UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

Department of Dance

Unsteady State: hip hop dance artists in the space(s) of UK dance theatre

by

Paul Colin Sadot

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

April 2019

UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

ABSTRACT

INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Department of Dance

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Unsteady State: hip hop dance artists in the space(s) of UK dance theatre

Paul Colin Sadot

This thesis examines new ways of working with hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre from an artist-led, practice research perspective. The evolution of praxis that is explored is based on three studio projects: the BLOCK project (2015), two micro projects (2017) and the final exposition (2018). The research examines the dialogic relationship between the movement(s) of hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre and historico-temporal, sociocultural, political and economic forces conceptualised as the UK hip hop dance theatre (HHDT) 'metaspace'. In doing so, it asks why, how, when and where dance takes place in the UK, who is granted access to it and under what conditions. Responding to the metaspatial forces that it critiques, the research develops the role of the choreodramaturg as an explicitly politicised practitioner who responds to the metaspace by invoking processual turbulence and unsteadiness in the studio. The research process is informed by an evolving theoretical framework that draws on cultural theory, dramaturgy, hip hop dance theory, contemporary dance theory and performance politics. In particular, Edward Soja's (1996) concept of Thirdspace was influential in developing a processual Thirdspace model for HHDT. Additionally, the research draws on artist journals and interviews conducted with a range of UK hip hop dance/theatre practitioners as key means of bringing practitioner voices into the research project. In this thesis I argue that complex metaspatial conditions play a supervisory role in choreographic outputs of HHDT artists in the UK. Furthermore, the practice research

demonstrates that the development of metaspatial knowledge can be an intrinsic part of choreographic practice and a processual tool that is capable of challenging such conditions.

The research undertaken for this thesis has informed two recent publications:

Sadot, P. (2019). I'm Still Looking for Unknowns All the Time: The Forward (E)motion of Northern Soul Dancing. In S. Raine, T. Wall, & N. Watchman Smith (Eds.), *The Northern Soul Scene* (pp. 292–310). Sheffield: Equinox Publishing Ltd.

Sadot, P. (2019). Negotiating the Metaspace: hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre. In M. Fogarty & I. Kai Johnson (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Hip Hop Dance Studies*. New York: Oxford University Press (Forthcoming).

E-Submission Access Information

The reader should access the website using the login details provided with the thesis.

The website contains the thesis with hyper-links to films, photographs, diagrams, appendices and other reference materials that provide important supporting evidence of the practice research.

The website is running from April 1st, 2019 – October 1st, 2020: following that please contact the author directly for access to digital materials.

Website address: https://paulsadotphd.com

Contents

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, Paul Colin Sadot

declare that the thesis entitled

Unsteady State: hip hop dance artists in the space(s) of UK dance/theatre

and the work presented in the thesis are both my own and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

none of this work has been published before submission,

Signed: ……

Date: April 1st 2019

Acknowledgements

First, special thanks go to my supervisors Dr Clare Parfitt and Dr Victoria Hunter, whose support, patience, empathy and encouragement has been unwavering and whose knowledge and advice has been invaluable. I really do feel very lucky to have had them guide me through this complex process.

Thank you to the incredible open-minded dance artists who worked with me throughout the practice research: Joshua Nash, Jordan Douglas and Christina Dionysopoulou. Additional thanks go to Lisa Rowley and Mickael (Marso) Riviere who joined me at various stages of practice.

A wide ensemble of people have appeared throughout the course of my PhD to make invaluable contributions be they artistic, empathetic, supportive or questioning. In no particular order, I would like to thank: Dr Claire Moon, Liz Hill, Professor Alexandra Carter, Jo Carter, Marco Santucci and Elaine Constantine, Dr Moira Faul, John McGrath, Martin (Visceral) Stannage, Lee Griffiths, Botis Seva, Robert Hylton, Jonzi D, Kwame Asafo-Adjei, Victoria Shulungu, Flaviana Sampaio, Natalie Rowland, Janet Carter, Howard, Pauline and Oscar Romp, Contact Theatre, Brendan Kearney, Samriye Aden-Dirie, Dr Stephen Pritchard, Leonie Higgins, Xristina Penna and Mathilde (when I was starting out). If I have forgotten anyone, please forgive me.
A special thanks goes to Benji Reid, an inspiring artist and a wonderful friend who has caught me in freefall several times during my doctoral journey. His artistic pathway maintains constant and fearless momentum and in this way his inspiration and support extend into my life, encouraging me to dwell in the turbulence of what often feels like a solitary journey.

Words are not enough to acknowledge the support and love freely given by my long-time friend and sometime artistic collaborator Leo Kay, whose humour, wise words and generosity has truly carried me through some tumultuous moments during my doctoral study. He too has caught me on the precipice many times. We all have unfinished business and witnessing his evolving process(es) of fermentation is truly amazing and inspiring.

Love and thanks go to my sister Michelle who has always and unfalteringly been there to support me throughout…

Finally, thanks, love and respect to my incredible daughters Jade and Arielle who put joy and soul into my life and life into perspective.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

This research explores the potentiality of hip hop dance theatre (HHDT) performers to challenge mainstream conventions in UK contemporary dance theatre, and how choreographic practice in this field might be practically re-configured and theoretically reconceptualised to evolve new performance-making practices, empower performers and challenge mainstream representations of HHDT. In this way I examine my concern to involve dancers more in HHDT processes and my interest as an artist in trying to bring this about through innovative strategies employed in the studio.

My initial research focused on the performance space of HHDT and what occurred within it, and I was primarily concerned with the physical space of the studio and performance setting. However, it very quickly became clear to me that multiple components were at play that influenced and defined these spaces, and that a dialogic interplay between sociocultural, political, economic, historical and temporal circumstances resonated within them. It is useful to note at the outset that I use 'space' as a hybrid, interchangeable term. In the first instance, I use it to refer to the studio and performance 'space' where the dance practice occurs. From this physical 'space' where the dance takes place comes the second conceptual use of the term, applied in discussions of the wider sociocultural and political 'space' in which dance products, performances and events circulate. I argue that this 'space' defines dancers' mobility, impacting on 'how they move' physically and politically in implicit and explicit ways. It is both an abstract and a concrete dialogic space. From these interrelated spatial dynamics arises the term 'metaspace', which I have applied throughout this research to signify a unified concept of 'space' as a complex domain of negotiation in HHDT.

The thesis investigates a hybrid choreographic methodology that emerged through the creation of one major performance, a series of exploratory micro projects and a final exposition of practice.[1] The large-scale performance piece entitled BLOCK was shown at Cambridge Junction Theatre (16 November 2015), University of Chichester (18 January 2016) and Manchester

[1] For film documentation of the performances use the hyper-links and galleries provided in the e-submission.

Contact Theatre (21 January 2016). Two exploratory micro projects followed BLOCK, the first taking place at Manchester Contact Theatre (2, 3 April 2017) and the second at Praxis Studios in London (5, 6, 7 May 2017). The final exposition of practice took place at the University of Chichester (8 January 2018).

The initial large-scale performance piece BLOCK engaged with multiple components to inform the creation of choreography, including a scenographer, a blogger and a commissioned writer. This project acted as a scoping exercise through which I observed and evaluated my conventional and habitual modes of working as an artist in the field of HHDT. It enabled me to reflect on my processes situated within the socioeconomic, political, historical, cultural and institutional context in which UK-based HHDT operates, and makers and performers work. This approach proposed and facilitated a number of outcomes and routes that were then unpicked, distilled and assessed through two subsequent micro projects.

2. Research Aims

This research examines what might be achieved choreographically with hip hop dancers in the space of UK dance theatre if the present structures that define HHDT are challenged. It does not attempt to claim authenticity for any of the current modes of hip hop practice, but instead searches for a new method of creating and presenting work. The research seeks to challenge existing theoretical, processual, technical and aesthetic paradigms informing the making and reception of HHDT. In doing so, it explores through theory and practice the potential of new methods and presentational formats to perform within and against institutional and presentational norms, and considers the role of what I call the choreodramaturg (see 'Key terminology', below) as an agent of change within these negotiations.[2]

3. Research Questions

- How might an understanding of institutional discourse inform the creation of a new processual and choreographic approach in HHDT?

[2] Agency in the context of the choreodramaturg might be defined and informed by a series of actions and interventions that produce a particular effect, brought about by a conscious engagement with the political narrative of the theatre as an institutionally prescribed domain in order to create a counter-narrative.

- How might choreodramaturgically led practices of turbulence, hindrance and displacement develop new choreographic outcomes for hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre?
- How might the 'unsteady state condition' be applied in practice to test the creative and performative potential for HHDT performers as they move from the improvised circle (cypher) to the formalised performance space?
- What new creative processes might emerge?

In the very early stages of my research, my intuition as a practitioner drew me towards the notion that the HHDT process and product was geared towards commodification and, as such, induced compliancy in its performers. I acknowledge that this may to some degree have been informed by my previous work as a mentor on Breakin' Convention's Open Arts Surgery artist development programme. Breakin' Convention is a Sadler's Wells project, which runs the annual International Festival of Hip Hop Dance Theatre in London and HHDT training programmes throughout the UK and more recently in locations such as Canada and America.[3] After working sporadically over three years in three different UK cities as a professional mentor on Breakin' Convention's emerging artist training programme Open Art Surgery, I began to recognise a formulaic, de-politicising process revealing itself (discussed in detail in chapter 2).

Subsequently, the space afforded by my doctoral research practice drew me once again to reflect on the prevalence of dominant formulaic patterns. I perceived these to have become embedded into the aesthetics, staging and movement of HHDT and questioned the impact of these formulas on the way in which HHDT moved. In response, I conceived my research project as a reflexive and reflective space of moving and thinking about HHDT making. This enabled me to unpick some of the conditions and drivers behind the evolution of homogenised HHDT products, and to reflect on some of its artistic and material processes, which appeared to enforce convention rather than break it. In this space of research, practice, movement and politics coincided, catching me somewhat offguard, as my thoughts and intentions going into my PhD had never been ostensibly political, at least not explicitly, in a pre-meditated way. Yet perhaps the nature and history of my work as a practitioner has etched an embodied labyrinth of implicit political intuitions into my way of working. Therefore, it is possible to acknowledge that the negotiation between the HHDT model and my work with hip hop dance artists in the space

[3] The name Breakin' Convention is trademarked and the intellectual property rights are registered to Sadler's Wells Trust Limited, Categories 25 and 41.

of UK dance theatre brought this tacit understanding to the surface, encouraging if not forcing it to seek a critical voice.

This thesis examines practice and theory, and references film material and images of projects that took place and formed the locus of my research. In the e-submission document the in-text hyper-links take the reader directly to the media source cited and galleries are provided for each research project phase.

4. Hip Hop Dance Theatre

The term hip hop theatre arose in the 1990s and early 2000s, referring to particular dance and theatre artists whose work had its roots in hip hop culture.[4] In the UK the genesis of this movement was led by three notable artists, Benji Reid, Jonzi D and Robert Hylton, all of whom emerged from the battle cyphers associated with hip hop's historical foundations.[5] These artists first encountered hip hop culture as teenagers in the early 1980s, as it passed from the USA into British culture via early videos such as *Buffalo Gals* (1984) and the film *Wild Style* (1983).[6] Here, graffiti art, concepts of wild style and breaking heralded a political, corporeal and cultural 'coming of age' through hip hop (Jonzi D, interview with the author, 14 December 2014). During the late 1970s, and early 1980s breaking was considered the purest form of hip hop dance, a belief that has long been held by many dancers (Chang, 2005). Viewed retrospectively, the physical demands of breaking emerging in the 1970s and 1980s appear far less complex than contemporary iterations, yet movements that are now considered as foundational to the form, such as top rock, freezes, backspins, six step and swipes, originated during this period (Chang, 2005). During the early decades of its development (1970s and early 1980s) older funk dance

---

[4] 'Hip-hop theatre', coined from inside the culture by Brooklyn-based poet Eisa Davis in *The Source* magazine in March 2000, 'has come to describe the work of a generation of artists who find themselves defined in a new category of both prospective opportunity and limitation' (Uno, 2004).

[5] Hip hop battle cyphers are improvised circles made up of spectators and participants. Traditionally battles took place between breakers or rappers (spoken word) to establish superiority among individuals or groups (crews).

[6] To view the videos *Buffalo Gals*(1984) and *Wild Style* (1983) please follow the links in the e-submission.

Wild Style (1983) is regarded as the first hip hop feature film, combining graffiti, music and breaking to inform a new emergent 'wild style'. Breaking or b-boying is the name given to the solo dance regarded as central to hip hop culture, involving acrobatics, upright dance steps such as top rock, and fast and intricate floor work such as six-step.

styles, such as locking and popping, became merged into hip hop dance as the scene expanded its territory and gained notoriety via an increasing media interest.

In the evolution of 21st century contemporary practice, rather than solely involving breaking, hip hop dance can be viewed as being made up of 'collective texts' (Huntingdon, 2007: 41), an expansive lexicon of movement styles that inform hybrid adaptations, collectively residing under the banner of hip hop dance. Locking, popping and, more recently, krump have been incorporated into this arena in the UK scene. Thomas DeFrantz describes hip hop dances as an 'aggressively layered array of shapes assumed by the dancing body […] an assertive angularity of body posture and an insistent virtuosic rhythmicity' (2004: 9), while Carla Stalling Huntington asserts that the freezes, spins and splits of the 1972 Waak dance style provided the basis for the development of early breaking (2007: 39). It is undeniable that the corporeal history of hip hop is highly complex and contested among practitioners and scholars alike. Ethnomusicologist Jonathan D. Williams argues that 'it is virtually impossible to clearly and succinctly define what authenticity means in the context of hip-hop' (2007: 4), while author and curator of the Cornell hip hop Collection, Johan Kugelber, puts it more succinctly, saying that the history of hip hop is a 'riddle wrapped inside an enigma stuffed inside a mystery hidden in a sock' (cited in Schloss, 2009: 125). However, I am not concerned with analysing these historical labyrinths in-depth but rather wish to examine emergent HHDT in contemporary practice.

The physical extremes achieved by today's breakers, where power moves and acrobatics play a large role, were not yet conceived of in the generative years of the UK hip hop theatre pioneers, but the dynamic and rhythmic physicality of their 'generational narrative' (Chang, 2005: 118) remains as powerful as any. The fluidity of being 'in the music' is a hallmark of Hylton and Reid's dancing, while Jonzi D achieves the same dynamics through the spoken word.[7] Interestingly, Reid, Jonzi D and Hylton went on to attend contemporary dance conservatoires in the 1990s while actively battling on the UK underground hip hop scene. Reid was a member of the renowned Broken Glass Crew from Manchester, and a world ranked European body-popping champion before attending the Northern School of Contemporary Dance. Hylton, hailing from North East England, attended the same conservatoire while battling on the UK

[7] 'Being in the music is a moment where one is in a meditative state. Where there is a oneness and a completeness there is no division between what is happening sonically and physically. The mind body and soul are free. Where time stops and one is linked to the universe of possibilities. Where everything you know, physically, spiritually and intellectually, is available in a nanosecond' (Reid, interview with the author, 6 March 2017).

underground hip hop dance scene, as a dancer with a focus on locking and popping. Meanwhile, Jonzi D was training at London School of Contemporary Dance while actively participating in the UK underground scene rapping as an MC. In the mid-1990s, feeling that hip hop's political voice had been 'hijacked by the music industry' (Jonzi D, interview with the author, 14 December 2014), these artists each sought to rediscover a political voice by 'combining music and the language of breaking and body popping with the theatricality of text and movement theatre' (Reid, interview with the author, 25 June 2015), to create hip hop theatre. The subject matter that inspired the work of these UK innovators was informed and shaped by issues of exclusion, displacement, discrimination and marginalisation. With maverick intentions, these pioneering artists entered the space of UK hip hop, contemporary dance and theatre to proclaim the arrival of a new form that was to leave a lasting and continuing legacy (this work is discussed in detail in chapter 2).

Following this early period in the form's evolution there has been a growing body of written work about hip hop theatre (Davis, 2006; Hoch, 2006; Hodges-Persley, 2015; Osborn, Kearney and Fogarty, 2015). These discussions extend to include the micro-expression of particular forms that emerge from hip hop theatre, for example McCarren (2013) and Shapiro (2004) discuss the French 'hip hop ballet' and 'hip hop concert dance', while Osumare discusses Afro-American artist Rennie Harris as a 'hip hop concert choreographer' (2009: 261). Yet little attention has been paid to the uniquely British form of HHDT, and no research to date has examined the UK institutional framework in which it has evolved, equally the impact of the institutional environment on the corporeal and aesthetic manifestation of the form has been under explored. Existing articles on HHDT focus on its institutional legitimisation (Prickett, 2013), while others briefly touch on it in wider debates about hip hop theatre and hip hop (Fogarty, 2011; Hoch, 2006; Uno, 2006).

In my research I distinguish clearly between hip hop theatre, as a generic term used to capture the work of hip hop artists making theatre around the globe, and the term HHDT, a 'terminological change' (Shapiro and Heinich, 2012: 5) instigated and adopted by Sadler's Wells Theatre in 2003 for the launch of their project Breakin' Convention International Festival of Hip Hop Dance Theatre. The project's artistic director, Jonzi D (David Jones), chose the name HHDT to differentiate the work from hip hop theatre: 'because there's a focus on dance' as the

primary element when creating theatre (Jonzi D, interview with the author, 14 December 2014).[8] Therefore, I use the term HHDT to denote a form or brand that has emerged in the UK under the supervision of Sadler's Wells' project Breakin' Convention. Performance works such as ZooNation's *Into the Hoods: Remixed* (2016) and Avant Garde Dance's *RUSH* (2014) are pertinent and notable examples.

It is possible to argue that, since 2004, influences beyond the explicit realms of Sadler's Wells supervisory structures have contributed to the growth in popularity of HHDT. Here we might consider the surge in televised dance competitions, YouTube videos and dance for screen works which have included films by Barbican Theatre associate company and Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Company (NPO), Boy Blue. Boy Blue's 2013 show *Emancipation of Expressionism* became a set piece on the UK GCSE Dance syllabus in 2016, "the first hip hop dance theatre piece to be included" (Stendall, 2019). Here then, it might be concluded that these events have contributed to the popularity of HHDT. However, my thesis does not contest the popularity of HHDT but rather, it questions the commercially driven manifestations of the form that derive from these collective circumstances. I argue that the imperatives of the UK's cultural industry and its supervisory structures place HHDT in stasis rather than contributing to its development. Supporting this analysis, I have identified a patrimonial and legitimising network in HHDT (discussed in detail in chapter 2.6.), a circuit of ACE -funded organisations which have supported, mentored and funded the four HHDT NPO companies of which Boy Blue is a part. [9]

---

[8] 'If it was a hip hop theatre festival, then I'd balance out the influences in the theatre space' (Jonzi D, interview with the author, 14 December 2014).

[9] Another possible influence worth noting is Rennie Harris, who is described as a 'hip hop concert choreographer' (Osumare, 2009: 261). Harris' USA based company Puremovement toured the UK in 2001 with *Rome and Jewels*, a hip hop re-imagining of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet.* The show was produced and staged within the same structural framework I describe as problematic in the productions of companies like ZooNation*,* deploying virtuosic movement within a classic Western narrative. This suggests that a parallel theatrical structure was developing in the USA, in Harris' work at least.

5. Problematisation

Soon after Alistair Spalding was appointed artistic director of Sadler's Wells, he set out his clear intentions for the organisation, declaring, 'You've got the National Theatre for drama, English National Opera for opera and I want Sadler's Wells to perform the same function for contemporary dance' (Higgins, 2005). These words, invoking concepts of monolithic national and artistic values in the UK high arts continuum, heralded the rise of Sadler's Wells Theatre to a position as one of the UK's prominent cultural and artistic gatekeepers for contemporary dance. The funding of these gatekeeping institutions is directly linked to Conservative government prerogatives, which are explicitly 'increasing investment to organisations that produce and present art of international significance, and that also contribute to tourism and the local economy' (Hill, 2014).

