



LISTAHÁSKÓLI ÍSLANDS
Iceland University of the Arts

MAÏEUTICS

How could the expansion of consciousness benefit dance practices ?

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BA Project in Contemporary Dance Practices – Thesis

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Abstract

This paper aims to relate my experience of the expansive benefits of the mindful embodiment of movement practices such as dance. I will explain in what manner movement phenomenology is applicable to dance and how this attitude relates to my artistic process. The piece *Maïeutics* is an allegory of the living, i.e. a concrete representation of the abstract idea of the meaning of existence. Hence, the title itself entails the Socratic art of bringing the human soul to birth through introspection to reach transcendental consciousness. Moreover, I am using the Platonic ideology *Têchnè* to re-investigate the essence of acquired techniques and knowledge through movement reflexivity according to the study of their phenomenons in active meditations. The choreographic work is an extension of a movement practice I developed in 2020 entitled *Transcendental Embodiment (TTE)* where I reflect on the holistic experience of moving through conscientious corporeality, phenomenological and metaphysical inquiries. By *metaphysical* I mean the undeniable relationships between the tangible (physical) and intangible (psychological, emotional, energetical, and spiritual) bodies in the physical realm.

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INTRODUCTION

Humans, a species native to *Homo sapiens*, have spread over the entire surface of the globe in a few millenniums. They became this social animal that differs from all other living species. They are particularly distinguished by their power of expression which manifests through thoughts. Thoughts, at the dawn of consciousness and consciousness within the mind. This is how they tie their deep motivations with the tool that will allow them to achieve their uniqueness in a society governed by beliefs. Their material vehicles use systems of symbolic communication as a complex language to express themselves and exchange ideas. Their power of expression through symbolism expands notably in the artistic fields. Body and art are interrelated and *Homo sapiens* have done arts since the dawn of time. Throughout handprints in the caves to religious, sacral, and shamanic dances. Moreover, art is a language that unites humankind by a deeper understanding of the created feeling inside of us, the emotion. All confronted to their ineluctable finitude, it is intrinsic for humans to wonder at least once in their lives *Who am I ? Why am I here ? What is Truth ?* In response to that, we have built an ensemble of knowledge on our lifetime compiling with a sense of individual truth giving meanings to our existences. Below different angles, mediums, and methodologies, arts, philosophy, and sciences are questioning the being, life, and the universe. Beyond any word and any explanation, art is self-sufficient to bring across a subjective interpretation of life. By using the physical vehicle as the main medium of artistic realization, dance asserts its existential position in the world and demonstrates humanism within the arts. However, the knowledge acquired during repetitive movements frequently vanishes in a productive vanity of *doing for the sake of doing*, bringing us closer to the behavior of machines: a concrete disconnection between the physical and psychic substance. In this case, does the living art continue to affirm its existentialism and its humanism ? If the techniques of art come to their climax, what will be left ? We might surely guess that increasing bodily awareness leads to better proprioception, and thus, to a better embodiment of dance techniques. Still, the body is a source of distraction for the mind if *“I am not merely present in my body as a sailor is present in a ship, but that I am very closely joined and, as it were, intermingled with it, so that I and the body form a unit.”*¹

Then, what bounds the body to its thinking substance ? What factors unite the *meta-* (in Greek : μετά = beyond) and the *-physics* (in Greek : η φυσικη = the study of nature) into one entity ? If the power of attention and intention are capable of changing our perception of what

¹ René Descartes, *Meditation VI, Méditations métaphysiques* (GF Flammarion, 2021), 56.

we call reality, how could the expansion of consciousness benefit dance practices? In my opinion, the study of holistic corporeity cannot denigrate the correlation of scientific facts to philosophical discourses. This being said, it seems primordial to me to put forward scientific examples to the precepts of ancient, contemporary, eastern, and western philosophies that support the argumentation of my words. Therefore, I will talk about how I came to the conclusion that the remembrance of our essence as human beings is essential to the complete awareness of our own relative, ephemeral and eternal incarnation.

