Initially operating within the *avant-garde* sector of filmic practice, her feature films are generally shown within the arthouse distribution sector. In *The Tango Lesson* (1997), Potter makes use of the dance form of tango as a device to explore gender-based roles and concerns in relation to issues of emotional engagement. Potter does not fulfil the role of step-maker within the film's creation. However, an analysis of the film's opening sequence reveals an approach to filmmaking which demonstrates strong engagement with aspects of choreographic practice.

At the film's beginning, three strands of visual material are intercut. The film's opening credits, beginning with the complex and lengthy list of international co-production partners and national and international funders, are shown on a black screen with white text. An arm is then made visible, also in black and white and in close-up, wiping across a plain white surface. This image dissolves into a wider frame of Potter's head and upper body, wiping the surface as filmed from above. A second widening of shot reveals that she is cleaning a circular white table-top. After further credits, an overhead shot of the circular table with matching stool is re-established, and Potter enters the frame to sit, carefully placing and adjusting a blank sheet of paper and a pencil. The shot's composition and visual style is precise, minimal and controlled. Potter, concentrating on the paper, moves her

head and neck almost imperceptibly before picking up her pencil, as the camera cuts to a close up of the pencil's point hovering at page level. A new strand of visual code is introduced as a young woman in a red ball gown runs through a lush formal garden. This strand contrasts with the previous footage in its vibrant use of colour, exterior location and expansive movement. Potter's pencil hesitates before writing the word 'Rage', and the young woman falls to the ground as a gunshot is heard. As though in response, Potter crumples the paper, throwing it away and out of shot. After further credits, three young women in orange, blue and red ballgowns walk up and then down a large exterior stairway. The camera returns to Potter, now writing more continuously at the circular table, which is revealed to be situated within a room minimally furnished with a piano, chair and a window overlooking a brick wall. The fluency and economy with which these three strands of visual information are presented and interwoven can be read as revealing a great deal about three contrasting processes. The scale and complexity of contemporary film making is revealed in the volume of international production and funding credits. The solitary ritual of creative endeavour is presented in monochrome, with information on the performer and the surrounding environment disclosed in precise and carefully increasing increments. The lush fertility of Potter's imaginative engagement is also exemplified in the vivid colours of costume and landscape.

Throughout the film, Potter' s direction encompasses a variety of stylistic features already established as reciprocal areas of practice between choreography and film. These include a sophisticated engagement with spatial and temporal

concerns. She utilises the cultural codings and practices of tango as a key image of gender-differentiation and power. The movement itself is framed in ways which emphasise differing emotional climates operating within the film. In this respect, the film's dance content is firmly embedded as an integral element of the overall emotional tone, rather than functioning as a series of extra-diagetic set-pieces. Potter also utilises references to the genre of Hollywood musicals. However, her execution subverts the conventional boy-meets-girl narrative arc rather than adopting it wholesale. Stylistically, the film has a strong visual rather than text-driven impetus. Potter's use of dancers as performers, essentially playing themselves throughout, resonates strongly with a sense of choreographic practice rather than with a conventional engagement with filmic casting. Potter's work is particularly significant to this investigation in that her choreographic knowledge is evident in the utilisation of movement as an integral compositional element throughout the film. This can be read as an exemplification of Deren's characterisation of a process of screen-specific choreographic composition, achieved by the interrelation of movement content 'both immediately and over the film as a whole' (in McPherson, 2005, p.225).

Lynne Ramsay trained initially as a photographer, with further study of cinematography before embarking on a career as a director. This background is apparent within her output, which is led by a concern with visual imagery, rather than with a conventional use of dialogue as the principal means of narrative advancement. Close parallels can be found within Ramsay's work to the fields of music video and screen-based dance. British choreographer Yolande Snaith has

stated that her own practice can be characterised as 'the working together of images' (cited in Watson in Preston-Dunlop, 1995, p.411). Ramsay's work can also be approached and read as the weaving together of a series of often visually-led images and episodes. John Bishop has likened the function of the camera itself to that of a choreographer, stating that it 'defines a space, places subjects in the space, and moves them through that space' (in Mitoma, 2002, p.246). Ramsay's professional training in cinematography places her within this operational field of screen based creative practice.

In Ramsay's debut feature *Ratcatcher* (1999) the film's central character, James, watches through the window of a bus as the landscape shifts from the oppressive, rubbish-strewn urban streets of his neighbourhood to an expansive pastoral location. While exploring a partially-built house, James encounters a view of a field, bathed in golden light, from the uncompleted kitchen window. The lack of glass allows him to sit inside the frame, before jumping into the field as though passing into another dimension of being. James' encounter with the exterior of a partially-completed housing project is depicted in a non dialogue-dependent and musically accompanied sequence. James physically explores this unattended, alien environment in a series of disparate shots. He walks along plastic piping, jumps into a pile of sand, climbs through scaffolding, and sits at the top of a ladder, whistling. In the house's interior, James lies inside a plastic-covered bath, and urinates into an as yet unplumbed-in toilet. In the kitchen, he encounters the (window) framed view of the golden field, and, once inside, is filmed in a montage of running, jumping, rolling and lying. His head, briefly visible against the shoulder-

high crop, disappears from view, to be replaced by feet in the air. This is followed

by a final shot in which he shown standing upright, as he surveys the landscape.

In its dialogue-free portrayal of James' engagement with his environment, this

section of *Ratcatcher* has much in common with Peter Anderson and Rosemary

Lee's screen-based dance work *boy* (1995), which is examined in Chapter Four.

Both Potter and Ramsay's output, in relation to issues of visual composition, can

be read as exemplifying areas of overlap within the genres of feature film

production, screen-based dance practice and music video. Stan Brakhage has

also observed that the original meaning of cinematographer is 'writer of

movement' (2003, DVD interview). This definition resonates strongly with Potter's

thematic and compositional concerns and within Ramsay's professional

background in cinematography.

3.4 Conclusion

In the previous chapter, a number of developments relating to the intersection

points between dance and screen based practice were explored. These

developments included the notion of conceptually-oriented choreographic practice,

as operational within the historical time-frame of the post-Judson era. In addition,

the increasing accessibility of digital technology in the creation of moving image

work, and its resulting impact on the creation of screen-based dance, was

examined. In this chapter, the analysis of a range of moving image work raises

issues relating to the identification of these intersection points from

choreographically-relevant parameters. To this end, issues relating to the temporal

and spatial design of screen space, the movement content of graphic elements and to the design of movement pathways across the screen space have been highlighted. These spheres of function present a creative arena where animators, video artists, film directors and screen-based dance practitioners can engage with a relational interplay of compositional elements. Kovgan's categorisation process, as outlined in Chapter One, has yielded a set of evaluative criteria which allows for a non-traditional notion of the choreographic to be articulated and examined within a screen context (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.49) This non-traditional choreographic engagement has been exemplified within a range of the work examined throughout this chapter. Choreographically-relevant engagement through the use of *mise-en-scene* is illustrated in Gondry's *Come Into My World*. The use of editing as a choreographic tool is manifest within Fosse's editing practice in *All That Jazz*, and the choreographic composition of visual elements within the screen space is exemplified in Lye's *Free Radicals*. Deren's articulation of the choreographic within a screen context, which she characterised as the development of an overarching compositional framework, can also clearly be discerned in many examples of work (in McPherson, 2005, p.225). This is particularly evident within Potter's conceptual interweaving of visual and thematic elements in *The Tango Lesson*. The relationship between musical and visual composition, married to a kinaesthetically-engaged viewing experience, is also strongly in evidence within the output of Gondry. The notion of creating an internal musicality is explored in greater detail in relation to my own programme of work in Chapter Five. Eisenstein's assertion that an image 'enters the consciousness and perception *through aggregation*' finds expression in terms which resonate strongly

with screen based choreographic practice through the work of Girard and Medem (1943, p.23). In particular, Girard's use of accretion and Medem's development of visual refrains mark their filmmaking practice as containing compositional elements which can be read within choreographically-oriented parameters.

It is clear from the analysis of screen-based work that choreographic practice occurring within a screen context cannot be considered as the sole preserve of artists working within the traditional boundaries of dance. The fields of animation, music video, video art, feature film and screen-based dance practice share points of stylistic, thematic and operational intersection. In addition, these convergence points are demarcated by permeable boundaries subject to the influences of increasingly homogenised cultural and technical developments and practices. In recognition of this expanded operational field, and of the conclusion that convergent area of practice present a new and specific set of demands and creative challenges to dance artists, Francis Sparshott has stated that 'the maker of dance video must be a video artist, with creativity geared to specific sets of choices in video terms, as well as a dance artist' (1995, 450). In the following chapter, a range of contemporary screen-based dance will be analysed in order to investigate the extent to which this claim is discernible within current practice in the creation of dance work for screen. A range of work by artists identified in this chapter is also examined in relation to the practice of a number of contemporary screen-based dance makers. This examination affords a further exploration of intersection points with the potential to be read from choreographically-relevant parameters. This process includes an exploration the work of Len Lye in relation to

Magali Charrier's use of animation; Tony Hill in relation to Nic Sandiland's physiologically-oriented engagement; Mike Figgis and Katrina McPherson's exploration of simultaneity and Lynne Ramsay and Rosemary Lee's use of location.

Chapter Four
Screen Based Dance
Practice: an Analysis

4.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the extent to which the creation of screen based dance conforms to an identifiable notion of choreographic sensibility. As a means of contextualising the field of debate, this investigation is located within a context of current practice. The notions of non-traditional and conceptually-oriented screen based choreography, as explored in the previous chapter, and articulated by Kovgan and Deren, are further examined. These notions include the use of *mise-en-scene;* editing as a choreographic tool, and the visual composition of elements within the screen space. The notion of a choreographically-relevant compositional framing of a work is also examined. Particular reference is made to Eisenstein's notion of micro and macro-montage creation, in relation to its potential for adaptation to choreographic practice within a screen context. The impact of more traditionally-recognised elements of choreographic crafting will also be explored. These include the creation of movement vocabulary specific to elements of screen based representation, such as location and narrative. To this end, a range of work by European and North American screen-based dance practitioners is subject to a process of analysis. This analysis is informed by the writing of the classical film theorists, as outlined in Chapter Two. This body of writing is used as a means of evaluating the specificity of work to its screen context, as distinct from work created for live performance. Biographical details of

the screen-based dance practitioners referred to in this chapter are included in Appendix E. Within this chapter, the range of work subject to examination can be said to find a natural home within the categorisation of screen based dance. However, parallelling the trend towards convergence discussed in Chapter Three, much of this work would fit the eligibility criteria for screening as part of non-dance specific festivals and events. Examples of this strand of cross-artform curatorial policy are represented by organisations such as Final Cut and Bird's Eye View in Britain, and by the San Francisco-based Microcinema International (undated, http://www.finalcut.gb.com/, undated, http://www.birds-eye-view.co.uk, undated, http://www.microcinema.com).

In the previous chapter, a range of moving image forms were examined. This examination was undertaken in order to identify areas of practice with the potential to be read from a choreographically-oriented perspective. In this chapter, a range of screen based dance work, created in Europe and North America over the last fifteen years, is examined. This examination has been undertaken in order to identify the extent of any choreographically-relevant intersections within the works and within the range of forms subject to analysis in the previous chapter. The screen based dance work selected for analysis represents a mixture of forms, reflecting the diversity and emerging potential of the genre. These forms include animation; short film; documentary; online work and larger scale pieces shown in televisual and cinematic contexts. The range of approaches adopted by dance artists working within a screen based context is also explored. The working practices of the selected artists reflect the breadth of possibilities currently open to

practitioners in the field of screen based dance. This range of professional roles includes work created by two directors who have moved into dance from other fields; two who have moved from a dance background into directing; three choreographers working collaboratively with directors, and three who have directed screen-based adaptations of their own work.

Silvana Szperling has observed that 'filmmaker Jorge Coscia ... believed it was easier for a choreographer to learn the cinematic language than for a filmmaker to learn dance' (in Mitoma, 2002, p.182). The increasing accessibility of digital technology in the form of affordable cameras and editing software programmes means that dance artists are increasingly able to put this assertion to the test by utilising their choreographic skills within a screen-based context. Katrina McPherson has outlined her view of the current range of opportunities available to dance film makers in the assertion that 'at the beginning of the 21st Century, video dance is coming of age. Each year, new international video dance festivals and funding schemes are established' (undated, www.videodance.org.uk/ pages/opinions1.html). This increase in opportunities to develop and show work within a screen based context has major implications for dance practitioners whose training may not have included any formal study of filmic work. Many choreographers currently creating screen based work are doing so on a collaborative basis by working in partnership with a director. Increasingly, however, dance artists are moving across the spectrum of practice, in order to explore the range of possibilities afforded by the creation of screen based work. Judy Mitoma has written of the attributes that she believes naturally equip them for

this task. To this end, she lists 'sensitivity to visual form, motion, space, time and light' among their professional strengths (2002, p.xxxi). British-based dance filmmaker Becky Edmunds provides a further perspective. Edmunds highlights the execution of choreographic structures, which she characterises as including 'theme and variation, repetition, accumulation' as marking out a distinctive approach to screen based work as created by artists with a background in dance (2006, p.1). This approach is identifiable as opposed to the more conventionally linear and narrative constructs frequently adopted by non-dance trained filmmakers. In the following section, a range of work will be examined in order to determine the extent to which the impact of both traditional choreographic strategies and screen specific choreographic practice can be identified.

4.1 Screen-based dance

This section begins with an examination of two short pieces by filmmakers who initially trained in other disciplines before embarking on the study of dance. The resulting breadth of influences can be clearly read within the work. In Magali Charrier's *Tralala* (2004) and Nic Sandiland's *Exosphere* (2003), strong relationships to the fields of, respectively, animation and video art can be discerned.

In *Tralala*, the movements of three dancers interact with animations created by chalk drawings, which are visible against a blackboard. Echoing this theme, the dancers are filmed from above against a dark background, initially covered in chalk. Within this setting, their movement leaves a wake of trails and traces

through the screen space. The image of chalk on a blackboard also serves to recreate a world of childhood imagery, which involves a giant fish, a horse-like creature, a snake and a train. Charrier also makes use of stop-motion animation techniques. Here, she bestows a range of objects representative of the inner and outer world of young females, such as toys, dresses and blankets, to each of the three performers. A limited movement vocabulary is utilised throughout. The performers initially propel themselves through the screen space on their backs, before progressing to rolling, sliding and, at one point, mimicking swimming techniques. This lack of formalised, codified dance content reinforces the sense of recreating a childhood world. High-speed filming and reverse motion are also employed, thus heightening the cartoon-like quality of the visual style. The performers bodies fit within the structures of the animation in many instances. As a result, their apparent solidity contrasts with the pace of change and sense of ephemerality of the chalk drawings. This creates a strong sense of the mutability of childhood imagination.[19] This sense of instability and impermanence is reminiscent of the work of Len Lye, as outlined in Chapter Three. It also illustrates Münsterberg's view that filmic form is ideally suited to the portrayal of mental processing (in Langdale, 2002, p.95). Charrier's background in visual arts also clearly informs the work and helps to locate it within Kovgan's categorisation of choreographic practice occurring in the composition of elements within the screen space (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.49). The use of the pace and rhythm

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[19] In Tralala, Charrier achieves a convincing meld of live action choreographic content with a range of animation techniques, which is a preoccupation currently shared with a range of British-based artists such as Shelly Love and Rajyashree Ramamurthi. This strand of screen-based dance practice strongly demonstrates Deren's assertion that 'choreographing consists not only of designing the dancer's individual movements but also of designing the patterns which he and his movements, as a unit, make in relationship to a spatial area' (Deren in McPherson, 2005, p.220).

of editing in the piece also situates it within Kovgan and Pearlman's characterisation of choreographic practice achieved by means of the edit (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.49 and p.54). Charrier's credited role as co-choreographer of the work also suggests input at the level of development of movement vocabulary, thus locating her practice at the level of both movement-generation and operational overview.

Within the brevity of its one minute and fifteen second timeframe, Nic Sandiland and Simon Aeppli's *Exosphere* explores a variety of visual and aural landscapes. A light weight camera, attached to a line, is manipulated by the lone performer. This enables the viewer to experience the physical journey of the camera, and to 'see' what it 'sees' throughout. In its varying proximity to the performer's body, to the ground and to the landscape around it, the camera promotes a strong sense of the defamiliarisation of otherwise recognisable elements. This proximity invites the viewer to see and experience these elements from novel and constantly shifting aleatory perspectives. In this regard, the piece clearly exemplifies several of Balázs formal principles of filmic art in its use of extreme changes of scale and dimension within a shot, and with the rapidly changing viewing perspectives it offers (Balázs, 1952, p.47). As the piece begins, an extreme close-up of a spherical object, reminiscent in texture of the surface of a meteorite or of a lunar landscape, fills the screen space. As the camera begins its journey, opening out and upwards from this starting point, this object becomes recognisable as a pitted tarmac-like ground surface. The performer manipulating the camera's ascent is revealed initially in close-up. Fragments of an arm, a face, and the crown of a

head are visible as the camera passes. Later seen upside down, and revealed as a tiny dot from the wide expanse of an overhead view, the performer's movement vocabulary is entirely functional. This comprises an entirely naturalistic vocabulary of walks, winding and circling of the camera's line, or changing hands to manipulate and regulate what the viewer is able to see. The sound levels also vary in relation to the proximity of the camera to the performer. In this respect, as with the manipulation of unfamiliar viewing perspectives, and in the sense of a camera journey which promotes a strong physiological response, *Exosphere* shares elements in common with Tony Hill's *Downside Up* (1984). In its physiologically-oriented engagement, the piece also echoes Brakhage's assertion that 'as the eye moves, the body is in movement' (in McPherson, 2001, p.131).

In the case of both *Tralala* and *Exosphere*, the main concern is not with the filming of codified dance steps. At a conceptual level, the movement content is fully integrated within a mix of visual and aural elements. The use of techniques and conventions from the fields of animation and video art exemplifies Dodds' characterisation of video dance's 'hybrid character' (2001, p.174). In this regard, the choreographic input for each piece is reliant on a relational fusion of entirely context-specific movement vocabulary and creative function.

In the following section, three examples of the choreographer/director collaboration will be examined. Each involves an artist well established within the world of British dance, who is creating screen based work in partnership with a director. While there are obvious similarities within the pieces, as each sets a lone

performer within a highly distinctive landscape, the resulting work explores the director/choreographer partnership in very differing ways.

In *boy* (1995), created collaboratively by Rosemary Lee and Peter Anderson, a lone prepubescent male explores a private world of imaginative play by inhabiting a pared down natural landscape of shoreline, scrubland and sea. Filmed on the Norfolk coast, the piece uses the open expanses and endless-seeming horizon lines of the sky, the shore and the area of scrubbed land bordering the beach. A strong thread running through the piece is that of visibility. This is explored through the boy's appearances and disappearances from shot and through a suggestion of the boy's own image of himself, as he engages with the landscape. In its engagement with subjectivity and inner worlds, the piece can be said to illustrate Münsterberg's statement that 'life does not move forward on one single pathway' (in Langdale, 2002, p.95). There are also strong stylistic parallels with Ramsay's filmic evocation of a space existing outside of the constraints of everyday urban reality in *Ratcatcher* (1999), as outlined in Chapter Three. The figure of the boy first appears soon after the piece's title sequence. Fingers, hands and face are first revealed as he clambers over the brow of a rise and into shot. He is dressed functionally in a boiler suit and boots the colour palette of which echoes the muted and elemental shades of the surrounding landscape. In the piece's final shot, he disappears abruptly from the viewer's sight by jumping, his landing masked behind the ridge of a similar incline.

The boy's movement vocabulary is a mixture of the high energy rough and tumble of a young male's total physical engagement. This is represented by jumps, falls, rolls and runs. An additional variety of minimal movement includes moments of great delicacy, such as a careful stepping pattern along the edge of a ridge. A seemingly private language of hand gestures, executed as though directing and conducting the surrounding elements, is also employed. These extremes are echoed in the framing choices within the piece, with whole body shots contrasted with a range of close-ups on face and hands. The boy appears to be exploring his habitat and finding his place within it. This is represented by an engagement with all of the elemental forces and natural phenomena both physically present and imaginatively suggested by the landscape. At points within the piece, his movement vocabulary takes on an animalistic quality. Motion games are shown, with the boy's physical play reminiscent of an alighting bird; of a cheetah or other large catlike creature as he lopes along the shore on all fours. Snaking through the frame like a sidewinder, he leaves a distinctively patterned tracing in his progress through sand, and through the shot.