It can be argued that these artistic policies, driven by the corporate economisation of the arts, produce a simulacrum of culture and democracy. Here, I draw on Jean Baudrillard's (1994) notion of simulacra as simulations of reality, to infer a situation in which divergent cultures are being driven out of London by dominant economic factors linked to gentrification. In the place of these displaced communities and cultural manifestations arises a manufactured version of multiculturalism, neatly packaged and tourist friendly. This simulacrum arises from a dialogic relationship between dominant forces that drive London's development, urbanisation, cultural industry ambitions and multinational capitalism ranking among them. These strategies are evident in new developments such as the East Bank Cultural District, which I discuss in chapter two. Furthermore, government-driven artistic policies appear to have a symbiotic relationship with a rapidly gentrifying London, raising concerns for artists making work in the UK. This not only impacts on the artists' basic economic survival in London but also creates an environment where the little funding that is available is increasingly linked to supervisory demands and legitimising frameworks aimed at capitalisation and cultural tourism.

My practice research focuses on one of these enclaves, hip hop dancers in the space of UK contemporary dance theatre. Many of these artists, such as Christina Dionysopoulou, have expressed growing concern and frustration towards a system that proposes a meritocracy based on national economic growth rather than the artistic voice.[10] It is a system that

[10] Christina has been involved in HHDT since her early work with Lee Griffiths' The Company (2014). She has created and performed her work rooted in HHDT and performed with London-based company Far From the Norm.

jeopardises free artistic expression in the UK by explicitly tying public arts money to non-artistic governmental concerns.

The London-based hip hop dance artists' collective Artists4Artists, headed by Joseph Toonga and Lee Griffiths, was formed in late 2016 to debate and strategise against these prevailing conditions. Artists4Artists was striving for greater autonomy rather than having to rely on the precarious support of Breakin' Convention, which they felt focused too much on the work of international, rather than national, HHDT artists. Yet by the close of 2018, the work of Artists4Artists had in my opinion shifted towards being a model of human capital, industry-driven programme of activities, and in doing so drifted away from the collective's initial independent, artistically driven agenda. Funded primarily by Arts Council England (ACE) and describing themselves as part of the UK dance industry, in 2018 Artists4Artists organised workshops such as Identity, Ideas, Industry and Dance + Industry. Additionally, they offered boot camps (intensive workshops for emerging and young dancers) to upskill 'hip hop creatives with artistic and business skills needed in and out of the studio'. As I suggest in later chapters, such output-based agendas can be linked to ACE funding and wider dialogic creative and cultural industry prerogatives.

I argue that HHDT today is under the influence of creative and cultural industry conditions, thereby becoming a commodity that is, in its ascendancy, part of the UK creative economy (McRobbie, 2016). This perspective is informed by debates on the industrialisation of UK arts stemming from New Labour's (1997–2010) cultural policies, when Jen Harvie suggested that cultural commodification risks 'limit[ing] the right to artistic expression to those who can make it economically productive' (2005: 23). I believe this limiting of artistic expression has an impact on the movement(s) of hip hop dancers in UK dance theatre, as there is an expectation and delineation of how they should move, stylistically and aesthetically on stage, as bodies in the studio and as workers and bodies in the economic and capital system of the UK dance industry. The hegemonic supervision of artists working in HHDT ensures that long-established notions of what hip hop dance is, adhering to archetypes of high energy synchronised movements and acrobatics, are perpetuated via interconnected elements including mentorships, funding strategies and state-led commodification of arts and culture. These processes have an impact

on the agency[11] and mobility[12] of artists working in the HHDT mould and are connected to the wider processes of gentrification[13] and 'culturfication'[14] (a neologism for the manufacture of culture) that presently permeate London's sociocultural, political and artistic landscape.

Sadler's Wells is an institution that, while purporting to embrace progressive politics, is 'halted by a contrary spirit of conservatism (saturated with strategic nostalgia)' (Gotman, 2015: 67). I argue that this nostalgic identity extends through the corporeal and artistic supervision of HHDT via the Breakin' Convention project, where artists' training programmes reiterate successful tropes associated with the institution's historic foundations. These motifs can presently be identified in the two dominant iterations of the HHDT form, both of which maintain the fourth wall end-on staging paradigm, which has long defined the institutions of British dance and theatre.[15] The first of these is exemplified by productions such as ZooNation's (2016/17) *Into the Hoods: Remixed* and Boy Blue Entertainment's *The Five and the Prophecy of Prana* (2015). Both employ staging aesthetics 'structured around a series of set pieces or visual punch lines, flourishes of physical bravado that require [as in pantomime] a vocal response' (Logan, 2014). This approach follows long-established models of white Western theatre and dance performance, and it is possible to draw comparisons with aspects of 19th-century melodramas, pantomimes, spectacle plays and story ballets. Similarly, and demonstratively, it uses narratives

---

[11] Human agency is an often-used term in academic writing and linguistic and socio-cultural anthropologist Laura Ahearn notes that its meaning varies greatly depending on the context of use (2000: 12). In my research I find Ahearn's definition of agency as 'the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act' (2001: 28) a useful anchor point.

[12] I use mobility to refer to movement in the physical sense of dancing, and to refer to artists' contextual relationship with the UK's sociocultural and political environment in which they move.

[13] 'Gentrification is a form of socio-spatial urban development wherein working class or lower-income residential neighbourhoods are transformed into middle-class residential or commercial neighbourhoods, resulting in the displacement and geographical reshuffling of existing residents' (Deobhakta, 2014: 1).

[14] Culturfication is a neologism used on some online discussions to mean becoming cultured. However, I use culturfication to mean a corporate strategy, linked to globalisation that produces and manufactures culture as a financial commodity. This product is closely linked to notions of cultural and financial capital aimed at tourism and international markets. It is a homogenous product designed to control and replace the diverse (vernacular) cultural sites that it consumes. Used in this way, culturfication echoes aspects of Peter K. Fallon's (1991) notion of the 'Disneyfication of society' (Fallon in Kehoe, 1991: 373).

[15] The fourth wall is a theatre term referring to 'the imaginary line, or wall, between the actors on the stage and the audience' (Del Seamonds, 1996).

that illustrate a simplified moral universe via stock characters, presented in a series of short declamatory scenes (Brooks, 1996).

The emphasis in this type of work is placed on short routines that focus on displays of physical virtuosity, constructed through montages that piece together fragmented images, synchronised routines and musical cut-ups (edits that use short sections from a selection of songs to punctuate shifts in routines). I argue that this style of performance employs a flattened and linear presentation of hip hop dance on stage, and there is much to be found in common with the production values of West End musical theatre. This is clearly illustrated in the work of major UK HHDT companies ZooNation and Boy Blue, which draw heavily on the formulaic West End equation of 'catchy music in a popular style […] spoken dialogue, dance sequences, stage spectacles and magnificent costumes […] all held together by the plot' (BBC, 2014).

The second dominant iteration of HHDT, evident in the work of London-based companies such as Just Us Dance Theatre and Far From The Norm, navigates a different route, employing movement and choreographic strategies that might be aligned more closely to common staging aesthetics and movement vocabularies witnessed within postmodern, contemporary dance works. Here, via a system of artistic supervision, the HHDT choreographers and dancers are drawn towards assimilating the styles of the celebrated contemporary dance choreographers whom they encounter through mentorships. Examples include the 'all too familiar Hofesh Shechter trope of simian loping' (Norman, 2015) incorporated into Lee Griffiths' and Botis Seva's work, and the Jonathan Burrows-esque hands in Kwame Asafo-Adjei's work following their mentoring by these two key artists.

Funding streams for emerging hip hop dance artists in the UK are increasingly tied to allocated mentorships with high-profile postmodern contemporary dance practitioners. For instance, Sadler's Wells consistently uses its own associate artists such as Jasmin Vardimon, Hofesh Shechter and Jonathan Burrows (director of the Sadler's Wells Summer University)[16] to deliver

[16] 'Summer University offers 15 dance professionals the chance to take part in a four-year project meeting for two weeks each year to share work, hear talks, explore methodologies and philosophies of performance making and extend their own practice through self-study and focussed interventions' (Cross, 2018)

To date the programme demonstrates an endogamous approach to delivery. Past guest speakers include celebrated post-modern contemporary choreographer Liz Lerman, celebrated post-modern contemporary dance film-maker David Hinton, Tate Modern performance art curator Catherine Wood (who has worked extensively with celebrated

the intensive hip hop artists training workshop Back to the Lab, and as mentors linked to hip hop dance artists via other funding initiatives. With artistic funding becoming increasingly hard to secure in the UK, it is difficult for emerging hip hop dance artists to develop work without acquiescing to a system that guarantees funding and support through institutional collaborations. The creative tensions invoked by such an environment is a point which I will expand in chapter 2.

These collective circumstances and observations create a binary system, suggesting that the voice of hip hop dance artists is currently compromised by the UK creative industry's commodification of HHDT, thriving as it does on the replication of familiar white Western artistic traditions (hooks, 2006). This emphasis on industry, dance-art product and commodification rather than artistic potential creates a restrictive positionality that is exacerbated by the institutional frameworks that drive HHDT, imposing paradigms of staging and narrative to inform a formulaic, homogenised product.

I believe that HHDT has inherited traditional production values under the supervision of Sadler's Wells Theatre, which, dating back to the 18th century, is London's second oldest theatre. Its historical space echoes with the weight and gravitas of classical dance, theatre and contemporary dance performance. Experimental dramaturg André Lepecki (2015) suggests that we exercise caution towards these types of spaces, where empty stages are already filled with clichés inherited through the tried and tested tropes of dance, art and theatre. Interdisciplinary scholar Kélina Gotman argues that Sadler's Wells is a late capitalist institution focused on financial returns, a successful corporate brand that employs strategic marketing to be able to claim 'all of dance as its inheritance and heir' (Gotman, 2015: 69). Through laying a simultaneous claim to tradition and innovation, Sadler's Wells performs a 'dialectics at a standstill' (Gotman, 2015: 66), an illusion of innovation tethered to incumbent physical histories, marking it as an institution that produces stasis by 'showcasing something dance like, here, but back then' (Gotman, 2015: 69). Nurtured and defined by Sadler's Wells, HHDT is struggling to find its voice, confined by an institutional framework saturated with established ways of moving, 'techniques and gestures that seem to be readymade in order to serve a certain preconception of what a dance work […] should properly be' (Lepecki, 2015: 63).

---

post-modern contemporary dancers such as Wendy Houston and Jerome Bel and founder of the celebrated post-modern UK contemporary dance company the Featherstonehaughs, Frank Bock.

The transition of hip hop dance from a vernacular to a theatrical setting in the UK has been primarily orchestrated via the single dominant institution of Sadler's Wells, which, as Spalding predicted in 2005, is now recognised as the cultural centre for UK contemporary dance. The tropes and attitudes of this institution have permeated and coerced the development of hip hop dance artists making theatre. I suggest this is closely tied to considerations of HHDT as a corporate brand that pertains to ideas of financial and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2010), which is discussed detail in chapter 2.

6. Rationale

A practice-as-research strategy implies that I bring a certain knowledge and depth of practice to this research investigation, and therefore it is useful to acknowledge the area(s) of embodied knowledge that I carry into this research and space. This provides a vital perspective by offering an insight into the route that guided me to the starting point of my research inquiry, and enables the reader to better understand how this professional, practitioner knowledge and experience hinders, guides, coerces, deceives and informs my research journey. Informed by Jane Desmond's suggestion that we 'can further our understandings of how social identities are signalled, formed, and negotiated through bodily movement' (1997: 29), I now propose to map my movement in the fields of dance, movement-based theatre and intercultural theatre, albeit briefly, so that the reader might better understand my position in relation to the research field.

I am a white male of working class origin, born in 1961, with genealogy rooted in Franco-Irish ancestry. For the past four decades I have been involved in popular (vernacular) dance forms via the UK northern soul scene and, since 1988, with capoeira.[17] Interestingly, hip hop dance practitioners have recently noted and acknowledged some similarities in form between breaking and northern soul dancing, though they emerged simultaneously on different continents and with no apparent connection. For example, Poe One, a leading b-boy and hip hop dance historian, often shows footage from the 1977 northern soul documentary *This England* in his

[17] 'Capoeira is a movement practice from Brazil that evades classification. It is movement to music, but it is not considered a dance form; it is an interaction between two people in front of an audience combining both rehearsed and improvised material, but it is not theatre; it is arguably a martial art, but there is little contact between the players. The players of capoeira or capoeiristas take turns in the roles of movers, musicians and observers. Capoeiristas call it a game, or jogo de capoeira, but in this game, there are no winners or losers, just players' (Höfling, 2006: 83). In 2001, I was awarded the level of professor by Mestre Sombra the head of Associação de Capoeira Senzala, Santos, Brazil.

workshops, to draw attention to these resemblances. As with northern soul dancing, the Afro-Brazilian dance and martial art form capoeira has been considered to have similar movement vocabulary as breaking, with elements such as the l-kick being evidenced in the capoeira roda (circle) long before it surfaced in the breaking cypher (circle). Furthermore, capoeira, as with breaking, is a form that is intimately bound by complex questions of sociocultural and political agency.

Aged 15 I became an indentured apprentice engineer, and on completing my 'time' I looked for a long-term escape via corporeal expression. I found this route through movement-based theatre. I trained and performed with implicitly political mentors at Bretton Hall College, Wakefield, and with Rena Mirecka (Grotowski Company), The Laboratory Theatre of Manipur, Volcano Theatre Company, Pan (intercultural) Projects and many others. During this time I have been a performer, director and choreographer, engaging with Western as well as non-Western corporeal practices. My training, performance and research has drawn me to work with elements of contemporary dance, somatic practice, corporeal mime, Butoh, Thang-Ta and Kabuki, and extensively with Capoeira Regional and Capoeira Angola. I have worked with many artists and students through workshop scenarios.

My exploration of theatre with hip hop dance artists in the UK began in 1997, and my work with Cambridge-based Dance Offensive has appeared on Breakin' Convention's main stage (Beneath Me Lies, 2011, and Pressure Drop Part II, 2010). Additionally, I have worked as an assistant to Breakin' Convention's Artistic Director Jonzi D, and as a mentor on Breakin' Convention's artist development programme Open Art Surgery (2013–2015). During this extended period of working with artists who were using elements of hip hop to explore theatre, I was drawn towards the idea that there was an innate latent potentiality to produce a new politicised dance theatre vocabulary that was yet to find its voice among this group. It was this initial premise that led towards my doctoral practice research and exploring the studio and performance space of HHDT, a space that I felt at the time, albeit in an embodied rather than conceptualised way, was coercive and homogenising in the context of the institutional framework that governed the form.

This brief history of my movement(s) demonstrates my involvement in a wide range of practice, and my ongoing engagement with the nexus between dance, theatre and movement, and the sociocultural and political negotiations that inhabit it. I now have an embodied understanding of how dance can provide a means of escapism and offer a sociopolitical voice to those who find it difficult to achieve it in other spheres. I now understand how the practices encompassed in my

dance and movement training have a shared ethos of collectivity and communitas, which have informed my sense of alliance and empathy with the experiences of hip hop dancers who collectively seek similar forms of communal exchange and communication through dance exchanges and training scenarios.

There is currently very little academic research into the emergence and potential of hip hop dance artists making theatre in the UK and extant writing on the subject is scarce. Any mainstream media reviews of HHDT are almost unanimously eulogistic and superficial in tone, lacking what critic Lyn Gardner (2011) describes as 'restraint, consideration, contextualisation and enough space to write meaningfully and thoughtfully about a show'.[18] By problematising these conditions, my research widens the critical discourse surrounding the form. This close examination of the conditions of production of HHDT seems even more urgent as hip hop gains currency not only in the creative industries sector but also as an area of study within the academy, engaging in an ever-deepening transaction with the UK institutional framework.

Hip hop is undoubtedly a growing field of academic study in the UK,[19] yet available literature is very US-centric, consisting of in-depth studies from socio-historical and ethno-musical perspectives (Chang, 2005; Forman and Neal et al, 2012). Dance-specific literature is also dominated by these same concerns (Hazzard-Donald, 2004; Huntington, 2007; Johnson, 2009). The UK popular dance scholar Laura Robinson rightly argues that 'U.K. hip hop dance culture' is one of the under-researched areas of academic study (2015). Furthermore, I posit that engaged research into the UK centric phenomenon of HHDT is currently under-represented in

---

[18] The following two examples illustrate this. First, Hoggard, writing for the *Evening Standard*, invokes the white Western art continuum via legitimised venues while summarising the event via a 'low art' comparison: 'It was fascinating to see how hip-hop has embraced elements of 'high art', while several spoken word pieces could easily have been staged at the Bush or Young Vic. […] At heart Breakin' Convention is a variety show. For the finale, Britain's Got Talent finalists Flawless stormed the stage with their firecracker pyrotechnics' (Hoggard, 2016).

Second, Rattrey wrote a review for the website I Am Hip Hop, London, which lacks the critical awareness that Breakin' Convention is not autonomous and is a Sadler's Wells Project. The review also critiques elitism, while proposing HHDT should follow the same path as ballet: 'Breakin' Convention broke down the usually stuffy and elitist doors of Sadler's Wells Theatre for its 13th year. […] Breakin' Convention is at the vanguard of hip hop culture, a cultural merging point between theatre and grass roots urban culture. I really hope hip hop dance theatre becomes a thing like going to the ballet' (Rattrey, 2016).

[19] The University of Cambridge, regarded by many as a world-class bastion of academic learning, now 'has a course in hip hop' (Butterworth, 2016) and held the International Hip Hop Studies Conference in June 2016.

the academic field, and more importantly for the purposes of my research inquiry, so too are hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre.

My practice research inquiry deals with a particular enclave of dance artists who come from different ethnic backgrounds, including white Caucasian, and their relationship to the institutional frameworks in which they move. The meta theme of this chapter derives from and focusses upon socio-economic precarity arising from gentrification processes as a unifying outcome and effect. This meta-theme implicitly contains multiple precarities including race and gender, yet, in the UK environment at least, socio-economic precarity is presently, and very rapidly, superseding and dominating the discourse. That is not to say that it is negating other expressions of precarity. However, this thesis focusses upon and unpicks the socio-economic environment in which HHDT moves and from which it emanated.[20]

My work is aligned with the 'new wave' of UK artists who use hip hop dance as a creative element when creating theatre, a group that includes Botis Seva, Lee Griffiths and Kwame Asafo-Adjei. These choreographers are, in my opinion, seeking greater autonomy from the HHDT machine, as demonstrated through their voices in this thesis. My work is therefore aligned with some of the ideas of a new generation of UK HHDT artists. It responds to an incipient movement within the UK, whose advocates have not yet quite found, or articulated, a methodology. My research responds to an embryonic feeling that something needs to change and presents a new methodological approach. This work is not at a tangent, but rather builds on something that is starting to emerge in HHDT in the UK. So, while being innovative the research also responds at a grass roots level to what is already happening in UK HHDT.

7. Key terminology

Throughout this thesis certain terms are employed to help describe some of the key ideas and concepts applied within and emerging from the research enquiry. This guide explains them, outlines how they are employed in this research, indicates where they are used in fields outside dance and performance studies, and notes where new terminology has arisen from the practice-as research study itself.

[20] For a detailed discussion of precarity and precariousness see Chapter 4, 2.1.