I. KNOWLEDGE, SCIENCES, AND THE EGO

Keywords : NBIC, AI, EEG, Golden Ratio

a) Theoretical motivations

The physical dimension anaesthetises us from the internal psychic power that fades into our bodies. With the ever-increasing external stimuli in our modern lives, we experience more and more technological distractions. We do not naturally transcend the sensorial experience to the movement and it is challenging to increase our inner-awareness in a very fast life. With the emergence of industrial movements such as Taylorism, Fordism, and Toyotism after the Second World War in a capitalistic context aiming for higher productivity, the ready-made artistic movement ² as well as the colossal expansion of AI in our daily lives, I feel that it has never been as important to be human in this lifetime.

Humans marvel themselves with human imitations through robotization while they are the most advanced beings ever ‘created by nature’. Humans tend to be as powerful as ‘gods’ who create lives, while they are themselves considered as art from ‘God’. This technology scoffs at the power of nature and is a consequence of the tendencies of humans to go beyond life in an excessive way. Scientists tried to re-modulate human consciousness, the *Strong AI*. This artificial neuronal synaptic network humanly made has already been used in some of our daily electronic devices (such as facial and voice recognition). For example, the *Turing Test* ³ from Alan Turing who spreads the well-known question “*Can a machine think ?*”

² “Fontaine,” Centre Pompidou, accessed March 11, 2022, <https://www.centrepompidou.fr/en/ressources/oeuvre/VgrNkuT>

³ Graham Oppy and David Dowe, “The Turing Test,” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Stanford University, October 4, 2021), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/turing-test/>

But if emotions are also part of our intelligence ⁴, then connected to our power of thinking, the question would rather be *Can a machine feel ?*

Equally, *The Chinese Room Argument* ⁵ admits that a digital computer processing in a robot body does not know what words mean beyond its asserted data-based programming. Our intrinsic intuitive qualities of thinking, feeling, understanding, and free will cannot be encapsulated by any computational system. The mechanism by which such neuronal computation may produce a conscious experience still remains unknown and ungraspable for scientists: the intangible bodies (psychological, emotional, energetical, and spiritual) ⁶. Since they can reproduce neuronal networks transmitting data-based information, what non-computable factor occurs in the brain ? Perhaps the pineal gland, as a part directly intertwined with our subtle body (mind's eye), the symbol of higher consciousness is Eastern philosophies. This gland produces melatonin, the hormone that protects our nuclear DNA, reinforces our immune system, regulates our sleep patterns, and makes us dream. If such a hormone is able to keep us alive and makes us live other realities during states of 'unconsciousness', could we imagine its primary role in consciousness ? The progress of the NBIC (nano-bio technologies, computer science, and cognitive) pushed to their climax leads to a contempt for human flesh while we are sophisticated energetic beings.

However, this spiritual dimension holds a subversive character and has been eclipsed in our occidental and capitalist beliefs. There is a tendency to discredit esoteric subjects that are not physically coherent with our rational sense of truth. Yet, the truth lies everywhere in life and our knowledge only depends on our perception. Don Miguel Ruiz, Mayan nagual tells us *"We ignore the truth. Once we have been domesticated, we accumulate a lot of knowledge that forms like a kind of fog that prevents us from seeing reality. Our belief system is like a mirror that only shows us what we believe."*⁷ If we have this tangible conception of our vehicle, but we know since we are thinking, that our existence does not only result in being in a state of corporeality, consciousness is consequently something that exists beyond our body.

The concrete existence of material things seems to us to be the most obvious thing because they are tangibly graspable. This illusion is due to the heterogeneity of the tangible

⁴ "Emotional Intelligence", Psychology Today <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/emotional-intelligence>

⁵ David Cole, "The Chinese Room Argument," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford University, February 20, 2020), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/chinese-room/>

⁶ "The Five Sheaths (Koshas)," *The Five Sheaths (Koshas)*. - *Tibetan Buddhist Encyclopedia*, accessed March 13, 2022, http://tibetanbuddhistencyclopedia.com/en/index.php?title=The_Five_Sheaths_%28Koshas%29