The piece suggests an episode occurring outside of the normal strictures of an adult linear perception of time, in its recreation of the state of total absorption involved in childhood exploration and imaginative play. This is re-enforced in a number of ways, including the use of slow motion, with particular emphasis on the act of jumping. A series of shots of jumps and landings are repeated throughout the piece. This prefigures the final jump, in which a landing is never seen. The boy is thus represented on a universal level as ever-present archetypal energy. In its

non-linear engagement with its subject matter, the piece functions as a clear

exemplification of Maya Deren's concept of horizontal narrative progression, as

outlined in Chapter Two (cited in Jackson in Nichols, 2001, p.64). The long

elemental expanses of the shoreline, the sky and the horizon also serve to

emphasise the timeless quality of the piece, and the feeling of limitless potential of

unfettered childhood experimentation. In *boy*, the close interrelation of performer

to landscape and of physical content to filmic representation convincingly blur the

boundaries of a conventionally polarised choreographer/director partnership.

Lea Anderson, Simon Corder and Lucy Bristow are credited as the creative team

responsible for *Speed Ramp* (2002). Simon Fildes has peer-reviewed *Speed

Ramp* posing the question 'where's the dance?', as the choreographic language of

the piece is not located at the conventional, step-making end of the spectrum

(2005, www.videodance.org.uk/pages/opinions8.html). Posing an alternative

question of 'where is the choreography?', however, reveals that in its relational

interplay of visual elements, the work conforms to Dodds' characterisation of

screen-based dance practice (2001, p.171). The work also conforms to Deren's

characterisation of screen-related choreographic properties, in that 'the full

dynamics and expressive potentials of the total medium are ardently dedicated to

creating the most accurate metaphor for the meaning' (in McPherson, 2005,

p.255). Shot in black and white, the piece explores a concretised, man-made

urban environment. The movement content is made up of a lone human

performer's passage through this landscape, and begins with shots reminiscent of

surveillance camera footage. Close-ups of signage displaying words such as

'caution' and '5 mph' establish a restrictive, claustrophobic and authoritarian atmosphere. The sharp lines and harsh diagonals of the sign's edges set the visual tone, and these lines are echoed compositionally by elements such as tunnels, steps and the edges of the underpass. A lone female figure, dressed in an anonymous urban uniform of trainers, hooded top and jacket, is seen negotiating her way through terrain made up of the underpass, slopes and steps. The resulting movement vocabulary comprises running, jumping and clambering over and around. The figure is shown in fragments of face, hands and a montage of running feet. This fragmentary style, overhead shots and sudden disappearances in an otherwise deserted landscape reinforce the atmosphere of underlying menace and disquiet. Through careful use of framing, the surrounding landscape is also revealed only in parts, with shots of the man-made environment composed to echo the extreme angles of signage. In its fragmented and minimalist sensibility, the piece also embodies Eisenstein's notion of suggestiveness through the use of montage. This notion of suggestiveness is characterised as 'features that are capable of evoking a sense of the totality of conception' (1991, p.150). *Speed Ramp* manages to suggest more than it shows through careful attention to framing and editing. Throughout the piece, a variety of viewing perspectives is offered. Surveillance camera style footage initially places the viewer in a position of power and control, at one remove from the landscape being surveyed. Overhead shots of the running figure are suggestive of helicopter monitoring of civil disturbance, while the montage sequence of running feet evokes the more frantic, earthbound perspective of the lone figure. A final sequence in slow motion focuses in close-up on the figure as she reaches the tunnel's end. Maya Deren

has written on the various expressive uses of slow motion. She cites 'a revelation of effort or anguish' and also 'intimate and loving meditation on a movement' as foremost amongst them (in McPherson, 2005, p.179). In *Speed Ramp's* final moments, both of these are in evidence. The camera records the effort registered in the performer's face in an act of throwing, and of the effect of the wind in the performer's hair and jacket. The focus on the highly charged emotions on a human face and the natural, organic phenomenon of wind in hair contrasts starkly with the preceding footage. As the movement arises entirely from the physical and emotional landscape of the piece, the use of naturalistic movement vocabulary also conforms to Kracauer's assertion that 'dancing attains to cinematic eminence only if it is part and parcel of physical reality' (1960, p.43).

A contrasting approach to the issue of the directorial and choreographic partnership can be found in *Tremor* (2005). The piece was developed by the creative team of Ravi Deepres and Wayne McGregor, working as director and choreographer respectively. As the piece begins, an environment is established, which is suggestive of a futuristic, hi-tech landscape, lacking in human presence. A set of automated doors is seen closing against a white light source, and shots of an unmanned control console and the whirring of blades establish an unsettling visual and aural texture. Against a large corrugated circular structure, the single female performer is seen entering, her silhouette distorted and blurred against the light source. This shot is reminiscent of imagery culturally familiar from the genre of science fiction. A close-up shot of the performer's hair responding to the movement of high wind, together with recurring footage of the rotary action of

blades, indicates that some process is beginning. The tremor of the title is translated into a close-up of the performer's hand, accompanied by the sound of her breath, indicating physical extremis. This tremor is shown progressing through the whole of the upper body, at times contrasted against the harshly man-made angles of the rotating blades. The movement vocabulary builds in intensity to include kicks, turns and lunges, as the sound levels rise. This culminates in a gestural moment as the dancer covers her ears with her hands. She is subsequently framed only partially within shot, suggesting a disintegration of the previous levels of visibility and physical integrity. A sudden cessation of sound and movement is followed by a slow upwards camera pan over the dancer's immobile but upright body, before resumption of noise and movement at a significantly increased rate. A very fast rate of cutting is adopted, with less focus on representing pre-choreographed movement content. Blurred and doubled images are intercut with extreme close-ups of hands, face and feet. This rate of cutting and disintegration of whole body imagery contributes to a sense of loss of control, as the performer is seen falling to the ground and struggling to return to an upright position. A final image of return to standing is shown at a higher speed, which is suggestive of non-human physical capabilities. The performer's head and shoulders slump forward, creating an image reminiscent of a deactivated robot, as she stands upright but functionless to end the piece. The sense of testing to destruction, and of a body in response to extreme environmental forces, provides a strong setting for McGregor's choreographic style to inhabit. This is in evidence in the utilisation of impulses of energy throughout the body in a way which distorts the performer's physiology, apparently beyond her conscious control. The piece

displays a distinctive and dynamic use of the potentialities of montage and of the use of cultural reference points in 'forming images in the mind of the spectator' (1991, p.302). The focus on filming pre-existing movement content, while creating a context for such a distinctive choreographic language, means that *Tremor* invites a more conventional reading of the role of the choreographer, which locates it nearer to the step-making end of the spectrum of practice. In this respect, *Tremor* appears to present a less fully integrated collaborative model for screen based choreographic practice than can be found in *boy* and *Speed Ramp*.

In evaluating the totality of choreographic process within a screen context, each of the three pieces presents a model for differing forms of engagement with the choreographer/director dualism. In *Speed Ramp*, the representation of conventional choreographic language has given way to close engagement with the medium, which is apparent in the design of each frame. In *Tremor*, the movement vocabulary is foregrounded, with location and narrative providing context for a strongly established and highly recognisable movement style. *boy* presents a model of engagement which succeeds in retaining a distinctive sense of movement vocabulary which appears to arise naturally from location and context. In order to determine the 'author' of all three works, in a choreographic sense, the totality of choreographic process within a screen context requires to be addressed. This necessitates an acknowledgement of the full range of practice at a choreographic level. This range includes the development of movement vocabulary, in addition to the design of visual elements within the screen space and the practice of editing. In this regard, all three works can be regarded as

products of a series of choreographic processes, in which no individual can claim sole authorship in choreographic terms.[20]

Work by Katrina McPherson and Becky Edmunds will now be considered in relation to the genres of online work and documentary. McPherson and Edmunds both trained in dance as students at the (then) Laban Centre in London during the mid-1980s, and have subsequently transferred their dance experience to the direction of screen based work. In this respect, McPherson's and Edmunds' directing practice can be read as a sophisticated illustration of Deren's exhortation to filmmakers to realise that 'the most important part of your equipment is yourself: your mobile body, your imaginative mind' (in McPherson, 2005, p.18).

The Truth: The Truth (2004) is an online piece created by Simon Fildes & Katrina McPherson working with Ricochet Dance Productions. The piece uses footage from a linear videodance work, where two consecutive versions of the same event, interpreted by choreographers Fin Walker and Paulo Ribeiro, are shown. In this respect, the piece can be said to exemplify Deren's notion that screen-based form 'is a time-space art with a unique capacity for creating new temporal-spatial relationships' (p.29). In the linear version, the four performers are introduced by CCTV-style footage, which makes use of surveillance-like recordings of meetings in public places. For the online version, the footage is restricted to the interior of a warehouse-like living space. Surveillance coverage in different parts of the building's interior is suggested by use of camera placing and angles.

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[20] The notion of choreographic authorship within a screen context is explored further in Chapter Six.

The piece is constructed so that it is possible to activate two viewing options, situated on either side of the screen space, simultaneously, or to view each section separately. The section of the piece choreographed by Fin Walker is placed to the left of the screen. Each performer is shown alone, executing repetitive, rhythmically defined movement. Two performers are seen in different part of the same space, dwarfed in scale by the use of long shot. The performers also come together, using the informal language of contemporary social dance. At times they appear to be caught up in their own private world of engagement with their movement, and also to be forging liaisons through a tracery of mirrored gestures and glances. This progresses to sequences of partner work filmed in extreme close up, with intimacy of gaze and physical connection between two couples re-enforced by framing of isolated body parts.

On the other side of the screen space, the section of the piece choreographed by Paulo Ribeiro makes use of longer sequences of movement. This section of work employs a more recognisably contemporary dance oriented movement vocabulary, which is punctuated by strong dynamic shifts. In a sequence of solo movement material for a female performer, close framing on the face, head and chest suggests a different approach to the issue of human vulnerability. This is represented in its concentration on the exaggerated rhythms, and subsequent movements, dictated by breath. A section of extreme close framing on eyes suggests a watchfulness and wariness among the performers, and a physical landscape of interlocking body parts is also introduced. While there appears to be

a less strongly signposted sense of narrative progression within this strand, evidence of combat and duress appears within the performers' interactions. Poses of physical restraint and emotional suppression are in evidence, throughout male to male, female to female and male to female encounters.

When watching both sections of the piece simultaneously, it is possible to see differing interpretations of the same performer's movement vocabulary. The same progression towards interaction is played out with different emphasis on choreographic approach and emotional tone. In this respect, *The Truth: The Truth*'s differing interpretations of a similar scenario engages with the issues of subjectivity and simultaneity evident in Mike Figgis's *Timecode*. In common with *Timecode*, *The Truth:The Truth* makes use of technological innovation to extend into new territory Eisenstein's assertion that a key characteristic pertaining to the practice of montage is 'not so much the sequence of segments as their *simultaneity* '(1991, p.86).

Brighton-based filmmaker Becky Edmunds has stated that her practice as a camera operator is closest in nature to her training as a dancer. Edmonds observes that 'I make decisions about the placement of my own body (with camera) in relation to the movement of the other bodies (that I am filming)' (2006, p.1). In this respect, Edmunds' practice conforms to Brakhage's views on dance and film when he asserts that,

cinematic dancing might be said to occur as any filmmaker is moved to include his whole physiological awareness in any film movement - the movement of any part of *his* body in the filmmaking.

(Brakhage in McPherson, 2001, p.132).

In *Have You Started Dancing Yet? (*2004) Edmunds takes on the dual role of director and editor. Making use of documentary form, the film is an interweaving of visual, aural and thematic material. The work begins with the sound of the filmmaker's disembodied voice set against the title, as she vocalises the question which each of the piece's interviewees sets out to answer. These comprise a range of British and North American dance artists who are introduced in turn. Each provides an initial answer to the question. These progress from monosyllables to a more expansive engagement with the issues raised in relation to their own movement practice. The interviewees are located within a range of different settings, which establishes a strong visual context for each strand of the film's development. U.S-based dance artists Steve Paxton and Lisa Nelson are strikingly situated within an outdoor garden-like space and against an expanse of white-painted brick wall respectively. British-based artists Liz Aggis and Scott Smith converse in a kitchen, and Fiona Wright is located within a domestic interior and later against a wide horizontal expanse of shoreline. Fin Walker also appears against an interior backdrop, and Kirsty Alexander and Gill Clarke are situated informally on the floor of a studio space.

Over the course of the film, ideas are expanded and developed through the use of overlapping elements involving location and sound. Footage of a beach is accompanied by the sound of the sea, which carries over into the next segment of voice over, and a series of thematic changes are punctuated by use of a black screen. The interviewees' responses are increasingly interwoven with footage of movement, as thematic concerns including a state of flow, musicality, privacy and interiority are explored and echoed in increasing depth. Nelson, Smith, Alexander and Clark are filmed moving within studio settings. Performance footage of Walker's work is also included, and Aggis dances in slow motion in front of a bedroom mirror.

The structuring of the piece, as interviewees are left and then returned to, builds and weaves together a tapestry of narrative input. This allows each to inadvertently echo, comment on, respond to and elaborate on specific points. Structural parallels can be identified with the work of documentary filmmakers from the American *avant-garde*, such as in Beth B's *Stigmata* (1991), in the creation of a synergistic interweaving of first hand personal testimony. These compositional choices have clear affinities with Eisenstein's writing on polyphonic montage, which he characterises as,

> a succession of sequences, each motif having its own rate of compositional progression, while being at the same time inseparable from the overall compositional progression as a whole .

(Eisenstein, 1991, p.330)

McPherson has moved from an initial training in conventional dance making to engagement with the conceptually oriented end of the spectrum of screen based choreographic practice. This is evident in her professional role as a director working collaboratively with choreographers. Edmunds' adoption of the documentary form means that she does not necessarily engage in a formal collaborative process with choreographers. She does, however, bring her own choreographic eye to bear in the selection of material for inclusion in work and in the execution of compositional and choreographic strategies.[21] Both McPherson and Edmunds make the case through their writing that their training in dance has equipped them with specific qualities which have transferred to a screen based context. Edmunds states that when reviewing her own editing choices 'I can see that they are based on patterns of movement or sound' (2006, p.1). McPherson has written of her own journey of artistic development from the study of dance, as influenced by the innovations of the Judson-era pioneers, through her training in moving image production. Here she encountered video art work which, she states 'shared much in common with the post-modern dance practices which had so inspired me' (undated, www.videodance.org.uk/pages/opinions1.html). By making conscious use of the capabilities developed through their dance training, and in bringing those to bear within a screen-specific context, both artists are prominently positioned within the trend of hybrid practice currently emerging within the field of screen-based dance in Britain. This trend towards hybridity combines artistic and technical knowledge in the fields of dance and moving image. McPherson's screen

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[21] This is also a tactic strongly in evidence within British-based dance documentary practice, visible in Lisa May Thomas' work *The Elders* (2005), and in *Routes: Dancing to New Orleans* (2006) by Alex Rueben.

based choreographic practice requires the use of conventionally-recognised choreographic input, in the process of applying a conceptual overview to the filming and editing of movement material supplied by a step-making dance practitioner. Edmunds' practice moves further from this conventional dualism, as she engages with choreographically-oriented compositional strategies directly in the creation of her own work, and often without the input of formalised dance content. The output of both artists can be read as an exemplification of the successful adaption of traditional choreographic skills to a conceptually-oriented engagement with the practice of screen based choreography. This is evident in the choice-making capacity of each, which relates to framing, editing and overall composition of pieces.

Examples of work are now examined which were created by choreographers who have developed reputations for making live work for own companies in Europe and North America from the 1980s onwards. Two of these choreographers have had stage-based work adapted for screen on a number of occasions, by a range of directors including David Hinton, in the case of Lloyd Newson, and Thierry de Mey, for Wim Vandekeybus' work. Each dance artist has moved beyond the limitations of this traditional role to take sole artistic control of his work for a screen-based context. As a result, the dual function of choreographer and director has been adopted, and each has applied very different strategies in adapting pre-existing live work for a screen context.[22]

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[22] Viewed from within the context of current debate within screen-based dance practice, Lock, Newson and Vandekeybus' work can be identified as clear examples of Siebens and Doyle's outlining of highly financed, high profile work, created with a particular distribution agenda in mind, and strongly prevalent within the field during the 1980s and 1990s. Siebens and Doyle state that,

Édouard Lock's *Amelia* (2003) makes distinctive architectural use of a minimalist set, which is created from interlocking sections of blond wood flooring. The performance space consists of this floor area, bounded and demarcated by rounded edges and high sides. Structurally, this affords an enormous range of vantage points involving overhead filming, which results in disorienting shifts of scale and perspective. The opening shot establishes an unsettling and distancing perspective with a single figure seen lying, dwarfed in scale by the high sides of the set walls. The use of an overhead shot reinforces the contrast between the long, clean lines of the environment and the smallness of the human figure contained within them. Lock contrasts this vastness of architectural scale with the use of extreme close-ups by focussing at different times on the feet, fingers, eyes and mouths of the performers. Throughout the work, Lock appears to be engaged in exploring a range of formal concerns, both choreographic and filmic. These concerns manifest through a minimalist focus on the pared down essentials of the dancers' movement, which is intercut with strategic use of close-up. It can be argued that the piece represents a dance and film-literate version of Balázs characterisation of silent filmmaking. This is encapsulated in the assertion that 'the place of dialogue was taken by a detailed, expressive play of features and gestures, shown in close-up' (1952, p.26).

Throughout the work, the movement vocabulary and costuming echoes the stylistic conventions adopted by choreographers such as William Forsythe. This is

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'In these traditionally-oriented models, works are beautifully shot, with a narrative through-line, even if expressed in non-linear fashion, and composed with the television screen or single projected image in mind.' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.59)

apparent in a heavy reliance on a neo-classical engagement with partnering

through a movement vocabulary of supported turns and balances. The selective

use of close-ups enables Lock to foreground these choreographic and

representational choices. The viewer's eye is directed towards a small-scale

wealth of detail which would be impossible to guarantee within a live performance

context. Lock also builds in moments of engagement specific to the screen-based

medium. A female dancer's hair loosens and falls around her face, apparently of

its own accord, which is suggestive of an episode taking place outside of the

normal restrictions imposed by time and physics. In a striking example of camera

choreography, the same dancer's position in a lunge is displayed to the viewer as

the camera pans around her body. This again suggests a departure from the

normal constraints of front-on viewing conventions. One dancer's breath and

another's running are manipulated in post-production by respectively speeding up

and slowing down, thus revealing extremes of temporal engagement with

movement. The use of filmic techniques to exaggerate the speed of movements

can be read as illustrative of Kracauer's characterisation of 'temporal close-ups

achieving in time what the close up proper is achieving in space' (1960, p.53).

The busyness of the movement style is contrasted with the minimalism of the set

and costuming. This contrast is also apparent in moments of quietness between

musical interludes, and in the pared down interactions between the camera and

the performers. Lock makes use of the movement of the camera and its

relationship to the set to achieve sudden disconcerting switches of perspective. In

addition to moving beyond the traditionally privileged 'front-on' focal point, Lock

also experiments with mixing front, back, up and down. Viewing perspectives are manipulated and challenged as performers appear to be lying on the floor while sliding down a wall. The movement of the camera is also effectively contrasted with moments of the performers' stillness. A female dancer, whose face is filmed in close-up, follows the path of the camera with her eyes. She thus engages directly with the audience, as a light source alternately illuminates and obscures the screen space. Throughout the work, Lock clearly demonstrates that he understands the difference between 'photographed theatre' and the properties which render a piece to be read as screen-specific (Balázs, 1952,p.25). The characteristics which Balázs sets out as differentiating filmic form from photographed theatre are heavily featured within the work. These include varying the dimensions of the performer within the screen space; changes of angles and perspective, and the use of fragmentary close-ups in the construction of montage. Lock also makes effective use of shadow and silhouette, in a way which further exaggerates the potentialities of scale and perspective. Filmed from above, two performers generate rapidly expanding and shrinking shadows, while engaging in duet work. The performers themselves appear tiny in relation to the scale of the set around them, and to their hugely enlarged shadow selves. Scale is also manipulated to contrast the image of performers filmed in full figure and set against enlarged facial profiles.