7.1. Choreodramaturg

The search for my identity within my creative process working with hip hop dancers led me to explore a hybrid role that I posit is best captured by the term 'choreodramaturg', an original term I have developed to delineate this composite role. Notably, I do not choreograph in the traditional sense of HHDT, where routines and steps are passed on by the choreographer to be drilled and synchronised by dancers. I do not function as a dramaturg in the traditional sense of forming a dialogical relationship with a choreographer to comment on the evolving work and the dance(ers). Rather, I draw on an embodied understanding of movement that aligns itself most closely with dramaturgical thinking when creating choreography. This role manifests itself in a processual approach to creating choreography, where task-based methods are introduced to test, disrupt and develop new ways of moving with the dancers (described in chapters 3 and 4). This involves a process of layering that calls on an interaction and disruption between various elements such as text, movement, subject material and scenography. This interaction and disruption question the choreographic and visual identity of HHDT.

While acknowledging Joana Nunes's original coining of the word choreodramaturgy[21] in 1995, I have chosen simply to fuse the words choreographer and dramaturg to describe a hybrid role as it emerged in my research practice. Calling on my embodied knowledge as a movement-based ensemble theatre practitioner I collaborated with the dancers in this research project to create new choreographic outcomes. Therefore, I apply the noun choreodramaturg to signify my role as the navigator of the labyrinthine pathways of the collaborative choreographic process. By removing the construction of the specialist choreographer or choreographer as 'expert' (Butterworth, 2009), I am challenging traditional conceptions of the dramaturg as a secondary figure: one who does not make direct decisions or statements, but instead supports the primary figure of the choreographer in their work (Trencsényi, 2015). In the context of my research, However, the dramaturg becomes the primary figure, working directly with the dancers in a devised process, creating movement by exploring political themes and employing dramaturgical task-based methods. This is, I suggest, a move away from choreography as it has been applied until now in HHDT, moving towards an expansion of dance scholar Joanne Butterworth's (2009)

[21] Artist and educator Joana Nunes originally coined the term 'choreodramaturgia' (which translates into English as 'choreodramaturgy') in 1995, using it to describe a specific field of thought within a Brazilian ethnographic context, in which movements in space are signified through their cultural identifications.

Didactic-Democratic Spectrum Model of choreographic roles, foregrounding dramaturgical processes while questioning the explicit politics of the institutional space (Appendix 1.1.).

I did consider that the term choreopoliticaldramaturg might better hint at the complexity and explicit political discourse that the role purports, but settled on the shorter choreodramaturg for reasons of conciseness. The choreodramaturg proposes a useful package – a split personality – that relates the micro level of movement to the macro level of the world: a politicised dramaturg who choreographs, bringing the outside world into the space while questioning how the institution moves and defines movement. While Butterworth's spectrum captures the contemporary dance model it required further expansion in this research context in order to define the choreodramaturg in HHDT. Practically, there is a need for a devised approach to creating work (Oddey, 1996) and to explore a particular method of working in the studio that permeates the final performance (see chapters 3 and 4 for an expanded discussion).

7.2. (Im)mobility

In chapter 2 I introduce the term '(im)mobility' (Pellegrino, 2011: 157) to describe the notion of a dialogic interaction between corporeal and conceptual freedom and constraint. I employ the term to capture a negotiation between mobility and immobility that emerged from my practice research following the first large-scale performance work (BLOCK) in 2016. During the initial stages of my practice I employed notions of mobility and immobility in a somewhat binary and divided fashion to denote two separate states. However, through my practice-based research, I came to realise that the two states are intricately linked and inform each other; they are causal and reciprocal, interacting and negotiating with each other. Therefore, the term '(im)mobility' captures this continuous dialogue and contains both the conceptual and corporeal discourse that my research explores.

7.3. Metaspace and Metaspatial Knowledge

Often referred to as the 'fifth element' of hip hop, knowledge is not a new ideal or novel concept in hip hop culture. Yet in the British context at least, and after having interviewed and worked with UK artists, I argue that the broadly held conceptualisation of 'hip hop knowledge' centres on the *micro*-sociocultural and historical and temporal space of hip hop, rather than the *meta*-sociocultural, historical, temporal and political space that frames it. The micro lens recognises that possessing hip hop specific knowledge endows dancer artists with subcultural capital (Thornton, 1996: 163), which focuses specifically on hip hop legacy such as the role of founding figures and practitioners, the evolution of movements and the development of terminology. This

micro lens is bound to a canon that is subject to hip hop's hegemony, particularly notions of the four founding elements of b-boying (breaking), MCing (rapping), Graffiti and DJing.

I refer to the wider definition of knowledge in HHDT as 'metaspatial knowledge', a term that emerged from my research to denote critical thinking about the wider space (metaspace) in which HHDT circulates, a multidimensional space filled with its own histories, imbued with cultural imperatives, political agendas and the ghosts of movements past. This is, essentially, knowledge of the wider sociocultural, historical, economic and political space in which HHDT artists move, a space where multiple components such as funding, artistic supervision, gentrification and culturfication come together to impose a form of institutionally driven 'choreopolicing' (Lepecki, 2013). The term 'choreopolicing' was developed by experimental dramaturg and scholar André Lepecki, and in the context of my research denotes complex and interrelated structures of supervision, the purpose of which is to enforce 'a prechoreographed pattern of circulation, corporeality, and belonging' (2013: 20).

Using the concept of choreopolicing, it is possible to bind together ideas of *movement, freedom* and the *political* (Lepecki, 2013: 15, emphasis in the original), to argue that the institutional supervision of HHDT equates to the idea of artistic surveillance, aimed at regulating movement. By drawing on this and other conceptual debates, principally Foucault's (1997) ideas on 'domination' and Gotman's (2015) use of the Benjaminian concept of a 'dialectics at a standstill', I develop the argument that metaspatial knowledge (discussed in detail in chapter 2) leads to a clearer understanding of how the metaspace shapes HHDT performance. This argument is informed by considering how imposed and inherited preconceptions of dance conventions, forms and presentational and performative formats circulate in the arena of HHDT through the physical and political movement(s) of the dancers.

7.4. Multiple Entry Point Layering and Processual Accretion

'Multiple entry point layering and processual accretion' refers to a studio practice that was developed during the first large-scale research project entitled BLOCK (discussed in chapter 3). Entry points are defined in this research as studio tasks that disrupt habitual ways of making movement. The job of an entry point is to puncture, enter or disturb the dancers' fixed notions of how they should move, while challenging my fixed notions of what I do as a choreodramaturg. Multiple entry point layering emerged as an intrinsic practical method of destabilising dancers' movements when exploring the unsteady state condition. Multiple components such as text, scenography, movement scores and music were introduced gradually to the dancer(s) via specific tasks and subsequently switched about and disrupted once the dancer had become

competent or safe within the task(s). Hence, multiple entry point layering was employed as a strategy to destabilise the dancer's movements as the components interacted simultaneously, jostling for position and displacing each other.

In the final research phase, as the complexity of the praxis developed, I used the term 'processual accretion' to capture some of its intricacy and to acknowledge that the practice had moved beyond multiple entry point layering to a process that gradually accrued influences, ideas and stimuli from inside and outside the studio. After finding that the original term 'multiple entry point layering' was lacking and not sufficiently describing what I was doing, I decided to use 'processual accretion', as discussed in detail in chapter 4.

7.5 The Unsteady State Condition

Through the working processes of multiple entry point layering and processual accretion the choreodramaturg is positioned as a creator–facilitator, an agent of turbulence who instigates the 'unsteady state condition' out of which the dance emerges. The term 'unsteady state condition' is commonly used in the field of thermodynamics to describe the scientific principle of thermodynamic heat transfer in areas such as chemical and thermal engineering, where it is posited that the desirable 'steady state condition' cannot exist without the initial unsteady state condition when elements are in flux (White, Gilet and Alexander, 2002). Used as a metaphor, we might then view the steady state condition to signify a choreopoliced product, one that in HHDT is represented by the two dominant iterations of the form that I have previously discussed, wherein choreographic immobility is imposed through processes of supervision and mimesis. My research explores the possibility of a choreodramaturg constructing an unsteady state condition, and positioning dancers as the creators of the movement vocabulary that emerges from such conditions. This processual approach is unsteady in that it is largely improvised and not concerned with choreographic output in the traditional sense of the hip hop dance routines or physically demonstrative narratives that are associated with HHDT. The material emerging from the unsteady state condition is subsequently formed into a finalised performance work through negotiation with the choreodramaturg, who seeks and employs strategies to maintain the unsteady state condition in performance.

My inquiry examines the potentiality of the unsteady state condition from a studio-based perspective, and considers the impact of this approach more broadly in the field, as HHDT artists negotiate between the regulating structures and systems of the institutional setting. By deliberately pursuing and exploring methods of destabilisation in the studio, my praxis informs a process and product that are rendered unsteady through choice, as a means of both artistic

revolt and artistic creation. In this context, as opposed to a positive position of stability and security inferred by the term, I am asserting that steady state conditions are a negative force. I argue that such conditions compromise the potentiality of the per*form*ers and the *form* through strategies that are attached to notions of power and domination (Foucault, 1997), and that such an environment blockades potential technical and artistic transitions within the space. The steady state condition is closely linked to institutional and corporate strategies of marketisation and commodification, and I suggest that the processes and performance of HHDT are driven by, and bound within, these cultural and creative 'industry' structures.

7.6. Turbulence

This research project employed studio-based research to explore how some of the complex ideas discussed above might be challenged through practical interventions. To achieve this I deliberately sought out a rigorous strategy to displace and hinder my performance-making habits and rituals, as well as those of the dancers, captured through the notion of 'turbulence'. Challenging established paradigms of HHDT requires processual disruption and the concept of turbulence enabled me to problematise accepted modes of working in HHDT to facilitate change. Additionally, it challenges practitioners' modus operandi. Theatre practitioner and researcher Eugenio Barba argues that contrary to the image of disorder that it invokes, turbulence is in fact 'order in motion' (2000: 61). In the studio, this 'strategy of disorder' challenges and denies mimesis and clichéd illustration; moreover, it confronts individual and collective tropes that risk becoming nostalgic and burdensome in the research context. Barba came to describe a similar notion, through the term 'Disorder'. Using an upper case rather than lower case 'D', to avoid confusion with the disorder of undisciplined chaos, Barba writes that Disorder is 'the logic and rigour which provoke, the experience of bewilderment in me and the spectator' (2010: 17). Drawing from this idea of Disorder as a logical and rigorously invoked process, my practice explores 'reliable frameworks of turbulence' in the studio. This involved developing multiple tasks that were gradually built up to a point where the dancer could attempt to execute them simultaneously. For example, simultaneously delivering text, interacting with scenography and maintaining choreographed phrases while conveying subject material, instigated a corporeal struggle for the dancer as each element began to displace the other. My research inquiry employed strategies of turbulence to unpack habitual methods of working and sought to understand the dynamics, and communicate the impact of such conditions in relation to their potential influence on the physical outcomes of the work.

In the context of the studio I use the notion of turbulence as the struggle and messy exchange between materials and bodies, between the co-existing elements of subject material, movement, text, scenography, myself and the dancers. For example, this might involve the dancer struggling to maintain balance and choreographic intention atop a mattress (a destabilised scenographic setting), while simultaneously trying to deliver text and convey subject material (a process explored in detail in chapter 3).

In performance, a secondary iteration of turbulence arises between the work and its reception by the audience and these two stages of turbulence share a causal relationship: between studio and performance. This secondary iteration was encountered when the multiplicity of studio formulated elements collided with the presence of a live audience. As I describe in chapter 3, in this scenario, scenography, dancers, text, subject material and spectators hindered and displaced each other, invoking new choreographic outcomes that were marked by kinesthetic empathy, as discussed in chapter 3.[22]

8. Methodology

Within the paradigms of practice-based research, my methodology fits most aptly in the category of practice-as-research, in that the practice forms the nexus of a critical inquiry that explores my practitioner 'know how' through an iterative cycle of doing and critical reflection (Nelson, 2013). However, I find the term 'practice research', as conceived by scholar and practitioner Franziska Schroeder (2015), more precise in its acknowledgement that research emerges out of practice, and that practice leads and informs research. In my project, practice is the 'key method of inquiry' (Nelson, 2013: 8), and the research that emerges from it calls for a multidimensional approach, which reflects on the 'doing' by developing a theoretical framework that is stable and rigorous, yet reflexive and expansive. Working towards clarity and the recognition that practice is equitable to research, Schroeder calls for practitioners to abstain

---

[22] 'Kinesthesia' refers to 'sensations of movement and position', while 'empathy' can be seen as 'projecting oneself into the object of contemplation' (Reynolds and Reason, 2012: 8–19). The terms kinaesthesia and empathy were both coined in the 1880s, emerging from the fields of neuroscience and art respectively (Foster, 2011: 6–11) In her in-depth study of kinesthetic empathy, Susan Leigh Foster raises concerns about the emergence of the two concepts running in parallel with British responses to, and evaluations of, colonialism. Foster argues that a particular application of the concepts facilitated a means of justifying the differing of others and 'like the term choreography, they were mobilised, in part, to rationalise operations of exclusion and othering' (2011: 11). While I acknowledge this point, it is beyond the scope of my practice research project to elaborate further.

from using the 'as' in practice-as-research, arguing that it reflects an apologetic notion of practice, framing practice 'as *if*' it might somehow equate to research, therefore elevating research over practice (2015: 3).

My methodological approach begins in the studio in collaboration with dancers. We explore a devising process that employs task-based methods to create material. Within these exercises I adjust through a process of embodied reflection, which engages with the research task in relation to the dancers' responses and their personal orientation towards the task and to the emergent moments of movement. It is a process of being in the moment and working reflexively, drawing on tacit impulses and intuitions and allowing space to navigate possible new routes within the unfolding action, challenging and testing it in the process.

At this generative stage of movement exploration, I am drawing on 'knowledge that arises through handling materials in practice' (Schroeder,2015: 346). From this stage of 'doing', provocations, problems, confusion and moments of insight arise in implicit and explicit manners. For example, through restricting the movement vocabulary of one of the dancers in the BLOCK project, I noted a change in the intensity and density of his performance. To develop this I edited down his original improvisation to just a few movements. This choreographic material involved jabbing, punching, tensing and popping actions, which I considered to be linked to the subject of gentrification: destabilisation, loss of security, social loss, imbalance, relocation and displacement. This editorial pathway supported the development of movement that was contained and concentrated, veering between mobility and immobility, displacing the dancer's urge to make more movements, which is an opposite approach to the norm in HHDT. Additionally, I stood in close proximity to the dancer, and in doing so contributed to the enclosed intensity of the edited pathway. Through this process the dancer's movement became charged, and I could feel the movement material blend with the subject material as it inhabited a visceral element in the space. After the project was completed I read the dancer's studio journal for the day in question, and found that he had been highly frustrated at 'not being allowed to dance more'. I reflected that turbulence is a phenomenon invoked through a notion of frustrated labour, which when combined with the subject material that the dancer was inhabiting found a powerful outlet via the limited movement vocabulary of the 'pop' and the 'jab'.[23] Furthermore, the visceral

[23] The 'pop' uses a quick contraction and relaxation of various muscles to create a jerking effect in the body. It can be concentrated to specific body parts, such as arms, legs and chest. Pops can vary in dynamic and intensity and stronger pops involve the lower and upper body working simultaneously. In my studio work, the 'jab' often extends

sensation that I felt while being near the dancer unveiled ideas of kinesthetic empathy. This practical experience led me to reflect that a spectator can exchange energy in an intimate way with a dancer, a reciprocal kinesthetic and empathetic dialogue that is instigated through close proximity between the two (Foster, 2011: 129).

This example demonstrates how practical inquiry facilitates critical reflection, enabling me to unpack what might be described as the 'messy intuitiveness' of my studio practice. This process is informed by an evolving theoretical framework that draws on cultural theory (Foucault, 1991, 1997, 2002; Lepecki, 2013; Soja, 1996), dramaturgy (Barba and Barba, 2000, 2010; Profeta, 2015; Trencsényi, 2015), hip hop dance theory (Chang, 2006; Davis, 2006; Huntington, 2007; Neil and Forman, 2004; Uno, 2004), contemporary dance theory (Butterworth, 2009; Foster, 2011; Osterweis, 2014), performance politics (Dodds, 2011; Harvie, 2005; Martin, 1998) and artists' journals (including my own). In this research I also draw on interviews I conducted with a range of UK HHDT practitioners, as a key means of bringing their voices into the research project.

From this iterative cycle of doing and thinking new questions reveal themselves, generating revisions and reformations of the original problem that emerged from the studio practice. These provocations led me to the studio once again to seek further insights and possible resolutions: to practise my way within them, and out of them. Through this methodology the conceptual framework of the research becomes stronger and more malleable as the practice unearths new knowledge that informs understandings and conceptualisations of the theoretical material. This new knowledge allowed me to develop new and newly informed routes of inquiry to pursue and reflect on further. The perpetual questioning of my process through this iterative cycle, while searching for a clear method of 'articulating the doing and thinking that led to specific outcome[s]' (Schroeder, 2015: 351), defines my research as 'practice-as-research', or taking Schroeder's preferable and resolute stance, 'practice research'.

---

from the initial contraction of the pop and culminates in an extension of the arm through to the hand in a dynamic jabbing movement. The jab may also work independently of the pop, calling on tension in the arm muscles to achieve the jabbing motion.

9. Outline of Thesis

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces the research aims and questions followed by a detailed discussion of the emergence of hip hop dance theatre in the UK. The problematisation of current hip hop dance theatre practices is introduced and the practice research rationale is presented, wherein I position myself as a practitioner within the practice research framework. The definition of key terminology that arises throughout the thesis is articulated followed by a discussion of the methodological approach that the research undertakes.

Chapter 2 Moving Politically: Metaspatial Knowledge and the Institutional Framework

Chapter 2 introduces the concept of the 'metaspace' as a theoretical framework to examine the wider sociocultural, historical, economic and political space in which HHDT is produced. The chapter interrogates, and explicitly politicises, complex relationships and negotiations that impact on the choreographic outputs of HHDT artists working within a metaspace defined by a culture of supervision. In doing so, the writing develops a notion of spatiality that is closely linked to gentrification and cultural industry outputs in the UK. This lens is applied and developed in the following two chapters through a detailed discussion of studio responses that challenge the dominant supervisory conditions chapter 2 describes

Chapter 3 The Unsteady State Condition

Chapter 3 discusses BLOCK, the initial, large-scale practice research project. The role of the *choreodramaturg* in the evolving praxis is examined and notions of choreographic fixity in HHDT are challenged by exploring turbulence as a processual tool. Emerging from these practical explorations, a dialogic relationship between the processual components, cypher scenography, multiple entry-point layering of corporeal tasks, perspective, proximity, agency, (im)mobility and kinesthetic empathy is presented. The idea of the unsteady state condition, constituted through the relationship between these processual components, emerges as an overall theme in the chapter and in doing so a new notion of virtuosity is examined.

Chapter 4 Process(ing) and Protest(ing) in the Metaspace of HHDT

Chapter 4 presents the final practice research phase that emerged from reflections on the BLOCK project, comprising of two micro-projects and a final exposition. Through the articulation

of an iterative cycle of praxis, the evolution of the unsteady state condition is presented in relation to ideas of precarity. The role of the choreodramaturg as architect of the unsteady state condition is developed through a discussion of processual accretion, a complex choreographic tool that houses metaspatial thinking and doing. The culmination of the practice research is presented through a discussion of the final exposition of practice, wherein ideas of processing and protesting the metaspace of hip hop dance theatre are shared and articulated.

Conclusion

The concluding chapter summarises the key points, returns to the research questions and points towards future research avenues. Highlighting the choreodramaturg's role in the development of metaspatial knowledge and the unsteady state condition as processual tools, it proposes possible future impacts, extending beyond hip hop dance theatre to related fields such as human geography, cultural theory and social activism.