⁷ Don Miguel Ruiz, José Ruiz, *Le cinquième accord toltèque: la voie de la maîtrise de soi* (Jouvence, 2020).

body and the psychic substance of our physical existence. Nevertheless, the metaphysical divorce proves to be unfounded and deceptive to the meditating mind. Indeed, the tangible proof of the soul is yet an aporia. Except if we dare to talk about the *21 Grams Experiment*⁸ realized by the physician Duncan MacDougal in 1907 (AKA the soul's weight), or about 'decoration' phenomena, so-called NDE (Near Death Experience) contingency corroborated by Dr. Raymond Moody⁹ (Dr in medicine and philosophy). A large number of doctors have conferred unexplained phenomena during several hours of clinical deaths from the absence of electroencephalogram (EEG) signals and heartbeat before seeing their patients coming back to life with the memory of medical prescriptions and operations during their deaths. Indeed, scientists have measured successfully the consciousness happening in Buddhist's brains in meditations with EEG. The example with Stuart Hameroff¹⁰ who corroborates that consciousness is measurable in Hertz. Then consciousness is a vibrational frequency and therefore energy. If the EEG is not giving any signal during clinical deaths, could the consciousness have left its tangible vehicle and be experienced outside of it ?

Nowadays, robots are being tested on their ability to create art with the *LoveLace Test 2.0*¹¹. Performing arts in the presence of high technology as non-substitutable but as complementary is respecting the potential of human nature, emphasizing its beauty and versatility. In collaboration with the laboratory of Takashi Ikegami, and Hiroshi Ishiguro, Justine Emard, a french visual artist, has recorded her performance *Co-(AI)-xistence*¹². A duet between Mirai Moriyama, a dancer, and the robot Alter to whom we remove the word *ego*. Endowed with different skills, they interact through the signals of their respective language, bodily, and verbally. A meeting between sensitivity, agility, and consciousness and the very fragile versatility of the abstract machine. The machine is brought up to the rank of an artist collaborator. The idea of the ego, the *I think, therefore I am* from Descartes is inherent to all consciousness. It should be encountered in such ways that we ought to use it as a driving force, not as a rival. Acknowledging it, passing through it, and making it our ally might truly empower oneself. That is why I decided to work more with my consciousness.

⁸ "21 Grams Experiment," Wikipedia (Wikimedia Foundation, January 19, 2022), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/21_grams_experiment

⁹ Raymond Moody, *Life after Life: The Investigation of a Phenomenon: Survival of Bodily Death* (London: Rider, 2016).

¹⁰ "Consciousness in the universe A review of the 'Orch OR' theory", Physics of Life Reviews https://www.academia.edu/40443382/Consciousness_in_the_universe_A_review_of_the_Orch_OR_theory

¹¹ "Lovelace 2.0 Test - An Alternative Turing Test" <https://www.i-programmer.info/news/105-artificial-intelligence/7999-lovelace-20-test-an-alternative-turing-test.html>

¹² "Co(AI)Xistence," Justine Emard, May 13, 2021, <https://justineemard.com/coaixistence-2/>

b) In practice and performance

I will now relate my personal experience of what I call the transcendence of the ego into the performative state, which means, to be detached from the *show-off* mode. At the beginning of the piece *Maïeutics*, I am still in the womb while the audience is watching a short movie about conception. Meanwhile, I am meditating and witnessing it with them in my mind. I rewind everything that has happened before I was able to pronounce the *I*. Descartes tells us that “*in thinking, the mind explicitly formulates its affirmation of existence. This is the first truth of being grasped by the meditator.*”¹³ The self is discovered as an individual substance when he experiences the ability of thinking.