British-based dance artist Lloyd Newson's *The Cost of Living* (2004) begins with a long exterior panning shot, which reveals an expanse of sea and a pier. This embrace of the convention of the establishing shot is one exemplification of the

work's location within a tradition of televisually-oriented naturalism. Newson also makes repeated use of televisual framing techniques, such as the framing of characters from head to knees. The performers' progress is also tracked through a series of exterior locations, where Newson makes use of wide shots. These operational choices present a viewing perspective more readily associated with the grammar of televisual drama, while short episodes of creative framing invite a more recognisably dance-oriented viewing engagement with the work.

Newson uses a range of framing devices to offer the viewer a variety of different perspectives. He begins by locating the viewer as part of the audience at an end-of-the pier show. This device utilises the subjective possibilities of the camera in a way which makes sense of the piece's subject matter and location, while also acknowledging a debt to its stage origins. Disabled performer David Toole addresses the viewers directly in a monologue to camera sequence, which is a device also used in DV8's production of *Dead Dreams of Monochrome Men* (1986). Here, Newson's framing choice places the viewer in the position of confronting issues relating to disability and sexuality. The direct address to camera also creates a much greater sense of intimacy than would be possible between character and audience within a theatrical context. Later in the piece, the viewer is positioned within the visual perspective of an unseen performer, as hand-held footage from a digital video camera is presented. The unseen figure intrusively questions Toole while filming his movement. The use of digital video footage for this sequence provides a raw and less polished alternative visual language. Throughout the sequence, Toole is filmed from above, which emphasises the

vulnerability and inequality of the exchange. Within a stage-based context, viewers would only be able to witness both characters and their interaction from a distanced and traditional viewing perspective. On screen, however, Newson is able to locate the audience in a far less comfortably detached viewpoint. As Eisenstein observed, 'a fight filmed from a single viewpoint in longshot will always remain the *depiction* of a fight and will never be the *perception* of a fight' (Eisenstein, 1991, p.134). Within this sequence, Newson affords the viewer an inescapable sense of participation in events.

In addition to this concern with subjectivity, Newson uses the relational visual conventions of screen-based dance practice, as characterised by Dodds. This is apparent in a sequence which involves a number of able-bodied performers who emulate Toole's characteristic movement vocabulary of supporting the body weight on the hands. The relaxed dynamic pacing and shifts of weight associated with release-based work provides a movement vocabulary for the sequence, which is filmed outdoors. The brow of an incline is used as an element allowing for concealment and display of the performers' bodies, arranged in rows behind Toole, at different points within the dance. Much use is made of close-up, filmed from ground level, and functioning as an agent of abstraction. Shots are presented of disembodied hands following feet and of hips and torsos in a continuous sea of movement that fills the screen space. This section, which conforms to the conventions relating to a dance number performed to music, operates on a different level to much of the rest of the piece. Here, the relational interplay between movement content and non-naturalistic framing is presented as the focal

point of viewing engagement. In this section, Newson explores and celebrates the movement world of Toole in a way which conforms to Deren's concept of vertical rather than horizontal progression (cited in Jackson in Nichols, 2001, p.64).

Newson also moves beyond the conventions of naturalism in a sequence which makes use of a careful and minimal composition of gazes. This composition of minimalist elements is reminiscent of Julio Medem's outdoor café scene from *Lovers of the Arctic Circle* (1998), as discussed in Chapter Three. Set within a sea-front shelter, four characters are placed in varying proximity to the camera. The choreographic potential of interplay in relation to depth of focus is explored, using the range of difference in scale of each character's face. In a later section of the piece exploring male pick up rituals, Newson uses framing choices to fragment the bodies of the performers. Shots of legs and feet are followed by isolated facial features, in a montage sequence suggestive of secretiveness and anonymity. Eisenstein has written of the use of selective detail within the practice of montage creation. To this end he states that the viewer is responding to 'a swarm of real events and actions evoked in his imagination and his emotions by the use of skilfully chosen suggestive details' (1991, p.134).

Blush (2005) was created by Flemish choreographer Wim Vandekeybus and screened as part of the ACID selection at the Cannes Film Festival in the same year. The sense of a distinctive choreographic vocabulary is retained, while the work opens out to make use of filmically-oriented narrative devices and a poetic mix of imagery in its engagement with visual language. Balázs cites this potential

within the technique of montage as 'the mobile architecture of the film's picture-material' and as a 'new creative art' (1952, p.40). Much of Vandekeybus' achievement in directing *Blush* rests on his facility with the manipulation of imagery which strongly favours a melding of traditionally-oriented choreographic and directorial skills.

Vandekeybus skilfully creates a world where naturalistic episodes are blended with dance. They explore extreme emotional states such as dreaming, loving and dying in a multilayered and non-linear narrative progression. There are no named characters within the film, although a Bride is identified early on, and also, by association, her Bridegroom. Frogs appear symbolically in various guises, in their capacity as amphibious creatures inhabiting the water and the land, and as the symbol of fairy-tale related romantic transformation. The human performers also inhabit a recognisably naturalistic world of social gatherings, a pastoral idyll of land and water, and a netherworld of dream and myth. Vandekeybus makes good use of both interior studio settings and of exterior locations. Dialogue is used sparingly, as an element within the creative mix, rather than the principal means of narrative advancement. Balázs also deals with the phenomenon of filmic time, stating that 'pictures have no tenses. They show only the present - they cannot express either a past or a future tense' (1952, p.120). *Blush* appears to show a series of events co-occurring in a variety of interrelated, non-linear psychological states, such as dream and myth, as well as within external reality. This is entirely in accord with Münsterberg's assertion that,

life does not move forward on one single pathway. The whole

manifoldness of parallel currents with their endless interconnectedness is

the true substance of our understanding.

(Münsterberg in Langdale, 2002, p.95)

This artistic marriage of movement, non-linear progression, imagery of internal

and dream states and expression by visual rather than verbal means finds

endorsement in Kracauer's assertion that film's defining characteristics can be

summarised as 'a succession of ever-changing images which altogether give the

impression of a flow' (1960, p.158). Vandekeybus' strongly choreographic

directorial and editorial style, exemplified through a clear sense of rhythm, pacing

and focal clarity in his use of montage, also exemplifies Eisenstein's views on the

sense of dynamic thrust and impulse which generates a sense of

movement, ranging from the purely *physical movement* to the most

complex forms of *intraconceptual movement* when we are dealing with a

montage which juxtaposes metaphors, images or concepts.

(Eisenstein, 1991, p.86)

In one particular sequence towards the film's end, Vandekeybus advances the

narrative entirely by means of polyphonic montage. This is achieved by

intercutting footage of choreographed movement with additional visual strands. In

this sequence, located within a decaying warehouse-like interior, camera work is

used to suggest a series of interlocking and oppressive cell-like interior spaces,

with each housing an ongoing strand of choreographic development. In one of the spaces, two opposing factions of a crowd face one another, later converging into a melee. This is intercut with footage of two men closely circling before locking shoulders and then heads. The camera remains tightly focussed on the moving bodies, exaggerating the sense of claustrophobia and menace. Vandekeybus also intercuts this sequence with footage of singer and composer David Eugene Edwards, who has already fulfilled a visually performative function in various of the piece's earlier sequences. Here, Vandekeybus employs a jerkily distinctive style of camera movement, which establishes a clear visual language for this particular strand of development. A continuous tracking shot is also used to move through a series of adjacent cell-like spaces. Each is inhabited by a duet or trio, engaged in the ongoing combat of physical blocking. What is particularly striking about this sequence is Vandekeybus' fluency in the use of a variety of filmic techniques. This is evident in his handling of a large number of visual elements such as the crowd; the singer; trios and duets to build both choreographic and narrative development. This variety of devices used by Vandekeybus in order to film his choreographic input contributes greatly to the success of the film. To this end, passages of formalised dance are used as one element of the filmic whole, rather than treated as something to be re-created from the viewing perspective of a live audience. The reworking of *Blush* for a screen context can be judged as successful to the extent that it conforms to Dodds' definition of video dance as an exploration of 'certain camera perspectives to create spatial possibilities that cannot be achieved on stage' (2001, p.71). *Blush* conforms significantly to these criteria, while also exemplifying Dodds' assertion that the process of framing 'enables a spectator to

see compositional perspectives of an image that are only applicable to the television or film context' (p.71). The use of dance and the piece's engagement with non-linear structuring can also be said to exemplify Balázs view that 'no words can convey this non-rational correlation of shapes and images which takes place in our subconscious mind' (1952, p.126). In this respect the film functions as a clear example of Deren's theory of a vertical, as opposed to a horizontal model, of narrative progression, dealing as it does with an associative mesh of feeling states explored through layering of imagery (cited in Jackson in Nichols, 2001, p.64).

The work of all three choreographer/directors can be located as inhabiting the full spectrum of choreographic practice for a screen context. Lock's and Vandekeybus' work exhibits a distinctive and strongly formed movement vocabulary, while Newson's employs the task-driven movement content recognisable from previous projects. Beyond conventional step-making choreographic territory, the professional experience of all three artists in directing full-length stage works appears to have translated into an affinity with the conceptually-oriented level of engagement with screen based choreographic practice. All make use of the editing process in highly distinctive ways, with Vandekeybus' work in particular emphasising the compositional possibilities inherent in the weaving together of images and narrative threads. This process of engagement with the development of both movement vocabulary and conceptually-driven compositional overview can be read from within choreographically-oriented parameters as relating to Eisenstein's notion of the

micro and the macro within the practice of montage, as outlined in Chapter Two.

Eisenstein characterises the process of micro-montage as the assemblage of

individual shots, and that of macro-montage as 'a compositional combining of

several *scenes*, of whole *parts* of a complete work' (1991, p.109). The notions of

choreographic engagement within a screen context occurring at micro and macro

level afford the potential for adaption of Eisenstein's notion. In this

choreographically-specific model, the notion of micro-choreography can be read

as relating to a conventionally-oriented input of codified dance steps. A concept of

macro-choreography within a screen context allows for an expanded definition of

non-dance specific choreographic practice, which relates to the conceptually-

driven compositional organisation of a work as a whole.[23]

4.2 Conclusion

With regard to the notion of an identifiable choreographic sensibility, a number of

conclusions can be reached from the aforegoing examination of this range of

contemporary screen based dance. The notions of micro and macro screen based

choreographic engagement affords the means for work to be evaluated at the level

of choreographic practice both at the level of conventionally-oriented dance input,

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[23] Douglas Rosenberg has addressed the issue of non-traditional choreographic practice, characterising the resulting phenomenon as 'a director's film' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.13). Rosenberg asserts that a work so described 'is one in which there is an objective distance between the dance and the cinematic articulation of it'. Rosenberg's characterisation necessarily assumes the existence of a body of original pre-choreographed movement material. However, an alternative model of choreographic engagement has been presented in recent British screen-based dance practice. David Hinton's Birds (2000), created in partnership with choreographer Yolande Snaith, makes use of footage of the natural movement of birds in flight. This approach effectively bypasses entirely any engagement with codified dance steps or with human bodies in order to perform them. Miranda Pennell's Tattoo (2001) utilised as subject matter the drill formations of a military marching band. Tattoo again moves beyond a level of engagement with a traditional notion of dance content to approach the task of framing and composing footage from a choreographically-aware perspective.

and also at the conceptually-driven compositional level. Both strands of practice are clearly in evidence throughout the range of work examined. From a traditionally-oriented notion of choreography as the development of movement vocabulary, the work of Lee; McGregor; Lock and Vandekeybus illustrates a variety of possible approaches to the creation of movement language appropriate to the elements of location, narrative and screen context. From the perspective of an enhanced notion of non-traditional choreographic engagement at the 'macro' level, the use of editing as a choreographic tool is clearly in evidence throughout the range of work examined.[24] This aspect of choreographic functioning can be identified in the work of Charrier; Edmunds; Lock; Newson and Vandekeybus. The arrangement of visual elements within the screen space as a manifestation of choreographic practice is also strongly in evidence in the work of Charrier and Anderson. The conceptually-oriented choreographic practice of translating pre-existing dance work into screen based product is also presented in the work of Lock, Newson and Vandekeybus. This process encompasses a highly specific range of professional skills which are evident at a macro level of compositionally-oriented organisation. Viewed from within the context of this investigation into choreographic practice for screen, this conceptually-oriented skillset requires to be acknowledged as a significant strand of choreographic process.

In Chapter Three, areas of convergence were identified across a range of screen-based practice, and criteria were established in order to determine whether convergence points could be read from within choreographically-relevant

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[24] This relates clearly to both Kovgan and Pearlman's classification of editing as screen based choreographic practice (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.49 and 54), and Eisenstein's notion of composition through the practice of polyphonic montage (1991, p.330).

parameters. It is clear from these findings that choreographic practice for screen cannot be identified exclusively as the province of artists with a background in dance. However, close analysis of selected screen based dance work reveals a range of reciprocal influences emanating from various strands of moving image production and infiltrating the porous boundaries of this emergent genre. A number of trends and patterns can also be discerned relating to the working practices and approaches adopted by the dance artists whose work has been subject to analysis. It is undoubtedly the case that a background or working knowledge of another field or discipline can bring a breadth and depth of influences to the creation of screen based dance work. It is equally apparent, however, that the compositional skills of the dance artist are highly transferrable and appropriate to a screen based context. It is also clear that documentary is emerging as a form with the potential to combine the choreographic skills of selection and arrangement with the technical and conceptual engagement required by the directorial and editorial role.

When viewed in relation to the spectrum of choreographic practice as outlined in Chapter Two, the three choreographers engaged in collaborative practice with a director have chosen to adopt very different approaches. McGregor's work in *Tremor* invites a reading which places him closest to the traditional step-making end of the spectrum. Within the work, his highly personalised and idiosyncratic choreographic language serves as a fulcrum, around which the other elements of the film coalesce to provide a context. At the other end of the spectrum, the distinctively precise gestural vocabulary which has characterised much of

Anderson's stage-based work has been subsumed into a deep level of engagement with a screen context in *Speed Ramp*. Lee has adapted her own choreographic style to the needs, limitations and potentialities of a wide range of circumstances and eventualities throughout her choreographic career. In *boy*, she and Anderson have achieved a synthesis of elements which retain a recognisable choreographic vision, but which are integrated into a subtle balance arising from the interaction of location, performer and medium.

Michael Kustow stated in the late 1980s that, 'there's no reason why sooner or later a choreographer won't learn how to direct his own film' (cited in de Marigny in Jordan and Allen, 1988, p.97). At the level of large-scale, international work, Kustow's prediction has been realised as choreographers with a proven record in developing live work take on the directorial function in adapting their own output for the screen. A range of approaches is discernible within an analysis of this work. The enclosed formalism of Lock's concerns, combining an extravagant style of step-creation with a minimalist approach to camera choreography, contrasts with Newson's adoption of naturalist conventions. *The Cost of Living* was developed for screen in partnership with Channel Four for broadcast on British television. Newson appears to have taken on a range of televisual conventions as part of his directing brief, perhaps with the intention of exploiting viewer familiarity and therefore access to the work. This approach could account for the sense of a lack of full engagement with the range of potentialities inherent within the creation of dance work for a screen context, which is discernible when viewed in relation to the full-blooded experimentation of Lock and Vandekeybus' work. Vandekeybus'

achievement has been to retain the hallmark of his distinctive choreographic language, sutured within an expansive engagement with areas of filmic practice and non-linear narrative. In this respect, Vandekeybus' work provides a high profile example of the possibilities inherent within a meaningful engagement with the medium. This engagement encompasses the entire spectrum of screen based choreographic practice, and is apparent at both micro and macro level.

It is clear from the examination of work outlined in this chapter that the creation of work for screen can function as a means of repositioning and re-evaluating the range of skills, experience and specialist knowledge which constitute the professional legacy of the dance trained artist. In the next chapter, I will be extending this process of evaluation to encompass the location of my own screen based work within the spectrum of choreographic practice and within the context of contemporary moving image production.

Chapter Five
Screen Based Dance
Practice
The *Memory Pool* Project

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, a number of issues are explored which directly address the aim, as outlined in Chapter One, of identifying a choreographically-relevant sensibility within screen based work. To this end, my own programme of practice-as-research is subject to a process of analysis and evaluation. This process is situated within the framework of critical discourse discussed in Chapter Two. This analysis has been undertaken in order to evaluate the impact of a range of choreographically-oriented compositional strategies, which have been identified in earlier chapters, in the creation of my own work. In Chapters Three and Four, a programme of analysis was undertaken from the perspective of informed spectatorship. In this chapter, the analysis of my own work is approached from the perspective of the expert practitioner. This perspective acknowledges a clear engagement with choreographic intent throughout the creative process. This term has been adopted in acknowledgement of the relationship of my own screen-related creative practice to particular strands of professional experience, which have been developed over the course of a twenty-year engagement as a dance artist. Specific examples of work from the *Memory Pool* cycle are subject to a process of analysis and evaluation in section 5.3. However, several examples can usefully illustrate the direct relationship of previous choreographic experience to screen-related practice, and are therefore outlined here. These examples correspond to three identifiable strands within my own professional practice. The

first strand relates to a particular range of choreographic concerns which have

consistently been returned to and reworked over the course of an extended time

period. These concerns can clearly be discerned within *Partial Visibility* (2005),

which re-examines for screen a set of choreographic preoccupations relating to

the portrayal of partner work. This choreographic territory was initially explored

within a live theatre context in the duet *Our Lives* (1990), which was created for

the Tron Theatre Company in Glasgow, and re-examined in subsequent projects.

This professional groundwork allowed for screen-specific modes of engagement,

such as framing choice, editing and the interweaving of quotations to be privileged

within the creation of the piece. The second strand concerns a highly personalised

means of choreographic practice involving non dance-trained performers. This

strand of professional focus was developed over the course of many years of

involvement within education, community and theatre sectors and was not,

therefore, reliant on the delivery of a shared vocabulary of codified dance steps.

However, this apparent limitation translated into the development of a highly

specialised, task-based and conceptually-led engagement with the generation of

movement content. This approach is particularly evident within a screen-related

context within *Three Orchestral Variations* (2005) and *Duet For Two Hands*

(2006). Within these works, and others from the cycle, the development of

movement vocabulary functions as one element within a relational mix which

places equal value on a range of context-specific functions and a conceptually-

driven compositional overview. Thirdly, my own movement practice has

encompassed the ongoing study of both Skinner Releasing Technique and

Contact Improvisation. The resulting attunement to internal stimuli has manifest

into a highly rhythmically-oriented engagement within the process of editing. I would contend that the focus on rhythmic patterning which forms the basis of *Knotwork's* (2005) compositional organisation is directly attributable to this strand of professional practice. The ways in which this mix of influences and experience has impacted on my own screen-related choreographic practice are further explored in section 5.1, in which the notion of professional or expert intuition is highlighted. This notion has been explored in recognition of its significance to all stages of my own creative practice. Two related issues have also been selected for investigation within the chapter. Firstly, the specific processes involved in the planning, filming, and editing of my own work are explored. This investigation has been undertaken as a means of locating my own practice within a creative and operational context. In addition, a range of themes which relate to contemporary screen-based dance production are also identified. These include the use of location and the debates around contemporary screening models. These themes have been identified for investigation as a means of situating the work within current theoretically-based discourse from the field.

The work subject to examination comprises forty two self-contained pieces, created over a two year period as part of the research process. These works, collectively entitled *The Memory Pool* (2007), are submitted for examination on DVD.[25] The DVD comprises all forty two pieces of work as well as a range of supporting material. This includes relevant ideas and debates, encapsulated in

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[25] The title has been selected as a means of reflecting the chronological arrangement of the cycle of work. It has also been selected in recognition of the body of critical discourse relating to the notion of memory, although I do not explore this notion in greater depth as it is not central to this thesis.

quotations identified over the course of the research process and a selection of digital video stills. The decision to create work as an ongoing process over the course of the research period has enabled individual pieces to be shown at a wide range of screen-based dance festivals; short film festivals and artists' moving image events. A full list of screenings is given in Appendix A. The *Memory Pool* project was also presented in the form of a computer-based installation project at Middlesex University in May 2007.

For examination purposes, this chapter provides the clearest priming for subsequent viewing of the *Memory Pool* cycle on DVD. Here, the work has been set out as a chronologically-oriented mapping of the research process. This process begins with *Scatter* (2004) and ends with *Duet For Two Hands* (2006). However *Foreword* (2006) and *The Distance Between Points* (2006) have been placed at the beginning of the cycle as a means of introducing thematic concerns relating to the notion of memory. Sections of the work can be accessed on an individual basis, and the entire cycle can also be viewed sequentially. The design of the DVD allows viewers the opportunity to navigate their own pathway through the collection and therefore to determine the nature of their own engagement with the cycle of work.