Chapter 2

Moving Politically: Metaspatial Knowledge and the Institutional Framework

1. Introduction

This chapter develops the idea of the metaspace introduced in chapter 1 as a construct that comprises the wider sociocultural, historical, economic and political space in which HHDT artists move. I develop the discussion of movement, freedom and spatial politics by considering national artistic practices and argue that HHDT artists are confined by the metaspace of UK dance theatre. I discuss HHDT artist supervision by looking at ideas of choreopolitics and choreopolicing (Lepecki, 2013). In doing so I examine institutional strategies of artistic governance in the UK in relation to HHDT. The discussion weaves together multiple components and entities of governance as I perceive them in order to unpick, describe and contextualise the supervision of HHDT artists in a UK institutional setting. I examine interconnected supervisory structures, including Sadler's Wells' project Breakin' Convention, national portfolio organisation (NPO) funding models, the imperatives of cultural and creative industries, ACE prerogatives and artistic mentorships.[24] The purpose of this examination in my research inquiry is to help shape and define a spatial narrative in which to situate studio practice. I use the work of cultural and performance theorists (Foucault, 1997; Gotman, 2015; Lepecki, 2013, 2015) to support my analysis of metaspatial construction. Additionally, I draw on interviews with artists and this combined narrative sets the space to explore a conceptual and processual counter-narrative, which I examine through creative explorations. In doing so I propose another way of doing and thinking that differs from conventional HHDT choreographic practices.

My inquiry examines HHDT in a manner that interrogates, and explicitly politicises, the complex negotiations enacted in the space of UK dance theatre, and explores the impact of these

[24] Sadler's Wells is the hub for HHDT, which is supervised via Breakin' Convention, an NPO that sits within Sadler's Wells' funding stream (see chapter 1). Sadler's Wells instigates supervisory structures that are sanctioned and funded by ACE. These include allocated mentorships that demonstrate an endogamous strategic governance of HHDT in the UK. Therefore, I have chosen to scrutinise the interplay between these supervisory components.

discourses on the movement(s) of artists in this space.[25] Since my work with HHDT artists began in 1997, I have watched many HHDT shows, managed a successful dance company that worked with HHDT elements,[26] and worked as a HHDT artist mentor in the institutional framework that my research problematises. These experiences, supported by my studio project work and extensive interviews with hip hop dance artists, drew me to form a politicised notion of movement and space in the HHDT setting, leading me to conceive of a metaspatial discourse. My research implicitly invokes a critical debate surrounding HHDT by questioning the nature of its institutionally supervised production in the UK. I argue that this produces a homogenised and formulaic way of moving and making. This belief informs my studio practice and leads me to propose a conceptual and physical counter-narrative to dominant modes of making and moving in this performance realm.

To arrive at such a point in the research I examined the sociocultural and political UK arts landscape to identify essential components that I perceive to be imbricated with the manufacture of HHDT products. Through this process I developed the concept of 'metaspatial knowledge' as a term that facilitates a wider understanding of the sociocultural, historical, temporal, economic and political space that influences HHDT artists' practices and working protocols. In this chapter I develop the idea of such a metaspace as a key concept that enables me to consider how sociopolitical and historico-temporal discourses choreograph wider societal spaces, and how this permeates through the movement(s) of HHDT more broadly. To expand on the notion of a metaspatial narrative I draw on ideas of choreopolicing (Lepecki, 2013) and the work of Michel Foucault (1991, 1997) to identify notions of dominant supervisory behaviours in HHDT, which I believe limit artists' practices of economic and artistic freedom. In doing so this chapter addresses the following research questions:

- How do institutional frameworks shape HHDT practices in the UK?
- How can an understanding of this 'metaspace' inform a critical approach to HHDT in the UK?

---

[25] 'Discourse generally refers to a type of language associated with an institution, and includes the ideas and statements which express an institution's values. In Foucault's writings, it is used to describe individual acts of language, or 'language in action' – the ideas and statements that allow us to make sense of and 'see' things (Danaher, Schirato and Webb, 2000: x).

[26] For reviews of the company's work please follow the links in the e-portfolio.

2. Notions of Domination and (Im)mobility

It is important to avoid having a binary view of artists versus institutions. A hardened stance, as Goldman wrote, 'is the result of a reification of freedom as freedom is the necessity of not taking a hardened stance' (2010: 4). Furthermore, improvisation arises from these very circumstances and in reaction to 'various kinds of constraint' or 'tight spaces' (Goldman, 2010: 3). Similarly, Foucault suggested that practices of freedom are only afforded because of the existence of power relations and that power is productive and embedded in all human interactions, an inescapable truth where 'one is always 'inside' power' (1991: 95). In this sense, the seemingly oppositional notions of coercion and liberation propose a symbiotic relationship that informs an improvised 'practice of freedom', where power inevitably produces resistance.

In order to develop choreographic strategies that resist dominant processual structures in HHDT, I have found it necessary first to understand the full complexity of the constraints within which HHDT moves. I believe that the production of HHDT is linked to current governmental and ACE prerogatives aimed at strategies of cultural consumerism and that the apparatus maintaining this supervisory structure is built on a network of complex negotiations. Foucault's *dispositif* is useful in suggesting that these dialogic criteria operate implicitly as well as explicitly in HHDT and in doing so they exert a type of choreopolicing on the artists and the form.

With 'more than £56 million of arts funding […] cut by local councils in England since 2009' (Hutchinson, 2016) artistic funding is becoming increasingly difficult to secure in the UK. This is problematic for emerging artists and companies attempting to develop work without acquiescing to a system that guarantees funding and support through institutional collaboration. Furthermore, the arguments presented in this research support a viewpoint that those drawing up corporate agendas of institutions such as Sadler's Wells aim to maintain a steady state commodity that intentionally negates the unsteady state condition described in chapter 1. bell hooks (2006) suggests that such institutional settings see value only in art that mimics the white, Western artistic continuum, while dance and cultural scholar Randy Martin argues against hegemonic institutional practices, asserting the need to 'preserve a space where new formations germinate, to avoid assimilation and co-optation of the energies and demands that issue from social movements' (1998: 13). However, I claim that the preservation of a space for invention is prohibited for HHDT artists because of interlinked choreopolicing (Lepecki, 2013) strategies, which are discussed later in the chapter. I argue that artists operating in this domain are faced with a continual negotiation of agency and freedom of movement in a corporeal and

artistic sense through systems of supervised funding, mentorships, emerging artist training programmes, and controlled access to performance spaces and events.

Operating within this climate, Sadler's Wells' promotion of HHDT is imbricated with agendas guided by ideas of socioeconomic governance. For example, funding structures such as the NPO strategy (discussed in detail later in the chapter) are closely linked to the apparatus of the state or what Foucault calls the *dispositif.*[27] Foucault asserts that the *dispositif* alludes to a dialogic relationship established between diverse elements including 'an ensemble of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws […] in short, the said as much as the unsaid' (1980: 194). The discourse of the arts in London increasingly focuses on cultural tourism. For example, the document *Take a Closer Look: A Cultural Tourism Vision for London 2015–2017* set out a strategy to develop an intimate dialogue between art and culture: dance and theatre are clearly highlighted, along with museums, exhibitions and other attractions, for their potential to offer authentic 'brag-able' experiences for cultural tourists (Mayor of London, 2015: 28).[28]

The new East Bank cultural district in Stratford, East London,[29] which is destined to open in 2022, includes a hip hop academy sited within a new Sadler's Wells outpost, and receives a special mention within the vision proposals. I suggest that these prerogatives, prescribed at a

---

[27] Foucault summarises the various forces that have an impact on institutionalised forms in the term *dispositif*: 'What I'm trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements' (Foucault, 1980: 194).

[28] Ryan Bukstein, chief cultural engineer at the Ace Hotel in Shoreditch, is quoted as saying: 'If harnessed in the right way, cultural tourism could offer huge long-term value to London and inspire and motivate more repeat travel across London. […] Most of our clientele are cultural tourists. Our whole brand is based upon this cultural exchange' (Mayor of London, 2015: 22).

[29] Originally called Olympicopolis, the name of the project changed in 2018 with Sadler's Wells new outpost becoming Sadler's Wells East. 'The line-up is completed with Sadler's Wells, designed by ODT [O'Donnell + Tuomey] as a purplish brick shed containing a 550-seat theatre and dance studios. It's topped with a sawtooth factory roofline, recalling the industrial history of the site. It is a consciously tough edifice to stand opposite the voluptuous curves of Zaha Hadid's aquatics centre and a ground-floor corner will be devoted to a community dance space, providing a shop window of cavorting bodies to lure people inside' (Wainwright, 2018). For more information follow the link in the e-submission.

national level, influence the development of HHDT when it is supervised to produce a clearly defined product (discussed in this chapter). This situation is not entirely new. Writing in the late 1990s, a professor of tourism management, Howard Hughes, wrote about tourism's effect on theatre, warning that the dominance of West End musicals might inhibit 'the stimulation and survival of a more diverse, adventurous and innovative theatrical scene and of creative artistic talent' (1998: 445). Hughes discusses the standardised musical format that dominates the West End and which familiarises audiences with the product via the marketing of celebrated plots, composers and producers, making the product accessible to international audiences (1998: 449). However, he argues that to achieve this 'both the tourist and arts industries have standardised their products, making them safe and predictable' (1998: 446). In this chapter I illustrate how this premise applies to HHDT, supported by funding strategies and supervisory structures.

In HHDT practices, pedagogical hierarchies can be seen at play through mentoring and supervisory schemes such as the Bonnie Bird mentorship programme and Back to the Lab – a two-week intensive programme run by Sadler's Wells Breakin' Convention linking emerging HHDT artists with contemporary dance mentors. Over the past eight years, celebrated and commercially successful figures from the postmodern contemporary dance canon, such as Hofesh Shechter, Jonathan Burrows and Jasmin Vardimon, have dominated the mentorship and practical delivery of these schemes and intensives. I argue that the commercially proven processes and production values of these bankable artists can be seen to infiltrate HHDT through the promotion and perpetuation of linear or flattened modes of choreography and choreographic production. Flattened or linear choreography refers here to a generic HHDT movement style that adheres to the notion of the fourth wall end-on staging paradigm that dominates UK dance theatre. This can be seen in the work of many of the young emerging artists whose work I discuss in my research, primarily because that is the only model that they have been exposed to through mentorship programmes and venue specific support, which generally requires sharing work with an audience. Consequently, these artists choreograph to suit those spaces and the expectations of mentors, audience and funders.

I also argue that mentorship schemes for young emerging artists impose a verifiable form of legitimisation on the HHDT product. The supervisory process that dominates HHDT is saturated by the structures and strictures of institutionalised contemporary dance theatre and compromises the movement of hip hop dance artists on many levels: socio-culturally, politically, corporeally, aesthetically, technically and artistically. Foucault (1991) uses the example of

agricultural workers to illuminate the idea of technical supervision producing submissive behaviours and I posit that this model of an apprenticeship of techniques is at play as HHDT dances within the canon, rather than on it (Dodds, 2011).[30] The shift from the heuristic context of the vernacular towards the supervised spaces of the institution can therefore be considered problematic because of the inheritance of dominant processual paradigms that structure these spaces.

However, I am not proposing a simple state of domination or that political power is everywhere, where the hapless and helpless masses are subject to the will of the state without any recourse or means of pursuing freedom. My thinking about domination accords with Foucault's writing on freedom and control when he argues that freedom is not something that can be possessed, granted or assured by the state, rather it is a practice, involving the constant exercise of ethical self-governance among and by individuals, working towards states of non-domination (1997: 283). Within commonplace sociocultural relationships played out in everyday life, notions of power are at play, and while they may exist within political life, it is not exclusively so, and negotiations of power are reflected in a multiplicity of other contexts, including 'families [and] pedagogical relationships' (Foucault, 1997: 283). Moving under the supervision of the contemporary dance canon prescribes a notion of (im)mobility in HHDT that aligns with Foucault's (1997) discussion of power relations. While acknowledging the complexity of power relations, Foucault believed that domination is a key component in defining states of immobility by strategic blocking of negotiations, whether among individuals or social groups. In doing so, various means are called on, including economic and political, to enforce states of domination where 'it is certain that practices of freedom do not exist or exist only unilaterally or are extremely constrained and limited' (1997: 283).

Drawing on Foucault's ideas, I argue that a blocking of artistic negotiations is at play in the metaspace of HHDT (which I discuss in detail throughout this chapter). Supervision impacts on the corporeal freedom of hip hop dance artists seeking to create work in the space of UK dance theatre and Foucault's description of practices of freedom illuminates this debate, shedding light

[30] 'The modelling of the body produces a knowledge of the individual, the apprenticeship of the techniques induces modes of behaviour and the acquisition of skills is inextricably linked with the establishment of power relations; strong, skilled agricultural workers are produced; in this very work, provided it is technically supervised, submissive subjects are produced and a dependable body of knowledge built up about them' (Foucault, 1991: 294).

on the states of domination enacted and perpetuated in this field of dance practice and production.

The impact of dominant supervisory frameworks is ultimately revealed in the dance work performed on stage where it can be analysed through interrelated processual considerations, technique and aesthetics counting among them. I believe it is not by chance that the HHDT product mimics established performance formats and structures closely tied to the classical and postmodern contemporary dance canon. For example, one can witness a Vardimon-esque narrative style of storytelling, as exemplified in Park (2014) and Justitia (2013), in the work of HHDT companies such as BirdGang Dance Company, which have been mentored from Vardimon through the Sadler's Wells initiative Back to the Lab. In a promotional documentary for the 2012 inaugural Back to the Lab where Vardimon was the invited guest mentor, Jonzi D introduces her as a 'choreographic heavyweight in the contemporary dance world' and Vardimon describes how she asked the participants to 'leave hip hop out of the room for the first three days' of the workshop.[31] Alternatively, the postmodern quirkiness of Jonathan Burrows' choreographic focus on hands can be seen in the work of his mentee Kwame Asafo-Adjei, again through Burrows' lead engagement in the Back to the Lab programme (2014) and the Sadler's Wells Summer University (2015–2018).[32] It is this choreographic influence – or metaphoric sleight of hand, in which the corporeal image of hip hop dance represents innovation, yet simultaneously replicates and perpetuates long-established structural tropes – that defines Sadler's Wells' claim to be the UK's 'dance capital' (Gotman, 2015: 63).

Foucault's (1991, 1980) debates on the body's inscription with dialogues of constraint in relation to notions of incarceration and restriction offer a conceptual base from which to examine the impact of the corporeal supervision of HHDT artists via practices of institutional choreographic mentorship. Here, the institution's 'knowledge of the individual' (1991: 294), in this case the hip hop dance artist, is achieved by maintaining a corporeal status quo within UK contemporary dance. I believe it is informed by a wider debate linked to cultural industry prerogatives, commodification and the drive towards a steadied and reliable product.[33] In a discussion of the

---

[31] To watch the interview follow the link in the e-submission.

[32] For examples of this work see *Family Honour* (2016), choreographed by Asafo-Adjei, and *52 Portraits*, a Sadler's Wells project by Jonathan Burrows with Kwame Asafo-Adjei. Links are provided in the e-submission.

[33] Debord wrote, 'the economy transforms the world, but it transforms it into a world of the economy' (1994: 40). We can draw on this insight to consider the interplay of the local culture industry with the global. It proposes

apprenticeship of techniques, Foucault argues that 'submissive subjects are produced and a dependable body of knowledge built upon them' (1991: 294). Bearing witness to Foucault's idea of technical supervision is the metaspace of HHDT, where a dialogic relationship between sociocultural, economic, historico-temporal and political forces maintains a steady state artistic continuum. The technical supervision of HHDT artists is maintained via training programmes such as Back to the Lab, which can be seen as a form of artistic apprenticeship. In this case, the apprenticeship creates a situation where a dependable body (of knowledge) can be passed on to the young HHDT artists via contemporary dance luminaries. This apprenticeship structure is further secured and maintained via funding streams that are explicitly linked to celebrity choreographic mentors such as Hofesh Shechter and Jonathan Burrows, or through platforms like Breakin' Convention, which now demand a highly condensed product squeezed into a ten-minute performance slot. Under these conditions the movement(s) become submissive to funding criteria as well as to the choreographic protocols of institutionally maintained performance platforms, currently dominated by scratch style events such as those hosted by Artists4Artists and the annual Breakin' Convention International HHDT festival.

3. Choreopolicing, Supervision and Surveillance

HHDT's position in the strategic agenda of UK arts is determined not only by its multidimensional capital, but also by its deference to the British postmodern contemporary dance canon of which Sadler's Wells is an influential curator. In this respect, and in the wider spatial context I have discussed, the supervision of hip hop dance artists constitutes a type of 'choreopolicing' (Lepecki, 2013). Here, an analogy can be made with the surveillance mechanisms that dominate 21st century life. This analogy is informed by considering the wider context of societal policing, where surveillance cameras, cell phones, loyalty cards, credit cards, computer-linked location tracking systems and other devices track our movements: 'this condition, where no one is left alone for long, reveals how an apparent "freedom of movement" is under strict control thanks to constant surveillance' (2013: 15). By following this line of thought I am proposing that a similar form of choreopolicing exists in HHDT practice and production, whereby surveillance, represented by the watchful eye of funders, mentors, press reviewers and

interdependence between political, cultural and economic agendas and in doing so raises many concerns about the homogenisation of culture and the impact on diversity.

artistic curators, defines ‘pathways for circulation that are introjected as the only ones imaginable, the only ones deemed appropriate’ (2013: 15).

These conditions sit within the complex discourse of neoliberalism. Political theorist Wendy Brown is quick to point out that the term neoliberal is used in a wide variety of contexts to denote a wide range of constructs. Drawing on Foucault’ s understanding of neoliberalism, Brown sees it ‘as an order of normative reason that, when it becomes ascendant, takes shape as a governing rationality extending a specific formulation of economic values, practices, and metrics to every dimension of human life’ (2015: 30). In this thesis I suggest these choreopoliced pathways are driven by a product-based agenda (as outlined by ACE’s strategic funding of HHDT), which by its very nature compromises the political voice in favour of the outward shape, thereby promoting the performance of ‘spectacle as a condition of commodified society’ (Robinson, 2015: 3). Therefore, agreeing with Brown’s definition of neoliberalism, I argue that my practice research engages with the neoliberal project in relation to HHDT. In this context of neoliberal projections practioners of HHDT often favour form over content, promoting ‘a movement that, while moving, veers away from freedom’ (Lepecki, 2013: 20), implementing and maintaining stasis, and in doing so de-mobilising the political voice and the ability to move differently.

The direct choreopolicing of movement and artistic aesthetics in HHDT is consistently enacted through assigned mentorships, where artists who define the UK legacy of postmodern contemporary dance transmit legitimised ways of moving and working, such as the Shechter-like ‘Simian loping’ (Norman, 2015) or Burrowsesque use of hands (described in chapter 1). The dominant UK dance institutions and organisations, including funders, broker these programmes as part of a legitimising process that attempts to pass on perceived artistic capital via association. And, at the time of writing, Jonathan Burrows, Hofesh Shechter and Jasmin Vardimon rank among the dominant figures in the mentoring of HHDT artists. This suggests that the choreopolicing of HHDT resounds with echoes of cultural imperialism, perpetuating what writer bell hooks described over two decades ago as a ‘solely white Western artistic continuum [through a system that] sees and values only those aspects that mimic familiar white Western artistic traditions’ (2006: 29).

