



PERFORMANCE
PHILOSOPHY

TALKING BACK: WHAT DANCE MIGHT MAKE OF BADIOU'S PHILOSOPHICAL PROJECT¹

ERIN BRANNIGAN UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The first version of this paper was presented at *Reason Plus Enjoyment* (UNSW, Sydney, 11–14 July 2015) and I have returned to it in light of current activity which constitutes the most significant ‘philosophical turn’ in Dance Studies since the work around Michel Foucault and the subjected body of the (ballet) dancer in the late 1980s to the early 2000s.² Monographs on the state of the art released in the last decade make substantial use of continental philosophy—particularly the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari—including books by Jenn Joy (2014), Petra Sabisch (2011), André Lepecki (2006, 2016), Bojana Cvejić (2015a), Ramsay Burt (2017), Derek McCormack (2013), and Frédéric Pouillaude (2017). This body of work in many ways constitutes a Deleuzian turn in Dance Studies. Such critical activity has been primarily connected with contemporary dance that has variously been described as ‘conceptual’ or ‘non-dance’ and which has dominated discourse in the field for the past fifteen years.

Dance as a discipline can be associated with a kind of *unassertiveness* that can be very productive. But perhaps we could be a little more pro-active in ‘naming and claiming’ for what is still a very new field of practice and theory.³ My current research seeks to locate, articulate and assert dance knowledge as it circulates, often unnoticed, within the broader contemporary arts and its discourses.⁴ My interest is in how the art form is perceived, how this generates a desire for dance in other disciplinary contexts, what preconceptions about the form such desires are based on, and how dance knowledges are being newly articulated in intermedial practices and discourses. When dance is drawn into the world of philosophy, for example, what is generated from this interdisciplinary encounter that is sourced in, and may contribute back to, the field of dance and

dance studies? Does philosophy—and its branch dealing with the arts, *aesthetics*—offer texts that could be applied to the task of disciplinary determination? Should we be looking there at all or turning, rather, to the methods of self-identification the art form chooses?

The popularity of Deleuze and Guattari's 'practical philosophy' within dance studies has seen it used in many ways. The verb 'use' in this context refers to the deployment of something in the service of something else, with little change to or benefit for the used phenomena. For instance, their philosophy has been the source of concepts applied to the analysis of specific choreographies or fields of choreographic practice, but also as a philosophical model per se that shares many of the qualities of dance and choreography.⁵ Deleuze's disciplinary work in literature, film, and painting provides seductive critical concepts for the analysis of works of art where experiment, affect, sensation and movement all play crucial roles. Departing from the field of Deleuzian dance studies through attention to Badiou's work provides an interesting counterpoint. Examining a position in which the disciplinary distinction between philosophy and dance is asserted, albeit through the 'use' of dance by philosophy, provides a critical space to consider current practices and future trajectories.

I have come directly to Badiou through his essay on dance, 'Dance as a Metaphor for Thought' (1993), from his *Handbook of Inaesthetics* (2005), and make no claims to be an authority on his broader philosophical project. This essay has attracted some attention from Dance Studies as modern philosophers rarely consider dance within aesthetic projects (with the recent exceptions of Giorgio Agamben [2000, 2013], Jean-Luc Nancy [1993, 2005], Alva Noë [2015], Jacques Rancière [2004] and Didi-Huberman [2006]).⁶ This paper approaches Badiou's essay on its own terms, considering its stated approach and central claims. This is in order to see his position clearly and avoid the dismissive tone of some responses from the field that have clouded accounts of Badiou's project through their desire for other approaches to philosophy's engagement with dance. 'Dance as a Metaphor for Thought' is antithetical to my own current, advocatory research, thus offering an adversary of sorts. If it is the case that dance is, in Badiou's words, 'instrumental' for the art-philosophy schema that he is formulating, and dance is being 'incorporated' into the strategies of a philosophy of art, what's in it for dance (Badiou 2005, 2, and Badiou 2014, n.p.)? Can Badiou's project be repurposed for our own disciplinary concerns? For instance, if his conception of dance (drawn from past philosophical accounts and for his own purposes) is seen as lacking from a disciplinary perspective, then what is the idea of dance that positions his as 'wrong'? And if it is the whole notion of a relatively stable, generalized model of dance that is so problematic, from which position can we begin to critique it?

In the following I will briefly situate Badiou's essay in relation to the work of other theorists and philosophers who have mobilized dance for their various projects. I will then outline the characteristics of the model of thought Badiou draws from Friedrich Nietzsche and Stéphane Mallarmé's work on dance, summarizing these as lightness, autonomy, restraint and silence.⁷ Throughout, I bring a voice for the discipline of dance into dialogue with the philosopher to see what this produces. I ask whether anything could be put into play between the kind of thinking that Badiou finds modeled in philosophy's image of dance, and the creative practice of dance as it

currently stands. This is a move beyond Badiou. To do this, I turn to the field of contemporary dance both as it has been defined generally by theorists such as Laurence Louppe, and specifically in the work of my research peers, choreographers and scholars Lizzie Thomson and Matthew Day. Finally, I ask the following question: if Badiou does not provide a philosophical response to dance in its current configuration, what might such a project look like?

1. Dance-Philosophy

When it comes to philosophy's general project, Alain Badiou states that 'philosophy depends on art and not the reverse,' so it follows that encounters between the two occur in the field of aesthetics where art becomes inscribed in philosophical strategies (Badiou 2014, n.p.). For this reason, artists are right to be suspicious of philosophy; Badiou says that works of art are soldiers on philosophy's battleground, deployed in the tussle between philosophical projects, so that a philosopher's chosen artists are better off dead (ibid.).⁸ It is true that dancers and choreographers seem to have had little need for philosophy proper until the very recent 'conceptual' turn in dance.⁹ Badiou might say that this is because some art forms make better 'objects' for a philosophical project; literature for example is more easily incorporated into the project of philosophy as both fields share the medium of the written word (ibid.). This would corroborate Susanne Langer's observation that the fact that philosophy has avoided dance perhaps signals that the art form has a philosophical significance all its own.¹⁰ In line with this thinking, for Badiou, when dance enters the field of philosophy and prompts the philosopher to 'tell me who I am,' the dance, in effect, is showing the philosopher how it escapes his grasp, "'barring" him from mastery' of the work of art (Badiou [1994] 2005, 1). Badiou characterizes the attitude of art as one of 'disappointment about everything that the philosopher may have to say about it' (2). Happily, Badiou is not concerned about such failure:

Inaesthetics is always to say that the relation to art is not 'aesthetic' in the sense of a peaceful description of what artistic activity is. The strength or subjective potency of artistic truth is used by the philosopher in his or her strategic vision to propose arguments concerning art which give new force to the philosophical strategy. It is an incorporation of art in the philosophical fight. (Badiou 2014, n.p.)

This 'use' of art by philosophy is not undertaken in a spirit of disrespect, but rather a deep admiration that sees the philosopher bar *himself* from assuming that he could speak for the processes and products of art, remaining instead within the 'intrap philosophical' (Badiou 2005, 0). Badiou admits to another relationship with art outside his role as philosopher; 'when the philosophical superego is sleeping in myself I can clandestinely go to the side of the work of art' (Badiou 2014). We know that Badiou engages with art in other ways—particularly through his work with theatre.¹¹ For the current purpose we need to understand Badiou's position in relation to the history of aesthetic philosophy, which will illuminate his adoption of the term 'inaesthetics.'