5.1 Production-related procedures

It would not be possible to appraise the work created as part of the *Memory Pool* project without a consideration of the circumstances and procedures involved in its production. This appraisal touches on issues relating to the precise nature of the

working partnerships involved, and the repercussions of creating work by means of recent developments in digital technology. The implications of creating work independently of traditional funding structures will also be considered; this relates directly to Deren and Brakhage's writings on the notion of 'the amateur' as outlined in Chapter One (in McPherson, 2001, p.144 and McPherson, 2005, p.18).

All of the work has been created in partnership with Jake Messenger, who has taken on the title of technical facilitator in relation to the project.[26] The adoption of the term within this context signifies a relationship in which technical expertise is placed at the service of conceptual and artistic vision. This usage can be readily identified as located within a working model more usually associated with visual arts practice. This model places a single artistic originator as the acknowledged signatory to a work. This can also be distinguished from a model of collective practice occurring between a number of collaborating artists, more generally associated with the traditions of the performing arts. This orientation is also reflected in Messenger's employment status as part of the team staffing the Creative Studio at Apple U.K.'s central London store. Within this professional role, technical knowledge and abilities are utilised in the realisation of others' creative vision. This position would not be a workable model for many collaborative partnerships. However it has evolved over several years of creating screen based work, and exists alongside Messenger's own creative practice as a photographer and digital artist. This background knowledge was also reflected in the filming and editing processes in the creation of the *Memory Pool* project. During filming

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[26] This term reflects current practice as adopted by leading screen-based dance organisations, such as The Place's Dance on Screen Festival, and by South East Dance in relation to their workshop programmes.

sessions, Messenger was able to contribute considerable expertise in the deployment of lighting and camera operation, while I retained responsibility for determining all movement tasks and framing choices, Over the course of the editing process, all stylistic, editing and compositional choices were my own, while Messenger's extensive knowledge of programming options was responsible for the level of image and sound quality in the work.[27]

Maya Deren has written at length about what she characterises as the 'collective monster' associated with traditional filmmaking practices. She cites ' the enormous personnel of assistant directors, cameramen, lighting men, actors and producers' as obstructions lying in the path of the film artist in the realisation of their ideas (in McPherson, 2005, p.20). Deren also points out that artists practising in other disciplines are able to circumvent these problems. To this end, she states that 'this is an obstacle which the poet, in his direct control over words, and the painter in his direct relationship to the canvas, does not confront' (p.20). My own practices in the creation of screen based work have been shaped in large measure by the necessity of financial economy. However, they have been equally informed by the notion of the desirability of improvisationally-oriented input within unfunded digital production. In such a working model, ideas can easily be adapted in response to changing conditions and concepts. In relation to the privileging of technical equipment within the process of mainstream filmmaking, Deren has also noted that,

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[27] The design and navigation elements required in the process of DVD authoring were also developed by myself, and realised by means of Messenger's technological capabilities.

Cameras do not make films; film-makers make films. Improve your films not by adding more equipment and personnel but by using what you have to its fullest capacity. The most important part of your equipment is yourself: your mobile body, your imaginative mind, and your freedom to use both.

(Deren in McPherson, 2005, p.18)

All of my own work has been created with a minimum of technical equipment. A digital video camera, purchased in 2000, has been used, together with a home computer and domestic editing software programs such as Final Cut Pro and Shake. A lighting rig consisting of three small halogen lamps, which were purchased at extremely low cost from a commercial hardware chain store, or the availability of natural light, has provided lighting cover for all pieces. Studio filming took place predominantly in space provided by Middlesex University at the Trent Park Campus, or, in some cases, the interior of my home. All of the performers took part in the filming sessions without payment. Everyone involved contributed their expertise as an integral element of the creative process, with myself as catalysing agent and ultimate arbiter in the shaping of the work. These conditions conform to Deren's recipe for artistic integrity, proposed in response to what she characterises as the 'assembly-line product' of conventional film industry practice. Deren states that artistic integrity is achievable 'only when the individual who conceives the work remains its prime mover until the end, with purely technical assistance where necessary' (p.23). Significantly, Deren rejects what she characterises as the 'operational gigantism' inherent within the working practices

associated with traditional, industry-led production (p.243). In this regard, she

consciously places her working practices entirely outside of any notions of

externally-funded production models. Consequently, Deren's embrace of the

traditions of amateur filmmaking is framed as an inherently desirable creative

option (p.17). In her espousal of this tradition, she argues that 'economy of means

is of the essence' and should not be taken as 'an unfortunate limitation on

creativity or profundity' (p.243). On the contrary, Deren regards these limitations

as a means to expand creativity, which necessitates 'a real examination and

exploitation of the inherent possibilities of the camera, the cutting and the film

medium as such' (p.158). The work developed as part of the *Memory Pool* project

conforms to Deren's assertion that production models require to be 'scaled

modestly enough to "afford" failure' (p.156). Deren elaborates in this vein by

stating 'I am also convinced that the chances of completing any project are

inversely proportionate to the number of people upon whose co-operation it is

dependent' (p.156). All of my own work has been created with this imperative in

mind, by a conscious limiting of the number of personnel involved. This method of

production also conforms to the influence of digital technology on mainstream

filmmaking. This influence has been acknowledged by Walter Murch in the

observation, 'I can see down the road it's possible that a film crew will be a very,

very small bunch of people' (in Ondaatje, 2002, p.214). Murch also acknowledges

the impact of digital technology on the potential range of creative filmic production.

To this end, he states that 'there are lots of other kinds of filmmaking possibilities

opening up in the wide spectrum between home movies and feature films' (in

Koppelman, 2005, p.334). The work created as part of this research process can be regarded as an exploration of that unfolding creative and productional territory.

For the *Memory Pool* project, a total of ten formal filming sessions took place over a two year period. Much of the work for each session was carried out beforehand, by pre-determining movement tasks; camera positioning and framing choices. These were discussed with Messenger prior to a shoot, and sometimes diagrams or sketches proved to be helpful in communicating an idea. However, there was no intention to pre-empt the organic development of a piece by story boarding or planning individual shots in order to adhere to a shooting script.

Sherril Dodds has written of the challenges presented to dance performers during the filming for televisual presentation of a pre-existing choreographed work. Dodds states that,

> the television performance is made up of multiple 'performances', filmed over several days or weeks, which are often then edited together into a whole. Each shot can last as little as a few seconds and many shots have to be repeated several times as part of the production process. For a dancing body, the performance experience is fragmented and inconsistent.

> (Dodds, 2001, p.147)

Alternative means of capturing footage have been outlined, however, in other works on screen-based dance. Interviewed in *Parallel Lines* (1993), Siobhan Davies recounts filming which involved a continuous take lasting fourteen minutes, shot with a hand-held camera. Davies states of this approach that ' the dancers weren't doing two minutes and then a cut, and then another minute, and so on' (cited in Jordan in Jordan and Allen, 1993, p.176). My own background in dance, and particularly in the improvisational traditions associated with Contact Improvisation and Skinner Releasing Technique, has influenced the orientation of filming sessions towards the notion of movement-centred events. These sessions have been filmed non-intrusively and in sustained takes, rather than privileging the technical demands of traditional filmmaking requirements. Katrina McPherson has written of the particular properties apparent within screen based work created by means of improvisationally-oriented input. McPherson states that 'there is a qualitative difference between the performance of video dance material that has been set exactly and material that retains elements of improvisation' (2006, p.51). McPherson expands on the benefits which can be achieved in this way by stating that the work created can contain moments 'full of energy, excitement and with a sense of aliveness' (p.54). In pursuing this sense of improvisationally-generated energy as a significant element of my own work, a number of strategies were adopted. If not actively involved in performing during a filming session, my role comprised the image-led initiation of movement tasks for additional performers. This allowed the resulting improvisation to unfold with minimal verbal input. While not physically holding the camera, my practice placed me in very close collaboration with Messenger during the filming process. In this regard, decisions

were made in relation to the camera's physical pathway in response to what could be seen in the camera screen. This approach to filming movement has arisen directly from my own experience as a dancer, and is indivisible from that very particular body of experience. This also reflects the improvisationally-driven approach which has been integral to the development of every stage of the production process. The notion of specialist levels of embodied knowledge, which have been derived from experience of dance-related practices, holds particular significance in relation to the notion of intuitively-governed choreographic engagement. This notion has been articulated by video artist Bill Viola in relation to his own experience and practice. To this end, Viola has stated that,

I first started using a video camera when I was 21. I had to think about where I was pointing it, how I was using it, what the light was, and so on. And this process was not only technical, it had a direct effect on the content of my work. Then I used that camera for twenty years, and that 21-year old part of me who was struggling with composition and lighting is now something deeper, and has migrated out to my *hand*, so that the center (*sic*) of consciousness has moved from my conscious mind to my hand. My hand now 'knows' where to put the camera, which I do quite naturally, when I encounter a new location.

(Viola, 1998, p.272)

This sentiment is echoed by Becky Edmunds in her description of her own practice, where she states that operating a camera comes closest to recreating

and utilising her experience as a dancer. Edmunds states that the decisions made, involving the placement of her own body and of the camera in relation to her subjects, 'feel instinctive, but they come from years of practising placing my body in space as a dancer' (2006, email). This approach also strongly resonates with Stan Brakhage's assertion that 'cinematic dancing might be said to occur as any filmmaker is moved to include his whole psychological awareness in any film movement' (in McPherson, 2001, p.132). Within my own practice, the notion of professional intuition is manifest in a variety of ways. For example, the framing choices and camera pathways in *Partial Visibility* were partially pre-determined. However, I was also able to respond to the stimulus of the unfolding movement task by tuning into my own improvisationally-oriented awareness. This allowed me to make choices relating to the journey of the camera within the moment, and, effectively to function as an additional participant within the parameters of the improvisation. In addition, Katrina McPherson's editing-related notion of 'an "Ah yes" moment' represents a near-instantaneous recognition of the usability of a section of material (2006, p.242). This process of recognition is clearly traceable within my own professional background to the experience accrued by viewing movement content within a studio context. It is worthy of note that the selectivity of focus possible within the process of editing has enabled a significant deepening of engagement with my own sense of intuitively-governed decision-making than was accessible within a traditional studio-based context. All footage from each section of work comprising the *Memory Pool* cycle has been selected on the basis of an 'Ah Yes' moment. The extreme selectivity of focus apparent in *Magical Thinking* (2004) provides a particularly effective exemplification of this phenomenon and

this process is explored in greater detail in section 5.2. The assemblage of footage into a notionally optimal order also derives in my own case from an internal attunement to my own bodily rhythms, which are then matched to the rhythms and cadences of the on screen movement. This notion is particularly evident within *Kinetic Empathy* (2005). This piece utilises the distinctive rhythmic patterning of my own improvisationally-based movement style, which has then been assembled through a process of improvisationally-governed editing. This emphasis on a kinesthetically-driven and improvisationally-oriented approach is directly traceable within my own professional background to the study of specific techniques such as Skinner Releasing Technique and Contact Improvisation.

Brakhage has also written of the shifting status and perception of his own roles within the context of film production. He states that,

> I have contributed to many commercial films as 'director', 'photographer', 'editor', 'writer', 'actor' even 'grip', etcetera, and sometimes in combination of all of these. But mostly I have worked without title, in *no* collaboration with others - I have worked at home and alone on films of seemingly *no* commercial value.
>
> (Brakhage in McPherson, 2001, p.142)

My own role in the creation of the *Memory Pool* project conformed to this permeable, multitasking and essentially unclassifiable model of non-commercially-oriented working practice. When viewed through the perspective of the traditional

film industry label of 'director', my own directorial input is very non-traditional and non-invasive. When functioning as a performer, my directorial input related to the selection and priming of framing choices for each movement task. As a director of other performers, an integral element of my input at the stage of filming was to function as a witness to the process. This role involved providing feedback on the most successful elements of an improvised movement task between takes. This approach can be regarded as a direct outgrowth from my own teaching and choreographic practice. As such, it is reliant on factors such as tone of voice and focussed attention, rather than on specific verbal instructions. This approach also allows for the provision of a supportive framework within which improvisations can evolve and develop over time.

The nature of my own choreographic involvement in the development of movement material can be seen to conform largely to a conceptually-driven approach. This approach involves the setting of tasks and delivery of images as a means of initiating improvised content. Many aspects of this procedural focus have much in common with the traditions of documentary filmmaking.[28] These aspects include the initiation of tasks in order to generate footage; filming as a record of an event, and the emphasis on composition by means of editing rather than on the realisation of a pre-determined shooting script.

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[28] Parallels to a documentary approach to filmmaking can also be made in relation to the use of the four principal performers within the project. Each of the four performers, including myself, brought a widely divergent set of personal histories, movement styles and creative preferences to the work. This divergence reflects a spread of age, life experience, dance training and diversity of professional engagement. My aim within the project was to utilise the filming process in order to highlight the particular qualities that each performer brought to a session, rather than to impose a predetermined movement style or vocabulary of codified dance steps. Biographical details of the principal performers are included in Appendix F.

In creating the *Memory Pool* project, filming sessions were structured in two-hour blocks, with up to half a dozen different ideas explored over the course of a session. This approach resulted in the filming of some pieces within an extremely short time frame, when viewed from the perspective of traditional film making practice. When examined from the context of improvised movement, however, much less filming time was required in order to generate sufficient workable footage. The exploration of different ideas served as a stimulus to the creation of as wide a range of recorded material as possible. This wide-ranging exploration was selected in preference to the more traditionally film and television industry-oriented process of realisation of the fixed points of a camera script. Some ideas translated immediately into clearly realised imagery, while others required several attempts in order to be refined more fully, and others still led on to development in entirely different directions. This approach resonates with Murch's observation on the role of the director. He states that 'the most important distinction is whether you allow the process to become an active collaborator in the making of the film' (in Ondaatje, 2002, p.217). Murch elaborates on this approach in relation to his own editing practice, encapsulated in the assertion that 'I particularly love that part of the process when an element of chance enters' (p.220). This resonates strongly with my own experience of the improvisationally-oriented creative process as part of the *Memory Pool* project. These issues also find expression in Karin Knorr-Cetina's positing of the question 'how can one theorize practice in a way that allows for engrossment and excitement - the emotional basis of research work?' (in Schatzki, 2001, p.175). Knorr-Cetina's elaborates on this issue in relation to the notion of a 'continually renewed interest in knowing' which remains open to the

potential for intuitive promptings (p.186). The organic and process-oriented approach adopted for the conceptualisation, filming and editing of the *Memory Pool* project allowed for a clear engagement with this range of practices. These practices can also be clearly identified as arising from my own body of professional experience in the creation of improvised dance. In this regard, my own screen based creative process requires to be acknowledged and categorised as a function of an improvisationally-oriented choreographic practice.

5.2 Editing

In this section, the specific processes and procedures involved in the composition of work through editing, as exemplified in the *Memory Pool* project, is examined in further detail. In acknowledgement of its centrality to my own editing practice, particular reference is made to the notion of professional intuition as outlined by Melrose (2003); Murch (2001); Knorr-Cetina (2001); Brakhage (2001); McPherson (2006) and others.

In my own assessment of the work created as part of the *Memory Pool* project, a strand of choreographic function can clearly be identified in the composition of footage by means of editing. This process of editing within my own creative practice comprises a number of stages and procedures. These can be seen to relate to Walter Murch's identification of three key stages relating to his own process. With regard to the first of these stages, Murch states that

There is the logistical wrangling of all the footage - getting it into the

system correctly, in sync, properly logged, and then getting it out the other

end when the creative work is finished.

(Koppelman, 2005, p.204)

Within my own practice, Messenger fulfils the first stage of Murch's process by

dealing with the technically-oriented tasks of capturing and importing footage.

Murch identifies the second stage in the process as 'the performance' of editing.

This is characterised as the selection of takes, which are positioned 'in their

proper places relative to each other, and intuiting how long to hold each one

before cutting to the next' (p.204). Messenger's role within this stage of the

process is that of keyboard operator, who functions in response to my own

rhythmic, visual and kinaesthetically-oriented decision making. This demarcation

of function allows me to focus entirely on the right-hemisphere oriented, non-linear

functions relating to intuition and pattern recognition required in the process of

composition. Charles Koppelman has stated that 'the material can tell filmmakers

what to do ... but you must know how to hear' (2005, p.139). The division of labour

within my own practice affords the ideal means of tuning in intently to the

promptings suggested by my own intuitive function. In addition, a number of

specific processes are employed as a means of promoting this intuitively-oriented

engagement. These include the identification and arrangement of stills from within

the footage and the incorporation of key ideas arising from the research process in

the form of quotations. Murch has written at length of his own strategies for

stimulating his professional intuitive sense. In particular, he cites the use of

photographic scene cards and picture boards as an aid to the process of internalising material (in Koppelman, 2005, p.235; in Ondaatje, 2002, p.45). Over the course of the *Memory Pool's* development, a weblog was created which incorporates image and text-based material as an aid to the composition of work. Within my own practice, the creation of this document functioned as a stimulus to intuitive function in relation to the task of editing. In acknowledgement of this pivotal role within the creative process, details of the weblog are given in Appendix G. In articulating his own process in relation to this area, Murch has stated that he is 'responding to something that is beyond my control, that has to do purely with thought and emotion, with rhythm and musicality' (p.269). This characterisation resonates strongly with my own experience of translating an intuitively-oriented engagement, which was developed over many years of participation in the field of improvised dance work, to the editing of movement content. Murch also states that this intuitively-oriented approach can yield results which access a self-generating level of creative engagement. To this end he has states that 'the process reaches the point where I can look at the scene and say, 'I didn't have anything to do with that - it just created itself' (2001, p.50). This conclusion is echoed in Stan Brakhage's views in relation to the creation of his own pieces. To this end, Brakhage has stated that 'I've become more and more convinced that I don't make them' (in McPherson, 2001, p.169). My own experience of this stage of the editing process involves a willingness to enter into a meditative state, and to disregard pre-planned structures in order to follow the promptings of professional intuition. This experience resonates strongly with Murch and Brakhage's characterisations of their own practice. Charles Koppelman has written of the discarding of footage

as 'a film is winnowed down to its essential self' (2005, p.144). My own process of composition through editing requires an initial removal of footage that does not appear to belong as part of a piece. Katrina McPherson has noted that useable content generated through improvisationally-oriented strategies 'tend to be in short fragments' (2006, 54). My own means of identifying these useable fragments conforms to McPherson's outlining of this stage of her own editing practice, which is characterised as the search for 'an "Ah yes" moment' (p.242). Murch has also outlined his belief in the notion of an 'optimal structure to the image sequence in any particular film' (in Koppelman, 2005, p.254). This, he believes, is analogous to an optimal molecular structuring occurring at an atomic level within any given form. My own experience of composition through editing can be characterised as an attempt to determine the optimal order and patterning of footage. This is achieved by means of engagement with a range of professional strategies and abilities developed over the course of many years of experience in generating improvised movement. Both practices draw on the intuitively-oriented function of rhythmic patterning, and make use of the phenomena of kinetic resonance and pattern recognition. This range of function can be categorised in relation to my own creative practice as comprising an identifiable choreographic sensibility. The ways in which these practices and function are manifest in the creation of specific pieces are outlined in section 5.3.

The third and analytically-oriented stage of Murch's process is characterised as things that 'a book editor might tell an author about basic structure' (in Koppelman, 2005, p.205). With regard to my own research process, this stage has been

realised in the assemblage of the cycle of work in its entirely, which has involved the reworking and drawing together of a number of elements. These elements have included the pieces themselves, digital video stills and quotations.

The use of sound for the pieces has been a significant element in the creative process. The aural environment was developed as a means of enhancing the particular nature and qualities of each piece. Generally, extremely short sampled loops of sound were technically manipulated by means of duration, tone and pitch to a point where the original stimulus was no longer recognisable. In one instance, the sound of chirruping crickets was significantly slowed and then looped to achieve a distortion effect. This aspect of the creative process also functioned as an extension of the editing stage. In this regard, Messenger's technical abilities were applied at the service of my own creative vision with regard to each aspect of the piece's structuring.

5.3 Evaluation

In this section, individual examples of work from *The Memory Pool* project are subject to analysis and evaluation. This analysis draws on a range of critical perspectives, as outlined in Chapter Two. Individual pieces are also reflected upon in relation to issues arising from a variety of other debates. These include a range of themes current within the field of discourse, such as the video dance body; the potential for intersection with a range of new media and visual arts-oriented practices; non cutting-dependent editing practice and the translation of pre-choreographed movement material to a screen context. The use of non-human

movement content; still images; quotations and pre-set choreographic material is also explored. The issue of kinetic resonance has proved to hold particular relevance to the identification of screen based choreographic practice. This section therefore begins with an examination of this phenomenon in relation to the process of editing. The section concludes with an evaluative assessment of the cycle of work, approached from the dual perspective of professional and academic contexts.