It is also worth noting some other players in the choreopolicing scenario. Producers play an increasingly pivotal role in the brokerage of UK funding streams and the development of artistic

legacies, including those of dance.[34] In addition, annual dance trade events such as the British Dance Edition and The British Council Showcase exert a heavy influence on the UK dance sector. Hylton calls this aspect of the dance metaspace, 'the business of the foyer', where reputations are made and where artists get a 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down'. He also notes the 'popcorn that they are putting out with a lot of the shows [and that] legacy is being written into this ecology [where] the funding sustains certain legacies' (interview with the author, 5 January 2016). Hip hop's hegemony is also implicated in the framework of choreopolicing, where concerns of authenticity often influence the production of formulaic work when outside producers exalt the four elements. This results in work that is clichéd and marked by processes of conformity that negatively impact future developments (Uno, 2006).[35]

4. Virtuosity

My work explicitly examines the discourse of virtuosity with hip hop dance artists as they intermingle their work with the hierarchical structures of UK contemporary dance theatre. In doing so it proposes resistance by challenging the paradigms of corporeal virtuosity that currently dominate those structures in flips and tricks, spectacular in execution but rendered as empty gestures. I argue that the complex dialogues that inhabit these relationships – from the micro-conversations with artists and administrators to the macro-engagements with civic or national bodies, systems and institutions, mentors and mentees – inform spaces of mobility that cannot exist without a counterpoint of immobility.

---

[34] Farooq Chaudhry has been pivotal in multi-millionaire choreographer Akram Khan's rise to fame. In a wider context beyond dance, Isabella Blow instigated the rise of iconic multi-millionaire fashion designer Alexander McQueen, while Charles Saatchi launched the career of multi-millionaire artist Damien Hirst. In 2019 London Studio Centre (LSC) is offering a new MA Dance Producing and Management course, which focuses on 'business models, governance and management structures for dance production'. Chaudhry and Katie Prince are among the chief advisers on the course and hip hop is grouped among the practices covered. It is interesting to note that on the LSC Theatre Dance BA programme, in years 1 and 2 hip hop is offered as a peripheral skills option along with Pilates, pointe work, tap dance and other skills. It is dropped in year 3 for students to concentrate on one of the main course key areas of classical ballet, contemporary dance, jazz theatre dance or music theatre. For more information on the LSC course follow link in the e-submission.

[35] The discourse around HHDT is imbricated with claims to authenticity that refer to the original foundation of the four elements; much has already been written on the histories surrounding the origins of these emblematic components of hip hop culture. See Banes, 1994; Chang, 2005; Fogarty, 2011, Chang, 2005 *et al.*

The fetishisation of what dance history scholar and black dance performance theorist Thomas DeFrantz calls ‘amplified hip hop style’, comprising externalised or spectacularised shapes and gestures and the ‘magnification of bodies moving in unison’ (2004: 15) often dominates the choreography and production of HHDT. DeFrantz wrote that replicating steps reproduces the external shape of the dance rather than ‘rearticulat[ing] the communicative desire which drives the dance’ (2004: 15). I suggest this idea of ‘re-articulation’ is compromised by the UK creative industry’s commodification of HHDT, prescribing particular forms of (im)mobility. This restrictive positionality is further exacerbated by the institutional frameworks that drive HHDT, imposing paradigms of staging and narrative to inform a homogenised product. Productions such as the UK tours of Boy Blue Entertainment’s The Five and the Prophecy of Prana (2015) and Avant Garde’s Fagin’s Twist (2017) illustrate these prerogatives as driving forces in the staging of UK HHDT (figures 2.1 and 2.2

Figure 2.1 The Five and the Prophecy of Prana (2015), by Blue Boy Entertainment

Figure 2.2 Fagin's Twist (2017), by Avant Garde Dance Company

Both productions employ fourth-wall-type staging and adopt predominantly isometric choreographic formations and synchronised (often high energy) routines, which are danced end on towards the audience. Here, it is possible to draw comparisons to aspects of 19th century story ballets, melodramas, pantomimes and spectacle plays: the productions employ narratives that illustrate a simplified moral universe via stock characters, presented in a series of short declamatory scenes (Brooks, 1996). Within this discourse I recognise a correspondence between mobility and immobility (Pellegrino, 2011: 3), in that the hypermobility demanded of the HHDT performers, denoted through the pursuit of physical excess, impacts on the artists' freedom of movement. The artists are expected and encouraged to move in a certain way, employing synchronised routines, high energy movements and cursory story lines that do not linger in silence or stillness. I suggest this sacrifices the dancers' potential conceptually and corporeally to explore the density and layering of the subject material in favour of filling the space with externalised, and often demonstrative, physical movements. When I discussed this idea in an interview with Asafo-Adjei in 2017 the artistic director of hip hop influenced dance company Spoken Movement, he noted, 'maybe it's the systematic form of being in a studio creating choreography, that systematic repetition of doing that has almost in a sense brainwashed you into believing you don't have to be disciplined to just be still at that moment'.

Asafo-Adjei's analysis was illustrated through my practical work with dancers, where I realised that mobility and a related notion of corporeal virtuosity were key concepts when considering HHDT's position in the UK dance theatre sector. This idea manifested itself as I observed the dancers struggle 'not' to dance, to resist the urge to fill the space with physical technique as they might have done in HHDT settings. By investigating the struggle between subject material, text, scenography and movement I led the dancers towards a concept of density and intensity, discovered and defined as each element interacted to justify its space within the context of what we were doing. Often this demanded stillness and silence. The turbulent encounter between these multiple components called on the dancers to recognise and respond to the unsteady state condition, as the space of creation. This corporeal conundrum called for the dancers to improvise and dance through constantly changing states of (im)mobility. I argue that this ability to reflexively do and not do, to wrestle with multiple layers of information garnered from different entry points, dialogically unified by the subject material yet corporeally combative in its navigation, is virtuosic. It is useful then for my research to consider virtuosity.

Virtuosity is a term of Italian origin that first appeared in the 19th century and is a complex idea influenced by multiple factors that determine and enforce its dominant contextual meaning. Music is a context I believe relates closely to dancers, and in *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Sir George Grove (1889) concluded that virtuosity is a 'display for its own sake [that indulged ability of the virtuoso] at the expense of the meaning of the composer' (Grove in Cvejic, 2016: 1). At the start of the 20th century, J. Burk related virtuosity to physical excess, comparing the fetishisation of the extreme and practised contortions of vaudevillian acrobats where success is measured by the amount of applause they receive, and a similar fetishisation of skill among concert hall musicians and audiences. However, he wrote, 'in the more pretentious world of concert-halls' they call these artists 'virtuosi' and their skill 'technique', wherein it falls under the banner of high art and culture (1918: 282). Burk, like Grove, notes that all too often the obsession with technique fostered by the public and critics alike results in the neglect of 'impulse', which in my research I relate to notions of corporeal reflexivity. Burk suggested that virtuosity dates to a time when musicians and acrobats 'were on the same social level and had severally to contort themselves, and exhibit skill when bidden' (1918: 284) to attract patronage. Similarly, I argue that venues such as Sadler's Wells, and perhaps contemporary dance in general, maintain a historical fetishisation of technique and that HHDT, when supervised under these conditions, follows suit.

As an example of the historical fetishisation of technique, Alistair Spalding CBE, the artistic director of Sadler's Wells Theatre, uses language that invokes the familiar gaze of an imperialist artistic tradition bound to notions of virtuosity.[36] In an article for the *Financial Times*, Spalding identified HHDT as 'arguably the dance form of the future' [concluding that] 'in today's increasingly diversified dance world, it is likely that the next Nijinsky or Nureyev will not come from ballet but from hip-hop or tango' (2013). Spalding's words, bound with images of male virtuosi, demonstrate a tradition that Afro-American scholar bell hooks (2006) decries as oppressive by the very nature of its investment in canons linked to an aesthetic of white supremacy. The article received some provocative responses from *Financial Times* readers, for example:

> I am pleased that the 'serious' end of culture and dance in the UK takes up modern music, but I have my doubts that hip hop is the way to go for ballet. What seems like agility can when looked at more closely seem a lot clumsier than ballet might require, and crucially, hip hop artists lack the years of discipline and training needed for ballet. Nor do I wish to see ballet politicised. Whatever next? Swan Lake with machine guns?
>
> (Lucinda, 13 July 2013, in Spalding, 2013)

Lucinda's declamation contains the essence of many of the problems that HHDT encounters in the UK high-art setting. Sadler's Wells counts high-profile multinational financial corporations such as Bloomberg, Cartier, Porsche and American Express among its corporate partners and this reflects the audience demographic that it aims to attract. I suggest that hip hop dance is still seen as 'other' by self-proclaimed dance aficionados like Lucinda, who show little understanding of the years of intense training demanded to achieve an elite level. Furthermore, her final comment reflects a sense of disdain that adds to the perception of HHDT as a low-art form.

Spalding is what Herrnstein Smith (1983) might call a 'power holding subject' in the UK contemporary dance scene and his perspectives derive from a particular reading of the virtuosic

---

[36] Human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell highlights the problematic nature of the honours system: 'The whole honours system stinks of class privilege and social snobbery. […] It is a relic of feudalism, with a taint of nepotism and corruption. […] In addition, too many honours have imperial titles, such as Member of the British Empire. The Empire is rightly long gone. When it existed, hundreds of millions of people in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Pacific were colonised by Britain, ruled against their will, enslaved, exploited as cheap labour and had their lands stripped of natural resources. This sordid imperial history is not something worthy of commemoration with honours such as MBEs, OBEs and CBEs' (Tatchell, 2016).

dancer. Spalding's perspective embraces 'a Eurocentric gaze that commodifies, appropriates and celebrates' (hooks, 2006), and the spectacular representation of HHDT adheres to this idea of virtuosity, as the performance of excess, going beyond the conceivable physical boundaries of a particular dance form. HHDT is actively encouraged, within the type of supervisory framework identified in my research, to pursue the performance of physical excess such as extreme acrobatics or fast synchronised routines and contortions. I argue that the focus on physical excess as a primary virtuosic component in HHDT limits the space of movement development and choreographic exploration for artists. Dance scholar and artist Ariel Osterweis illuminates similar complexities arguing that they inform the high-art versus low-art discourse of the virtuosic dancer, where conflicting paradigms of corporeal excess call for an examination of the cultural contexts of its production as 'dance cultures coalesce and intermingle' (2014: 55). My assertion of there being a metaspatial context for HHDT implicitly questions the discourse surrounding notions of virtuosity.

5. The Steady State Artistic Continuum: Dialectics at a Standstill

HHDT has grown primarily within the mono-institutional framework of Sadler's Wells, and therefore it is best understood as an institutionally supervised and legitimised form or brand that, through interrelated sociocultural, economic and political structures, is in danger of being authored by the state. The brand endorsement of a (non)critical media might also be included in the structure that maintains a steady state artistic continuum. Theatre critic Lynn Gardner's (2011) frustration with the continual stream of four and five star reviews that dance and theatre shows increasingly receive, minus any in-depth critique, perhaps demonstrates that critics' role in the UK creative arts sector is increasingly linked to the economy and tourism.[37] The increasingly passive voice of critics was highlighted by dance and theatre scholar Diana Theodores in 2002 when she called for critics to live in the struggle of the artist, and in living there ask 'what are we making? what are we seeing? what are we saying? what are we reading? How *are* we collaborating in the production of meaning? […] critical dialogue has to invite tough questions, has to live in the struggle' (2002) On a micro level, my research resonates with Theodores' words, yet it also moves beyond the context of her critique to direct similar questions towards the metaspace of HHDT production in the UK. In doing so it

[37] After 35 years of writing for them, Lyn Gardner was dropped by the *Guardian* newspaper in March 2017. Mark Shenton, writing for *The Stage*, said, 'Pulling Lyn Gardner's blog is another nail in the coffin of arts journalism' (2017).

recognises a connection between the metaspace and movements of HHDT, both corporeally and aesthetically. To examine these intimate relationships more closely my research led me to unpick the discourse surrounding HHDT and Sadler's Wells, the institution from which it emerged under that banner in 2004.

The term 'collective texts' (Huntington, 2007: 41) best captures the eclecticism of what appears on the stage of the Breakin' Convention during its annual International Festival of HHDT, and over the years it has hosted, among other things, poppers, lockers, house dancers, breakers, lindy-hoppers, flexing, dancehall and risqué burlesque hip hop cabaret.[38] The project has been recognised by the national press and through major funding initiatives as the key developer of HHDT, and Breakin' Convention's influence extends far beyond the yearly festival with a programme that includes artist mentorship, national and international tours, platforms for sharing work in progress and school-based courses.

Breakin' Convention is a registered trademark of Sadler's Wells Trust Limited and the project is funded by ACE through an award given to Sadler's Wells Theatre: the 'money is ring-fenced, so Sadler's Wells can only spend that money on Breakin' Convention stuff, but ultimately it's given to Sadler's Wells' (Jonzi D, interview with the author, 14 December 2014).[39] The project can thus be seen as an ACE NPO that sits within Sadler's Wells. We might also note that ACE governmental partners include the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and the Department for Education, which openly share priorities and formal working arrangements with the BBC and the British Council (Arts Council England, 2013: 15). I believe the endogamous nature of these relationships and their collective political and economic agenda is problematic

[38] In her examination of meanings in hip hop dance, Professor of Marketing and Management Carla Stalling Huntington introduces the term 'collective texts' to describe how hip hop dance is made up of many hundreds of what she calls 'rap dances' (2007: 41).

[39] Intellectual property rights cover 'Organising, arranging and staging dance festivals and live dance exhibitions, including hip hop dance theatre; booking agencies for dance festivals and theatre tickets; management of dance and theatre festivals; production of entertainment shows featuring dancers and live performers; organising workshops, lectures and demonstrations on hip hop dance theatre; provision of dance classes; publication of printed matter relating to all the aforesaid services; information and advisory services relating to the aforesaid services' (Patent Office, 2016).

for the arts[40] and shows how UK arts discourse is imbricated with complex dialogues of constraint and liberation; HHDT cannot be excluded from these concerns.

The Arts Council's channelling of support through a Sadler's Wells Theatre NPO project sets the stage for Breakin' Convention to be heavily institutionally driven rather than solely an autonomous organisation. Consequently, Breakin' Convention and HHDT are implicated in the workings of Sadler's Wells, which impacts on their artistic expression in particular ways. The NPO strategy is highly contentious, extending across the UK with the aim of centralising the governance of the arts around major national organisations, 'increasing investment to organisations that produce and present art of international significance, and that also contribute to tourism and the local economy' (Hill, 2014).

Important questions arise regarding what artistic, political and cultural compromises are demanded from and made for artists to remain in a funding and mentorship cycle that is dictated by the financialisation of culture in London. This appraisal of artistic work based on economically driven outcomes bears out Jen Harvie's suggestion that the industrialisation of the arts compromises democratic expression' (2005: 9). As UK hip hop theatre pioneer Benji Reid observes, this policy essentially means that artistic work 'is now seen as a product, and you have to have something that sells […] it must be packaged and marketed within a box that an audience recognises' (interview with the author, 25 June 2015). I argue that the NPO strategy jeopardises free artistic expression in the UK by explicitly tying public money to governmental concerns and proposing a meritocracy based on national economic growth rather than the artistic voice. This strategic funding framework has an effect on artists and art forms, including the Breakin' Convention project and HHDT, forcing arts managers to make artistic compromises when applying for funds in order to match the criteria of national strategic arts funding. Furthermore, quadrennial funding reviews and cuts discipline NPO projects that stray from the contractual demands imposed by the Arts Council England's investment, though it might be presumed that sitting within the embrace of one of the dominant national artistic institutions greatly strengthens the chances of longevity for the Breakin' Convention project. But, as Jonzi D points out, the project's position at Sadler's Wells is not secure and is subject to 'continual negotiation' (interview with the author, 14 December 2014). I suggest that this 'continual

[40] For instance, in an article for the Guardian website, British author and political activist Owen Jones accused the BBC of being politically biased and 'stacked full of rightwingers' (2014).

negotiation' encompasses a continual compromise imposed by the HHDT brand and its financial and cultural capital values (Bourdieu, 2010).

While working as a mentor for Breakin' Convention's Open Art Surgery artist development programme (2013-2015), I witnessed artists receive instructions from another mentor to 'put more dance in', an instruction that I thought related to the product of HHDT rather than what was needed to portray the subject material of the pieces, resulting in a case of form over content. To contextualise this critique, there is now an explicit connection between the annually run artist training programmes Back to the Lab and Open Art Surgery, and having work programmed for the main stage of the international festival.

Until 2010, the process was open to all artists (including those without any connection to Breakin' Convention's artist training programmes) via an audition where pieces of varying lengths could be submitted for consideration. This was the case for my company, Dance Offensive, which showed a piece of 17 minutes in length on the main stage at the festival in 2010. However, in 2011, a maximum set time of 10 minutes per piece was imposed, and I believe this has led to the work becoming homogenised and packed full of spectacularised movement designed to create maximum visual impact at the expense of artistic and corporeal exploration and development of alternative themes or concepts. Rather than creating work, and subsequently considering its suitability for staging at the festival or other venues, artists now manufacture short pieces of work with the specific intent of being chosen for the festival, defining the HHDT product as the maximum amount of movement that can be fitted into a 10-minute slot. This time restriction resonates with the notion of a performance of excess resulting in what scholar Laura Robinson denotes as 'the construction of "the surplus", which in itself aligns with post-Fordist labour practices and spectacle as a condition of commodified society' (2015: 3). Contributing to the reading of HHDT as a product or brand, since 2013 the festival main stage has been dominated by artists who have been mentored and supervised via internal artist training programmes. I attended Breakin' Convention festivals between 2011 and 2016, which confirmed my analysis, and consequently the work of UK companies has become increasingly homogenised and formulaic, due in no small part to the strategic link between process and product that Breakin' Convention propagates.

As an example of the strategic link at Sadler's Wells between process and product we might examine the decision by ACE in 2015 to award £1,000,000 to the partnership of HHDT company ZooNation and Sadler's Wells' project Breakin' Convention (both headed by Sadler's

Wells associate artists).[41] Almost half of this award supported a nationwide tour of ZooNation's show *Into the Hoods: Remixed* – a thinly disguised re-imagining of Sondheim's classic hit musical *Into the Woods* – promoting ZooNation's highly successful brand of West End musical hip hop theatre as a flagship for HHDT throughout the UK.[42] The remainder of the award supported a two-year nationwide tour of Breakin' Convention, to develop future professional HHDT artists. ZooNation has adopted a long-established and successful formula and applied it to its theatre, fusing popular classical Western narratives, West End musical staging and aesthetics, and corporeally virtuosic hip hop dance. The company consistently generates revenue for producers and jobs for performers, and attracts sell-out audiences. The original production of *Into the Hoods* (2006) was a successful and proven commodity, in every sense an archetypal spectacle, exemplifying the linking of hip hop dance with capitalist concerns.[43] ZooNation personifies the HHDT brand, and far from breaking any conventions represents the conventional formula of West End theatrical production: re-staging tried and tested narratives through demonstrative hip hop dance. ACE heralded the funding award with a press release that eulogised the partnership of Breakin' Convention and ZooNation as a showcase for 'some of the best HHDT in the world' (Wilson in Smith, 2015). The press release describes the show as the international epitome of HHDT while simultaneously highlighting its focus on the 'professional development of emerging hip hop dance talent and leaders across England'

---

[41] At the time of the funding award Alistair Spalding was sitting on the National Arts Council, which decides on funding awards to the dance sector including Sadler's Wells. Some commentators, including me, see this as a worrying conflict of interests. More recently Elisabeth Murdoch's appointment to the National Arts Council caused a backlash from arts professionals. For more information see link in e-submission.

[42] The Royal Opera House's promotional material announced: 'ZooNation creates irresistible narrative hip hop dance theatre. The company has won nationwide acclaim with its hugely popular shows, including *Into the Hoods* and *Some Like It Hip Hop*. Playfully drawing on everything from Shakespeare to Sondheim, Artistic Director Kate Prince and her company present brilliantly exuberant dance adventures overflowing with energy and wit' (2016).