Badiou's attention to dance joins a list of philosophers who have engaged the form as an unwitting partner, providing fuel for their own disciplinary thinking.¹² Poet-theorist Paul Valéry's writings on

dance—that owe much to Mallarmé—draw on examples as diverse as flamenco artist La Argentina, modern dance pioneer Loïe Fuller and the Romantic ballerinas. For Mallarmé and Valéry, dance provides an alternative model of expression external to language processes and structures of knowledge, an event of corporeal expressivity that their poetic words strive to match in a productive tension with failure (Brannigan 2011, 40–42). For Deleuze, the dance developing alongside Henri Bergson’s philosophy in the late-19th and early-20th centuries participated in an influential movement revolution that was ‘abandoning figures and poses to release values which were not posed, not measured, which related movements to any-instant-whatever’ (Deleuze 1986, 6). Through this interdisciplinary shift in the concept of movement, Deleuze connects early modern dance to the emerging art of the cinema as the two art forms primarily occupied with space and time. And for Agamben, early Modern dance was an exemplar of gesture as a ‘means without end’; corporeal actions that subvert the economy of production in which gestures work toward a predetermined outcome (Agamben 2000, 58).¹³ For Agamben, contemporaneous theatre dance was part of a general ‘gestural crisis’ that marked modernity’s shift away from effective gestures that had been characterized as functional and productive, being ‘a means to an end’ (56–59). In both Deleuze and Agamben, the connection between dance forms and concurrent developments in fields such as philosophy, mechanical reproduction, science or politics, is retrospectively written back into history through their work, with little evidence given of practical exchange in specific milieus.¹⁴ So, while *in-step* or *in-advance* of developments in other fields, according to philosophy, dance appears *not* to have been *in-dialogue* with the same perhaps being understood, traditionally, as voiceless.

In ‘Dance as a Metaphor for Thought,’ Badiou is distinguishing his approach from those philosophers occupying the field of ‘aesthetic speculation’ (0). Here he is referring to philosophers whom he believes apply a concept of truth as either ‘immanent’ or ‘singular’ to their dealings with art, and those dealings range in attitude ‘between idolatry and censure’ (2, 9).¹⁵ In the introduction to *Handbook of Inaesthetics*, ‘Art and Philosophy,’ Badiou outlines three schemata offered by philosophy in its dealings with art based on his understanding of the relationship between truth and art in each model: 1. ‘didactic,’ in which an external truth determines and regulates art, which art imitates (linking art, education and philosophy), producing a ‘singular’ relation to truth (Plato, Brecht); 2. ‘romantic,’ in which art alone is truth, so an ‘immanent’ relation to truth (Heidegger); and 3. ‘classical,’ in which art does not aspire to the truth of knowledge but is of a different order—verisimilitude operating in the domain of the imaginary (Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza) (2–4). He argues that such models of aesthetic philosophy were not successfully challenged in the 20th century, not even by the historic avant-garde.¹⁶ He then coins the term *inaesthetics* to describe ‘an absolutely novel philosophical proposition’ that recognizes that ‘art *itself* is a truth procedure,’ ‘a singular regime of thought’ (10, 0). Art produces a truth that is at once immanent (‘art is rigorously coextensive with the truths that it generates’) and singular (‘these truths are given nowhere else than in art’) (9). For these reasons, art exists beyond the scope of philosophy and Badiou ‘makes no claim to turn art into an object of philosophy’ (0).

Instead, Badiou takes up dance as a metaphor or ‘instrument’ (in his words) to describe a model of thought as it operates in philosophy. Badiou is thus using dance as a phenomenon to illustrate his

central subject which is philosophical thought; thinking and dancing are set out as sharing significant characteristics. In this way, dance is the instrument of the metaphor, and something about philosophical thought is apparently revealed through this process. Badiou is turning the 'subjective potency' of the art form—not examples of the art as objects—toward the task of accounting for a particular type of thought (Badiou 2014). His subject is *not* the 'singular regime of thought,' that is art and which is 'irreducible to other truths' (0, 9). And Badiou's essay does *not* seek to define or describe the artistic activity of dance. He refers to his project as 'intrap philosophical' (0); that is, belonging strictly to the internal and historical concerns of the discipline of philosophy, and deals only with dance *as it has been understood previously within that field*.

This distinction has been missed by some of the rather prickly responses to 'Dance As a Metaphor for Thought' coming from Dance Studies. Jonathan Owen Clark describes the essay as 'Badiou's theory of dance,' which misrepresents the project (Clark 2011, 58). Clark focuses on Badiou's statement that dance is 'thought as event, but before it has a name,' and sees this positioning of dance as operating prior to the logic of language as symptomatic of the art form's position as a 'perennial exception, problem, or special case' (52).¹⁷ Catherine Botha's article focuses on the sentence in Badiou's essay where he states, 'dance is not an art, because it is the sign of the possibility of art inscribed in the body' (Botha 2013).¹⁸ Elaborating on Badiou's claim regarding the 'non-art' status of dance, and turning to an alternative reading of Nietzsche to effectively challenge Badiou, Botha reads Badiou's statement from beyond the scope of his project. As Botha states, Badiou is not interested in defining dance, or specific genres of dance, in relation to art or otherwise (227). Using it, as he does, as a metaphor for thought, I believe this statement refers to dance as the sign of the possibility of thought before naming, that is, thought as it is experienced, 'inscribed in the body.' In Frédéric Pouillaude's important book, *Unworking Choreography: The Notion of the Work in Dance*, he gives a solid account of the history of dance as a subject within philosophy, finally observing that Badiou raises dance 'to the transcendental plane in order to say no more about it,' equating this approach to the work of many others (Pouillaude 2017, 10–11). For Bojana Cvejić it is an act of abduction; applying Badiou's 'subtractive ontology of events' to the art form while removing all of the real conditions under which dance occurs (Cvejić 2014, 148; 2015, 14; and 2015b, 8).¹⁹ Pouillaude and Cvejić are right—Badiou is not interested in dance per se in this essay but in his own philosophical propositions, but he never indicates otherwise. Badiou is clear in his writing: the relationship between art and philosophy is 'instrumental [...] not to say the truth of the art but to inscribe the force of art in the philosophical strategy' (Badiou 2014). That is, he is using a particular notion of dance as a metaphor to uncover something about the nature of philosophical thought within his intra-philosophical project, not making claims regarding its nature as a creative discipline.

This instrumental use of art, where the art form is incorporated into the strategies of philosophy, can be contrasted to the approach in Jean-François Lyotard's writings on art. In past work I have turned to Lyotard's account of the philosopher's attempt to respond to the work of art (in this case painting) in the face of its assault upon thought in his 1993 essay, 'Gesture and Commentary.'²⁰ In this essay, Lyotard finds himself disarmed of his philosophical tools in the face of the work of art's affect. Here, the work of art 'happens' to thought in the tradition of Immanuel Kant's sublime: the

faculties of thought that scaffold philosophy under the rule of understanding cannot find the measures and limits that it requires in order to be effective (Kant 2000). This attitude in Lyotard's work has been described by Jon Roffe as a 'subservience' to art (Roffe 2016, n.p.). Lyotard describes how philosophy fails the artist; 'the philosopher, like a desperate lover, attempts to give to the work something he does not possess, namely, the words to carry on this gesture' (Lyotard 1993, 38). This is echoed in Badiou's respectful distancing from such ambitions in his own philosophy and the consequent distancing from the art form of dance in its contemporary configuration.