A process of examination of a wide range of critical discourse was undertaken at the start of the research process. Not all of this research has been included in the formal process of thesis writing. However, many of the aspects of critical writing encountered fulfilled a valuable function by providing a seedbed of ideas in the creative germination of work. For example, a range of issues from the field of current practice has been explored in *Kinetic Empathy* (2006); *Spiro* (2006); *Zoetrope* (2005); *Flicker* (2005); *Close Reading* (2005) and *Full Tilt* (2005). These issues include the phenomenon of kinetic resonance, as outlined by Sherril Dodds and Siegfried Kracauer (1960, p.158, 2004, p.33/34;). Issues relating to the historical development of cinema and the notion of the video dance body have also been investigated (Doane, 2002, p.132 and 199; Greenfield in Mitoma, 2002, p.24 and Dodds, 2004, p.169).

The issue of kinetic resonance has particular significance for my own editing practice, and is explored in the piece *Kinetic Empathy*. In this work, the distinctively lilting rhythmic patterning of my own improvisatory movement style

encourages viewer engagement on the level of kinaesthetic response. The work also takes Siegfried Kracauer's assertion that, 'representations of movement do cause a stir in deep bodily layers' as its starting point (1960, p.158). Douglas Rosenberg has noted that, on the issue of kinetic resonance, much has been written as a means of characterising the phenomenon, However, Rosenberg also asserts that 'little has been written about how that sympathetic kinaesthetic sensation is translated on to the screen' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.13). Karen Pearlman has approached this issue specifically in her investigation of editing as a choreographic practice. To this end, Pearlman states that,

> Choreographers empathize directly with the movements that they have created when they watch the dancers performing their dance because they neurologically recognize the intentions and kinesthetically recognize the feel of those movements. They use this physical understanding of intentions of movement and empathy with its force, direction and speed to shape flow of the choreography.
>
> (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.54)

My own experience of editing within the *Memory Pool* project resonates with Pearlman's characterisation of kinetic empathy as a function of choreographic practice. Within my own practice as choreographer/ editor, a sense of pre-determined choreographic endpoint has largely been bypassed. This has allowed each piece to be constructed in response to the promptings of an intuitively-oriented sense of kinetic resonance. This issue is foregrounded in both *Kinetic*

Empathy and *Spiro.* The latter piece further connects with Pearlman's notions of

the importance of the breath within the editing of movement content. Outlining her

ideas in this area, Pearlman has stated that 'editors have to use their own physical

presence as a stand-in for the spectator's and measure the rhythms of the film's

"breath" by comparison with the feeling of their own breathing' (2006,

www.dvpg.net/ essays.html, p.55). This notion of a strongly physicalised

engagement with movement content by means of editing has proved to be an

identifying feature of my own choreographic practice throughout the creation of the

Memory Pool project.

Zoetrope and *Flicker* both make use of digital technology to re-create the

historically significant visual forms of pre- and early cinematic imagery represented

by the zoetrope and the flicker film. *Full Tilt* merges the very different

improvisatory styles of two performers into a single hybrid sequence. This is

achieved through the practice of montage editing, which was pioneered in the field

of screen-based dance by work such as Deren's *A Study In Choreography for*

Camera (1945), and Hilary Harris' *Nine Variations on a Dance Theme* (1966).[29]

Full Tilt and *Close Reading* both investigate the mediated phenomenon of the

video dance body, which is outlined in the writings of Amy Greenfield (2002) and

Sherril Dodds (2004) respectively. In both cases, a screen based construct of

disparate physical elements is created utilising body parts from different

performers.

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[29] The quotation by Amy Greenfield, referring to 'a new kind of body existing only in cinema' which prefaces the piece, is a reference to Harris' work (Greenfield in Mitoma, 2002, p.24).

Several of the individual works created call into question the assumption that work

requires the depiction of human bodies in motion in order to be read from a

choreographic perspective.[30] In *Mid-October* (2005) and *April/May* (2006), non-

human movement is explored, drawing on the writing of Stan Brakhage in relation

to the filmic movement potential of natural phenomena. Brakhage describes the

impact of a strobe effect on trees visible in the background of Deren's *A Study In*

Choreography for Camera by stating that they are 'in a state of dance' (1989,

p.98). This image is one that I wished to explore within the creation of work. While

manifestly not concerned with any representation of codified dance steps, these

two pieces reflect a long-standing choreographic preoccupation with the

movement quality of plant life.[31] Within the *Memory Pool* project, this has

manifested as an illustration of the effect of wind and atmospheric conditions on a

range of natural phenomena. In particular, the movement of a number of trees

filmed in different locations during autumn 2005 and spring 2006, is explored. The

pieces focus on a range of discernibly different movement qualities, most

obviously affected by seasonal change. In the third section of the work *April/May*,

entitled 'May Day', long continuous takes were used to capture the range of

movement occurring in a single blossom-laden tree. Filming and editing methods

employed in the creation of more conventional dance works also proved to be

applicable to non-human movement. In this respect, locations and 'performers'

were identified; framing choices made and long takes winnowed down during the

editing process in order to highlight specific moments of movement. These

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[30] This assumption is exemplified by the (Hu)manifesto document created at the Open Source
Video Dance Conference in 2006, as set out in Chapter One (2006, www.videodance.blogspot.
com/2006_06_01_archive.html)
[31] A clear influence on my own screen based choreographic practice has been the BBC television
series The Private Life of Plants (1995).

particular pieces can be read as a response to Deren's exhortation to film makers to ' use the movement of wind, or water...as a poem might celebrate these' (in McPherson, 2005, p.17/18). These particular pieces can also be located within a tradition of artist's moving image work, in particular exemplified by Tony Hill's *Laws of Nature* (1996), as outlined in Chapter Three. In the sections of work entitled *Foreword* and *Afterword* (2006), which preface and end the cycle, footage of the natural world and of seasonal shifts was filmed over the course of a two year period. This provided the opportunity for a longer term engagement with a particular idea and range of material within the project as a whole. *15.12* (2006) also explored the territory of non-human movement by utilising footage filmed from a train interior. The conceptual framing for this piece contains obvious echoes to Michel Gondry's *Star Guitar*, as outlined in Chapter Three. However, the piece is of particular interest from the perspective of current screen-based dance production. An appraisal of the processes involved in the creation of this work reveals a particular engagement with the notion of rhythmic patterning, as achieved by means of editing. In this regard, the work clearly exemplifies the potential for choreographically-oriented compositional strategies to be applied to movement material which does not conform to any traditional notions of 'dance'.

The development of a large number of individual screen based works over an extended time period allowed for a wide variety of approaches to be applied in the process of their creation. The creative possibilities inherent within the technique of montage editing were explored in pieces such as *Surveil* (2005) and *Full Tilt* (2005). In these works, the disruption and dissonance to the viewing experience

achieved through the process of sharp cutting becomes the focus of the work.[32]

These pieces are reliant for their impact on the effect of juxtaposition through cutting. However, other work created as part of the project explored the phenomenon of unedited, continuous takes. *Threshold State* (2005), an eight minute-long improvisation, in which a single performer gradually approaches and subsequently obscures the static camera position, is presented entirely as it was filmed. The piece was created in response to patterns of natural sunlight visible across a studio's floor and back wall, and these patterns can be seen to shift subtly within the timeframe of the piece. In its concern with the durational aspects of filmed movement, the piece owes an obvious debt to Rosemary Butcher and Martin Otter's *Vanishing Point* (2003). Both of these works can be identified as clear examples of a strand of screen-specific choreographic practice which, while concerned with spatial and temporal elements, is non cutting-dependent. *Two of Space and One of Time* (2006) also falls within this strand of practice. Here, the addition of a second camera to the filming process allowed for the juxtaposition of contrasting footage. The filming of a single performer in multiple takes also afforded the opportunity to highlight contrast in scale between synchronous renditions of the same movement sequence. This sequence was filmed both at close range and at greater distance from the respective camera positions. *Two of Space and One of Time* also clearly inhabits operational territory explored by Mike Figgis in *Timecode*, as examined in Chapter Three, and by Katrina McPherson in *The Truth:The Truth,* as identified in Chapter Four. In all three works, the issue of

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[32] The editing of movement content within Full Tilt also provides a clear example of a practice outlined by Daniel Conrad and characterised as the creation of a 'kinetic bridge' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays. html, p.102). Here, the positioning of specific body parts within the frame creates the illusion of a continuous movement sequence, achieved by means of cutting.

simultaneity is examined and foregrounded. *Two of Space and One of Time* also

explores a range of concerns relating to extremes of scale in the presentation of

movement material. These concerns are also apparent within Édouard Lock's

Amelia, which is also examined in Chapter Four.

Uninterrupted sequences of movement were also employed in a range of pieces

inhabiting territory more readily associated with digital arts or new media practice,

rather than with conventional filmmaking traditions or techniques. In *Three*

Orchestral Variations (2005), the hands of a non-dance trained orchestral

conductor were filmed and subsequently presented as three discrete sections of

continuous movement. *Trace* (2005) also makes use of a single continuous

sequence of solo improvisation. In this piece, the editing software program Shake

was used to render visible the movement patterning created by the journey of the

dancer's hands and feet across the screen space.[33] *Scatter* (2004) was created by

applying a particular effect from the software program Isadora to a sequence of

improvised dance. The application of this effect contributes to a sense within the

piece of the inherent instability both of the digital image and of the human form.

Several of these pieces have the potential to be developed further in directions

which diverge from a linear, single screen viewing format. Many would also

particularly benefit from a contemplatively-oriented and non duration-specific

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[33] This process resonates strongly with Rosenberg's characterisation of the relationship created between audience and performer in the course of viewing a work. To this end, Rosenberg asserts that an audience perceives 'a kind of performative, autobiographical writing, writing in real, spatial, dimensional time' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.13).

experience of exhibition within a gallery-based context.[34] The quotation prefacing *Three Orchestral Variations* is by Sherril Dodds, who states the requirement for new critical strategies in relation to the analysis of screen based dance. This is encapsulated in the assertion that, 'critics who dismiss video dance for its lack of established dance techniques need to reconsider the evaluative criteria of what constitutes "dance" ' (2001, p.125). *Three Orchestral Variations*, *Trace* and *Scatter* can be read as engaging with a range of conceptually-driven conventions and approaches which are more usually associated with visual arts practice than with a traditional view of dance-making. In this respect, the pieces can be said to represent possibilities for expanded notions of choreographic practice inherent within the 'hybrid' genre of screen-based dance (Dodds, 2001). The works can also be categorised as part of the trend towards increasing convergence evident across the spectrum of contemporary moving image production. These pieces can also be seen to clearly exemplify one strand of Kovgan's categorisation of screen based choreographic practice. This strand is characterised as the arrangement of elements within the screen space, as governed by practices relating to the traditions of visual art and new media practice (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.52).

In addition to the use of continuously moving footage, several pieces were created which explored the incorporation of digital video stills. Stills were used as an element within in a number of pieces, such as The *Grammar of Presence* (2005) and *Surveil* (2005). In addition, several of the works were either wholly, or

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[34] The central section of Three Orchestral Variations was screened in linear form as part of the programme comprising From Actuality to Illusion at Chisenhale Dance Space, London, in July 2007.

predominantly, reliant on the use of still images. In *Still* (2005), an improvisation involving two performers was edited down to a series of nine images. The tight framing for the piece, which focused in close-up on heads and faces, functioned as a compositional choice. This compositional focus was strongly influenced by a particular sequence from Julio Medem's *Lovers of the Arctic Circle* (1998), as identified in Chapter Three. In *Splice* (2005), thirty three still images, each isolating a single hand, were shown sequentially. This created a jerkily dissociative movement sequence, which incorporated images of the hands of four female performers of differing ages. The sequence alternates throughout the piece with longer passages of uninterrupted footage. Consequently, the continuity of the moving image is disrupted, while the notion of a continuous process, with the ability to span differing life stages, is suggested. In relation to framing choice, the piece also makes use of extreme close-up to highlight the range of expressive qualities visible within the human hand. This choice represents an alternative to the presentation of more conventional signifiers of identity and appearance, such as the face.[35] *Splice* was filmed over a series of sessions, with a very specific framing choice and conceptual engagement in mind from the beginning. In contrast, *Duet For Two Hands (2006)* developed from an unstructured improvisation, with no predetermined agenda. All three pieces concentrate on minute specifics of human expression and interaction. They can therefore be viewed as exemplifying Balázs' assertion of the primacy of the emotive potential inherent within the filmic medium. This is encapsulated in the assertion as previously cited that film is best suited not to grand extremes of spectacle such as

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[35] The use of still images in this piece is comparable to Letizia Weth's work with posed photographic images of women in Sekunden (2004), screened in London at the Kinetic Fields symposium in May 2006.

'a hurricane at sea or the eruption of a volcano' but instead to a focus on minutiae such as 'a solitary tear welling up in the corner of a human eye' (1952, p.31). All three works can also be regarded as exemplifying Kovgan's categorisation of choreographic composition by means of editing (Internet 9). In this regard, the use of still images to construct the impression of movement, as evident within *Splice*, represents an explicit foregrounding of the mediated and constructed nature of this strand of screen based choreographic practice. Here, no pre-set choreographic material was utilised as a starting point for the creation of work. Material was generated through a process of improvisation and reduced down to a single frame before being reconfigured to achieve an illusory sense of continuous motion by means of editing.

The majority of work developed as part of the *Memory Pool* project was created solely for viewing within a screen based context. However, three of the pieces were adapted for screen from dance work initially devised for live performance. Within these three works, the translation of pre-set movement material into a screen context requires examination as a distinct strand of screen based choreographic practice. This process of translation can be read from within choreographically-relevant parameters as moving from an engagement with the development of movement content to the notion of context-specific reconfiguration of a work.

Fleeting, Magical Thinking and *P.O.V.* (2004/5) were originally choreographed as part of teaching commitments for Cambridge University Contemporary Dance

Workshop. These pieces reflect the movement preferences of the majority of the performers, in that they make use of a vocabulary comprising pre-set, codified dance steps. However, the screen based work differs greatly in form from its original incarnation as live performance. Sherril Dodds has stated that 'the basic framing device of a camera enables a spectator to see compositional perspectives of an image that are only applicable to the film or television context' (2001, p.71). All three pieces were developed for screen with this property in mind. This, in turn, echoes Münsterberg's assertion that the development of cinema is dependent on its ability to 'free itself from the shackles of the theater (*sic*) and to live up to its own forms' (in Langdale, 2002, p.174).

P.O.V. originated as a largely unison-based group piece. However, the screen based version allowed for the individual tracking of two of the performers, in order to represent their pathway through the work. The quotation from Gregory Currie which prefaces the piece foregrounds the mediated nature of the creative and operational choices which are integral to screen based choreographic function. This foregrounding is designed to counter the notion that screen based dance necessarily presents a dissatisfying experience, when compared that of live performance. This notion is encapsulated in Francis Sparshott's characterisation of the screen based dance viewer, whom he likens to "someone in a very bad seat at a theatre, confined to frustrating glimpses of what should have been the show' (1995, p.447). Currie's assertion that 'there is no such thing as non-perspectival seeing' effectively problematises the notion of a single, optimal viewing perspective as manifest within live or screen based contexts (1995, p.178).

In *Fleeting* (2004), several different strands of movement phrasing are interwoven through the process of editing, in order to produce a suggestion of co-occurent activity. Eisenstein's concept of polyphonic montage functioned strongly as an influence within the work's compositional process. This concept is characterised as a weaving together of compositional strands. Each strand is further characterised as advancing in a way which develops its own internal integrity 'while being at the same time inseparable from the overall compositional progression' (1991, p.330). Filming for the piece took place within a very constricted spatial area, and the resulting intimacy of scale and use of shadow contrasts with the companion work, *Magical Thinking* (2004). In the latter piece, the same body of movement material was filmed in a much larger space, lit by the naturally occurring patterns of summer sunlight. *Magical Thinking* successfully creates a sense of its own imaginative landscape with extreme economy of means. This resonates with Eisenstein's assertion that the essential characteristic of montage editing is 'suggestiveness' and that 'six properly chosen details can produce the effect of an event' (p.150; p. 203).

The movement content for the site-specific versions of *Fleeting* and *Magical Thinking* made use of a range of material generated over the course of a twenty year choreographic career. For the screen based works, this content was compressed, through the application of montage, within the time parameters of a few minutes. In the case of *Fleeting*, temporal concerns were further foregrounded by the addition of a soundtrack generated by the ticking of a clock. The piece is

also prefaced by André Bazin's characterisation of the practice of montage editing as 'the ordering of images in time' (in Tredell, 2002, p.64). In relation to their compositional construction through the practice of montage editing, *P.O.V.*, *Fleeting* and *Magical Thinking* can thus be said to conform to Pearlman's notion and Kovgan's categorisation of editing as a choreographic practice (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.54 and 49). The 'objective distance' achieved by the process of translation from live to screen incarnation also locates these three pieces within Rosenberg's characterisation of the 'director's film', which is outlined in Chapter Four (2006, www.dvpg.net/ essays.html, p.13). In relation to my own practice, these processes manifest through a choreographically-informed engagement with the framing choice; composition by means of editing and conceptually-driven synthesis of creative elements.

Access points to each section of the work In *Memory Pool* are indicated by the use of quotations. These quotations encapsulate areas of debate within the field of critical discourse and inform the creation of the pieces. While these quotations are used mainly to preface each piece, some have been integrated to a greater extent as an element of the work itself. A passage by Brian Massumi, which relates to the process of walking, was the instigation point for *The Event of a Caught Fall* (2005). This idea, which was initially filmed using two performers, generated a large amount of visually arresting still images. However the resulting movement material was overly reliant on a character-driven approach. The idea was reworked in a subsequent filming session with less emphasis on visual engagement, and more on the rhythmic structure of improvised footfalls. This

footage was edited with the aim of counterpointing the rhythm of the movement with that of the on-screen reading of the text. This was achieved by means of intercutting between the two elements. The grammatical construction of Massumi's sentences constitutes a base line of reference within the work. This allows the passage's final full stop to function as the end punctuation point, and for the movement content to function as an improvisatory counterpoint around it. Karen Pearlman has written of the relationship of movement phrasing to linguistic structuring. She states that 'movement phrases in dance, and in film editing, are compositions of movement into perceptible and intentionally formed rhythmically expressive sequences' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.55). Pearlman elaborates on this relationship by asserting that 'a phrase in the choreographic sense is distinct from a linguistic phrase in that it may be of any length, and may contain more than a single choreographic "thought" '. The relationship between movement and linguistic phrasing has been placed at the forefront of *The Event of a Caught Fall*, with an emphasis on the construction of rhythmic patterning by means of the editing process. This foregrounding also resonates strongly with Pearlman's assertion that 'a choreographic phrase is a series of related movements and grouped emphasis points'. In *An Undoing of Time* (2005), a written passage by Maya Deren is woven through a series of short movement phrases. The piece explores the notion of emphasis points through the integration of visual and aural elements. The compositional effect is achieved entirely by means of editing, and, when examined in relation to Pearlman's concepts, can be regarded as inhabiting a choreographically-oriented set of professional practices.[36]

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[36] In Partial Visibility (2005), quotations were used to preface different sections of the piece, with all

Creating a range of work over an extended time period allowed for a number of unanticipated outcomes to emerge. These outcomes are evident within the processes of both editing and filming. Over the course of the project, ideas and footage which were initially rejected were subsequently returned to and developed after further time for reflection. The process of identifying still images from within the footage suggested creative possibilities which had previously been overlooked. The pieces *Flow* (2006) and *Evanescent* (2006) both evolved over time in this way. This resonates strongly with Murch's description of the process of visual recognition in operation within his own editing practice. This is encapsulated in the assertion that 'as soon as I saw it, I recognised it as a possibility, whereas I couldn't have articulated it as a choice' (2001, p.47). Murch elaborates on this process of unconscious assimilation by asserting that, in the course of revisiting and reworking material 'you are learning something new...you are actually doing creative work, and you may find what you *really* want rather than what you *thought* you wanted' (p.47). Within the filming process, several of the pieces required repeated reworking before achieving successfully realisation. *Enfold* (2006) was initially, and entirely unsatisfactorily, filmed from an overhead camera position, which tightly framed two floor-based performers. A second attempt at filming focussed on the movement content of a single, upright performer. The piece was subsequently constructed from footage filmed in extreme close-up, and captured

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referring to the issues of visibility in relation to dance work. Bob Lockyer's assertion that 'all you can see is what the camera is showing you' (Lockyer in Jordan and Allen, 1993, p.129), can usefully be taken as a starting point in any debate relating to the creation of screen based dance. However an implicit acknowledgement of the pivotal role of the director/editor in relation to choreographic function is required in any consideration of the necessarily mediated screen based viewing experience.

during a third filming session. This process allowed for the idea to be refined over the course of several months. An emphasis on the near-abstract quality of the movement of fabric is evident within the finished work. This is in contrast to the folding and unfolding of human joints, which constituted the piece's original focal point. Reworking was also employed in relation to a number of less initially promising pieces, which include *Proprioceptive* (2005) and *An Undoing of Time*. In *Proprioceptive*, a strong sense of pacing in relation to the disclosure of visual information was initially weakened by the lack of a clear end point. A subsequent reworking of material provided a more coherent compositional framing. *An Undoing of Time* required the addition of a particular visual effect post-production in order to provide sufficient impact in support of the movement material. This process of revisiting, re-evaluating and subsequent reworking called upon a range of skills and professional experience developed over many years of creating dance work for live performance. The application of this range of skills to work created for a screen context did not require any traditional choreographic engagement, such as that associated with the development of codified dance steps. However, in its clear derivation from a body of dance-related experience, it cannot be separated from my own professional legacy of creation by choreographic means.