The *I* appears during reflected consciousness, so my attempt is to return to the raw state, or animality, of the human being. Object of itself, the *cogito* from Descartes is polluted in its harmless purity and loses its authentic dimension of being in the world. Hence, I relive again the macroscopic state, I am the first cell that has been created in my body, but yet, I surrender to what is infinitely greater than me. Thus, I practice the complete detachment from my *self*, identity, from Tiffany to be part of the whole and the nothingness again. The division is just an illusion. My identity, anonymously encapsulated in a womb of ambiguity, the void the affirmative existence. As previously explored in *Self Unfinished*¹⁴ by Xavier Leroy, the audience’s imagination finishes the form that they observe from and through the material in which my body extends, sometimes creature, sometimes human. This is my contract with the audience. I am investigating the state of pure consciousness, at the dawn of thought. To be able to pass through the ego, here the womb, and find other qualities than its bounded notion of : *I know, I want, I expect*. Instead, I trust the process of becoming in transcendentalism : *I feel, I seek, I welcome abundance* to unfold my existence in macro-perception, a “*conscious sensory life in introspection, an unconscious perception*”¹⁵ This approach widens my awareness and the acute perceptions about my moving body and the infinitesimal expansion of its psychical power into the physical realm. The two-meter giant womb in which I am captured at the beginning of the piece is more than the literal representation of being born on stage. It symbolizes the conditioning of the human mind and its identity. The void of existentialism perforated let appear a naked being to its authenticity and vulnerability.

¹³ René Descartes, *Méditations métaphysiques* (GF Flammarion, 2021).

¹⁴ “SELF UNFINISHED (1998),” Xavier Le roy, accessed March 13, 2022, <http://www.xavierleroy.com/page.php?sp=d22f5301fc93b61aedfc31f0c3c53a88e553d8be&lg=fr>

¹⁵ Carl Gustav Jung, *L'énergétique psychique*, (Genève: Georg, 1956).

Naked from all judgment, expectation, and self-definition, that is a main aspect of the *Transcendental Embodiment* practice. Transcending what the ego judges, what the self thinks, and what the identity believes to embrace the infinitesimal possibilities of being in the world towards self-achievement potentiality. In reference to the previous title given to the piece : Awakening, this is the second one, the spiritual awakening : a reminiscence of the essence. In the piece *Maïeutics*, I claim my existentialism and my humanism.

Now we have seen that the mind accumulates all sorts of knowledge, knowledge building our behaviors, perceptions, and beliefs, we all have a different intuition about the *supreme truth*. What I call supreme or immutable truth is the perfect and natural organization of everything from the DNA to the universe. The cause or name of anything beyond human rational understanding that some call God. This cause from which we derive all original knowledge since it is this knowledge itself. By reading this paragraph you can already glimpse the movement established between the infinitely large (the universe, mathematical laws, and endless philosophical inquiries) to the infinitely small (DNA, the atomic state, and the macrocosm). The reciprocity of the explicit to the implicit. In this fact, I would like to approach what has been a great source of inspiration to me, the formula of existential design: the golden ratio. The Golden Ratio, Phi (ϕ) known as the Fibonacci sequence ¹⁶ (= 1.618), so-called the *savoir-faire* of life is the divine proportion founded in nature, DNA, foetus, galaxies, Great Pyramid of Egypt, paintings, human faces, etc. The symbol Phi in mathematics is also represented (ϕ) in Ancient Greek for philosophy.

Philosophy comes from Philo- (love) and Sophia (wisdom). Likewise, the spiral for spirituality is the symbol of eternity, reincarnation, and re-birth. The cycle of life expounds that each beginning follows an ending. In my practice, I inspire my movements from *Phi* through the spirals and curves in my body and in space. The movement dynamic never stops, instead, I recycle the gravitational energy ¹⁷, going down to up again. I gather this natural force into my core and this provides sustainable energy to my body. The expansion of my consciousness behind and beyond my kinesphere helps me to inhabit the whole surrounding environment in which I am dancing.