Deleuze has said, 'the only people who are capable of thinking their media are artists' (Deleuze 1987). But instead of subservience in Deleuze, art and philosophy are equals and so, rivals. So, as Roffe explains, Deleuze understands Proust's novel as an *alternative* to philosophy—its ambitions are the same: to attend to thinking. But art as an encounter is a violence to thought operating via sensation; this is very different to the processes of philosophy that have qualities of calmness and 'friendliness' (Roffe 2016, n.p.). What Deleuze and Lyotard have in common is placing specific creative acts and outcomes at the center of their labour of thought, remaining self-reflexive about the limitations of the latter, and this is where my personal affinities lie. They also both use the terminology of movement and force to explain the thinking involved with art, and this of course suggests there are affinities between the choreographic arts and the philosophical thinking involved in aesthetics.

The act of thought that Badiou is reaching towards and describing also shares the corporeal characteristics traditionally associated with dance such as *mobility*, *restraint* and *weightlessness*. However, he is not interested in marrying his model of thought to specific creative objects or forms. In fact, he may never have seen a dancer if we take his writing on face value. 'The contemporary configurations of art' (Badiou 2005, 14)—such as the crisis that was imminent for dance at the time of his writing in 1993 and would lead to its exhaustion or saturation—are external to his concerns.²¹ He is undertaking an exercise that would find in dancing a metaphor for his own disciplinary labour, that is, the kind of 'thinking' required by philosophy.

To take up the side of Dance Studies, the question remains: What's in it for dance? According to dance and performance scholars, Badiou is neglecting the contemporary configuration of the art form and, as Cvejić points out, removing all of the real conditions under which dance occurs. So what is that contemporary configuration and what are those real conditions? Is there a 'dance' to set against Badiou's 'philosophy'? In order to argue with Badiou we are forced to implement a similar generalization of the field, replacing the philosophically derived notion of dance that he takes from Mallarmé et al. with a generic model of contemporary dance gleaned from the broad field of Dance Studies. To declare a set of principles or fundamentals for dance has become awkward in the post-modern period, but not so for painting. In *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze states the 'three fundamental elements of painting' as being *figure*, *contour*, and *surface* (Deleuze 2003, 27). He also declares *space* and *time* to be the fundamentals shared by all the arts (Deleuze 1987).²² Following Deleuze's lead, I will offer a set of terms in the context of Badiou's essay where disciplinary assets are being set out and deployed for various projects.

To do this, firstly we must acknowledge the necessary translation from body knowledges to language forms. Choreographer Mette Ingvarstsen, who developed platforms for sharing choreographic tools and methods, puts it simply: 'verbal articulation and discursive practice is not the most evident mode of expression in relation to dance as an art form that is primarily physical, corporal, and non-verbal' (Ingvarstsen 2009, 3).²³ So we proceed with an acceptance of the limitations of the medium through which we work.²⁴ Secondly, the 'white,' Western bias within the field of Dance Studies is noted; the narrow range of dance practices considered within institutionalised theatre dance genealogies echo patterns across the other contemporary arts. As Janez Janša and colleagues note, 'dance is an art form *par excellence* of the First World, the democratic and free world' (Janša et al. 2013, 18).²⁵ Thirdly, the conservatism that haunts any project interested in disciplinary formations provides a daunting challenge; to account for the limit-features of an art form that constitute its social condition and identity, while acknowledging the radical testing of those limits within experimental practice. A focus on elements that have traditionally constituted the grammatical parameters of dance must necessarily take into account the role of the same as points for resistance, subversion, critique, and dismissal.

French dance theorist Laurence Louppe's landmark book, *Poetics of Contemporary Dance*, returns to a model of dance that is committed to its corporeal foundations, offering key elements (via Laban and other pioneers of dance analysis) that are particular to the operations of the body; namely *breath, weight, tone, movement (qualities), force/energy, and rhythm*.²⁶ As Louppe points out, there can be no question of constructing a comprehensive account of such materials; Laban's four factors—and any account of fundamentals—are 'only a step in the search for "choreographic materials" that are more global and also more disseminated so as to escape fixed frames of adjudication.'²⁷ So we also proceed with an understanding that this is a relational and contingent exercise. These dance fundamentals could be framed within broader foundational principles gleaned from several sources; *the mind-body, singularity/collectivity, presence/participation, process*.²⁸

Badiou is clear that his is 'a certain vision of dance' (2005, 59). Of its many styles or genres, the dancing Badiou has in mind is specific, and it reveals how the preceding work of Nietzsche and Mallarmé informs his approach. It is thus apparent that while an ahistorical model of dance is evoked in Badiou's philosophy, history cannot be so easily extracted from any mobilization of a concept of 'dance.' He proceeds at first by negation: 'What, in Nietzsche's eyes, is the opposite of dance?' (59). It is the dance of a dancer 'imposed upon' by an 'external constraint,' that is, subjected to the choreography of someone else; what he refers to in shorthand as, humorously, 'obedience and long legs' (Ibid.). He states that dance is also 'miles away from any doctrine of dance as a primitive ecstasy or as the forgetful pulsation of the body' (60). So what type of dancing is it in terms of these real-world exclusions? Does it matter whether it really exists for Badiou's purposes? Possibly not, but armed with *our* definition of Dance, one way to enter into a dialogue with Badiou's essay is to ask: If dance could talk back, what would it have to say in response?²⁹ Firstly, it's important to note that Badiou would not be particularly interested—he is not writing for dance but for philosophy (Badiou 2014). Secondly, we can't assume that dance would care to respond given its apparent disappointment with philosophy's efforts (according to Badiou and Lyotard). But

assuming that Dance has a voice, is up for it, and chooses to respond, what would the dance of the early-21st century make of his evocation of the art form? Trying to answer this question facilitates a reinstitution of current dance knowledges through a fictional dialogue with Badiou and reveals something of the discipline to those of us interested in dance and dancing.

2. Dance as a Metaphor for Philosophical Thought

i. LIGHTNESS

The most immediate and repeated impression in Badiou's evocation of dance is *lightness* through a series of analogies including flight, birds, breath, a fountain, the air (57). 'Dance is opposed to the spirit of gravity [...] devoted to its zenith'; 'the body "on points," the body that pricks the floor just as one would puncture a cloud' (59). However, he goes on; 'to say that it is the absence of weight does not get us very far.' Rather, the emphasis is on 'an *unconstrained* body, or as a body not constrained by itself [...] in a state of disobedience vis-à-vis its own impulses' (60).

For Badiou's purpose, dance as weightlessness approaches the condition of thought as lightness and is associated with the qualities of innocence and affirmation (57–58).³⁰ At first glance, there is an echo here of the tendency to associate lightness and goodness with the mind, in opposition to the 'baser' characteristics of the body. So this begins to look like a return to the mind-body binary, with dancing as an image of the body released from its terrestrial, material reality and 'aspiring' to the condition of thought. The problem is clear; the dancing body becomes an image reiterating the mind-body division that dance, in both practice and theory, has so successfully and tenaciously overcome.

But there is something else going on in this passage—lightness and release from the habitual, impulsive or constrained—an escape into another modality; 'It is a new beginning [...] freed] from all social mimicry, from all gravity and conformity,' but also from 'vulgar' untamed impulses (57–58, 60). The idea that dance is to the everyday body as philosophical thought is to everyday thought is perhaps behind this characteristic of lightness for dance (as a metaphor for thought).