[43] In ZooNation's case, the West End model is a long-established and trusted theatrical tradition that is potentially capable of providing a highly profitable revenue stream, as well as an influx of tourists who contribute to the local economy. Furthermore, emphasising this market potential, hip hop generates £10 billion a year worldwide through its various enterprises from music to Broadway theatre (Watson, 2018). A recent survey by Simmons Lathan Media Group (SLMG) identified a customer base of 45 million hip-hop consumers between the ages of 13 and 34, 80% of whom are white, with a spending power of $1 trillion. In the work of ZooNation we can see two strong economic models combined, commoditised hip hop and commoditised West End theatre, a formula that the UK culture and tourist industry strongly supports via supervised funding initiatives.

(2015). Here, metaspatial knowledge leads me to apply a choreopolitical lens to question whether the development of HHDT by Sadler's Wells is economically rather than artistically incentivised, primarily aimed at securing the capital growth of the brand or form.

The ZooNation product(s) resonates with Kélina Gotman's (2015) critique of Sadler's Wells and her reading of Walter Benjamin's (1999) concept of a dialectics at a standstill. She argues that by exploiting 'the twin concepts of tradition and innovation – dual watchwords for a politico-aesthetic regime wherein safety and security, on the one hand, and novelty, on the other, vie – [Sadler's Wells] performs a dialectics at a standstill' (2015: 66). Here, the dialectic between past and present achieves stasis, and despite claims to be innovative and radical, HHDT, through its mimicry of familiar Western choreographic traditions, stands still.

The maintaining of the status quo is revealed through the supervised movement(s) of HHDT and the image of HHDT clarifies and demonstrates Sadler's Wells traditional stance. This choreopolicing (Lepecki, 2013) of artists through the Sadler's Wells HHDT project 'suggests a progressive politics, halted by a contrary spirit of conservatism (saturated with strategic nostalgia) that ensures the temporary stability of financial returns' (Gotman, 2015: 67). I believe this continual negotiation of temporariness based on financial returns mutes the engaged sociopolitical voice of hip hop dance artists making work in the space of UK dance theatre. In this environment, complex questions of (im)mobility arise, wherein the established formulaic product halts progressive movement in not only choreographic terms, but a wider sense (because of rapid gentrification and its incumbent strategy of inflating the cost of living). Financial instability renders artists unable to move freely within the city itself. Through Gotman's reading of Benjamin, HHDT, as exemplified by ZooNation, might then be viewed as the 'image of the institution […] encapsulating "the now" rent through with history, legible as such in a particular moment' (2015: 66).

Through the careful management of tradition, accented with gestures towards innovation, the inherent volatility of the hip hop dance artist's voice has been stabilised via the HHDT product, and therefore might be viewed as the image of the institution legible in a 'particular movement'. In these circumstances, HHDT has much in common with the idea of the steady state condition, maintaining a dialectic that, through corporate driven necessity, hints towards an image of non-conformity and innovation, yet neuters the radical political voice, recognising that radicalism is an unpredictable and unstable asset.

The prescriptive nature of the lauded artistic practices inherent in UK contemporary dance and theatre exerts a heavy influence on HHDT, perpetuating the production of work that often relies

on watered down storylines that re-hash common Western theatre narratives and staging. Through this process, in many cases HHDT has been reduced to a kind of spectacle of tantalising performance elements, reminiscent of Guy Debord's assertion that the spectacle, 'express[es] the total practice of one particular economic and social formation: it is, so to speak, the formation's *agenda*' (1994: 15). Furthermore, concerns arise about the use of dominant Western theatrical narratives in HHDT and the legitimising nature of classic texts such as Sondheim, Dickens and Shakespeare: it 'sends a message that the hip-hop generation have no stories of its own and that in order for hip-hop to qualify as theatre it must attach itself to such certified texts' (Hoch in Prickett, 2013: 182).

In the context of HHDT, this analysis expands Lepecki's (2013) idea of choreopolicing, played out and enforced through high-level funding of projects that mimic the familiar traditions of the Western artistic continuum (hooks, 2006). Clearly, the *metaspace* of HHDT is filled with multiple intrigues and by managing funding strategies via their associate artists, Sadler's Wells is able to consolidate a firm link between product and process on a nationwide scale.

This argument is validated by the fact that the Breakin' Convention project has to date had little impact on the yearly programming of Sadler's Wells main stage full-length productions, beyond the annual May Day Bank Holiday slot, and occasional visiting international artists such as the French company Wang Ramirez, whose aesthetic invariably steers towards high-art contemporary dance. This, then, might be read as tokenistic and symptomatic of the marginalisation of HHDT to a yearly festival of fun, rather than a serious platform for emerging artists. But, while funding may demonstrate that ACE has shown commitment to the 'creative phenomenon that is Hip Hop culture, at a time when peace, love, unity, and fun is much needed' (Jonzi D in Dyke, 2015), I believe that the choreopolicing of artists via the HHDT brand compromises their artistic and political agency as well as their latent potential.

6. Movement and Metaspatial Knowledge

In presenting the argument that supervisory structures and dominant hierarchies nurture the HHDT product I am not suggesting a binary wherein artists must choose between the independent unfunded route to making work or the funded constraints of institutional supervision. Rather, I am arguing that increased metaspatial knowledge supports new ways of negotiating the territory of UK dance performance and production, which subsequently might lead towards new ways of moving and making. This is, essentially, *knowledge* of the wider sociocultural, historical, economic and political space in which HHDT artists move. And I

suggest that this could lead artists to a clearer understanding of how the environment of UK dance shapes their performance, and how imposed and inherited preconceptions of what dance should be circulate in this arena. What I am advocating therefore is a greater awareness for artists about the broader sociopolitical and economic conditions in which they move as a means of empowering them to move, make and perform differently.

HHDT is supervised through the spaces that define its circulation, and in my practice mobilisation is viewed as the act of moving away from the institutionally driven commodification of the form or brand. To resist commodification, Reid notes, 'one is forced to start thinking about [one's] box' (interview with the author, 25 June 2015), and in my research HHDT is the box that I examined in order to propose what postmodern political geographer and urban theorist Edward Soja (1996) describes as 'an-Other' way of doing things. By first identifying and conceptualising the metaspace of HHDT I found new ways of thinking and doing in my practice, to challenge the dominant structure imposed by the institutionalised form. In this way, a clearer understanding of agency and (im)mobility led me to consider alternative routes that resisted 'states of domination' (Foucault, 1997: 283), including those that I was transmitting through my practice (discussed further in chapters 3 and 4).

To further illustrate how *metaspatial knowledge* can inform a broader reading of artists' agency[44] and mobility, I closely examined the connection between London's East Bank cultural district and HHDT. In 2015, Sadler's Wells' influence on HHDT was further acknowledged and consolidated with the announcement of a second Sadler's Wells Theatre location, to be built on the site of the 2012 Olympic Stadium, as a part of the new 'Olympicopolis' cultural district, later re-named the East Bank. The building will sit alongside outposts of Washington DC's Smithsonian Museum, the V&A (Victoria and Albert Museum), London College of Fashion and the BBC, among others. It will house a choreographic school providing spaces for dance research, development and the production of new work, with the notable inclusion of the UK's first hip hop academy. However, as the academy will rely on the patrimony of both the state and Sadler's Wells Theatre, multiple anxieties present themselves, not least of which is that '[w]hen

[44] Human agency is an oft-used word in academic writing, and linguistic and sociocultural anthropologist Laura Ahearn notes that its meaning varies greatly depending on the context of its usage (2000, 12). For the context of my research I find Ahearn's definition of agency as 'the socioculturally mediated capacity to act' (2001, 28) a useful anchor point. This provisional definition recognises that, to some degree, sociocultural and political tensions inform all human actions and interactions.

art is blessed with public funding it is simultaneously cursed by the state's imperium' (Beech, 2015: 17). Here, once again, the funding does not grant artistic autonomy to UK HHDT artists, but instead includes funding allocated to, and administered by, Sadler's Wells (a gatekeeping institution)[45] as part of a strategically linked governmental programme, which I believe is aimed wholly at the capitalisation of the arts.[46]

For many people, the £1.3 billion project's inclusion of a hip hop academy is seen as a positive step towards recognising the talent and potential of HHDT, a cause for celebration as the state continues to legitimise hip hop through a dialogue of cultural inclusion and funding. Media coverage talks of the new cultural district providing a 'boost to culture and education' (Musa, 2017), where Sadler's Wells, including its hip hop academy, will establish London as a major dance centre. However, rather than the new hip hop academy being a benign force, I suggest that the sudden momentum to promote HHDT in the UK might be aimed at ticking 'of colour' and 'young' boxes to secure funding and build social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2010) for the institutions involved. Adding to this, these associations between institutions and HHDT raise questions about who gets to perform where and in what manner, what kinds of identities are being made, and the extent of what professor of contemporary theatre and performance Jen Harvie calls the 'profound and inescapable influence of government policy and practice in manufacturing these associations: in a continual rebranding of Britain, and particularly London, as a multi-cultural metropolis' (2005: 16).

People living in the London borough of Newham, the most ethnically diverse area in the UK, suffered mass evictions to make way for the Olympic Village.[47] Set against this backdrop the notion of rebranding appears implicit when I consider that the Olympic Games have been widely linked to gentrification: 'evict[ing] more than two million people in the past twenty years, [and making it] one of the top causes of displacement and real-estate inflation in the world' (Kumar,

---

[45] I use 'gatekeeping institution' to refer to one that administers funding from government bodies such as ACE to smaller projects such as Breakin' Convention, which receives funding as a Sadler's Wells NPO rather than as an independent organisation. This will apply to the proposed hip hop academy, which will be run under Sadler's Wells Trust rather than an independent organisation.

[46] Between 2016 and 2018 I submitted freedom of information requests to ACE, University of East London and the press office of Sadler's Wells to try to ascertain the structure and scope of the academy but none of these bodies expanded on the little information it provides to the public.

[47] For more information follow link in e-submission.

2012).[48] The East Bank vision systematically capitalises on these events by 'expanding the terrain of profitable activity' (2012), compounding the assumption of commentators such as writer and editor Alex Cocotas that this large-scale project's aim is economisation rather than revitalisation. Cocotas argues that the 'primary beneficiaries [are] cultural tourists, major property holders, and the egos of public officials' (2016: 6). Furthermore, at the time of writing (2019), the inclusion of affordable housing in East Bank was short of promised targets, causing many people, including architects and artists, to voice fears over gentrification, social cleansing and London's rapidly changing cultural landscape.

These worries are partially directed at the national arts institutions that will supervise the cultural district, with some suggesting that East Bank is displacing artists through a consumer-led gentrification of London, where 'the consumption of culture is driving the production of culture out of the city' (Heathcote, 2015). This argument, I suggest, implicates the national artistic institutions that will dominate the East Bank cultural district, in a context where they might be viewed as artistic gatekeepers, sustained by strategic policies of tourism and consumer-led artistic curation. The evolving discourse surrounding gentrification leads me to return to consider the hip hop academy that will be housed, governed and supervised by Sadler's Wells, a major player in the East Bank development, and to question HHDT's role in the ACE strategic vision for commodified dance.

Drawing on these perspectives I argue that the significance of this discourse extends beyond the movement of artists on stage, to their movement in the city of London. In the near future, many HHDT artists may not be able to subsist in London owing to the high costs of living, which are incompatible with freelance dancers wages, becoming immobilised or displaced by the forces of rapid gentrification and commoditisation. From my experience of working with these artists, I know that many are faced with rapidly escalating struggles for economic survival in the capital.[49] In this regard, the inclusion of a hip hop academy in an area that was cleared of lower

---

[48] 'Any reading of Olympic history reveals the true motives of each host city. It is the necessity to shock, to fast track the dispossession of the poor and marginalized as part of the larger machinations of capital accumulation. The architects of this plan need a spectacular show; a hegemonic device to reconfigure the rights, spatial relations and self-determination of the city's working class, to reconstitute for whom and for what purpose the city exists. Unlike any other event, the Olympics provide just that kind of opportunity' (Kumar, 2012).

[49] A hip hop dance artist whom I worked with on the BLOCK project (see chapter 3) noted in her journal: 'The issue of gentrification makes me question my future here in London and whether I will be able to get through all of these

income families and independent artists for the 2012 Olympic Games, and subsequently developed into a new cultural district, becomes problematic. Considering tightly controlled funding strategies, the apparent openness of the mainstream arts establishment to the cultural differences and new identities represented through HHDT appears questionable. I suggest that developing the East Bank in London is less a process aimed at protecting cultural differences than one of assimilation, which serves the mainstream arts establishment's imperial purposes, or 'the cultivation of a self-promoting and self-interested narrative of the metropolis as benignly tolerant of difference' (Harvie, 2005: 16). This notion seems prescient in relation to arguments over access, supervision and displacement implicated in the East Bank development. I believe the cultural district itself, while purported by the architects to 'intensify the urban grain and make the stadium and park feel more special' (Bevan, 2016), will remain an exclusive landmark of London's elite, including its elite artistic institutions.

In the context of the East Bank development political and economic immobilisation might therefore be said to impact on the physical mobility of hip hop dance artists in several ways. For example, the supervision by Sadler's Wells of the hip hop academy raises questions about dancers' artistic agency, while travel and rising living costs will limit their access to the area and consequently to artistic and developmental opportunities within it. This is a type of artistic and fiscal disciplining, which can be considered to contribute to dominant systems of coercion that seek to maintain the subordination of particular groups and particular modes of cultural production.

Until 2017 NPO funded hip hop dance companies were limited to Breakin' Convention and ZooNation (via Sadler's Wells) and 2Faced Dance Company, whose work has been described by the UK press as 'mixing hip-hop moves with contemporary dance […] at home with everything from street dance acrobatics to mooching contemporary steps' (Anderson, 2011).[50] However, in the 2017–2022 round of NPO funding 183 new companies were added, two of which specialise in HHDT. The first of these new hip hop dance NPOs was Boy Blue Entertainment whose artistic director Kenrick Sandy received an MBE in the 2017 honours list for services to dance and the community. It is worth noting that Sandy choreographed the hip hop sections of the 2012 Olympic Games opening ceremony and was involved in advisory

---

economic difficulties. […] I'm facing the reality of expensive rents, transportation, living costs' (Studio Journal, 9 October 2015).

[50] For more information follow the link in the e-submission.

discussions with the Sadler's Wells hip hop academy planning team. I therefore suggest that it is possible to perceive a link relating to the nurturing and legitimisation of chosen individuals through a network of allied organisations. The second NPO status was granted to Avant Garde Dance, whose artistic director Tony Adigun is one of the Work Place programme supported artists at the Place Theatre, London.[51] These examples of hip hop dance NPO companies illustrate the link between a network of supporting venues and organisations that collectively legitimise the work of selected individuals from the field of HHDT.

[51] The Place is home to London School of Contemporary Dance.

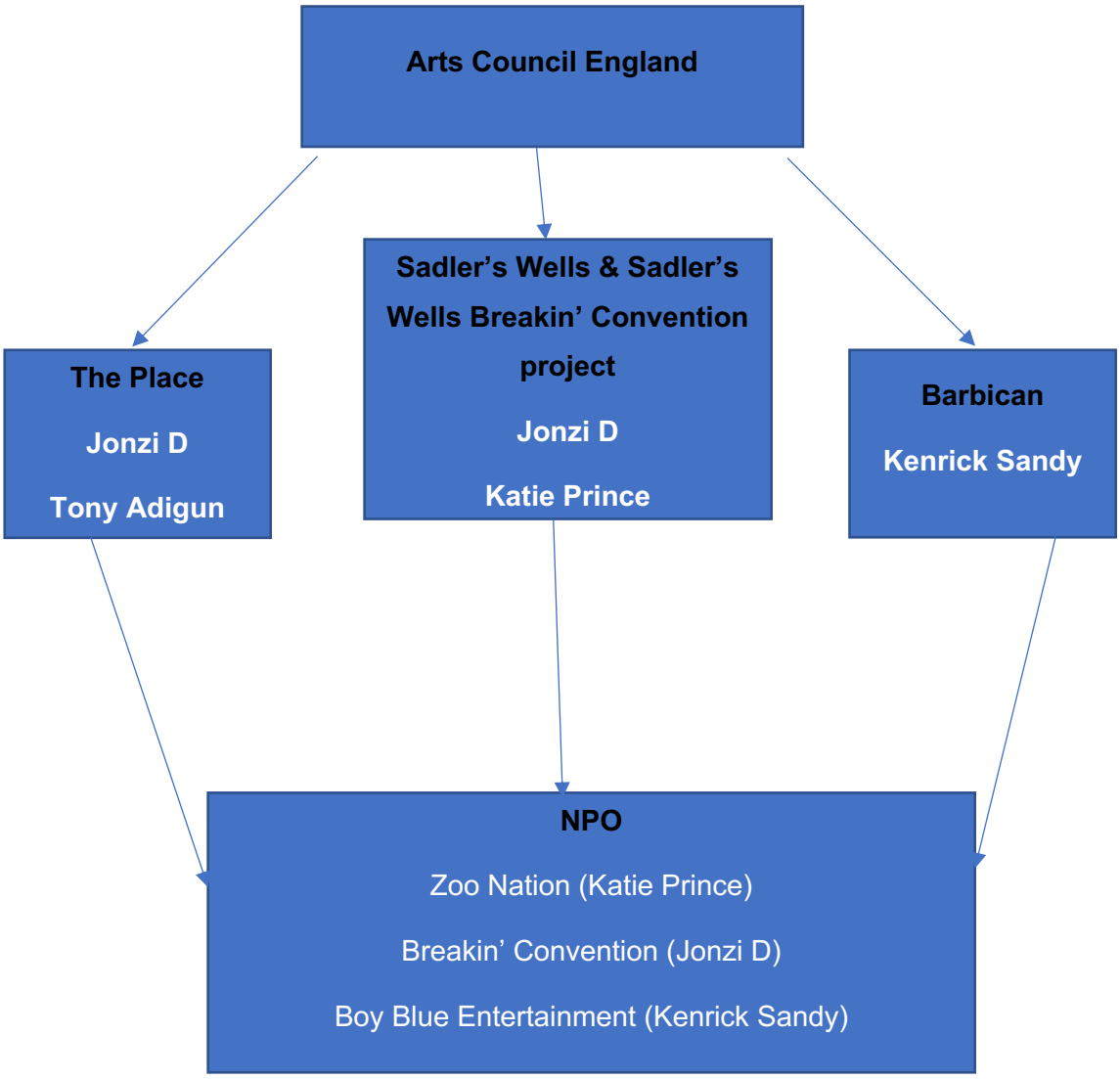


Figure 2.3 Patrimonial and legitimising networks in HHDT in 2019: a circuit of ACE-funded organisations which have supported, mentored and funded the four HHDT NPO companies

I argue that the promotion and perpetuation of a generic style of choreography that draws heavily on commercially successful Western dance and theatre archetypes can be identified through the patrimonial relationships that exist between organisations and companies. This heavily structured choreographic environment is problematic in that it affords little room to manoeuvre for emerging hip hop dance artists. I have noted through my research that the potential of such artists is quickly absorbed and assimilated by the canonical framework that the patrimonial network represents (Figure 2.3). These formulaic performance archetypes are

clearly demonstrated through choreographic and theatrical devices such as fourth wall proscenium staging and the re-working of classical narratives. Along with ZooNation's work, which I have already discussed, *Fagin's Twist* (2016) by London-based company Avant Garde[52] is another example, using a contemporary dance and hip hop mix that re-imagines Dickens' famous characters from *Oliver Twist*. Earlier in the chapter I discussed how the arts funding these NPO companies and artists receive is tied to the UK government's cultural tourism strategies. For HHDT this is distributed and supervised by organisations such as ACE, and supervised by ACE National Council in collaboration with institutions such as Sadler's Wells, the Barbican and the Place. Funding is only awarded to end user institutions such as dance companies if their managers agree to conform with policies that encourage tourism and efforts to boost of the local economy. However, tourism and economic gain are not traditionally allied to experimental work, so to obtain financial support from the state, NPO companies create work that maintains the steady artistic continuum – the HHDT developed by the five HHDT NPOs conforms with the West End theatre and postmodern contemporary dance continuum.