¹⁶ National Geographic Society, "The Golden Ratio," National Geographic Society, November 16, 2012, <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/golden-ratio/>

¹⁷ "Newton's Law of Universal Gravitation," Wikipedia (Wikimedia Foundation, February 5, 2022), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newton%27s_law_of_universal_gravitation

II. UNCERTAINTY, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE SPIRIT

Keywords : Maïeutics, Phenomenology, Teknè, Metaphysics

a) Theoretical motivations

From the birth of cellular life, we come into this world slowly remembering who we are. Stardust from the Universe, ephemeral and eternal incarnations, the embodiment of infinitesimal possibilities of becoming. Unfolding our existences, moments in movements. Fugitive, elusive, and expressive substances that vanish away, yet diffuse their energetic propagations in space. This space, the distance between me and an object, is not formed from a vacuum but formed from molecules and particles. Air is invisible, impalpable matter but truly existing. The same applies to the intangibility of what constitutes us and makes us intrinsically energetic beings. Man's main task in life is to give birth to himself. As requires the Maïeutics of Socrates, the art of bringing the human soul to birth through introspection to reach this transcendental consciousness. Through questioning, the mind of the person being questioned manages to find the truths within oneself that bounds to the immutable truth. Socrates affirms that everyone carries that knowledge within, without being aware of it. The art of remembering who we truly are : the essence of the being below the *self*. This is the theory of the immortality of the soul. *“My art of maïeutics has the same general attributions as that of midwives. The difference is that he delivers the men and not the women and that it is the souls that he oversees in their work of childbirth, not the bodies.”*¹⁸

In my point of view, it is urgent and important to strengthen what makes us human in order to be able to use and integrate advanced technologies into our daily life. If we do not reinforce the relationship between our consciousness and our essence, human beings will start to believe that the only way to grow is through technology. In other ways, we will stop being human in its etymological definition. Endlessly trying to escape away from our human condition, our ineluctable finitude, to tend to post-humanism. Perla tells us *“Men invented robots because they carefully observed their own behaviors. Repetitive and unconscious. Too often we operate like robots. The more we have lived, the more we have repeated actions and experiences, the more we are robotic.”*¹⁹ We forget to actively request the movements themselves through the study of their phenomenons, the philosophy of *what we are doing*. That is why I engage my artistic process in the natural science of phenomenology.

¹⁸ Socrates, *Theaetetus*, Plato, with an English Translation (Harvard University Press, 1963).

¹⁹ Perla Servan-Schreiber, *Les promesses de l'âge: à 75 ans, ma nouvelle liberté* (J'ai lu, 2020).

Phenomenology is a descriptive science of consciousness and essences (or phenomena). It is a method advocating the total rejection of prejudices and the possibility of a new beginning by returning *to things in themselves*²⁰ as the philosopher Edmund Husserl used to say. It is to seek the original intuitions preceding scientific discourse. This gives us access to a level of transparency and authenticity from the practitioner who engages in a subjective introspection within his own bodily and sensitive experiences “*Phenomenology is a description of the structures of transcendent consciousness based on the intuition of the essences of these structures.*”²¹ The purification of the *self*, from the Latin *ego*, requires that the thinking subject detaches itself from its empiricism in order to be able to grasp things in their essence to rediscover their true empirical consequences. The phenomenological reduction makes possible the passage from natural self to transcendental self. The transcendental ego is the radical source of meanings, allowing me to see the world with objectivity and clarity throughout the suspension of judgment to which I refer in my practice. Equally, Sartre alleges the transcendence of the *I* as being primordial within the bracketing of the natural attitude “*The transcendent I must fall within the scope of the phenomenological reduction.*”²²

Coming back to the reasons of the Maïeutics in relation to the phenomenological attitude I adopt in the piece, In *Pheado*, Plato has esoterically expounded death as the separation of the incorporeal part of a living being (the soul) from the physical part (the body). He professed that it is birth that becomes oblivion of the Truth for the soul coming into the world. He also insists on the fact that time is not an element inherent in the domains situated beyond the sensitive world. “*What we call time is just a moving and unreal reflection of eternity.*”²³ This dilation of time, in the phenomenological reduction manifests itself during my meditative state in the womb, as well as during the dance. In stillness, I am already moving with the activity of my consciousness and this requires me to be in the present moment. In a present moment, a chance to re-actualize one’s existence at each moment life presents itself. “*The body intelligence is expressed with satisfaction and senses as soon as we act in consciousness. ‘In consciousness’ is not a constant state. [...] To act in conscience allows us to live more intensely.*”²⁴

²⁰ Daniel Christoff, “Husserl Ou Le Retour Aux Choses,” in *Husserl Ou Le Retour Aux Choses* (Paris: Seghers, 1968).