Dance says:

The vertical orientation of dance was opposed in the early years of modern dance across the first decades of the twentieth century, and would never recover the weightlessness that characterized the ballerinas of Nietzsche's era. As in music, *tonality* (here in terms of muscles) would be challenged and give way to atonality which manifested as 'release' in dance. A new interest in weight, falling, floor-work and groundedness (even stasis) would replace elevation, defiance of gravity and muscular tension.

However, the association of this 'series' with a force that is *unconstrained* and *affirmative* is more resonant with contemporary practice: the validity of any-movement-whatever, a resistance to habitual movement, the free plundering of the body as an archive or repository of movements sourced elsewhere, and the important role of *choice* as a space of play, discovery and innovation.

As Valéry defined dance very early on in its post-classical life, it consists of ‘an action that *derives* from ordinary, useful action, but *breaks away* from it, and finally *opposes* it [... They are] acts [which] have no outward aim’ (Valéry 1964, 205).

ii. AUTONOMY

The dancing that Badiou evokes is characterised by *originality*, *singularity* and *autonomy*, qualities that are historically associated with the solo dancer/choreographer, yet he maintains the *anonymity* Mallarmé assigns to the dancer. As Badiou paraphrases, ‘the dancing body is never *someone* [...] It depicts [figure] nothing’ (64).³¹ Here is Badiou’s ‘subtractive’ method; ‘Every genuine instance of thinking is subtracted from the knowledge in which it is constituted.’ So, ‘the spectacle of dance is the body subtracted from every knowledge of a body’ (66). The dance does not preexist—or outlast—its own event, just as the type of thought under discussion can neither preempt nor outlast its naming.³² In a phrase echoed in Agamben’s writing around the same time, Badiou writes, ‘the dancing gesture must always be something like the invention of its own beginning’ (57–58).³³ The dance does not even belong to the dancer but to its own coming-into-being; as ‘a wheel that turns itself. [...] A circle that draws itself’ (59).³⁴

Dance is like a circle in space, but a circle that is its own principle, a circle that is not drawn from the outside, but rather draws itself. Dance is the prime mover: Every gesture and every line of dance must present itself not as a consequence, but as the very source of mobility. (58)

So the originary, autonomous status of dance is inseparable from an *auto-motility*. The circle keeps retracing that returning, self-enclosed, destination-less pathway. Badiou writes of ‘the theme of mobility that is firmly fastened to itself, a mobility that is not inscribed within an external determination, but instead moves without detaching itself from its own center’ (59).

Here is the movement of original thought, the ‘new’ thinking mobilized by a force or energy that we find also in Kant/Nietzsche/Deleuze. Badiou says, ‘in actual fact, what justifies the identification of dance as the metaphor for thought is Nietzsche’s conviction that thought is an *intensification* [...] not effectuated anywhere else than where it is given [...] it is the movement of its own intensity’ (58). Badiou refers to ‘the Nietzschean idea of thought as active becoming, as active power’ (59)³⁵ and finally links this to his own event-theory: ‘Dance would provide the metaphor for the fact that every genuine thought depends on an event’ (61). We will return to Badiou’s event-theory shortly.

Dance says:

For Badiou, it appears that the originary status of the dance as it comes into being in space-time is linked to the dancer as, at once, the medium/author and the object/outcome; that is, an *autonomous event* (57–58). Cvejić describes this as the ‘coincidence of the source, instrument and site’ in the figure of the dancer, and this fact is central to its specific status amongst the arts (Cvejić 2015, 9). Appearing, historically speaking, to indeed be autonomous yet generative of discourse that it does not need but which thrives on approaching the art form, dance has apparently floated free of the big ideas shaping the broader arts. This state-of-affairs lead Yvonne Rainer to famously

claim in the early sixties that dance has 'been the most isolated and inbred of the arts.'³⁶ This is an historicization of the art form that Dance Studies has worked hard to revise, claiming ground for dance as generative of, rather than merely responsive to, major cultural and aesthetic developments.

The turn to philosophy in recent dance practices as a point of reference, and even dramaturgical content, has been associated with an explicit introduction of dance into the heart of the contemporary world of ideas and related art practices. Cvejić refers to this as an 'inverse movement,' *as dance begins to use theory* in European 'conceptual' dance (8). Along with this development—the most radical in dance since the mid-20th century—we have seen a destabilisation of accepted notions of authorship, subjectivity, materiality and independence associated with choreography and dancing, terms that need to be dramatically renovated in light of such work.

As noted, in Badiou's formulation the autonomy of dance—along with its lightness—is inseparable from its motility. Movement, as a foundational element of dance, has been critiqued by some dance theorists (André Lepecki in particular) as 'modernity's onto-political mobilization of movement' (Lepecki and Allsopp 2008, 1). This theoretical move in dance studies reflects a wave of largely static pieces by new generations of choreographers. It could be argued that the turn to stasis since Cunningham's deployment of it in the 1950s and 1960s is actually an expansion of the field of movement, just as John Cage's use of silence was an expansion of the field of music. So the collocation of dance with movement might be accepted in this context. The image of dance as generative of movement which can travel out from its center, yet which retains its relation to its source, places dance at the centre of a network of forces, exchanges and transmissions; at the provenance of a choreography that invents its own context.

iii. RESTRAINT

Freedom, or a lack of constraint, is countered with an emphasis on 'the potent legibility of restraint' in Badiou's schema of dance (59–60).³⁷ He writes, 'dance offers a metaphor for a light and subtle thought precisely because it shows the restraint immanent to movement' (60). In another Agamben-like move, Badiou links this restraint to choice-making and the medial or inconclusive quality of the gestures of dance; he says 'dance is composed of gestures that, haunted by their own restraint, remain in some sense undecided' (61).³⁸ So for Badiou we have both restraint and rigour in dance as a metaphor for thought—which differentiates this model of thought from the everyday—combined with an inconclusiveness; a regime of thought involving a powerful combination of discipline and experiment.

Dance says:

The characteristic of dance as an art of restriction and restraint is in step with current models that understand choreography as a setting of limits upon the always already expressive body.³⁹ This is the 'craft' in the art and contributes to the expansion of the discipline's body-of-knowledge through a testing at these limits. At the same time, the problems, tasks or scores that facilitate this restraint are often designed to exclude pre-determined outcomes and resist closure into exact reiterations.

Experimentation within rigorous structures tests the limits of the form from within, rather than without. The case for contemporary dance as an art of experimental composition that deals explicitly with and through a series of formal restraints has been most clearly made by Jonathan Burrows in *A Choreographer's Handbook*, where the testing of disciplinary parameters regarding such things as repetition, expectation and risk have been convincingly laid out (Burrows 2010).

iv. SILENCE

Restraint as an aspect of *the thought that dance describes* is perhaps connected to Badiou's discussion of the dancing body as 'the silent body' (59). This silence is privileged in opposition to what he calls 'the aleatory and vanishing economy of the name.' Dance is now 'the metaphor for the eventual dimension of all thought' which precedes all naming (62). Here he is returning to his event-theory which he describes as follows:

Obviously, the only way of fixing an event is to give it a name [...] The event 'itself' is never anything besides its own disappearance [...] Dance would then point to thought as an event, but *before this thought has received a name*—at the extreme edge of its veritable disappearance [...] Dance would mimic a thought that had remained undecided, something like a native (or unfixed) thought. Yes, in dance, we find the metaphor for the unfixed. (61)

This evocation of dance at the edge of disappearance, resistant to language and suspended in its condition as medial—a means without ends—is consistent with Mallarmé and Valéry's interest in dance as a productive ideal for a poetics; to quote Mallarmé, '[the dancer] is a poem set free of any scribe's apparatus' (Mallarmé 2001, 109). But there is also a Cagean dimension to this evocation of silence as a space that is full of potential and contingency; an unfixed quantity that is always in relation to an event, and in fact gives rise to it and provides the ground upon which it occurs (Cage 2011, 7–8).