Within the framework of my own evaluation of the *Memory Pool* project, not all experimentation yielded fruitful outcomes. For example, in *The Grammar of Presence* (2005), the initially striking conceptual framing, compositional framework

and movement content failed to come together cohesively, despite extensive reworking of the material.

The wide range of work included in *Memory Pool* also reflects pieces at differing stages of realisation. A number of sketches containing ideas for more fully developed work have been included. These works merit inclusion as a means of representing the totality of the research project, and also as an acknowledgement of the incremental nature of the creative process. I would contend that these pieces can bear scrutiny as containing strong potential for further development in subsequent initiatives, rather than being viewed merely as unsuccessful examples of work.

Aperture (2005) engages over the course of its thirty second duration with a range of concerns. These include the mediated nature of a constantly changing screen based viewing perspective; the specific attributes of lens-based work, and of the effects of abstraction on improvised movement material. *Experimental Studies on the Seeing of Motion* (2005)[37] was created as an attempt to represent the eye movement of performers in the process of visualising a dance sequence. *An Etymology of the Sublime* (2005) was developed in response to ideas arising from a fellow student's research presentation, and the distinctive visual style developed for this work was evolved and incorporated into the more fully realised *Expanse* (2006). These three pieces could not be regarded as fully developed work, or entered for screening at festivals. However they exemplify the genuinely

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[37] The title is taken from Max Wertheimer's work of 1912 (cited in Anderson, B. & J. 1993, www.uca.edu/org/ccsmi/ccsmi/classicwork/Myth%20Revisited.htm).

experimental nature of the research process, and have provided a creative grounding necessary for the emergence of subsequent work.

The long term and ongoing nature of the creative process significantly shaped the nature of the work produced. The three year time period covered by the research period spanned markedly changing circumstances within my own personal and professional commitments and artistic concerns. These circumstances and concerns were inevitably reflected within the cycle of work. Within the trio of pieces created for Cambridge University Contemporary Dance Workshop, which date from 2004/5, pre-choreographed movement material is translated from live to screen context. In contrast, a developing artistic concern with capturing natural elements and non-human movement is evident as the cycle progresses towards its end. In addition, a wide range of work was generated in response to ideas encountered during the unfolding research process. Consequently, the work created illustrates a wide range of creative approaches, ideas and techniques. In this respect, the cycle of work can be seen to represent a seed bed of creative ideas. As said, several sections can, however, be seen as remaining at the level of kernels within this seed bed, rather than developing into more fully realised works. Others contain the potential for development beyond an engagement with linear, single screen presentation. In particular, *Zoetrope* and *Trace* present movement based and technically-oriented ideas which invite further exploration within the context of larger scale projects.[38]

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[38] A version of Trace has achieved notable success within a variety of national and international screening contexts. However the specific techniques employed in the work's creation have the potential for significant development within the context of a large-scale project.

Several of the more fully realised sections of work have however been shown in a variety of contexts over the course of the research process. This has fulfilled the requirement of practice-as-research to inhabit both the academic and the professional arenas. A number of these pieces are examined in the following part of this section.

Knotwork (2005) developed from a very clear conceptual framework. The initial impetus for movement generation was provided by the image of Celtic knotwork. The framing options fitted into clear and predetermined parameters, and a distinctively rhythmically-oriented identity was created during the editing process. A focus on rhythmically-oriented composition of material is strongly in evidence throughout the *Memory Pool* project, and is particularly evident in pieces such as *Scratch* (2005) and *Inward* (2006). However, I would contend that this notion achieved fullest expression within the cycle in *Knotwork's* creation. This relates directly to Billy Cowie's characterisation of the creation of an 'internal musicality' and of David Hinton's notion of the creation of 'visual music' within a work (in Aggiss, Cowie with Bramley, 2006, p.93; in McPherson, 2006, p.180). In the case of *Knotwork,* this sense of rhythmic patterning was created entirely by means of editing. Katrina McPherson has also noted the relationship of editing movement content to musical composition. She states that 'the clips become like notes, phrases or samples' (2006, p.188). *Knotwork's* distinctive sense of rhythmically-governed progression was developed entirely in this way. This presents a clear exemplification of the use of rhythmic patterning as a function of screen based choreographic practice. The movement vocabulary represented within the piece is

closer to abstract patterning than to traditional, codified dance technique. This resonates with Sherril Dodds' assertion that the involvement of a choreographer in relation to movement design within a screen-based dance context 'would suggest that any physical action ... is directly or indirectly the result of a choreographic vision'. Dodds elaborates that 'these dynamic movement designs in time and space derive from a choreographic intention' (2001,p.82). This notion of movement design within the screen space resonates strongly with the concept of pattern recognition, as outlined in Chapter Two. Within the context of *Knotwork's* creation, the function of pattern recognition can be attributed as an additional and significant aspect of screen based choreographic practice.

Partial Visibility (2005) engages with a long-standing choreographic concern of exploring the relationship of a performer to an unseen partner, and of the relationship of the performer to the camera. The work presents three alternate viewpoints of the same movement material. Each section's compositional focus alters in response to written concepts selected from the writing of British and North American screen-based dance artists and commentators. The piece aims to subvert traditional conventions relating to the filming of dance by suggesting a partially-glimpsed world, which exists predominantly out of shot. Katrina McPherson has stated that 'it is often what is excluded from the frame ... that will create interest and energy in the design of a shot' (2006, p.25). The framing choices within *Partial Visibility* provide a viewing environment which requires a drawing in of attention, and suggests more than is shown. As a result, the piece suggests its own enclosed movement world. This effectively builds a relationship

which is to a large extent dependent on the imaginative input of the viewer. This process is articulated in Walter Murch's assertion that if a work 'gives a certain amount of information but requires the audience to complete the ideas, then it engages each member of the audience as a creative participant' (in Ondaatje, 2002, p.46). The piece also conforms to McPherson's notion of kinaesthetically-oriented viewing involvement. This is outlined in her assertion that 'the viewer can be drawn closely into the dancer's kinesphere, creating the feeling that the two are involved in an intimate, albeit virtual duet' (2006, p.131). The suggestion of a wider environment than is visually represented is a continuing preoccupation throughout the *Memory Pool* project. This notion is expressly dealt with in a variety of pieces such as *Breaking The Frame* (2005), *A State of Being* (2006) and *Endnote* (2006). In my own evaluation of the work, I would contend that this issue has been most successfully realised within *Partial Visibility*. Each section of the piece approaches the issue of screen based choreographic practice in a different way. The opening section was created in response to a quotation by Yvonne Rainer. Here, a sequence is constructed from disparate fragments of barely visible movement material. In the piece's central section, more sustained passages of movement replace one another sequentially, which utilise the notion of the 'kinetic bridge' (Conrad, 2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html. p.102), in which the on screen placing of a movement is echoed by the footage which follows it. In the final section of the work, a continuous sequence of movement material is shown unedited, as the performer shifts in and out of view in relation to the visual boundary of the frame. A self-reflexive matrix of screen-related choreographic strategies is therefore evident

within the work, which encompasses a range of thematic concerns suggested by the use of quotations from the field.

In *Flicker* (2005), a single continuous sequence of improvised movement was distributed between four sections of the screen. This effectively creates a flicker effect, which is suggestive of the early stages of development of the cinematic medium. Kenneth King has stated that 'as a dancemaker I program structural and organizational options' (2003, p.4). King's characterisation of choreographic function clearly exemplifies the processes involved in the creation of *Flicker*. Within the work, technological means were utilised to design the patterning of visual elements across the screen space. In this regard, the creation of the work conforms to Kovgan's visual-arts oriented strand of categorisation of screen based choreographic practice. To this end, a clear emphasis on the composition of movement within the frame is achieved by technological means (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.52). In *Expanse* (2006), the distorting effect of extreme close-up was utilised in order to achieve a distinctive visual style. The work takes Siegfried Kracauer's assertion that 'any huge close-up reveals new and unsuspected formations of matter' as its starting point (1960, p.48). The use of close-up translates the resulting imagery into an unsettling viewing experience in its defamiliarisation of the landscape of the human body. This resonates with Kracauer's assertion that this process is one of 'opening expanses which we have explored best in dreams before' (p.48). Within this work, the rhythmically-governed use of cutting as a disruptive visual device can also be attributed as an aspect of screen based choreographic function.

Viewed as a whole, the work created as part of the *Memory Pool* cycle has been conceptually developed in order to make optimal use of the medium itself. In this respect it can be said to relate to certain key aspects of Deren's articulation of the 'choreographic' specific to a screen context. This engagement was entered into with the aim of creating, in Deren's terms, the 'most accurate metaphor' for the underlying ideas (in McPherson, 2005, p.255). This approach can be expressed in the notion of a symbiotic relationship between the conceptualisation of work and the medium for which it has been created, with the resultant work inseparable from the context of its delivery.

To situate the work within a contemporary context, many of the working practices involved relate much more demonstrably to traditions associated with aspects of visual arts practice than with traditional notions of film production. However, many sections of the cycle of work have been shown at a range of events which encompass screen-based dance festivals, short film festivals and screenings of artists moving image work. In this regard, the work created falls within several of the categories of screen-based dance outlined by Karen Pearlman. These are characterised as work 'which prioritises dance as its central discipline' and, in addition, work 'that is based in the thinking of a video art maker' (2006, www.realtimearts.net/rt74/pearlman.html). Katrina McPherson has written of her belief in the importance of placing dance movement, which she characterises as 'rich, textured, complex, rhythmical, compelling' at the forefront of work (2006, p.xxx). A central and defining feature of the work created as part of the *Memory*

Pool project has been to explore ways of capturing and composing movement on screen. This focus has been selected at the expense of engagement with many of the elements associated with traditional film production, such as location and design. As McPherson states, an over-dependence on any of these elements can produce results in which 'the movement, or dance, content of the work seems like an afterthought' (2006, p.xxx). It can therefore be said that the choreographically-oriented focus of the project met the aim of exploring ways of recording and editing movement. As such, it can also be said that this was achieved at the expense of engaging with traditionally-oriented methods of filmic production.

To date, ten pieces from a total of forty two created as part of the *Memory Pool* project have been programmed for public screening. This proportion of work can be read as a measure of the project's success in generating content suitable for selection and showing within the context of current professional production. The project can be seen to represent a distinctive contribution to an emergent field of academic study. This contribution is also evident in relation to the breadth of the research process, which has encompassed the use of a number of elements. These include the creation of a wide range of individual works which have been formatted for presentation on DVD. This formatting synthesises a range of quotations relating to discourse within the field, together with a large number of still images generated as a by-product of the editing process.

5.4 Memory Pool and contemporary discourse in screen based dance

In order to situate this evaluation of my own work, a number of concerns relating to screen based dance are now examined. These concerns include viewing format, the trend towards narrativity, and the use of location. These notions are examined in recognition of their relevance to the work created as part of the *Memory Pool* project. They are also examined as a means of situating the work within current discourse from the field.

One of the key current concerns, identified by Edmunds, is the areas of difficulty associated with viewing experience in relation to screen based dance. Within the context of festival viewing, a large number of pieces have often been shown sequentially within a single screen environment. Edmunds has outlined the disadvantages to an extended series of short works which arise from this accretive experience. To this end, she states that the work has a resulting tendency to 'run together into one long film' (2006, email). Edmunds elaborates on the impact that this phenomenon has in relation to an audience's viewing experience. She states that 'each piece affects and infects every other piece until it becomes impossible ... to pull them apart'. It would appear therefore that the public viewing opportunities available to screen-based dance work require to be rethought. Such a rethinking is required in order to maximise viewer engagement and appreciation of the often highly concentrated and distinctive character of much dance work created for screen. This concern has been addressed in the presentation of the *Memory Pool* project on DVD and as a computer-based installation. Within these

formats a series of nature-based interludes were inserted between each piece.[39]

This series of visual pauses explored an additional strand of movement material within the cycle of work. These ten second interludes also functioned as a boundary for each piece, thereby distinguishing each section of work from those around it.

As an extension of her argument, Edmunds proposes an alternative model of gallery-based viewing. Such a model provides the opportunity for viewers to select their own navigational engagement with a collection of work by allowing a choice of physical pathway. Edmunds states that, within this format, a far greater degree of autonomy is experienced. This is expressed as the ability to 'make choices about whether you want to stay with something for more than one showing' (2006, email). Edmunds also suggests that it would be desirable for audiences to transcend a seated, frontally-oriented viewing engagement, by allowing them the option to 'move your own body in relation to the work'.

These concerns have fed into the presentational choices made in relation to the *Memory Pool* project. Several sections of the work have been presented within the traditional viewing format of the screen-based dance and short film festival model. Others have, however, been shown within gallery-based contexts as part of artists' moving image events. In presenting the entire cycle of work, the model of an installation-based event emerged as the optimal screening choice. This format allowed for different sections of work to be shown simultaneously on a number of

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[39] The title of Interval Films has been adopted for these interludes. This is in acknowledgement of Bob Lockyer's description of the short filmed inserts which were used to cover gaps in television programming in the days of live transmission (in McPherson, 2006, p.xviii).

monitors. This model also afforded the opportunity for audiences to determine an individual viewing pathway through the cycle of work. The potential to move between and revisit stations as viewing stamina dictated, and without the imposition of a wholly pre-determined screening order, was also a key element in determining presentational choice.

A further debate in the field concerns the notion of narrativity within current screen-based dance practice. The *Memory Pool* project can be located within a more abstract and experimentally-oriented range of screen based work. Historically, this latter tradition has been identified within the work of artists associated with the filmmaking *avant-garde*, such as Maya Deren and Stan Brakhage. This tradition is also recognisable within the work of contemporary moving image makers such as Bill Viola and Tony Hill. This approach runs counter to a significant trend in much current screen-based dance creation, which finds expression in Bob Lockyer's assertion that 'the screen is a narrative form' (in Mitoma, 2002, p.159). Douglas Rosenberg has identified this recent tendency, and states that it has 'all but colonized experimental or abstract work in the genre'. Rosenberg also notes the irony of this position in relation to the advancements made possible by technological developments. To this end, he states that they

> promise non-linear editing capabilities and a kind of freedom that analog video supposedly could not offer, yet in reality digital video is more often than not put to the service of narrative form.
>
> (Rosenberg, 2000, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.5)

Work created as part of the *Memory Pool* project also runs counter to a number of other trends currently prevalent within screen-based dance production, such as the use of location filming. A number of practitioners in the field, such as David Hinton and Rosemary Lee, have articulated their concerns in this area. These relate to the practice of transposing dance content originally created for a theatrically-based performance to a specific non-theatre set location. Hinton has stated that, in such cases, the resulting discrepancy can be unsettling as a viewing experience. He outlines this mis-match in the assertion that 'the world that the performer is inhabiting has got nothing to do with the physical world they are in' (in McPherson, 2006, p.66). Lee asserts the need to acknowledge that dance-centred movement content often requires a supporting set of environmental factors, such as 'sprung floors, warmth, light' (in McPherson, 2006, p.67). The work created as part of the *Memory Pool* project echoes Hinton and Lee's concerns in this regard. Filming sessions involving dance performers were studio-based. Exterior, location-set footage of natural phenomena was used, but did not involve the imposition of human movement content.

The work also runs counter to another trend prevalent within contemporary production contexts in its relation to issues of duration. Simon Fildes has posed a series of discussion points pertinent to contemporary screen-based dance practitioners. Disclosing a bias towards greater duration within screen based work, he enquires 'how can we continue to evolve longer works?' (2006, videodance.blogspot.com/2006_05_01_archive.html). Fildes continues this line of

enquiry by asking the question, 'are we destined to be the makers of ten minute films?' While many of the pieces created as part of the project inhabit a short timespan, the creation of work has been guided by the notion of finding an optimal form for each piece. This notion of an optimal form translates into the practice of finding a compositional structure which can best express and sustain creative ideas, regardless of duration. This approach necessarily calls into question the view, exemplified by Fildes' inquiry, that the creation of work on a larger scale need be regarded as an inherently desirable objective.

5.5 Conclusion

In previous chapters, the aim of identifying a choreographic sensibility within screen based work was addressed from the perspective of informed spectatorship. In this chapter, previously identified elements of screen based choreographic function were examined in relation to my own practice. This was achieved by means of analysis of the range of work created as part of the *Memory Pool* project. From this process of analysis, two main conclusions have emerged. The first relates to the specific role played by improvisationally-oriented strategies in the creation of my own programme of practice-as-research. The second conclusion relates to the examination of the range of function previously identified as comprising screen based choreographic practice. This outlining of function makes reference to themes previously explored within this enquiry. These include the model of a spectrum of choreographic practice, and the identification of micro and macro levels of screen based choreographic engagement,

A clear engagement with an improvisationally-oriented range of strategies is apparent from an examination of my own creative practice, This engagement relates particularly to the overlapping range of functions traditionally demarcated within film and television industry production as pertaining to the professional roles of the director and editor. While filming, an improvisationally-governed approach enabled creative decisions to be made spontaneously. Changing environmental conditions and viewing responses to specific movement tasks determined camera positioning and pathway. An improvisationally-oriented approach has also been a defining characteristic of my own editing practice. This has allowed for an open-ended and intuitively-oriented engagement with the composition of material, which occurs in the moment of viewing. This approach resonates strongly with Murch's characterisation of his own practice as 'the performance' of editing (in Koppelman, 2005, p.204). Karen Pearlman has characterised her own editing practice as governed by a range of kinaesthetically-oriented processes. The execution of these processes she describes as 'Singing the Rhythm' . She further characterises this experience as 'tuning one's own physical rhythms to the rhythms being perceived in the filmed material' (undated, www.dancefilms.org/ Abouteducation.html). Stan Brakhage has also characterised art-making as a physiological phenomenon. To this end, Brakhage asserts that an artist's input reflects an externalisation of 'the individual expression that can be attended by a person hearing himself sing and feeling his heart beat' (in McPherson, 2001, p.124). Viewed in relation to my own editing practice, this process of attunement to internal rhythmic stimuli, and its externalisation through the composition of work,

requires to be recognised as deriving from a professional legacy of movement creation by improvisationally-oriented means.

This legacy is evident throughout the range of my own choreographic practice in the development of the *Memory Pool* project, as manifest in the roles of performer; generator of movement content for additional performers; director and editor. All of these roles have drawn heavily upon different aspects of choreographic function, and have been reliant on the application of strategies governed by the notion of professional intuition, as outlined by Melrose (2003) and others, in Chapter Two. This intuitively-oriented engagement has developed in relation to a range of kinaesthetic, visual and conceptually-based concerns. These are manifest within the creation of my own screen based work in an interwoven matrix of practices and processes which resist the traditional demarcations of the director/choreographer dualism, and require to be acknowledged in their totality of input simply as 'choreographic'.

Viewed from a traditionally-oriented perspective, which casts the choreographer solely in the role of step-maker, my own involvement in the creation of the *Memory Pool* project has encompassed the generation of movement material as performer, and in relation to other performers. This process has largely related to the task-based and image-led generation of improvised movement. Within a small number of instances, this process has also encompassed traditionally-recognised choreographic territory involving the creation of pre-set, codified dance steps. This range of function can be seen as representative of choreographic engagement at

micro level, when viewed in relation to the model of screen based choreographic practice outlined in Chapter Four. At the level of macro choreographic engagement, another range of practices and processes require to be categorised and assessed within choreographically-relevant parameters. Here, the notion of choreographic process relates to the traditionally non-dance related functions of selection of framing options and composition of material by means of editing.