²¹ Edmund Husserl, *Méditations cartésiennes introduction à la phénoménologie* (J. Vrin, 2008), 140.

²² Jean-Paul Sartre & Le Bon, *La transcendance de l'ego: esquisse d'une description phénoménologique* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J.Vrin, 1972), 37.

²³ Plato & Cornford, *Plato's cosmology; the Timaeus of Plato* (Kessinger Publishing, 2010).

²⁴ Perla Servan-Schreiber, *Les promesses de l'âge: à 75 ans, ma nouvelle liberté* (J'ai lu, 2020).

b) In practice and performance

At the beginning of the piece, I question the audience *What does it mean to be alive ?* and I previously answered this question with what clinical death is, here I refer to my birth on stage when I exit the womb. I relate to a shamanic experience I had in Central America during a Temazcal Ceremony where we enter in what is called the *Womb of Mother Earth* to die and be reborn as new beings. Thereafter, I rephrase my question to the audience with *What does it mean to be truly alive ?* beyond the clinical definition of it. I answer this through the embodiment of an altered state of consciousness in stageable meditations, therefore with phenomenology extending on André Malraux's quote at the end of the second short movie "*To live is to transform into consciousness an experience as wide as possible.*"²⁵ To live more intensely is also to interact outwardly with the world, juxtaposed on an introspective life. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty likes to say "*The attention to life is our consciousness of incipient movements in our body.*"²⁶

Phenomenology is an excellent tool for conscious dances and thus leads to a different experience from the literal execution of techniques but can be juxtaposed. This science of the essence of consciousness can empower the veracity and authenticity of one's subjective experience of moving. Einstein said, "*We cannot solve our problems with the same thought we had when we created them.*" and it is better to warn them. If we remove the word *problem* and compare that to the most optimal performance of a technique once studied, it also supports the theory that all practices or techniques established should be approached with the quality of an open mind in order to find more richness in it.

The *Transcendental Embodiment* being the skeleton of the piece *Maïeutics*, I am tending to counter movement passivity in a world that fades into a certain automatism. "*In the case of passive movement, the subject senses that there is a movement without being able to tell which movement and in what direction.*"²⁷ This is also the reason why I am announcing the disclaimer : *this is not a performance, this is the subjective experience that leads to the performative state.* The prefix *per-* means to *pass through*, *-ance-* means a *state of*, *-form* means *meaning* to its representation. My intention was not to dance for the performative result but to live a conscious experience, journey through authentic dedication to a process that is intuitively and holistically leading me to certain concretizations. Therefore, I am inviting the

²⁵ André Malraux, *La condition humaine* (Paris: Ellipses, 1996).

²⁶ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Gallimard, 2015), 107.

²⁷ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Gallimard, 2015), 137.

audience to observe the piece *Maïeutics* as something else than entertainment, keeping in my mind that they have the free will to not follow this suggestion.

It is firstly coming from the inner perspective that guides me to an honest devotion for what makes me move, analog to Pina Bausch “*I’m not interested in how people move, but what moves them.*”²⁸ regarding emotions as a vital source for movement. In reference to the emotional body previously mentioned as being intangible, the word *emotion*, from the Latin *motion*, is to put in movement. The purity of the emotion felt is universal, but linked with unique experience and expressed subjectively, creating all different kinds of realizations that are called art. As I am, I feel and this is what differentiates me from a machine. As I am, I subjectively perceive, create my reality, and experience my personal truth within the gigantic question *What does it mean to be truly alive ?* this is what differentiates me from a robotized conform production and the objective truth that exceeds me. Merleau-Ponty explains that “*The body is our general way of having the world. Sometimes it is limited to the necessary gestures for the conversation of life, sometimes playing on these first gestures and passing from their proper sense to a figurative sense, a new core of meaning is manifested through them: this is the case with motor habits like dancing.*”²⁹ Dance is a relevant and concrete kinetic energy form of emotions. The sensitivity becomes perceptible somatically because this artistic medium can intertwine feelings in motion. When the heart speaks, transparency is. In Eastern philosophies they say *think with the heart and feel with the mind*, this is to harmoniously balance the yin and yang polarities into a unity.