And this event has a spatial dimension—dance offers an image of the space of this unfixed thought-event; 'Dance [...] integrates space into its essence. It is the only figure of thought to do this, so that we could argue that dance symbolizes the very spacing of thought' (63).⁴⁰ Coming before the naming or specific spatio-temporal dimensions of the event proper, dance 'must deploy itself as the survey of the site' (63). Here is Loïe Fuller in Mallarmé's account: 'the enchantress creates the atmosphere, draws it to her and returns to it' (McCarren 1995, 757).⁴¹ So the mode of thought that Badiou equates with dancing is 'undecided' or 'unfixed,' and prior to naming or 'inscription' (61); the event of thought in and of itself, as a process that institutes its own context.

Dance says:

Dance Studies has almost been built entirely upon a critique of the affiliation of the art form with the characteristics of ephemerality, disappearance, and a resistance to translation into language. Discourses surrounding dance have modeled new vocabularies specific to the art form and argued for its materiality, presence, repeatability and transmissibility. However, the mediality of the gestures of dance does appear to offer a genuine resistance and alternative to language-based

systems of knowledge, linearity, narrative and productivity. Badiou's description of a resistant or subversive capacity within dance in the face of a text and image-dominated world is politically significant for an art form that often seems to be on the knife edge between experimental leadership and redundancy amongst the contemporary arts.

So I have been preoccupied with the current conditions of dance as understood in its own discipline, ignoring Badiou's caveat that his project is 'not of dance thought on its own terms, on the basis of its history and technique, but of dance such as it is given welcome and shelter by philosophy' (63). The mode of thinking that Badiou aligns with dance has the characteristics of lightness, originality, autonomy, restraint and a resistance to closure through 'naming.' It occurs 'in the movement of its own intensity,' that is, it is not 'effectuated anywhere else than where it is given' (58). This is thought as an unfixed 'event'; 'an emergence that is indiscernable from its own disappearance' (61). Badiou concludes: 'It is for all these reasons that thought finds its metaphor in dance' (58).

3. Conclusion

What can we learn from the tensions between the model of thought described by Badiou and the specificities of dance as a contemporary creative practice? Jacques Rancière explains that Badiou's 'denunciation of aesthetic usurpation [by philosophy] works to guarantee "the specificity of art"' (Rancière 2009b, 64). Perhaps the specificity of art in relation to philosophy, but the evocation of dance in Badiou's writing does not, at first, seem helpful if one were seeking the specific, foundational practices of the form. Badiou harnesses a *body of knowledge* in the service of philosophy. The philosopher needs dance and the forces it creates, unleashes and mobilises to both fuel his own work and to serve as an ideal against which to measure the field's processes (Badiou 2014). So one result of the respectful differentiation between philosophy and art in Badiou's work is an exclusion of the thinking and doing that belongs to the art form itself. This is, at least, what has got Dance Studies riled up.

So what of the processes, knowledges and characteristics specific to dance asserted in my defining terms and throughout the above dialogue? Clark complains that Badiou neglects the notion that dance is a type of '*thinking itself*' (60) which is a well-established foundation of the form since the turn of the 20th century.⁴² Badiou does acknowledge that art more broadly is 'a singular regime of thought' (0) with its own corresponding truths that will always remain external to the project of philosophy. A corollary could be that there are disciplinary regimes of thought that correspond with the artistic fields covered in his book (poetry, theatre, dance, cinema).⁴³ However in *Inaesthetics*, dance is understood strictly via the history of philosophical encounters with the form with no reference to actual dance artists, and Badiou's framing of the art form as a metaphor for the work of philosophy—i.e., thought—is in keeping with that history. In his chapter on dance, Badiou acknowledges a 'body that thinks' or 'thought-body,' which belongs to the arts generally, but finally baulks from 'defining a singular art' of the body that is *dance*, in fact stating that 'dance is not an art' (69–70).⁴⁴

Nevertheless, the kind of dancing that comes closest to Badiou/Nietzsche/Mallarmé's description would be the thinking-dancing of the immediate compositions of scored-improvised dance (and Cvejić agrees on this) (Cvejić 2015b, 14).⁴⁵ Here I am referring specifically to the dancing of my colleagues Lizzie Thomson (2016) and Matthew Day (2016). It is through the intensities of its own shifts between action and perception, or feeling-thinking-doing, that the dancing body produces its dance *in the moment of its occurrence*, with very little to hold onto after the event. Here is an unconstrained, singular, silent yet rigorous activity that resonates deeply with Badiou's model of thought. So perhaps, as Pouillaude admits, there is *something* of the truth about dance in philosophical approaches such as Badiou's (Pouillaude 2017, xii).

But perhaps I've fallen into a Badiouian trap. Despite his argument for a respectful separation between art and philosophy, Badiou compares their operations and has me interrogating how his model of thought stacks up against one particular iteration of dance—a certain mode of contemporary dance. In this way (and perhaps knowingly) Badiou (to quote Rancière), 'forces a new consideration of the *aesthetic* tie between the productions of art and the forms of thought pertaining to art' (Rancière 2009b, 82).

Finally, to return to the fact that dance lacks its philosopher.⁴⁶ Badiou would argue that dance, along with all the other arts, does not need one. Valéry and Mallarmé already feature heavily in dance studies and Deleuze appears more regularly recently, as already stated. But dance is not the object of study for these philosophers in the way that cinema, music and art can be for Deleuze, Adorno and Lyotard. Is there a freedom in this? Can we turn our attention back to our own resources rather than defining ourselves through another discipline's lens? Did we really exhaust the tools, knowledges and processes developed across the 20th century within the discipline before we looked beyond? I'm not convinced we did. There is clearly a third way that does not abandon the resources developed by dance artists and their commentators, but equally does not isolate dance from the world of ideas with which it is constantly in dialogue. If dance really did need one, I would wish for a philosopher who is attentive to the tools that the art form chooses for itself, who understands the historic and contemporary conditions under which it has and is operating, and who can give a good account of the role the body plays as the apparatus of process, production and reception in corporeally realized choreographies.⁴⁷ So perhaps it is best to thank Badiou for pointing the way towards newly refined encounters at the interface between dance and philosophy as they are appearing in dance and performance studies ... moving on.

Notes

¹ Thanks to Bryoni Trezise, Hetty Blades, Anna Pakes, Jonathan Burrows, and anonymous readers for feedback on drafts of this paper.

² See, for example: Foster (1986, 1997); Innes (1988); Green (1999, 2000); and Dempster (2002). On Foster's edited book, *Choreographing History* (1995), reviewer Meglin writes, 'does anyone not cite Foucault anymore?' (Meglin, 1997). See also: Thomas (2003) for an account of Foucault's approach to the body and Burt (2004) on Foucault versus Judith Butler. More recently, in *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement* (2006, 8), Lepecki briefly cites Foucault's theory of subjectivity and 'technologies of the self' alongside Deleuze's development of the

same. For more on Foucault's appearance in dance studies see Wait and Brannigan (2018).

³ Here I am deferring to French dance theorist Laurence Louppe's claim for contemporary dance as a phenomena emerging in the 20th century and distinct from Ballet (Louppe 2010, 23).