My own creative practice relating to the creation of work for the *Memory Pool* project therefore requires to be categorised as representative of a clearly identifiable, and improvisationally-oriented, choreographic sensibility. This sensibility is in evidence at both micro and macro levels of engagement and occupies positions across the spectrum of screen based choreographic practice.

Douglas Rosenberg's assertion, as set out in Chapter One, that the current era can be characterised as 'post-dance, in which dance is displacing its own identity by eagerly merging with other existing forms and its own mediated image' can thus be said to hold particular significance to the outlining of choreographic practice within a screen context in relation to a raft of practices falling outwith the conventionally-regarded parameters of dance (2000, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.1). The relationship between traditional notions of dance and the evolving nature of screen based choreographic practice is identified in the following, and concluding, chapter.

Chapter Six
Conclusion

In this final chapter, the aims of the enquiry are revisited in relation to subsequent research findings. The contribution to new knowledge within the field is outlined and a range of research areas falling outside of the investigation's scope is also identified as a way forward for future research.

In Chapter One, the aims of the enquiry were identified. These included a critical investigation into the creative processes involved in the making of screen based work in dance, with specific reference to the notion of choreographic sensibility. The research findings relating to this aim are summarised here and placed within the context of current debate within screen-based dance practice. In this regard, key themes relating to the notions of creative processes and of contemporary production models have been highlighted as areas of particular relevance to the enquiry.

This research process has been located within a climate of evolving production paradigms and increasingly permeable boundaries in relation to professional roles. Within this context, this investigation has demonstrated that Deren and Brakhage's notion of the amateur, as outlined in Chapter One, is particularly relevant to the creation of my own programme of practice-as-research.[40]

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[40] Conforming to the notion of 'amateur' production status, this programme of work was created without recourse to an external production budget. This presented a number of practical challenges which had to be overcome in order to produce a full programme of research. Finding ways beyond this limitation necessitated a reliance on the unpaid input of the collaborating technical facilitator

In Chapter Two, a range of discourse relating to the fields of practitioner writing in film, classical film theory and practice theory was examined. This both informed and identified a range of criteria necessary for the evaluation of work in subsequent chapters.

The range of moving image work subject to analysis in Chapter Three served to highlight areas of choreographically-oriented commonality and convergence occurring across the range of production. Douglas Rosenberg has written of the importance of intentionality in the classification of a work. He states that it is possible to 'appropriate and decontextualize ' any moving image work only in as much as we are able to recontextualize 'within a frame of reference that supports our theory' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.16). Research findings from this chapter moved the grounds of debate beyond the immediate realm of intentionality by recourse to the notion of choreographically-informed spectatorship. This was achieved by the identification and application of a set of choreographically-oriented evaluative criteria, which were applied to a range of moving image work which need not be classifiable as 'dance'.

The lack of terminology specific to the task of analysis of screen based choreographic practice was addressed in Chapter Four. The adoption of the model of a micro and macro level of choreographic engagement within a screen context

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and performers. Creative use was also made of personally-owned and university-based resources in the form of equipment and space for filming as a way of overcoming the lack of external production funding. The programme of work created as part of the research process, however, clearly demonstrates that a lack of a traditional funding structure need not function as a limiting factor in relation to the creative process.

has allowed for a means of classifying a range of choreographically-relevant processes. This model of classification was employed in the analysis of work from the field of contemporary screen-based dance production. In addition, the adoption of terminology originating from within the field of film studies resonates with Douglas Rosenberg's assertion, as outlined in Chapter One, that in order to provide a critique of screen-based dance work 'we must be willing to jettison, or at the very least, suspend the medium-specific language of dance' (2000, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.3).

A distinctive choreographic sensibility was also identified in the creation of my own screen based work, which was examined in Chapter Five. This sensibility can be said to be located within the primacy of a range of improvisationally-oriented strategies. These relate to the processes involved in performance; the creation of movement material; directing and editing. These strategies can also be said to be governed by the implementation of a body of professionally developed intuitive knowledge.

In relation to the issue of the creation of new knowledge, my own programme of practice-as-research has contributed to the field in a number of ways. These include the provision of a self-reflexive commentary on many aspects of screen based choreographic practice, both in the creation of the *Memory Pool* project itself, and of an accompanying weblog. This supplementary document records the

process of the works creation from inception to screenings. Both of these resources are accessible online, as a means of disseminating research findings.[41]

An additional strand of dissemination was achieved by means of public screening. From 2005 onwards, individual sections of work from the *Memory Pool* cycle have been programmed across a range of specialist screen-based dance festivals, short film festivals and artist moving image events. A full list of screenings is included in Appendix A. This list demonstrates, by its level of diversification, the relevance of choreographic strategies and approaches to a wide range of screening contexts which fall outside the categorisation of 'dance'. Dissemination within the global network of screen-based dance festivals has afforded the opportunity for work to be placed in the shifting contexts relating to curatorial policies. The work has therefore exemplified a shift, apparent at the level of screening, away from heavily-funded productions by well-established choreographers and dance companies. This shift has moved towards an engagement with smaller scale endeavours developed by means of a single artistic vision. While the work was not created with a commercially-oriented imperative in mind, it has proved to be highly successful in programming terms within this series of specialist fora. Work from the *Memory Pool* project was programmed as the opening piece for the International Screenings at Dance on Screen's 2006 Festival, and it also opened the subsequent festival touring programme. A piece was also programmed as the opening work in the Festival Internacional de Videodanza de Buenos Aires 2006. The pieces screened at these

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[41] It is worthy of note that the weblog has attracted a large volume of globally-spread viewers since being featured on the high-profile web site greatdance.com (2006, greatdance.com/danceblog) as part of the growing trend towards dance 'blogging'.

festivals strongly engage with the self-reflexive properties of practice-as-research, thereby feeding into the screen-based dance community's current conversation with itself and with audiences regarding the development and presentation of the form. In this regard, the work can be seen to conform to Douglas Rosenberg's assertion that 'practice is leading theory in its development and dissemination within the culture of screendance' (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.116).[42]

A number of unanticipated by-products also resulted from initiatives undertaken as part of the research process. These included the commissioning of two articles reviewing British-based screen-based dance festivals for the Sydney-based arts magazine *RealTime*. An invitation was also extended to undertake the role of creative documenter for an international working party on screen-based dance, initiated in 2007. This working party developed as an outgrowth from the Open Source Symposium and American Dance Festival's Screendance: The State of the Art Conference, which were both held in 2006. These initiatives provided the opportunity to disseminate notions and concepts developed as part of my own research through the creation of high profile textual and image-based resources. Research findings were also disseminated by means of papers presented at the Moves Screen Choreography Conference in Manchester and the Society for Dance Research New Scholars Conference in London during June 2007.[43]

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[42] In addition to a wide range of festival screenings, sections of work have also been made available for public consumption by inclusion in two compilation DVDs of moving image work which were produced in 2006 and 2007 by Brighton-based organisation Final Cut.

[43] A programme of work created as part of the Memory Pool project is also scheduled for showing in December 2007 as part of South East Dance's Dance for Camera programme at the Brighton Film Festival.

While new research material relating to the field of screen based dance has come into being over the last three years, there is much of this territory which remains open to investigation. This territory has necessarily been left unexplored within my own enquiry, with enormous scope remaining for further research activity around a range of constantly evolving areas and specialist sub-genres. These include the potential for choreographic involvement inherent within the notion of end-user control in gaming culture; the integration of screen based work to the context of live performance, and the potential application of choreographically-oriented creative strategies to a wide range of new media practices. In particular, the use of video-enabled mobile phones opens up a range of creative possibilities by means of the increased levels of mobility and flexibility that they can allow within the process of filming.

In a revisiting of the enquiry's overarching aim, the research process has demonstrated a number of significant findings. The move towards the identification of a discernibly choreographic sensibility within the creation of moving image work has emerged as an issue currently at the forefront of exploration and categorisation within the genre.[44]

My own investigation has been informed by the concepts outlined by established practitioners and writers working in the field. These include the writings of Maya Deren and Sherril Dodds, which have been synthesised with the wave of more

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[44] In addition to my own investigation, the recent findings of other researchers in the field, such as Kovgan (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.49) and Pearlman (2006, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.54) affirm the timeliness and necessity for such an identification process, as a means of providing frameworks for debate within the genre.

recent screen-based dance scholarship as represented by the output of Kovgan, Pearlman, Rosenberg and others. This synthesis has allowed for the creation of a new model of evaluative criteria to emerge. This model is represented in the notion of a spectrum of choreographic practice operational within a screen based context, and identifiable at both micro and macro levels of engagement. This evaluative mechanism affords the opportunity to move beyond the traditionally-privileged professionally-demarcated nature of the choreographer/director dualism and raises particular issues relating to the identification of the totality of screen based choreographic process. Viewed from within the parameters of this model of choreographic practice, no single artist working within a choreographer/director partnership can be viewed as retaining sole authorship of a work in choreographic terms. Instead, the work must be regarded as the outcome of a variety of choreographic processes, some of which relate directly to traditional notion of movement material creation. Others must be regarded as relating to an enhanced and conceptually-oriented range of choreographic practices. These practices are more usually associated with the non dance-specific professional roles of the director, editor and visual artist.

My own research process thus demonstrates that an identifiable screen based choreographic sensibility can be said to be composed of a range of functions, techniques and approaches, deriving from diverse sources. Many of the skills traditionally associated with dance creation translate strongly into an engagement with aspects of screen based practice, such as editing and composition within the frame. This range of dance-related skills comprises a number of other relevant

functions. These include engagement with temporal and spatial concerns, familiarity with non-linear narrative forms and compositional devices such as rhythmic patterning, kinetic resonance and pattern recognition.

My enquiry also demonstrates that this particular range of skills and practices can be distributed professionally between a number of artists in a variety of combinations within any given project. It has also been demonstrated that this range of practice has the potential to find expression within a single artists' output, regardless of whether the artist is dance or non dance trained.[45]

When placed in relation to Bob Lockyer's enquiry *Where Has All The Dancing Gone?* (2006, www.dancecamerawest.org), which was outlined in Chapter One, my own research reveals that conventionally-oriented notions of dance content no longer necessarily constitute a defining element of screen based dance work. My research findings demonstrate that within the parameters of screen based practice, engagement with conventional notions of dance have, in some instances, been bypassed and superseded by an engagement with a choreographic sensibility.

From within the expanded frame of reference revealed by the research process, Sherril Dodds' outlining of the 'dance' content within screen-based dance,

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[45] This notion of an enhanced range of choreographic practices can be located as corresponding to Kustow's assertion, as mentioned in Chapter Two, that 'all films are camera choreography' (Kustow cited in de Marigny in Jordan and Allen, 1993, p.87). Viewed from the perspective of this enquiry, Kustow's assertion can be read not as a reductive end point of classification, but as a starting point. This reading effectively opens the lines of enquiry as to what use dance-trained and non dance trained artists working within a screen context can make of such a proposition.

characterised as 'the triadic relationship between the physical body, the camera and the cut' (Dodds, 2001, p.171) can be recast as a listing of elements of choreographic practice as manifest within a screen context. Dodds' characterisation requires input relating to the generation of movement material; framing choice and the decision-making processes involved in the edit. Viewed from within the parameters of my own investigation, all three elements of this relational mix can lay claim to the label of 'choreographic' practice.

Bill Viola wrote of the shift in perception accompanying the realisation that 'the twentieth-century artist is not necessarily someone who draws well, but someone who thinks well' (Viola, 1998, p.64). My own investigation has revealed that within a twenty-first century context, the screen has the potential to function as a site of expression for dance artists involved in the shift towards a conceptually-oriented engagement with the creation of screen based work at a macro level of choreographic practice. The research process has demonstrated that artists can claim the potential for engagement within a wide spectrum of operational terrain. This terrain has moved far beyond the notion of choreographer as step-maker, acknowledged as contributing only a narrowly specific and codified strand of function. Douglas Rosenberg's assertion, quoted in Chapter One, that we are in an era which can be characterised as 'post-dance' (2000, www.dvpg.net/ essays.html, p.1), requires to be viewed from the perspective of this enquiry. Within such a reading, the post-dance era within a screen based context has been revealed to be giving way to an emergent era of the choreographic.

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Pennell, M. (dir) 2001 *Tattoo* MJW Productions/BBC/Arts Council of Great Britain

Potter, S. 1997 *The Tango Lesson* Artificial Eye

Ramsay, L. (dir.) 1999 *Ratcatcher* Holy Cow Productions

Reuben, A. (dir) 2006 *Routes: Dancing to New Orleans* ACE/Capture 4

Sandiland, N. (dir.) 2003 *Exosphere* 4 dance/ACE

Thomas, L.M. (dir.) 2005 *The Elders* ACE/Dance Bristol

Vandekeybus, W. 2005 *Blush* CCCP/Total Film

Werth, L. 2004 *Sekunden* (screened at Kinetic Fields - 13.5.06)

Williams, M. (dir) 1991 *Cross Channel* MJW productions/Dance Film BBC/Amaya Distribution

Appendix A

Screenings of Work from the *Memory Pool* cycle screened between 2005 and 2007 and listed in chronological order

Final Cut Screenings at the Brighton Festival, 2005 – *Splice (shown under the working title Chiaroscuro)*

Super Shorts Film Festival Touring Programme 2005 (London; Belfast; Newcastle; Edinburgh) – *Knotwork*

Final Cut Winter Season Screenings, Brighton, 2005 – *Fleeting/Magical Thinking*

International Dance for the Camera Festival, Utah, 2006 (selected as one of the winning entries in the Next Generation strand) – *Knotwork*

Il Coreografo Elettronico, Naples, 2006 (in competition) – *Flicker*

Final Cut screenings at the Brighton Festival, 2006 - *Flicker*

Included in the compilation DVD Final Cut –Take Two – *Magical Thinking*

Final Cut/Bird's Eye View Screening, Brighton, 2006 – *Flicker*

Fresh: Artists' Showcase, Bracknell, 2006 - *Trace*

Max5 Video Festival, as part of Projektor, London, 2006 - *Expanse*

Gstaadfilm Festival, 2006 – *Trace*

Microcinema's Fall Edition programme as part of Independent Exposure 2006 (Houston; Colorado Springs; Memphis; Seattle; San Francisco) – *Surveil*

Edit 2006, 2nd International Dance Film Festival, Budapest – *Flicker*

International Screenings 1 and One Minute Wanders as part of Dance on Screen 2006, The Place, London – *Partial Visibility/Trace*

Jump Shorts as part of the Shoot Short Film Strand at the Leeds International Film Festival, 2006 – *Expanse*

Festival Internacional de Videodanza de Buenos Aires 2006 – *Flicker*

Frame 2006 Festival Internacional de Video-Danca, Portugal - *Flicker*

Dance On Screen 2006 Tour, Bassano; Firenze; Ferrara – *Partial Visibility*

Fresh: Overground Screening Programme, Bracknell, 2007 – *Expanse*

700is, Iceland, 2007 – *Splice*

Included in the compilation DVD – Final Cut Take Three – *Flicker*

Microcinema's Independent Exposure 2007 Season Premiere (Houston, Seattle, San Francisco, Anchorage) – *Trace*

Videodance07, Athens and Thessaloniki – *Flicker/Trace*

Final Cut screenings as part of the Brighton Festival 2007 – *Trace/Surveil*

Internationaal Dansfilmfestival Cinedans 2007, Amsterdam – *Splice*

American Dance Festival Dancing for the Camera: International Festival of Film and Video Dance 2007, North Carolina – *Splice*

From Actuality to Illusion, Chisenhale Dance Space London, 2007 – *Splice/Three Orchestral Variations: Variation Number Two*

Dança em Foco - Festival Internacional de Vídeo & Dança, Brazil, 2007 – *Flicker*

Edit 2007 International Dance Film Festival, Budapest – *Trace/Splice*

Screendance basel film festival 2007 - *Trace*

In competition – Dance Screen The Hague, 2007 – *Splice*

Dance:Film 07, Edinburgh - *Flicker, Trace, Expanse, Magical Thinking, P.O.V., Zoetrope, Surveil, Splice*

Festival Temps D'Images, Lisbon – *Trace*

Festival Internacional de Videodanza de Buenos Aires – *Trace, Splice*

Frame 2007 Festival Internacional de Video-Dança, Portugal – *Trace, Splice*

Dance for Camera as part of Cinecity, Brighton, 2007 - *Splice*

Retrospective as part of South East Dance's Dance For Camera nights, Brighton, 2007.

Appendix B

Festivals, Conferences and Symposia

List of festivals, conferences and symposia attended between 2004 and 2007

Dance on Screen, The Place, London - Nov. '04

Constellation Change, London - March '05

Dance Screen Brighton - June '05

PARIP Conference, Bretton Hall - June '05

Critical Overload symposium, Cambridge Film Festival - Jul. '05

Supershorts Film Festival, London - Aug. '05

dancefilmday, London - Dec. '05

Society for Dance Research Conference, London - March '05

Kinetic Fields, London - May '06

Final Cut/Birds Eye View Screening, Brighton - May '06

Open Source Videodance Symposium, Findhorn - June '06

Artists Moving Image Strand, Cambridge Film Festival - Jul. '06

Nightingale Nights, South East Dance, Brighton - Oct. '06

Dance on Screen, The Place, London - Oct/Nov. '06

Moves'07 : Festival of Movement on Screen and Conference on Screen
Choreography - Manchester - June '07

Society for Dance Research New Scholars Conference, London - June '07

From Actuality to Illusion, Chisenhale Dance Space, London - July '07

Open Source Video Dance Symposium, Findhorn – November '07

Dance For Camera, Brighton – November/December '07

Appendix C

Quotations – *Memory Pool*

List of quotations included in the *Memory Pool* cycle

Foreword

As we watch a film, the continuous act of recognition in which we are involved is like a strip of memory unrolling beneath the images

(Deren cited in Fischer in Nichols, 2001, p.202)

The entire act of motion picture making, thus, can be considered as an exteriorization of the process of memory.

(Brakhage in McPherson, 2001, p.149)

Rather than being a present tense, memory becomes the future, informing all present actions and continually being updated, modified and invented.

(Viola, 1998, p.122)

1) The Distance Between Points

The individual moment or image is valuable only insofar as its ripples spread out and encompass the richness of many moments

(Deren in Nichols, 2001, Appendix, p.27)

2) Scatter

Film not only records physical reality but reveals otherwise hidden provinces of it, including such spatial and temporal configurations as may be derived from the given data with the aid of cinematic techniques and devices.

(Kracauer, 1960, p.158)

3)Fleeting

montage ... is simply the ordering of images in time.

(Bazin in Tredell, 2002, p.64)

4)Magical Thinking

For more than anything else, cinema consists of the eye for magic - that which perceives and reveals the marvelous in whatsoever it looks upon.

(Deren in McPherson, 2005, p.206)

5)P.O.V

There is no such thing as non-perspectival seeing.

(Currie, 1995, p.178)

6)Zoetrope 1-4

From Joseph Plateau's Phenakistoscope to the Thaumatrope, Zoetrope, and work of the other chronophotographers, the breakdown of movement into punctual units was required as a first moment in the operation of its illusory reconstruction.

(Doane, 2002, p.218)

7)Splice

The medium of film with its infinite possibilities of close-up and editing ... gives the dancers the opportunity to speak choreographically rather than shouting.

(Cowie, 2006, p.119)

8)Breaking The Frame

If what is in the frame can suggest what is outside of the frame and relate to it, viewers can sense that what they see is part of a larger world.

(Otake in Mitoma, 2002, p.84)

9)Experimental Studies on the Seeing of Motion

What it means to read - the attenuation of a gaze where language blossoms and disappears, dancing with a concept that inspires the visibility of a yet unnamed thing - is an activity undergoing constant historical mutation and renewal.

(Rodowick, 2001, p.75)

10)The Event of a Caught Fall

It is a contemporary proverb that walking is controlled falling. Continuity embraces discontinuity as walking includes falling. The momentum of walking is the excess of its activity over each successive step. The ongoing quality of walking is that trans-step momentum. Each next step is momentous, in its own little way: it is the event of a caught fall.

(Massumi, 2002, p.218)

11)Knotwork

It is all too easy to allow a choreography simply to hang on a musical framework, merely using the music as a grid in time to fasten movements onto, without investing in its internal musicality.

