

Movement as the Memory of the Body

A research and artistic development project 2003-2006

Traces of life and experience of different kinds can be discerned in the movements of the body. How are experience and memory stored in movement? How is this related to time/age? How does this show in art? I have devoted my work as an artist to the exploration of the linguistic nature of movement, what it is that is being communicated in movement. My current aim is to develop this exploratory work in relation to human ageing.

The role of the artist is to provide the context for creative processes in which the goal has not been pre-determined. This involves a considerable degree of risk-taking and the insight and understanding generated by the process may be just as much the goal as the "result" – the work of art. Art serves as the zone of experimentation in which free rein can be given to emotional and intellectual stimuli. Art as the space for what is irrational and what is most profoundly human. I also consider work in dance to be a fundamental form of research into language, as something that can develop our perceptual and communicative capacities. As that which makes it possible for us to encounter one another.

I am continually engaged in reshaping so-called reality so that it corresponds better to my desires, my needs. In dance the kind of knowledge that is not considered acceptable elsewhere becomes important. Our physical memories emerge as events of significance. Scents, tastes, movements, feelings, thoughts...The unexpressed. When I choose, for example, to see movement as the memory of the body, the linguistic and communicative perspective becomes significant. What is it that makes us believe that we know anything? Every day we tread the paths of memory and wander around in the tracks of what has been. I see this; I observe it. And then my work can take off and move forward. My body is my dwelling-place. I move within a context. My movement expresses my place, and it is through the body that I turn it into experience.

The aim of this project was to shed light on dance and movement, the creation of choreography and its design and staging from the perspective of the specific character of dance as a form of artistic expression focussing on issues to do with experience, memory and embodiment. The research concentrates on that form of practical knowledge, which is typically the form of knowledge peculiar to artistic creativity, i.e. bodily experience. The project has been examining this entire area and producing a form of practical application of its research through choreographed staging of the subjective experience of the elderly. Work on movement studies of older people furnish the research material and form the foundation for the choreographic process whose outcome is a presentation of movement as the memory of the body: A piece of fundamental linguistic research work.

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The project was presented in three different performances: The Memory 2003, With The Eye In The Middle Of Your Head 2004 and Smiling At Death 2005 as well as in a book. Info on the documentation of the project is to be found under "Artwork, Books".