⁴ See Brannigan (2015, 2016, 2017).

⁵ For example, performance maker and theorist Bojana Cvejić takes both approaches. She applies the Kantian sublime, and Deleuze's development of this into what she calls an 'anti-representational conception of thought,' to a discrete body of European dance works late 1990s-present (2015, 37). Cvejić also notes a broader 'alliance between Deleuzians and performance studies scholars' that 'could be built on shared concerns, negotiated with the notions of process, relations, movement, affect, event, and liveness' (32). It should be noted that Deleuze only mentions dance in passing in projects that are not directly related to dance, so dance studies scholars, such as Cvejić, turn to his aesthetic philosophy in his cinema books and beyond, to his philosophy more generally.

⁶ Cvejić (2015, 7) also points out the limited field for this kind of activity within philosophy.

⁷ Badiou's key texts are; Nietzsche (1969) and Mallarmé (2001). He also references an uncited version of Paul Valéry's 'The Soul and the Dance.' What I don't cover in Badiou's essay is the Mallarméan characteristics of 'the effaced omnipresence of the sexes' (64), the principle of 'nakedness' (66) and the role of the spectator (67/8). I'm also not concerned in this instance with the comparison to theatre in Mallarmé; Badiou states that Mallarmé's texts are 'governed by an inexplicit comparison between dance and theater' (63).

⁸ Badiou goes on to say that philosophers working with living, contemporary artists do have an advantage, 'because it is a great victory for a philosopher to incorporate a living artist. It's much more contemporary and the philosophical strength of the in-inaesthetical incorporation of the living artist creates effects which have more potency' than the interpretation of historical artists. However, 'it's more difficult because we have to discuss [our work] with the artists, and if they contradict you completely it's a weakness.' For philosophers working with living choreographers, see the partnerships between choreographer Mathilde Monnier and Nancy (2005), or Flamenco artist Israël Galvan and Huberman (2007). These constitute encounters between philosophy and dance that are not so war-like, that take place on dance's terms, and which require artists that are very much alive.

⁹ While choreographers' interest in philosophy has not played a significant role in dance studies, choreographers have engaged with their contemporaries in that field. Some include Isadora Duncan's interest in Nietzsche (for example Duncan (1928, 301) and also Martha Graham's (LaMothe 2006). There has been a recent discovery of a connection between Margaret H'Doubler's (Anna Halprin's teacher) radical dance pedagogy in the first half of the 20th century and her teacher, John Dewey (Ross 2000). There has also been William Forsythe's interest in various philosophers which is chronologically aligned with the post-structuralist turn referred to above. The connections between Merce Cunningham and Zen philosophy via John Cage is an important and largely under-theorised precedent.

¹⁰ Langer (1953). I thank Matthew Day for first alerting me to this section in Langer.

¹¹ For example, see Badiou's plays such as *L'Écharpe rouge* (1984) based on his 1979 novel of the same name.

¹² Here I am limiting myself to those I have engaged with in my book (Brannigan 2011), and my current research.

¹³ He describes a shift from pose (definition) to flow (open-endedness) and from effective outcomes to pure mediality. See Boenisch (2007, 26); Imschoot (2009); and Brannigan (2011, 82–107) for a discussion of Agamben's model of gesture in relation to Forsythe, Sharifi and early dancefilm respectively.

¹⁴ In both Deleuze and Agamben it is in cinema that the gestures of mediality—developed, rehearsed or realized in dance—are recorded for posterity and analysis.

¹⁵ 'The philosophical identification of art falls under the category of truth' (9).

¹⁶ Badiou claims that the avant-garde was a 'desperate and unstable search for a mediating schema, for the didactico-romantic schema. The avant-gardes were didactic in their desire to put an end to art... But they were

also romantic in their conviction that art must be reborn immediately as absolute.' They were 'above all anticlassical' (8). This would mean that art is not 'innocent' but actively engaged with the discourses and philosophies that attempt to discern their truth status.

¹⁷ Opposing this, Boenisch embraces Badiou's concept of dance as 'a ground before the name' in his account of William Forsythe's dancers; 'not outside of the processes and the logic of the name, but in the very process itself, presenting a moving existence which is neither absent nor yet inscribed by signs, texts, images, and names of the symbolic order of representation' (Boenisch 2007, 16). Clark goes on to critique Badiou's focus on 'dancing' as opposed to 'choreography' and makes an interesting comparison between Badiou's study of Schonenberg's music as dismantling 'the expectations associated with resolution' and the choreographies of Cunningham (57). However, the point remains that Badiou is only referring to dance as it has been mobilised within philosophy, not as it exists in specific case studies.

¹⁸ Quoting Badiou (2005, 69).

¹⁹ In *Choreographing Problems*, she writes of Badiou's work as one of the 'attempts of philosophy to usurp dance as a philosophical problem while ignoring the problems that dance poses itself,' treating it as 'a metaphor in universal abstract singular form, an ahistorical conduit for a general ontology' (3).

²⁰ I refer to this article in Brannigan (2011, Chapter 7).

²¹ For an account of this crisis see Lepecki (2006).

²² Deleuze also discusses aesthetic metaterms, some of which are relevant to the processes that we discover in dance: sensation, rhythm, measure, experience, experiment, form(less), force (2003).

²³ See also <http://www.everybodystoolbox.net/>.

²⁴ This definition of dance in its disciplinary formation is an excerpt from an as yet unpublished book chapter, 'Composition and Poetics.'

²⁵ They go on, 'if there is a dance history, it is the history of some student of a great Western master, mostly Laban, Wigman, or Palucca.'

²⁶ Laban favors space, time, weight, and flow, with effort coming later in his research, and Louppe's section on 'tools' is structured around the (poetic) body, breath, weight, (poetic) movement, style, time, flow, space, and composition (Laban [1950] 1971; and Louppe 2010).

²⁷ Ibid. And Laban himself states, 'As I was about to start work, to be the first among dancers to speak about a world where language alone is not good enough, I was well aware of the difficulty of this task' (quoted in Bradley 2009, 39).

²⁸ A sample of those sources are Bojana Kunst, André Lepecki and Sally Gardner, dance and performance theorists spanning the Europe, the USA and Australia respectively. In her contribution to the *Post-Dance* publication of 2017, Kunst focuses on 'the doing of dance' and its time, space, movement, physicality, energy, rhythm, power, exchange, context, weight, and materiality (2017, 130–131). In his contribution to the *Move: Choreographing You* catalogue, Lepecki cites 'corporeality, movement, and ephemerality' as elements 'that had been deemed constitutive (and exclusive to) dance as an art form' (2011, 153). And Sally Gardner focuses on movement, kinaesthetics, process, intersubjectivity, and a resistance to language (2008, 55–60).

²⁹ This diverges from the task to 'take Badiou's metaphor "seriously" and envisage the dance that would ensue from his axioms' (Cvejić, 2015b, 14). As Cvejić notes, this path is taken by Clark who tests Badiou's broader theories, beyond the essay under discussion, against Cunningham's work.

³⁰ Badiou says himself that this 'series' in Nietzsche related to the bird, air and child 'can appear very innocent, even mawkish, like a childish tale in which nothing may be asserted nor assessed any longer.' However, he points out that 'Dance is both one of the terms of the series and the violent traversal of the whole series' (58).

³¹ Singularity and immanence are brought together here, and we have seen that these two themes form the

essence of his schema for the various links between philosophy and art. For his inaesthetics, 'Immanence: Art is rigorously co-extensive with the truths that it generates [...] Singularity: These truths are given nowhere else than it art' (9).