These examples illustrate how the funding of HHDT is intrinsically linked to political and economic mobilisation and the physical mobility of hip hop dancers in the space of UK dance theatre. In this environment, the HHDT corporeal aesthetic necessarily celebrates the performance of excess on the one hand – denoted by the extreme physical feats of the dancers – while on the other mimicking postmodern contemporary dance (see chapter 1). In this exchange, where artists conform to funders requirements, the possible exploration of what Edward Soja (1996) terms Thirdspace[53] and an-Other way of moving is compromised. By assimilating the movements of West End and contemporary dance, HHDT companies become marginalised from their original space and geographical context. Additionally, when arts funders consider one set of 'authorised movements' such as contemporary dance to be artistic, but another set of movements such as hip hop is not, the latter becomes immobilised within the 'space' of the theatre, controlling their migration and exploration of 'other'. Here it is possible to

---

[52] Avant Garde's artistic director and choreographer Tony Adigun is a Work Place artist at The Place in London (home of London School of Contemporary Dance) and was mentored by Akram Khan. *Fagin's Twist* is co-produced by The Place.

[53] Soja's concept of Thirdspace is discussed in detail in chapter 4. It is the ability to resist hegemonic conditions and resonates with Foucault's idea of Heterotopia, which Soja describes as 'dealing with the trialectic of space-power-knowledge' (Borch, 2002: 116).

draw on Pine and Kuhlke's work on dance geographies and their assertion that dancing bodies 'contort to specific sites where they are dancing the cultural codes that constrict what movements are acceptable' (2013: 207). In the case of HHDT the contortions are orchestrated by the corporeal codifications used by funding and producing organisations.

Arising from this discussion, there emerges a perceived support and celebration of the diversity of HHDT by the state, yet on close inspection funding appears limited and awarded to companies whose artists closely mimic many of the endorsed tropes and paradigms of UK contemporary dance and popular theatre. In doing so, state funding absorbs the potential of radical voices or departures, demanding routines, recognisable Western narratives such as Jack and the Beanstalk and Little Red Riding Hood and one-dimensional staging. That is not to say that the work of companies like ZooNation has no value, but to express concern that it consistently receives the bulk of funding for hip hop dance artists making work in the space of UK dance theatre. In other words, the dance artists outside the funding must inhabit the established and defined space that is demarcated via the successfully funded companies so they might successfully compete for future funding.

7. A Glimpse of the Nascent

To expand on the current discourse surrounding artists using elements of hip hop dance when creating dance theatre in the UK, and my research, I draw on artist interviews conducted between 2014 and 2017. The interview material allows me to clarify and expand the trajectory of my argument by illustrating the idea of a supervisory metaspatial narrative articulated by the experiences of artists who move within it as performers and makers.

In addition to the three pioneers of UK hip hop theatre discussed in chapter 1, I employ here interviews with three emerging artists, Botis Seva (Far From The Norm), Lee Griffiths (The Company) and Kwame Asafo-Adjei (Spoken Movement). In doing so, I facilitate a discourse with others about how to create a more democratic space of discussion. These artists are often branded by the creative and cultural industries as working in HHDT, though not without some resistance from the artists themselves, and they are searching for their artistic–political voice by exploring a hybrid approach to making theatre, which draws on hip hop dance as a central creative element.[54] By exploring themes such as white British hooligans and applying

[54] For examples of how the term HHDT is applied by Sadler's Wells follow the links in the e-submission

techniques such as African dance, circus skills, physical theatre and improvisation they create experimental work that challenges binary thinking, such as being cast as working in HHDT or hip hop theatre. Examples of this work include *Behind Every Man* (2016) by The Company (Lee Griffiths) and Spoken Movement's *Obibini* (2017)[55] (figures 2.4 and 2.5).

Figure 2.4 Behind Every Man

[55] *Behind Every Man* is a feminist piece that explores the pivotal and often unacknowledged role of women in society, while *Obibini* explores complex issues of identity within black culture.

Figure 2.5 Obibini

To date, these alternative voices remain underfunded. Griffiths halted the development of her company's work to co-ordinate Artists4Artists, which now appears to have assimilated an industry-driven agenda that mirrors that of Breakin' Convention, where upskilling and scratch performance outputs dominate the agenda. The scratch format – a mode of presenting work in process to elicit feedback – has evolved as the main output of HHDT artists owing to the minimal funding and time slots that platforms such as Breakin' Convention's International Festival and Artists4Artists scratch nights adopt. In these circumstances, HHDT artists are only able to create bite-size pieces, which barely touch the surface of their exploration,[56] continually repeating the process to produce new bite-size work that conforms with the demands of each new scratch platform. In this demanding and underfunded environment, where trackable and observable outputs dominate the funding exchange, artists are rarely afforded the opportunity to

[56] An example of how the institution shapes what the audience sees can be observed through notable changes in the time limit imposed on works presented on the Breakin' Convention festival's main stage. A maximum time limit of 10 minutes for pieces submitted for inclusion in the programme was introduced in 2011. Before this, artists could submit a piece of any reasonable length for consideration. Since 2011 the introduction of a limited time slot format has resulted in the emergence of a bespoke, homogenised product.

sit with or develop their ideas and work towards creating work of greater depth, complexity or length.

As an example of the constraints felt by the enclave of hip-hop-inspired dance artists who I examine and work with in my research, I would like to turn briefly to the London-based Artists4Artists network, which was launched in 2016 with the aim of 'addressing the lack of training, professional development and programming opportunities for UK hip hop dance artists, encouraging confidence, inclusion and innovation to develop the hip hop sector' (Griffiths, interview with the author, 19 June 2016). Among the panellists and choreographers at the three-day launch event were Kenrick Sandy (Boy Blue), Ivan Blackstock (formerly, BirdGang Dance Company), Joseph Toonga (Just Us Dance Theatre), Lee Griffiths, Yami Löfvenberg, Botis Seva, Robert Hylton and me. Despite often heated debates there was consensus that after 14 years of creating work UK hip hop dance artists have had no impact on the main stage programming of Sadler's Wells Theatre, and little in the wider scope of UK venues. The gathered artists felt marginalised by the long-term struggle to secure sustained support, arguing that funding was tokenistic.[57] Botis Seva's solo *Virtue* (2016), performed at Redbridge Drama Centre, London, as a part of the launch captured the flavour of the event. It was a furious, visceral and uncompromising indictment of the current climate in which these artists work. *Virtue* not only expressed the artists' collective frustration, but confronted and challenged their technical and aesthetic preconceptions of what is possible, demolishing the space in which it was performed, and the boxes in which Seva's work had been placed. The piece used very minimal moments of hip hop movements, made even more powerful as they became the release valve for the prolonged periods of intense caged stillness, which represented the enforced confinement of artists' creative needs and energy.

Yet, despite these glimpses of nascent, visceral expression, and Artists4Artists' collective call for artistic autonomy, space and more time to explore their artistic voices, the artists appear unwittingly to be following the same path they so vocally reject. For example, their intensive workshop programmes focus on upskilling for the industry and competing in the market place. I believe this focus on the final product rather than the process is problematic and

[57] The artists were concerned that Breakin' Convention now focused on developing international artists rather than home grown talent. The 2016 Breakin' Convention USA tour was raised as an example: the tour showcases Tentacle Tribe (Canada), Just Us (South Korea), Jane Sekonya-John (South Africa) and just two UK acts, Jonzi D and Pro-Motion.

perpetuates the corporate strategy invoked by ACE funding streams and institutions such as Sadler's Wells.

When I first interviewed Seva in 2015 he expressed the dichotomy faced by young artists who are offered support, which is dictated by the canonical structures of UK contemporary dance institutions, usually offered and awarded under the conditions of allocated mentorships. Seva was awarded the Bonnie Bird mentorship in 2015 and allocated world-renowned contemporary dance choreographer Hofesh Shechter as his mentor. The mentorship was brief but left a lasting impression on the way that Seva's work was subsequently received:

> There will be a section of my work and people will say, 'it feels a bit Hofesh' and I'm, like, ok cool, watch Hofesh's work again and watch my work again. Because people don't watch work they see movements, sometimes they see a movement and whatever they can relate it to, it then becomes Hofesh. […] Now, when I'm doing programmes, I never say I was mentored by Hofesh. The reason is because, when people see that, they think of Hofesh and when they watch my work and see something that may be similar they compare it to that.
>
> (Interview with Botis Seva, 6 June 2015)

Here, Seva is clearly aware of the coercive nature of working within the supervision of the institutional apparatus, what Foucault terms the *dispositif*, and he has taken practical steps to avoid being described through the comparative paradigms defined through monumental figures such as Shechter. Seva has continued to rise within the realms of cultural industry prerogatives while at the same time resisting the dominant paradigms associated with HHDT. His resistance is illustrated in this interview where he clearly asserts the need for more experimental work to access centre stage, saying, 'there needs to be much more, especially within the hip-hop theatre world. Even Sadler's Wells […] is very traditional in ballet and contemporary dance' (Williams, 2018). Seva and his contemporaries align themselves with the Artist4Artists network as a gesture of autonomy, attempting to break away from monopolistic grips on HHDT. Yet, Artists4Artists relies solely on ACE funding and has already been criticised from within, with many artists identifying emergent controlling hierarchies and dominant figures, such as Kenrick Sandy MBE and Ivan Blackstock, as supervising proceedings. These artists straddle the institutions that play a major role in developing the HHDT brand – Sadler's Wells, the Barbican and the Place – and while their artistic achievements cannot be ignored or underplayed, it must equally be recognised that they transmit the values and processes of this dominant spatial triptych through their work.

8. Conclusion

It is possible from these discussions to argue that the choreopolicing of HHDT employs the combined tactics of surveillance and supervision, displacing artists' energies from the legacy of the maverick thinkers who first defined the UK space of hip hop theatre. In these circumstances, the demobilisation of the political is enforced by the reproduction of legitimised norms, which in turn secures a space where new formations are not encouraged to germinate (Martin, 1998). Through such critiques, my research project led me to reassess the way I negotiate my work with hip hop dancers in the space of UK theatre dance. It prompted me to step away from a product-based agenda and edge towards a revised concept of spatiality: a radically open perspective encouraging a new way of spatial thinking, where choreography 'as a planned, dissensual, and nonpoliced disposition of motions and bodies becomes the condition of possibility for the political to emerge' (Lepecki, 2013: 22). This perspective, I believe, invokes the original ethos of hip hop culture as a reflexive political movement that dared to challenge the structure of the Western art canon.

The conceptual development of metaspatial knowledge explored in this chapter holds a mirror up to a range of HHDT contextual conditions and by doing so supports and facilitates the exploration of alternative processes that might lead towards a new way of moving with hip hop dancer artists in the space of UK theatre dance. In the next two chapters I discuss my practice research, which explores and challenges the complex metaspace that informs the choreopolitics of the moment, and the economic model that currently shapes HHDT. It reaches beyond the paradigms and tropes of the canonical framework of contemporary dance in the UK to address the choreopolicing strategies that national arts institutions perpetuate.

My practice research incorporated processes that move beyond the corporeal movements of the dancer in the space, to incorporate the metaspace in which they move. This strategy allowed me to return to the space of my practice with multiple provocations, which seemed essential when considering alternative choreographies. I approach this not as a binary of working either within or without the institution, but through continually developing metaspatial knowledge to inform 'an-Other' way of doing things (Soja, 1996: 61). In the following chapters I discuss the studio work that formed the core of my practice research. These projects enabled me to reflect on and define a methodological approach that seeks out turbulence and the unsteady state condition as essential components when creating processes that challenge the current state of movement in HHDT. These narratives contain my search for identity, my battle to explore,

challenge and discover what I do when I work with hip hop dancers in the space of UK theatre dance.

Chapter 3

The Unsteady State Condition

1. Introduction

This chapter presents an account of and reflection on the BLOCK project, a major practical studio exploration that I developed from October 2015 to January 2016 with professional UK HHDT artists Jordan James Douglas, Joshua Nash and Christina Dionysopoulou, and contemporary dancer Lisa Rowley.[58]

BLOCK was a devised project in which the dancers contributed ideas and input in response to key tasks and creative episodes, which I then orchestrated. I was responsible for shaping the structure and presentational format. This work featured within the overall research project as the first practice research output. Through this initial intensive working process, I discovered and encountered significant provocations and revelations, which when carried forward into subsequent practice research projects (discussed in chapter 4). This initial project in many ways operated as a 'scoping' project, which enabled me to examine my habitual working methods, acknowledge the limitations of my existing practice and challenge me to find new ways of invoking change.

During the BLOCK process, I identified key literature and practitioner-led approaches alongside selected key creative methods, which enabled me to define a clear methodology for the wider practice-led PhD project and to locate my work within a wider field. I considered Foucault's ideas on domination and a practice of freedom (1991 1997) and Eugenio and Judy Barba's (2000) concept of turbulence as a necessary dramaturgical force. In doing this, I could consider turbulence as a key component when creating a studio environment that explored Foucault's themes. Practically, I developed creative methods that instigated a sense of struggle on or within the dancers, invoking the need to improvise while trying to maintain a central score.

2. Project Outline

In this project I attempted to disrupt the HHDT form in its broadest sense, moving from the micro-form of movement choices, transitions and routes of entry to more macro-form concerns

[58] For film documentation of the BLOCK PROJECT see the gallery in the e-submission.

based around choreography, content and scenographic structures. I was not trying to destabilise the form solely by exploring movement, but through the wider implications of the scenographic influences and the setting of the movement in the space so that these combined elements might create another way of seeing HHDT. This practice might then facilitate re-writing these bodies through the unusual circumstances defined in the studio by practical concepts of hindrance, displacement and turbulence, bringing forth new choreographic hybrids through the unsteady state condition (described in chapter 1).

BLOCK was a 15-day studio project, and I assembled the company of collaborative artists under the banner of Dance-Dramaturgy-Turbulence (DDT), echoing the key components with which I entered the studio. The project took place in Manchester between October and November 2015, and I collaborated with four dancers, a writer and music composer, a scenographer and a blogger. As I unpicked the metaspatial framework of HHDT a politically charged context was emerging through my research, demonstrating a link between the gentrification of the city and the supervision of the arts.[59] Furthermore, in the case of HHDT artists this indicated a constrictive economic environment where access to space was problematic on several levels including movement in the city and, artistically, within the space of UK contemporary dance. Therefore, I decided that the subject theme of BLOCK would explore gentrification, so that I might further unpick the institutional discourse surrounding HHDT, and in doing so propose a processual alternative to the dominant supervisory framework. The subject material gave me significant and focused ideas that I wanted to test as aesthetic, metaphorical and physical components in the studio: destabilisation, security, loss of the familiar, balance, relocation, displacement.

The working title BLOCK, reflects elements of the theme: tower blocks, artistic blocks, physical blocks and the rehearsal schedule, which was in three-day blocks over five weekends, allowing for blocks of time between sessions to reflect on the process. The Arts Council funded BLOCK as a research and development project leading to public performances, the first of which took place on 16 November 2015 at Cambridge Junction. It was later shown at University of Chichester on 18 January 2016, and Manchester Contact Theatre on 21 January 2016.

---

[59] Ruth Glass coined the term ‘gentrification’ in 1964. Lees, Slater and Wyley argue that the definition of gentrification is complex and ongoing so its definition should be left ‘open so as to allow it to include new types/forms of gentrification that may yet emerge’ (2010: 5).

The following research sub-questions guided the BLOCK project:

- How might politically engaged choreodramaturgical processes inform the creation of HHDT work?
- How might these processes challenge a practitioner's habitual HHDT choreographic process in this context?
- How might turbulence and the unsteady state condition be invoked through choreodramaturgical approaches?
- How might the conventions of virtuosity in HHDT be challenged through creative constraints?
- How might HHDT staging conventions be problematised through scenographic methods?

The process was driven by task-based methods in the form of solo and group exercises and objectives. The collective ensemble discussed the subject material throughout the process and the writer created text for the dancers to use in the choreographic process, which engaged with the themes in a narrative and abstract way. The dancers kept studio journals throughout the process to capture their reflections and experiences of the BLOCK project and I received these for review only after the final performance. This material enabled me to use the dancers' notes to identify the impact of task-based methods in the studio and to reflect on the outcomes of the project. For example, Joshua wrote comments about his frustration at not being able to dance fully, referring to the setting of tasks that deliberately restricted his customary flamboyant displays of virtuosity. This observation directly related to and extended my conceptual understanding of notions of frustrated labour in relation to ideas of (im)mobility and this information fed into my subsequent phases of research (discussed later in this chapter).

The final performances re-configured the traditional spaces in which they took place by using applied scenography to challenge traditional notions of HHDT staging. The performance was configured in the round, referencing the hip hop cypher,[60] and the dancers were often positioned on top of mattresses that destabilised their movements and prevented them from establishing a fixed routine. Additionally, the dancers were called on to deliver monologues while moving, and

[60] The 'socially constructed dance space […] the circle of onlookers in which the dance is performed' (Schloss, 2009: 13). Dance scholar Imani Kai Johnson describes the cypher as a 'collective action forged through individual artistic endeavors, out of which grows a dynamic between individuals and surrounding spectator-dancers' (2009: 12).

this presented a challenge to their conventional modes of performing HHDT as they seldom use text and rarely when moving. Consequently, the gravitas of the subject material was made viscerally present through the multiple complexities invoked by the physical conditions of displacement that the dancers struggled with. A description of the performance (Appendix 3.1.) written by the blogger working on the project is helpful in conveying an idea of what BLOCK looked and felt like.

BLOCK took the idea of a processual counter-narrative into the studio. I have previously identified the notion of counter-narrative as it applies to this research as a creative exploration through which I propose another way of doing and thinking that differs from conventional HHDT choreographic practices. Within the BLOCK project some of the key tenets of unsteadiness and instability, such as displacement, hindrance and imbalance, were applied in the studio through practical tasks, and the impact of these approaches was considered through oral and embodied reflection. This informed an exploration of the 'unsteady state condition' and its physical manifestation through movement composition and dramaturgical strategies. In my role as a choreodramaturg I sought to invoke this unsteady state by actively seeking out and employing 'turbulence' within the devising process.

To facilitate turbulence, leading to an unsteady state condition, I developed a process that involved the multiple layering of 'entry points' when devising new work. An entry point is defined here as one of the components that constitute the layering process; for instance, text would signify a single-entry point, subject material another, scenography another, and so on. Working together, and often in opposition, these different stimuli were used to invoke a creative response and outcome.

During the BLOCK process, dance phrases were initially developed through improvisational methods relating to the main theme, for example ideas of (im)mobility[61] were examined by setting corporeal hypermobility against corporeal immobility, made visible via the scaling down

[61] Pellegrino describes the 'conceptual couple Mobility/Immobility [as] neither a dualism nor an opposition, rather a relational continuum' (2011: 2). She argues for 'practice as the situated and material locus where proximity, mobility and immobility are put forward, challenged and realized, throughout myriad contexts, cases, situations and conditions where different assemblies of (im)mobility and types of proximity are practiced and constructed' (2011: 3).

of movements: Joshua's o obsessive compulsive disorder sequence[62] illustrates this approach: he used movements that appeared physically unspectacular and small in scale. Subsequently these dance phrases acted as central scores, constituting points of departure where ideas of dimensionality were explored through the layering of multiple elements: subject material, movement, scenography and text. These individual entry points, practically informed, displaced and hindered the dancers' (im)mobility, invoking turbulence and the unsteady state condition. Technically, these conditions were achieved through the demands of focusing on multiple objectives simultaneously, some of which were informed by a long processual layering of information, as was the case with the subject material, while others were informed by the immediacy of imbalance, as imposed by the unsteady mattresses.