Transparency has been performed by Marina Abramović in *The Artist is Present* ³⁰. When I am facing the audience, I invite them to sink through me. I dive into my own corporeity, tune into my pineal gland, and awaken the sensations in my body. I spread the awareness into my breath and make it travel into my limbs. I investigate my corporeal reality, embodying movements macroscopically. I start to move through an embodied score : mind’s eye, a cell, group of cells, blood, organs, spirals, the kinesphere, and what is beyond. This helps me to let go of the mind and self-expectations to grasp my direct intuition, and rather ‘think’ with my whole body “*all 385 trillion cells alive and conscious, performing*

²⁸ Norbert Servos et al., *Pina Bausch-Wuppertal Dance Theater, or, The Art of Training a Goldfish: Excursions into Dance* (Köln: Ballett-Bücherei-Verlag, 1984).

²⁹ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Gallimard, 2015), 182.

³⁰ “Moma Learning,” MoMA, accessed March 13, 2022, https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/marina-abramovic-marina-abramovic-the-artist-is-present-2010/

individually and in concert.”³¹ Deborah Haye explains the benefits of using scores. She follows the feeling of the experience as a primary source of movement creation and sees performance as a practice. The outline on *Practice VS Praxis* ³² from Chrysa Parkinson has also convinced my choice in using previous movement phrases I choreographed to transcend an acquired knowledge towards a re-enactment of the technique. I am consciously investigating already set material to re-actualize it into the *Now*.

Art, etymologically in Greek the *têchnè* ³³ (as a Platonic ideology), would not be conceivable without technique even if artistry cannot be reduced to the mastership of skill methods. Consequently, beyond the technique, the knowledge that we obtain through time, a mindful involvement towards exploration is necessary to soak movement material and gestural texture. This allows me to surpass certain sensitive knowledge, and expand my potential for self-discovery through open-mindedness to receive new information.

The cohesion between the physical vehicle and the psychical body in mindfulness provides authentic physical qualities and experiences. The practice of dance is a favorable occasion for this kind of experience if considered holistically. Existence manifests in the mind and receives another name that is called consciousness. The antecedent energy of its awareness becomes thought, therefore actions concretized in the material dimension of the subject who creates his own surrounding reality. The dedication to this process manifests itself by the power of intention. *“Indeed, consciousness is defined by intentionality. Through intentionality it transcends itself.”*³⁴ We cannot strive for the most effective result of an action without processing its manifestation and passively going to. We rather consider *“intentionality as a central theme of phenomenology”*³⁵. Thus, it is necessary to replace the word *doing* by the word *processing*, significant in terms of authentic experience in movement investigation. Being aware of the fulfillment between A to B enlightens the value of the movement in clarity through dedication. The verb *do* guides us unjustly to the methodology of *doing* and rather be approached below the methodology of *processing the do*. *“A movement is learned when the body has understood it, that is to say when it has incorporated it into ‘its world’, and to move*

³¹ “Deborah Hay: Turn Your F'ing Head!,” Walker Art Center, accessed March 13, 2022, <https://walkerart.org/magazine/deborah-hay>

³² “Self-Interview on Practice by Chrysa Parkinson,” Dance, May 19, 2014, <https://dance-tech.tv/videos/self-interview-on-practice-by-chrysa-parkinson/>

³³ Richard Parry, “Episteme and Techne,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford University, March 27, 2020), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/episteme-techne/>

³⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre & Le Bon, *La transcendance de l'ego: esquisse d'une description phénoménologique* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J.Vrin, 1972), 21.