³² This subtractive characteristic is restated here; 'Dance, as a metaphor for thought, presents thought to us as devoid of relation to anything other than itself, in the nudity of its emergence.' (66)

³³ 'If dance is a gesture, it is so, rather, because it is nothing more than the endurance and the exhibition of the media character of corporeal movements [...] it is a process of making a means visible as such.' Agamben 'Notes on Gesture,' 58, originally published in 1992. Badiou's essay on dance was first published in French in 1993 as *Danse et Pensée* ed. Ciro Bruni (Paris: GERMS, 1993).

³⁴ Here he cites Nietzsche, however Nietzsche never links the wheel metaphor directly to dance in *Thus Spake Zarathura*. Badiou applies Nietzsche's image here of the innocence of the child to his discussion of dance as a metaphor for (philosophical) thought (58).

³⁵ This is linked to its positive energy; 'But this becoming is such that within it a unique affirmative interiority is released. Movement is neither a displacement nor a transformation, but a course that traverses and sustains the eternal uniqueness of an affirmation' (59).

³⁶ 'That dance should reflect these changes [in minimal art and beyond] at all is of interest, since for obvious reasons it has always been the most isolated and inbred of the arts. What is perhaps unprecedented in the short history of the modern dance is the close correspondence between concurrent developments in dance and the plastic arts' (Rainer 1995, 264).

³⁷ Badiou goes on: 'In dance thus conceived, movement finds its essence in what has not taken place, in what has remained either ineffective or restrained within movement itself' (60).

³⁸ This recalls Agamben's definition of the medial gesture as a 'means without end' (Agamben 2000, 58).

³⁹ 'This is perhaps Nietzsche's most important insight: Beyond exhibition of movements or the quickness of their external designs, dance is what testifies to the force of restraint at the heart of these movements' (59/60).

⁴⁰ Elsewhere Badiou describes the time of dance as 'the secret slowness of the fast' in relation to its powers of 'restraint' (60) and elsewhere again as 'pretemporal' in relation to the named event; 'Dance manifests the silence before the name exactly in the same way that it constitutes the space before time' (61/2).

⁴¹ McCarren is translating and quoting Mallarmé.

⁴² For example, in the pioneering work of Mabel Elsworth Todd (2008).

⁴³ The book's chapters cover poetry, theatre, cinema and dance. See Rancière (2009a) regarding the 'identification of art's specificity with the specificities of arts' in modernism's project and the comparison to Badiou's project that insists upon the distinction between art and non-art (67–70). Rancière explains that Badiou's interest is not in the material specificities of the various art forms, but in the specificities of the 'ideas' that 'reside' in them (70).

⁴⁴ It's a sleight of hand that claims that dance 'shows us that the body is capable of art' but that this is different to a claim for an 'art of the body' – that is 'defining a singular art' (70). Is Badiou suggesting that the 'body that thinks' belongs to all the arts but in dance we see 'the thought-body showing itself under the vanishing sign of a capacity for art?' (70). When we see this in dance, Badiou argues, it produces a feeling of 'vertigo' 'because the infinite appears in it as latent within the finitude of the visible body [...] the infinite capacity of art, of all art, as it is rooted in the event that its chance prescribes' (70).

⁴⁵ Cvejić however criticizes such a model of dancing as promoting 'the individual autonomy of the dancer and the fetishistic exclusivity of a "here-and-now" expression' (14).

⁴⁶ Cvejić also points this out (2015b, 7).

⁴⁷ One precedent here may be Deleuze's *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (2003), which specifically gives us both rigorous attention to the materials and tools that the art form chooses, and a philosophical theme of sensation shaped by that very attention.

Works Cited

- Agamben, Giorgio. 2000. 'Notes on Gesture.' In *Means without End: Notes on Politics*. Translated by Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino, 49–60. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 2013. *Nymphs*. Translated by Amanda Minervini. London: Seagull Books.
- Badiou, Alain. 2005. *Handbook of Inaesthetics*. Translated by Alberto Toscano. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 2014. 'Cinema and Philosophy.' Masterclass, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 27th November.
- Boenisch, Peter M. 2007. 'Decreation Inc.: William Forsythe's Equation of "Bodies Before the Name."' *Contemporary Theatre Review* 17 (1): 15–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10486800601095982>
- Botha, Catherine. 2013. 'Dance and/as art: considering Nietzsche and Badiou.' In *Thinking Through Dance*. Edited by Jenny Bunker, Anna Pakes and Bonnie Rowell, 224–240. Hampshire: Dance Books.
- Bradley, Karen K. 2009. *Rudolf Laban*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Brannigan, Erin. 2011. *Dancefilm: Choreography and the Moving Image*. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195367232.001.0001>
- . 2015. 'Choreography and the Gallery: Curation as Revision.' *Dance Research Journal* 47 (1): 5–25. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0149767715000054>
- . 2016. 'Yvonne Rainer's "Lives of Performers": an undisciplined encounter with the avant-garde.' In *The Oxford Handbook of Dance Screen Studies*. Edited by Douglas Rosenberg, 517–536. New York: Oxford University Press.
- . 2017. 'Context, Discipline and Understanding: the Poetics of Shelley Lasica's Gallery-based Work.' *Performance Paradigm* 13: 97–117.
- Burrows, Jonathan. 2010. *A Choreographer's Handbook*. London: Routledge.
- Burt, Ramsay. 2004. 'Genealogy and Dance History: Foucault, Rainer, Bausch and De Keersmaeker.' In *The Presence of the Body: Essays on Dance and Performance Theory*. Edited by André Lepecki, 29–44. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
- . 2017. *Ungoverning Dance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cage, John. 2011. 'Experimental Music.' In *Silence*, 7–13. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Clark, Jonathan Owen. 2011. 'Dance and Subtraction: Notes on Alain Badiou's Inaesthetics.' *Dance Research Journal* 43 (2): 51–64. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0149767711000052>
- Cvejić, Bojana. 2014. 'To End with Judgment by Way of Clarification....' *Danse: An Anthology*. Edited by Noémie Solomon, 145–157. Paris: Les Presses du Réel.
- . 2015a. *Choreographing Problems: Expressive Concepts in European Contemporary Dance and Performance*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137437396>
- . 2015b. 'From Odd Encounters to a Prospective Confluence: Dance-Philosophy.' *Performance Philosophy* 1: 7–23. <https://doi.org/10.21476/PP.2015.1129>
- Day, Matthew. 2016. 'Assemblage Showing Critical Path.' <https://vimeo.com/190819326>
- Deleuze, Gilles. 1987. 'Gilles Deleuze on Cinema: What is the creative act?' Lecture, FEMIS. Online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_hifamdISs. Accessed 8 December 2017.
- . 1986. *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- . 2003. *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*. Translated by Daniel W. Smith. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Dempster, Elizabeth. 2002. *An Embodied Politics: Radical Pedagogies of Contemporary Dance*. PhD diss., Monash University.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2006. *Le Danseur des Solitudes*. Paris: Les éditions de Minuit.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges, and Israël Galvan. 2007. 'Risque & Rythme.' <https://vimeo.com/65249661>
- Duncan, Isadora. 1928. *My Life*. New York: Liveright.
- Foster, Susan Leigh, ed. 1995. *Choreographing History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- . 1997. 'Dancing Bodies.' In *Meaning in Motion: New Cultural Studies in Dance*. Edited by Jane Desmond, 235–258. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- . 1986. *Reading Dancing: Bodies and Subjects in Contemporary American Dance*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gardner, Sally. 2008. 'Notes on Choreography.' *Performance Research* 13 (1): 55–60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13528160802465557>
- Green, Jill. 1999. 'Somatic Authority and the Myth of the Ideal Body in Dance Education.' *Dance Research Journal* 31 (2): 80–100. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1478333>
- . 2000. 'Emancipatory Pedagogy?: Women's Bodies and the Creative Process in Dance.' *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 21 (3): 124–140.
- Innes, Shona. 1988. 'The Teaching of Ballet.' *Writings on Dance* 3: 37–49.
- Imschoot, Myriam Van. 2009. 'Gesturing Hooman Sharifi: On Gesture, Mass and Resistance.' In *Planes of Composition: Dace, Theory and the Global*. Edited by André Lepecki and Jenn Joy, 372–394. New York: Seagull.
- Ingvartsen, Mette. 2009. 'EVERYBODYS BERLIN, November 2009.' In *Everybody's Group Self-Interviews*. Everybody's Publications 3. See also <http://www.everybodystoolbox.net/>.
- Janša, Janez et al. 2013. "'east-dance-academy" ≈ working notes by Janez Janša, Bojana Kunst, Aldo Milohnić, and Goran Sergej Pristaš taken on July 5, 2006 in Tanzquartier Vienna.' In *Parallel Slalom: A Lexicon of Non-Aligned Poetics*. Edited by Bojana Cvejić and Goran Sergej Pritas, 16–31. Belgrade and Zagreb: Walking Theory-TkH.
- Joy, Jenn. 2014. *The Choreographic*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Kant, Immanuel. 2000. 'Second Book: Analytic of the Sublime.' In *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Editor and Translator Paul Guyer, 128–159. New York: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511804656.008>
- Kunst, Bojana. 2017. 'Some Thoughts on the Labour of the Dancer.' In *Post-Dance*. Edited by Danjel Andersson, Mette Edvardsen, and Mårten Spångberg, 116–134. Culberg: MDT.
- Laban, Rudolf von. (1950) 1971. *The Mastery of Movement*. 3rd edition. Boston: Play, Inc.
- LaMothe, Kimerer L. 2006. *Nietzsche's Dancers: Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham and the Revaluation of Christian Values*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781403977267>
- Langer, Susanne. 1953. *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art Developed from Philosophy in a New Key*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Lepecki, André. 2016. *Singularities*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315694948>
- . 2011. 'Zones of Resonance: Mutual formations in Dance and the Visual Arts Since the 1960s.' In *Move. Choreographing You: Art and Dance Since the 1960s*. Edited by Stephanie Rosenthal, 152–163. Manchester: Cornerhouse Publications.