(Cowie, 2006, p.93)

12)Proprioceptive

There is a sixth sense directly attuned to the movements of the body: proprioception. It involves specialized sensors in the muscles and joints. Proprioception is a self-referential sense, in that what it most directly registers are displacements of the parts of the body relative to each other.

(Massumi, 2002, p.179)

13)The Grammar of Presence

Photography, it would seem, is theorized as the representation of isolated present moments (which must be experienced by the spectator as already past), whereas filmic representation produces the spectatorial experience of presence.

(Doane, 2002, p.103)

14)Aperture

photographic images are, in a sense, psychologically false; they fail to represent movement as we really see it, since what is lacking is the 'real token' of movement - its luminous tracing or invisible wake.

(Doane, 2002, p.84)

15)Flicker

In the 1960s, the avant-garde film movement known as structuralist or materialist film refocused attention on the phenomenon of flicker in its investigation of the ontological implications of the material base of the medium - hence the short-lived genre of the 'flicker film'.

(Doane, 2002, p.199)

16)Close Reading

The fact that the video dance body is technologically enhanced raises questions about where 'biology' and 'technology' begin and end. These shifting and unstable boundaries highlight an element of subversion and 'fluidity' in the theoretical and material construct of the video dance body.

(Dodds, 2001, p.169)

17)Full Tilt

The edits cut fast and directly from hand to foot to knee, to a lock of hair, creating a 'cinematic body' of moving fragments relating to an unseen whole: a new kind of body existing only in cinema.

(Greenfield in Mitoma, 2002, p.24)

18)Surveil

The "real choreography" takes place in the edit suite.

(Lee cited in Lockyer in Mitoma, 2002, p.159).

19) Three Orchestral Variations

Critics who dismiss video dance for its lack of established dance techniques need to reconsider the evaluative criteria of what constitutes 'dance'.

(Dodds, 2001, p.125)

20) Partial Visibility

Dance is hard to see.

(Rainer in Copeland and Cohen, 1983, p.331)

All you can see is what the camera is showing you.

(Lockyer in Jordan and Allen, 1992, p.129)

Dance partners the invisible.

(King, 2003, p.19)

21)Threshold State

Everything is becoming.

(Sheets-Johnstone and Richardson in Sheets-Johnstone, 1984, p.61)

22)Still

Dance is movement, and its opposite, in time and space.

(Cunningham in Sheets-Johnstone, 1979, Foreward)

23)Scratch

A video camera can be used like a visual scratchpad. This could revolutionize dancemaking.

(Sparshott, 1995, p.448)

24)An Etymology of the Sublime

In philosophy and poetics, something is sublime if it is raised (both by the speaker-poet and by the reader-thinker) "up to" [ibid., sublime] or above the lintel.

(Clark, undated, Internet 4)

subliminal, sub-lim' in-al , adj. Beneath the threshold of consciousness.

(Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary, 1972, p.1345)

25)Trace

The technologization of dance ... has clearly opened up new creative possibilities for choreographic practices.

(Dodds, 2001/4, p.147)

26)Mid-October

Significantly, the contemporaries of Lumiere praise his films - the first ever to be made - for showing 'the ripple of the leaves stirred by the wind.

(Kracauer in Tredell, 2002, p.76)

27)An Undoing of Time

Another unique image which the camera can yield is reverse motion. When used meaningfully, it does not so much convey a sense of backward movement spatially, but rather an undoing of time.

(Deren in McPherson, 2005, p.121)

28)Enfold

Motion-pictures are, or should be, an art which makes its statement in terms of time and movement; the medium is not so much concerned with any single instant as with the change from instant to instant.

(Deren in McPherson, 2005, p.177)

29)Expanse

Any huge close-up reveals new and unsuspected formations of matter ... Such images blow up our environment in a double sense: they enlarge it literally, and in doing so, they blast the prison of conventional reality, opening expanses which we have explored at best in dreams before.

(Kracauer, 1960, p.48)

30)Kinetic Empathy

Objective movement acts as a physiological stimulus ... representations of movement do cause a stir in deep bodily layers.

(Kracauer, 1960, p.158)

31)Flow

What is created and what appears is a unique interplay of fluid, ever-changing forces, a dynamic and cohesive flow of energy, not in the sense that the dancers continually change relationships and positions, but because the dancers and the dance are one.

(Sheets-Johnstone, 1979, p.6)

32)Evanescent

The cinema is the space in which bodies and spectres, both real and fantastic, meet.

(McGrath in Williams, 1996, p.15)

33)April/May

Instead of trying to invent a plot that moves, use the movement of wind, or water ... as a poem might celebrate these.

(Deren in mcPherson, 2005, p.17/18)

34) Spiro

Body-centred rhythms, in the sense of cyclical energies, can not only be a source of inspiration for dance; they can also at at times, and in a quite determined way, exercise a choreographic control over the dance itself.

(Sheets-Johnstone and Richardson, 1984, p.59)

35) A State of Being

The term 'point of view' may refer to not only a physical location, but a metaphorical one as well. Here, point of view may be a poetic, even abstract repreaentation of place, or a visual reference to a purely emotional state of being.

(Rosenberg, undated, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.5)

36) Inward

Close-ups are often dramatic revelations of what is really happening under the surface of appearances.

(Balázs, 1952, p.56)

37)Two of Space and one of Time

Editing is a construction, a mosaic in three dimensions, two of space and one of time.

(Murch in Ondaatje, 2002, p.268)

38)15.12

As the eye moves, the body is in movement.

(Brakhage in McPherson, 2001, p.124)

39)Endnote

When everything that can be told has been told.

(Balázs, 1952, p.40)

Afterword

Memory makes possible imagination, which is the ability to accelerate real, natural processes that they become unreal and abstract ... man, in his mind, shuffles and re-shuffles the elements of his total experiences - sensations, ideas, desires, fears - into a million combinations.

(Deren in Nichols, 2001, Appendix, p.13)

40) Duet For Two Hands

Something in the work process comes through, that I am not capable of thinking along the lines of thought.

(Brakhage in McPherson, 2001, p.165)

Interval Films

A large percentage of the programmes in those days were live, and camera breakdowns, even after all that tender, loving care, were sadly quite common. To cover these little interruptions, or when programmes were shorter than they should have been, there was a collection of 'interval films' that were shown. The most famous of these (in the U.K.) was the potter's wheel. Shot on film, it showed a potter making something on his wheel. All you saw were his hands and the clay as he worked, always putting it down to start again, so you never saw the finished thing.

(Lockyer in McPherson, 2006, p.xviii)

Appendix D

Biographical details - filmmakers

Mike Figgis
British-born musician and director whose work includes the feature films *Stormy Monday* (1988); *Leaving Las Vegas* (1995) and *Timecode* (2000).
Adapted from information accessed at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Figgis - 10.3.07

Bob Fosse
United-States born director and choreographer whose output includes the feature films *Sweet Charity* (1968); *Lenny* (1974); *Cabaret* (1972) and *All That Jazz* (1979).
Adapted from information accessed at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Fosse - 10.3.07

François Girard
Canadian-born film-maker and screenwriter, who has also directed work for stage and television. Feature films include *Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould* (1993) and *The Red Violin* (1998)
Adapted from information accessed at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fran%C3%A7ois_Girard - 10.3.07

Peter Greenaway
British artist and filmmaker and director of a wide range of feature films including *The Draughtsman's Contract* (1982), *The Pillow Book* (1995) and *The Tulse Luper Suitcases* (2003).
Adapted from information accessed at:
http://www.magnet.gr/views/greenaway/biography.htm - 10.3.07

Michel Gondry
French-born director of music videos and feature films. Recent work includes the feature films *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004) and *The Science of Sleep* (2006).
Adapted from information accessed at:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michel_Gondry - 10.3.07

Tony Hill
British-born artist and filmmaker, whose work includes sculptures, photography, film installations, performance, short films and cinema and television and commercial directing.
Work includes *Down Side Up* (1984) and *Laws Of Nature* (1996)
Adapted from information accessed at:

http://www.allfilms.co.uk/directors/tony_hill/biog.php - 10.3.07

Richard Linklater

United States-based filmmaker whose output includes the feature films *Slacker* (1991); *Before Sunrise* (1995); *Waking Life* (2001); *Before Sunset* (2004) and *A Scanner Darkly* (2006).

Adapted from information accessed at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Linklater - 10.3.07

Len Lye

New Zealand-born artists known primarily for his experimental films and kinetic sculpture. Work includes the films *Colour Cry* (1952), *Free Radicals* (1958) and *Particles in Space* (1979).

Adapted from information accessed at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Len_Lye - 10.3.07

Baz Luhrmann

Australian-born director of stage and film work, whose output includes the feature films *Strictly Ballroom* (1992); *Romeo + Juliet* (1996) and *Moulin Rouge* (2001).

Adapted from information accessed at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baz_Luhrmann - 10.3.07

Julio Medem

A native of the Basque country, Medem is a writer and filmmaker whose work includes the feature films *Vacas* (1991); *Lovers of the Arctic Circle* (1998) and the documentary *Basque Ball* (2003).

Adapted from information accessed at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julio_Medem - 10.3.07

Sally Potter

British-based filmmaker who studied at the London School of Contemporary Dance. Her work includes the feature films *Orlando* (1992); *The Tango Lesson* (1997) and *The Man Who Cried* (2000).

Adapted from information accessed at:

http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/490062/index.html - 10.3.07

Lynne Ramsay

British-born director of film and music video whose output includes the feature films *Ratcatcher* (1999) and *Morvern Callar* (2002).

Adapted from information accessed at:

http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/490062/index.html - 10.3.07

Appendix E

Biographical details - screen based dance makers

Lea Anderson

Founder and Artistic Director of The Cholmondeleys and The Featherstonehaughs, Lea Anderson has choreographed over 100 original works for her companies since founding the Cholmondeleys over twenty years ago. Screen based work includes *Speed Ramp* (2002) and *Double Take* (2004).

Adapted from information accessed at -

http://www.londondance.com/content.asp?CategoryID=2255 - 16.3.07

Magali Charrier

A French filmmaker now based in Brighton. She originally trained at Les Beax-Arts of Montpellier, France, where she specialised in experimental animation. When she moved to England in 1997, she went on to gain a First Class Honours Degree in Choreography, Dance and Visual Arts at the University of Brighton. Her work includes *Minou* (2002); *Left or Right for Love* (2003) and *Tralala* (2004).

Adapted from information accessed at - http://www.birds-eye-view.co.uk/june2006masterclasses.htm - 16.3.07

Becky Edmunds

Trained at the Laban Centre, London and created performance work commissioned by the CCA, Glasgow and The Green Room, Manchester, with Mayhew and Edmunds and in collaboration with Charlie Morrissey. Currently a Brighton-based documentary filmmaker whose work includes *Have You Started Dancing Yet?*(2004).

Adapted from information accessed at -

http://www.ajtctheatre.co.uk/people/peopleRedSun.html - 16.3.07

Rosemary Lee

Lee has been choreographing, performing and directing for over twenty years. Known for working in a variety of contexts and media, she has created large-scale site-specific work with cross-generational casts, solos for herself and other performers, installations and films. Screen based work includes *boy* (1995) and *Remote Dancing* (2004).

Adapted from information accessed at -

http://www.artsadmin.co.uk/projects/artist.php?id=45 - 16.3.07

Édouard Lock

Canadian choreographer who founded his own company La La La Human Steps in the 1980s. His screen based work *Amelia* (2003) is a translation of a stage-based work created for the company in 2002.

Adapted from information accessed at -
http://www.artsalive.ca/en/dan/meet/bios/artistDetail.asp?artistID=117 - 16.3.07

Wayne McGregor

Born in Stockport in 1970 and studied dance at University College Bretton Hall and at the Jose Limon School in New York. In 1992 he founded his own company Random. Screen based work includes *Dice Life* (2003) and *Tremor* (2005).

Adapted from information accessed at -

http://www.randomdance.org/random/content/company/wayne_mcgregor/wayne_biography.html - 16.3.07

Katrina McPherson

Graduated with a degree in Dance Theatre from the Laban Centre, London in 1988 and had a career as a dancer and choreographer before completing a Post-Graduate course in Electronic Imaging at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design in Dundee. Creator of many single video-dance works, which have been shown at festivals across the world, as well as multi-screen and live works with video-projection. Her screen based work includes *Pace* (1996); *Moment* (1999) and *The Truth* (2003).

Adapted from information accessed at -

http://fineart.ac.uk/artists/92/ - 16.3.07

Lloyd Newson

Australian-born director and choreographer, who studied at the London School of Contemporary Dance and founded DV8 Physical Theatre in 1986. His screen based work *The Cost of Living* (2004) was adapted from the company's stage based production

Adapted from information accessed at -

http://www.dv8.co.uk/about.dv8/lloyd.newson.html - 16.3.07

Nic Sandiland

A multi-media artist working with installation, performance and film. He originally trained as an electronics engineer before moving on to study dance and performance in the late 80s. Recent screen based work includes *Remote Dancing* (2004) and *Exosphere* (2002).

Adapted from information accessed at -
http://lansdown.mdx.ac.uk/lceaSite/about/staff/NicSandiland/NicSandiland.html - 16.3.07

Wim Vandekeybus

Belgian-born director and choreographer, who established his own company Ultima Vez in 1986. Created screen based work in collaboration with Octavio

Iturbe and Thierry de Mey, before creating the screen based work *Blush* (2005), which was adapted from the company's stage-based production of 2002.

Adapted from information accessed at -

http://www.spiegeltour.co.uk/who.html - 16.3.07

Appendix F

Biographical details - performers

Franck Baranek

Trained at the Juilliard School, New York, and has performed and taught throughout the U.S. and Europe, touring with productions of Notre Dame de Paris and Cindy. Recent projects include : India Festival & (Inter)views (BOZAR studios/Brussels), Y-a-t-il... (Nadine Beaulieu/Paris), Manual for a better living (Ed Castro-Neves/Cologne),Azione-variazione (Laurence Marthouret/ Abbaye de Royaumont).He now lives in Brussels. Previous collaborations with Shiftwork include Gemini and Vertical Hold.

Dominique Bulgin

Trained in contemporary dance at Swindon National Dance Agency (2000-1) and in theatre and literature at Bristol University (1997-2000). She has worked with *Albrecht and Dancers*, Germany; *Aldes Dance Company*, Italy; *Attik Dance*, Plymouth; *Collision*, Warrington; *The Darkin Ensemble*, London and *Nu: Tempo*, Brazil and *SAP Dance*, Lancaster. Her interest in dance and technology is reflected in the work she has pursued with *Company Clever-E* in Italy using motion capture equipment, and her collaborations with sound and video artists for installation and performance work with *Pentalogos, Shiftwork* and *Dancing Strong*. Dominique is currently based in London where she freelances as a dancer, teacher and Pilates instructor for various dance companies and institutions.

Isobel Cohen

Trained at London Studio Centre as a contemporary major, before attending the Ailey School in New York for a year. She remained in New York for a further year following completion of her studies, working for various independent choreographers, as well as performing off-Broadway. Since returning to the UK, she has qualified as a Body Control Pilates teacher, as well as dancing here and abroad. She is due to work this year for the Royal Opera House, Niklas Laustiola and Fleur Darkin.

Alan Tongue

Has worked as a conductor since establishing a small orchestra at school. Brought up in a musical family, he was taught by the Romanian conductor Sergiu Celibidache. His musical interests are varied, and he is currently engaged in a musical crusade conducting British music around the world.

Maddy Tongue

Began dancing as a child with ballet lessons and subsequently trained with Laban teacher and choreographer Helen Lewis. Danced with Cambridge Modern Ballet and Belfast Modern Dance Group and now teaches Laban Community Dance classes for older people in Cambridge.

Appendix G

Quotations – *Memory Trace*

The Memory trace weblog has been developed from November 2004 onwards as an online research journal and choreographic notebook, recording the development of each of the forty two sections of work comprising the *Memory Pool* cycle. The weblog includes quotations, digital stills and writing on process, and can be viewed as supporting material to the *Memory Pool* cycle, documenting the process of creation from initial ideas to screenings.

The weblog is accessible to view online at
http://www.shiftwork.org.uk/memorytrace

P.O.V.2 (Jan. '05):

Film with its close-ups reveals the most hidden parts in our polyphonous life, and teaches us to see the intricate visual details of life as one reads an orchestral score.

(Balazs in Tredell, 2002, p.35)

A Gift from the Gods (Feb. '05):

... a certain combination of unquestionably personal talents, a gist from the fairies, and a moment in history.

(Bazin in Tredell, 2002, p.122)

Cyclograph 1 (Feb. '05)

Gilbreth's researches most adamantly illustrate that the scientific analysis of time involves an unrelenting search for its representation in visual terms - visual terms that exceed the capacity of the naked eye.

(Doane, 2002, p.6)

Event of a Caught Fall2 (Feb. '05):

The close-up has not only widened our vision of life, it has also deepened it.

(Balazs in Tredell, 2002, p.34)

Knotwork (Feb. '05):

The close-up thus functions as a means of what the Russian Formalist critics called *'ostranenie'* or *'defamiliarisation'*, in which art strips the scales of familiarity from the eyes to make us look at the world afresh.

(Tredell, 2002, p.34/35)

Magical Thinking (Feb. '05):

The mind develops memory ideas and imaginative ideas; in the moving pictures they become reality.

(Münsterberg in Tredell, 2002, p.21)

Connective Tissue2 (Mar. '05)

It is perhaps no longer appropriate to analyse video dance within stage dance criteria: a whole new set of appraisal techniques need to be developed to take into account the role of the televisual apparatus in the determination and construction of movement.

(Dodds, 2001, p.125)

Connective Tissue1 (March '05):

The cinema...is not exclusively human. Its subject matter is the infinite flux of invisible phenomena - those ever-changing patterns of physical existence whose flow may include human manifestations but need not climax in them.'

(Kracauer in Tredell, 2002, p.89/90)

Proprioceptive2 (June '05):

I was going on bodily memory of my movements...rather than visible form.

(Massumi, 2002, p.178/9)

Connective Tissue3 (Feb. '06):

Dance for the camera has liberated dance from the theater and given it a new and different proscenium, that of the film screen or television monitor.

(Rosenberg, undated, www.dvpg.net/essays.html, p.9/10)

Screenings3 (Feb. '06):

Previewing a film - with all these different people looking at it - helps to reveal the film as a dimensional thing, which in turn kicks off different ideas. It's a psychic component that you pick up from people sitting there taking it in for the first time.

(Murch in Koppelman, 2005, p.17)

Spiro1 (March '06):

I think art is the expression of the internal physiology of the artist.

(Brakhage in McPherson, 2001, p. 124)

Connective Tissue4 (March '06):

A work of art is a skin for an idea.

(Deren cited in Jackson in Nichols, 2001, p.56)

Duet Form1 (March '06):

What still inspires me most is the capacity of cinema to create new, magical realities by the most simple means, with a mixture of imagination and ingenuity in about equal parts.

(Deren in McPherson, 2005, p.206)

Screenings4 (May '06):

The filmmaker looks at his works and shows them to some friends or perhaps even a large audience, and begins to see that they hold up, that they have a form of integrity. And this happens much to the artist's surprise.

(Brakhage, 1989, p.162)

April/May (May '06):

The natural landscape is the raw material of the human psyche.

(Viola, 1998, p.253)

Connective Tissue4: Early June/Early July: (Jul.06)

Instead of trying to invent a plot that moves, use the movement of wind, or water, children, people, elevators, balls, etc, as a poem might celebrate these.

(Deren in McPherson, 2005, p.17/18)

Coda (July'06):

Creativity consists in a logical, imaginative extension of a known reality. The more limited the information, the more inevitable the necessity of its imaginative extension.

(Deren in Nichols, 2001, Appendix, p.16)

Appendix H

DVD Navigation

For examination purposes, a reading of Chapter Five provides the clearest priming for subsequent viewing of the *Memory Pool* cycle on DVD. Here, the cycle of work has been set out as a chronologically-oriented mapping of the research process. This process begins with *Scatter* (2004) and ends with *Duet For Two Hands* (2006). However *Foreword* (2006) and *The Distance Between Points* (2006 have been placed at the beginning of the cycle as a means of introducing thematic concerns relating to the notion of memory. Sections of the work can be accessed on an individual basis, and the entire cycle can also be viewed sequentially. The design of the DVD allows viewers the opportunity to navigate their own pathway through the collection and therefore to determine the nature of their own engagement with the cycle of work.