³⁵ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: general introduction to pure phenomenology* (Taylor and Francis, 2014), 282.

its body is to aim through it."³⁶ The word *processing* uncovers the action singularity and the multiplicity of verbs behind a movement. In my practice in the studio and on stage, this approach reconnects me to the range of possibilities there is to experience a given movement. *Do* a plié becomes *process* a plié in other words, *being the plié*. For instance, the verbs *elongating*, *expanding*, *pulling*, and *pushing* are subordinated to the verb *doing while doing* does not subordinate any of these verbs. I believe that it is the exploration behind the main action, through the power of intention, that will make an honest and authentic result. When the consciousness is traveling in the body, the embodiment is full and alive. Where the mind goes, the energy flows, the skin and the flesh are listening.

If the consciousness, that is to say, the intangibility of our being, has the capability to transform the quality of movements concretized on the physical realm, thus the surrounding reality which we perceive through it, then this consciousness has the potential to transform and reinforce empirical experiences. Consequently, the union of intangibility and tangibility exceeds the notion of metaphysical dualism. "*The body and the consciousness are not limited to each other, they can only be parallel. [...] As long as the body is defined by existence in itself, it functions uniformly as a mechanism.*"³⁷ The soul, the *third body* for Merleau-Ponty, is a junction point of the misleading dualism between the psyche and soma that unifies our existence. "*The fusion of soul and body in action, the sublimation of biological existence into personal existence.*"³⁸ In other words, the metaphysical dualism is in fact the harmonious physical accomplishment by the movement of existence in itself. The movement is a return to the source of being, a parcel of divinity. In my point of view, the subjective action produced by a living being is the addition of the spiritual, psychical, and physical dimensions. This union does not separate them as subjects and objects, a dominant and one which undergoes.

The spiritual body manifests itself discreetly through all movements of life because it is inherently part of existence. From a higher plan, a part of what has created existence, the *I* that affirms itself, and what follows it. As a matter of fact, Sartre tells us that "*the study of individual processes which have given birth to this world as a concrete and particular totality. In this sense metaphysics is to ontology as history is to sociology*"³⁹. Metaphysics investigates the being, its environment, the meaning of life, and what is beyond.

³⁶ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception*, (Gallimard, 2015), 173.

³⁷ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Gallimard, 2015), 156.

³⁸ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Gallimard, 2015), 114.

³⁹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'être Et Le Néant Essai D'ontologie Phénoménologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943), 683.

CONCLUSION

Dance can be a practice of introspection, transformation, and transcendence of one's subjective experiences into a worldwide journey. Through my personal experience, I can affirm that embodied phenomenology serves me to use the power of my consciousness to improve the knowledge I have about my moving body. It brings me to new creative perspectives and empowers my faculty to embody dance techniques in larger ways holistically. If the awareness of our complete corporeality, that is to say of the physical, psychic, and spiritual bodies were an integral part of our lives, we would have complete awareness of our relative, ephemeral and eternal incarnation. That is why I experience phenomenology as a metaphysical manifesto.

In my opinion, conscientious corporeality and the reflexivity of movement according to the study of its phenomenon have an important role within the performing arts field. As we tend to sustain the quality of dance techniques, every moment of the process should be considered as meaningful as the outcome we tend to.

Consequently, I believe that the science of the essence of consciousness can empower the veracity and authenticity of one's subjective experience of moving. It is essential to find the authentic paths in our bodies to tend to our sense of truth within the movements. The expansion of consciousness within the body-mind-spirit provides a presence to oneself, introspectively and outwardly, and this has an effect on the dancer's experience of moving. I am studying dance but my practice is spiritual, I use the concept and experience of an embodied spirituality to analyze the dance information I'm exposed to.

Phenomenology within the *Teknè* is a practice that leads to conscious paths, better movement appropriations, enhances decision making and one's artistic voice. The piece *Maïeutics* was a great experience for self-discovery and opened me to a new quality of presence on stage and a more subtle way of acknowledging my audience.

To finish with I would like to mention Thórbergur Thordarson who once said *“My only wealth is philosophy, my only pride is wisdom. Once people have had a huge glut of progress, they'll get bored. They'll start talking to the wind and flowers and stones again and listening to the song of the stars.”*

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