- . 2006. *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement*. New York: Routledge.
- Lepecki, André, and Ric Allsopp. 2008. *On Choreography*. *Performance Research* 13 (1): 1–6.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13528160802465409>
- Loupe, Laurence. 2010. *Poetics of Contemporary Dance*. London: Dance Books.
- Lytard, Jean-François. 1993. 'Gesture and Commentary.' *Iyyun, The Jerusalem Philosophical Quarterly* 42 (1): 37–48.
- McCarren, Felicia. 1995. 'The "Symptomatic Act" Circa 1900: Hysteria, Hypnosis, Electricity, Dance.' *Critical Inquiry* 21: 748–774. <https://doi.org/10.1086/448773>
- McCormack, Derek P. 2013. *Refrains for Moving Bodies: Experience and Experiment in Affective Spaces*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822377559>
- Mallarmé, Stéphane. 2001. 'Ballets' and 'Another Dance Study.' In *Mallarmé in Prose*. Edited by Mary Ann Caws, 108–113 and 114–116. New York: New Directions.
- Meglin, Joellen A. 1997. 'Feminism, the Academic Moment, and Research Rigor.' *Dance Chronicle* 20 (1): 87–98.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01472529708569269>
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. 1993. 'Corpus.' In *The Birth to Presence*. Translated by Brian Holmes et al., 189–207. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- . 2005. *Alliterations: Conversations on Dance with Mathilde Monnier and Claire Denis*. Paris: Editions Galilee.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1969. *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. London: Penguin.
- Noë, Alva. 2015. *Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Pouillade, Frédéric. 2017. *Unworking Choreography: The Notion of the Work in Dance*. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199314645.001.0001>
- Rainer, Yvonne. 1995. 'A Quasi Survey of Some "Minimalist" Tendencies in the Quantitatively Minimal Dance Activity Amidst the Plethora, Or an Analysis of Trio A.' In *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*. Edited by Gregory Battcock, 263–273. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Rancière, Jacques. 2009a. *Aesthetics and Its Discontents*. Translated by Steven Corcoran. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- . 2009b. 'Alain Badiou's Inaesthetics: The Torsions of Modernism.' In Jacques Rancière, *Aesthetics and its Discontents*, 63–87. Cambridge: Polity.
- Roffe, Jon. 2016. *Gilles Deleuze's 'Proust and Signs.'* Lecture from The Sydney School of Continental Philosophy, Sydney, NSW, 8 September.
- Ross, Janice. 2000. *Moving Lessons: Margaret H'Doubler and the Beginning of Dance in American Education*. Wisconsin & London: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Sabisch, Petra. 2011. *Choreographing Relations*. Munich: epodium.
- Thomas, Helen. 2003. *The Body, Dance and Cultural Theory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-48777-3>
- Thomson, Lizzie. 2016. *Tacet: Rhythmic Composition (After Roy De Maistre's Rhythmic Composition in Yellow Green Mirror (1919))*.
https://repository.arts.unsw.edu.au/primos-explore/fulldisplay?docid=LRS_FASSfass_24678&vid=FASS
- Todd, Mabel Elsworth. 2008. *The Thinking Body*. Gouldsboro, ME: The Gestalt Journal Press.
- Valéry, Paul. 1964. 'Philosophy of the Dance.' In *The Collected Works of Paul Valéry, Volume 13*. Translated by Ralph Manheim. Edited by Jackson Mathews, 197–202. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Wait, Nalina, and Erin Brannigan. 2018. 'Body-States and the Site of Authority: The Emancipated Dancer.' In *Oxford Handbook of Dance and Competition*. Edited by Sherril Dodds, 283–304. New York: Oxford University Press.

Biography

Dr. Erin Brannigan is Senior Lecturer in Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of New South Wales and works in the fields of dance and film as a writer, academic and curator.

Erin has written on dance for *RealTime* since 1997, and her publications include *Moving Across Disciplines: Dance in the Twenty-First Century* (Sydney: Currency House, 2010), *Dancefilm: Choreography and the Moving Image* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Bodies of Thought: 12 Australian Choreographers*, co-edited with Virginia Baxter (Kent Town: Wakefield Press, 2014). She has published articles in journals such as *Senses of Cinema*, *Writings on Dance*, *Brolga*, *Dance Research Journal*, *Performance Paradigm*, *Broadsheet*, *Runway* and *International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media* alongside several book chapters.

Her current research projects are *After Rauschenberg – Composition: Movement: Experiment* (with choreographers Matthew Day and Lizzie Thomson), *New Paradigms for Performance Pedagogies* (UNSW T&L Grant with Bryoni Trezise) and *Dancing Our City* (with Julie-Anne Long and Amanda Card).

Erin's curatorial work is documented at: <http://cargocollective.com/Erinbrannigan>

© 2019 Erin Brannigan



Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).