In this chapter I describe how such components were over-layered and enmeshed within the studio process. This working strategy was useful because it enabled me to recognise and develop ideas of kinesthetic empathy through notions of proximity, (im)mobility, perspective and agency arising from the practice and the performance. I also investigated turbulence, the unsteady state, virtuosity and my role as a practitioner. In this chapter I discuss the BLOCK project as a vehicle through which these ideas were practically explored.

Huntingdon examines meanings in hip hop dance and introduces the term 'collective texts' (2007: 41) to present the idea that hip hop dance is made up of many hundreds of what she terms 'rap dances' (2007: 41). Adhering to this notion, I chose to work with four dancers with different movement specialisms so that I could explore and maintain 'collective texts', which might mediate between hip hop and non-hip hop. This idea was important as I was pushing the boundaries of HHDT while wanting to maintain a connection with the form. My rationale for choosing four dancers was imbricated with pragmatic concerns, such as the idea that a greater number of dancers might yield multiple insights and propose a greater chance of collision, turbulence and struggle. Additionally, by using four dancers, representing varying elements of the collective texts of hip hop, I hoped to be able to explore a greater number of physical outcomes and produce more multi-vocal outputs, thereby developing the notion of co-authoring related to the interplay between the choreodramaturg and the dancers.

---

[62] Using small steps forwards while simultaneously tapping his hands up his chest then chin. Moving both hands to the front and tapping one fist on top of the other. Dropping his arms to the side and stopping. Walking forwards and moving his straight arms slightly outwards, then stopping.

3. Funding Constraints and Coercions

As a non-funded doctoral student needing to develop an in-depth and extended studio-based research project I was left little choice but to seek what cultural theorist Richard Maxwell calls the 'patrimony of the state' (2001: 2) and apply for ACE funding. I wanted to work with professional dancers, a scenographer, a blogger, a writer and a music-maker to engage with my studio inquiry. My application was successful, and I was allowed to enter the studio for 15 days to develop this inquiry. However, the success of my application was bound to the provision that I must show a piece at three venues across the UK. Consequently, although I could keep an open research inquiry while in the studio, there was a point at which I had to begin to prepare a product to show an audience, to do what dance scholar Jacqueline Smith-Autard might call 'set[ting] the movement into a constructional frame which [would] give the whole its form' (2010: 42). The funding I received for my research project obliged me to create a performance, and by entering this contractual pact I was in many ways living out the tensions that I discuss in my doctoral research.

Without this funding I would not have been able to develop the research inquiry and would instead have been limited to using available graduate dancers, with little or no experience of HHDT, having little or no means to explore the role of scenography in the practice and, more importantly, no studio space. This might be viewed as what dancer and academic Danielle Goldman refers to as a 'tight space' (2010: 5), where various constraints necessitate a certain amount of improvisation, within and around the sociopolitical elements that dictated them.

4. The Compositional Process

4.4. Multiple Entry Points as a Layering Process

The BLOCK project explored new contexts of making, doing and seeing hip hop dance in the space of theatre. Dance phrases were initially developed through improvisational methods relating to the main theme, for example ideas of hypermobility were set against those of (im)mobility, made visible via the scaling down of movements. One of Joshua's sequences illustrates this approach: he uses movements that appear physically unspectacular and small in

scale.[63] Subsequently, these dance phrases acted as central scores, constituting points of departure where ideas of dimensionality were explored through the layering of multiple elements: subject material, movement, scenography and text. I define these individual elements as entry points, and I use the term to mean a way of practically informing, displacing and hindering dancers' mobility to explore turbulence and the unsteady state condition. Technically, these conditions were achieved through the demands of focusing on multiple objectives simultaneously. Some were informed by a long processual layering of information, as was the case with the subject material, while others were informed by the immediacy of imbalance, as imposed by my technique of using unsteady mattresses. I decided to place the dancers on top of mattresses because it demonstrated a scenographic motif of how gentrification displaces people, echoing the conditions of eviction and isolation. Additionally, the mattresses imposed physical displacement on the dancers as they struggled to execute their choreography, resulting in improvised movement.

[63] Using small steps forwards while simultaneously tapping his hands up his chest then chin. Moving both hands to the front and tapping one fist on top of the other. Dropping his arms to the side and stopping. Walking forwards and moving his straight arms slightly outwards, then stopping.

Figure 3.1 Joshua and Christina dancing on top of mattresses

Exploring the themes of displacement and mobility through the interplay of scenography, movement and subject material, I set doubled-up single mattresses in the space and asked Joshua and Christina to repeat a movement duet, previously developed on the floor, on top of the unstable mattresses (figure 3.1). The routine represented the steady course of an intense relationship and I hoped to invoke displacement via the hindrance of the mattresses to further develop the intensity of the situation. The influence of the layering process is evident in Christina's journal reflection:

> In anyway, a relationship is difficult, full of challenging circumstances, let alone danced on a mattress. Keeping our balance was equal to dealing with issues. Having trouble balancing was picturing all the problems people are going through.
>
> (Studio Journal, day 6)

By exploring a metaphorical link between the subject material, the scenography and the dance, Christina acknowledged in this observation a density that shakes her 'out of the familiar trains of thought' (Barba and Barba, 2000: 60) and out of the familiar ways of dancing. I attribute these outcomes to the layering process, which I wanted to explore as it creates a depth and struggle within the movement that challenges the 'flattened', linear presentation of HHDT, thereby

revealing a complex three-dimensionality. This process led me to a new creative approach that problematised and proposed alternatives to 'flattening'. These combined outcomes, I posit, were the product of turbulence leading to the unsteady state condition. Architectural design and performance scholar Paul Carter describes turbulence as a feedback mechanism that creates reflexive responses through an interaction with 'surface phenomena in real time' (2014: 1), which allows for a reading of turbulence and the unsteady state condition through the feedback mechanisms of hindrance and displacement. My practical investigations enabled me to witness and develop this notion through creative inquiry, and concluded that the spontaneous 'changes of state' as described by Christina are rendered visible through the real-time interaction with surface (scenography) and sub-surface (subject material) phenomena. This reading might further support the creation of a new studio process that instigates a new way of working with HHDT.

The next sub-sections discuss each of the entry points as processual components using examples from the practice-based research project: a processual component can be defined as a key element in developing a working process.

4.2. Subject Material as a Processual Component

I used the subject material I brought into the studio for BLOCK to consider the idea of choreographic (im)mobility within the institutional framework, informed by in-depth research into gentrification, described by sociologist Kate Shaw as 'encompassing the entire transformation from low-status neighbourhoods to upper-middle-class playgrounds' (2008: 2).[64] In this way I could extend the idea of (im)mobility beyond the arts canon to consider dialogical relationships within the broader social context of gentrification. An unforeseen outcome of this approach was captured in Christina's journal: she was concerned about the cost of living in London:

---

[64] 'Gentrifiers focus on aesthetics, not people. Because people, to them, are aesthetics' (Kendzior, 2014). Gentrification is 'a dumbing down and smoothing over of what people are actually like. It's a social position rooted in received wisdom, with aesthetics blindly selected from the pre-sorted offerings of marketing and without information or awareness about the structures that create its own delusional sense of infallibility. […] The gentrification mentality is rooted in the belief that obedience to consumer identity over recognition of lived experience is actually normal, neutral, and value free' (Schulman, 2013: 51).

> The issue of gentrification makes me question my future here in London and whether I will be able to get through all of these economic difficulties. I left Greece for a better and more secure future and now I'm facing the reality of expensive rents, transportation etc.
>
> (Studio Journal, day 14)

The journal entry highlights the micro-conditions under which dance is made in the UK and this might be considered particularly relevant when examining the socioeconomic mobility of HHDT artists and its impact on making work.

This themed material supported the development of movement that was contained and concentrated, veering between mobility and immobility and displacing the spectacular movement commonly associated with hip hop dance, contributing to an enclosed intensity defined by the multiple entry points. The material involved jabbing, punching, tensing and popping actions, which linked an emotional proposition to the physical displacement of the dancers' movement in a wider sense, giving an emotive quality to the physical displacement.

I invited the dancers I was working with to look at a shared online folder that contained images, articles, statistics and other items related to gentrification, in order to explore their responses. This material provided a collective reference and offered each dancer a starting point in their research, with some developing this strand further than others. The impact of the subject matter was pervasive and often viscerally felt in rehearsal as a confrontational dilemma, rather than experienced through specific dedicated tasks. Christina explained in her journal entry for day 5:

> The feeling throughout the set has changed again. Once, funny, playful mattresses, then sad because of people dealing with OCD. […] People that are together trying to deal with everyday life, gentrification, money difficulties.
>
> (Studio Journal, day 5)

The journal entry acknowledges that there was a layering process through the transition of the mattresses from playful objects to objects of emotional significance. Referring to the 'once, funny, playful mattresses', Christina is reflecting on a session that took place on day 2, in which dancers explored the plasticity and malleability of the mattresses in relation to their bodies and without any concern for subject material. In the subsequent sessions leading up to the journal entry, Christina had explored text, movement and the subject material through task-based

exercises.[65] I had not deliberately structured the tasks to achieve the outcome reflected in the dancer's journal, rather I was exploring multiple layering processes to examine concepts of turbulence as a general theme. However, the journal entry brings into play the possibility that the performer developed kinesthetic empathy[66] through the scenography and this could only have been discovered through practice.

Researcher and practitioner Joslin McKinney has written widely on the subject of scenography and draws on the work of social philosopher Karl Polanyi to suggest that audience members are capable of responding to objects 'through an empathetic process of "indwelling"' (2011: 14), wherein the viewer is emotionally drawn into the object, perhaps through reminiscences of previous encounters with similar objects. This empathetic process of 'indwelling' might have been responsible for Christina's experience of the mattresses as emotionally charged objects. If so, this raises questions as to the nature of the branching out of this kinesthetic empathetic experience, examining a process of layering that extends not only through the subject material but also through the complex interplay between scenography, movement, performer and audience.

4.3. Scenography as a Processual Component

To further develop the concept of the unsteady state condition, I explored the cypher as a processual element in the staging of the BLOCK project. I assert that the end-on fourth wall staging adopted by HHDT via Breakin' Convention and other institutions has influenced this 'collective action', replacing the intimate kinesthetic exchange of the vernacular cypher with a flattened and linear 'looking at' rather than 'being in' experience. McKinney notes, 'spectators placed within (rather than before) the scenography should also be considered as participants' (2011: 2) and I wanted to examine this idea by considering the cypher in the BLOCK project. I was interested in how the dynamic between dancers and spectators might shift under these conditions; for instance, how might the spectators become spectator–dancers or the dancers become dancer–spectators?

---

[65] Including the repetition of a monologue about eviction, which was accompanied by a rapidly moving movement score that had been devised separately.

[66] 'Kinesthesia refers to "sensations of movement and position", while "empathy" can be seen as "projecting oneself into the object of contemplation"' (Reynolds and Reason, 2012: 18–19).

The cypher was constructed by placing the audience on mattresses that framed the dancers on two sides, offering the viewers intimate, bespoke experiences of the performance (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Cypher structure for BLOCK performance at Chichester

We were able to use lighting to isolate three micro-cyphers within the macro-cypher of the collective scenographic arrangement.[67] McKinney and Butterworth assert that scenography works in a dialectic relationship with the performers, the space and the audience to establish the performance environment, concluding that it is a 'sensory as well as an intellectual experience; emotional as well as rational' (2011 4). The staging of BLOCK as a cypher drew on aspects of this interplay to test the idea that intimacy might disrupt the normative dancer–spectator relationship in HHDT. The cypher arrangement brought the audience into the performance area, proposing an alternative theatrical setting within the traditional one, where the raked seating stood empty. This signalled a kind of displacement that echoed the themes of the research, as audience members were divided by the need to secure a viewing position on the mattresses or by standing up. Some members of the audience were initially confused and resisted watching the performance from a non-conventional position, or perhaps they were apprehensive about

[67] Mattresses imposed the 'architectonic structure, working in synthesis with the space, the lighting and the objects' represented by the bedding (McKinney and Butterworth, 2012: 4).

their proximity to the action. The Blogger working on BLOCK, Leonie Kate Higgins, described Joshua's krumping as:

> so powerful that the audience become almost totally still during it. Only during a pause do I see a man very slowly reach up to scratch his nose and a woman carefully cover her mouth with her hands.
>
> (2016)

Thanks to their position of close proximity to the dancers some members of the audience commented after the show that they could feel every pop or jab, breath and word, and that they held their breath in places as the dancers' struggle became a visceral experience. Choreographer and theorist Ivar Hagendoorn suggests that 'spectators can "internally simulate" movement sensations of speed, effort, and changing body configuration' (2004: 3) and by re-defining audience proximity in the staging of BLOCK it was possible to encourage the audience to resonate with the dance, eliciting, to varying degrees, the empathetic exchange that Hagendoorn suggests. The degree to which each member of the audience contributes to a performance varies. Following post show conversations with audience members I concluded that the interplay of scenography with the dancers and the audience had certainly elicited kinesthetic empathy and that the proximal relationship of the hip hop movements and techniques of popping and jabbing to the audience contributed to this.

During the staging of BLOCK it was possible to identify times when the movement physically moved the spectators and this supported the notion of the spectator–dancer. Christina noted the opposite of this phenomenon occurring as the audience entered and inhabited the cypher for the first performance:

> When people came on stage to sit on the mattresses around the set, it was extraordinary. I felt like people had climbed up my house and they were watching/stalking me from the windows/balcony. It felt a bit scary, like people were invading my private space, but also like I had someone I could talk to, a neighbour, maybe people that are facing the same difficulties as me.
>
> (Studio Journal, 16 November 2016)

Christina describes this experience as a dancer–spectator because she was watching the audience. These insights bring into question the duality of these roles within a scenographic construction that draws on the proximal intimacy of the cypher, suggesting that the role of the protagonist is in flux. Christina raises interesting points concerning feelings of displacement and anxiety while at the same time embracing an idea of kinesthetic empathy. In this scenographic

environment the proximity afforded by the cypher engendered a physical connection, which allowed the dancer to relate to the audience as a neighbour who would listen and empathise with them.

The practical exploration of the cypher setting began as a simple task aimed at re-viewing technique in the space by using mattresses as framing tools to alter the viewers' perspective. I wanted to test the idea that movements and technique might be re-viewed by exploring dance in relation to the filmic technique of zooming in, where the wide shot steadily zooms in to focus on a specific body part or view. However, for my exploration I reversed this idea, so that the camera or viewer was static and the dancers became the movable zooming apparatus. Through this exercise I hoped to explore scenographic methods that might play with the way in which a seated spectator views the body of the dancer so that conventional staging in HHDT might be challenged.

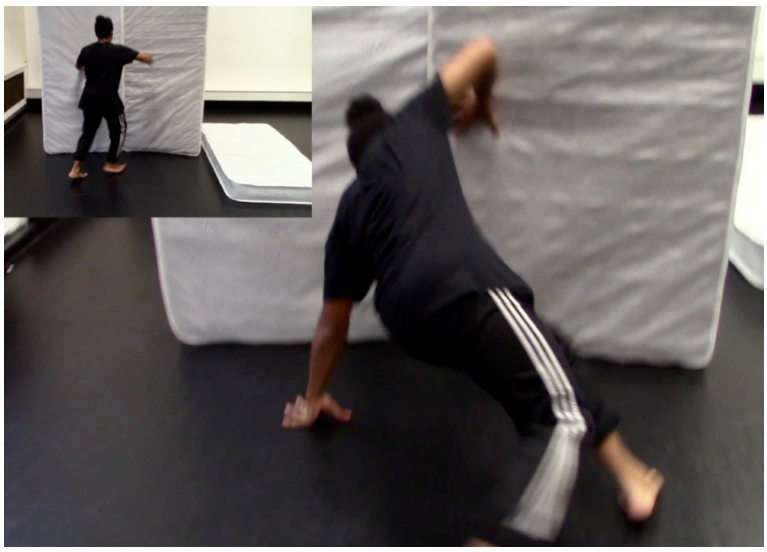


Figure 3.3 Zooming

To achieve this, I set up a task where Joshua and Christina manipulated a single mattress each, to create a vertical wall that could travel forwards and backwards (Figure 3.3). Jordan was asked to freestyle in front of the travelling wall while keeping a very light contact with the mattresses. This allowed the dancers holding the mattresses to control the zoom action. The camera and I remained in a fixed position to establish an end-on audience view. We worked with this principle for some time and found that – when set within the narrow frame of the mattresses, with the backdrop of the mattress controlling the perspective of depth – the figure of Joshua moving steadily towards the viewer reframed what was being danced. Through this

discovery of a change of perspective afforded by a physical process of reframing, I was guided to consider the dialectical relationship between proximity and perspective (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4 Proximity and perspective

Political theorist Guiseppina Pellegrino debates the notion of space, proximity and mobility through a sociopolitical lens. She suggests that 'the way physical spaces are conceived influences interaction processes' (2011: 19) and this idea resonates with the problematisation of the spectator–dancer and dancer–spectator relationship in HHDT. Here, physical spaces might be re-shaped to question mobility and agency through the interplay between proximity and perspective in performance. The change of perspective in the studio raised some interesting notions about how the audience observes, what it observes and how I might practically hinder and displace the perspective from which, and in which, hip hop dance is viewed in the theatrical space, challenging the linear, flattened and two-dimensional approach that presently dominates HHDT.

I chose not to employ this literal method of manipulating mattresses in the final performance because it shifted the focus too heavily from the corporeal towards the scenographic. But these early stages of experimentation informed the idea of reframing dance in the space of theatre and I used the principles discovered through this exploration to re-configure the performance space to control the proximity of the audience to the dancer. This idea was further developed in the performance so that the members of the audience were seated very low on single, uncomfortable and slightly unstable mattresses, inviting an altogether different viewing

perspective as the gaze had to shift and adapt to incorporate the constantly shifting proximity of the dancers (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5 Audience shifting proximity and perspective with Joshua

Individual micro-cyphers were created for each of the dancers to dance in. The mattresses stood in the centre of each of the three micro-cyphers and provoked, through hindrance, an idiosyncratic displacement of movement in response to each dancer's improvisation within the cypher. Here, in isolation, the dancers grappled with multiple layers of doing, through tensions that were defined by the simultaneous interaction of multiple entry points. Observing this, I was reminded of Barba and Barba's discussion of a negotiated coexistence of tensions in performance, which he refers to as creating 'density': forcing spectators to engage in a way that displaces their 'familiar trains of thought' (2000: 60).

The audience gaze was displaced by the proximity of the action, defined by the macro- and the three micro-cyphers where the use of single spotlights, operated individually or collectively, encouraging viewers to follow specific actions or to choose where to focus at particular moments in the piece. This challenged familiar notions of performance structures where the unsteady state condition caused audience members to simultaneously experience the same movement but from varied perspectives dependent on proximity and agency. For example, when Joshua was towering over an audience member who chose to look up at his looming figure, the audience member was locating the movement as being in the arms and torso, while feeling the force of the pop and jab as a visceral entity. Simultaneously, an audience member

directly opposite in the cypher was seeing the entire body of the same dancer, at a distance, from behind and in relationship to the audience member he was towering over, but not feeling the pop and jab viscerally because of the different perspective. The two viewers experienced the dance much more differently than if they had watched it staged in a linear and flattened fourth wall setting. In this reframed performance environment, the agency of the spectator was called into question, transitioning from the traditional fourth wall, flattened stance where a linear reading of HHDT takes place, to a domain that invites a shifting perspective.

Pellegrino argues for the need to scrutinise what it feels like to be 'close to each other' (2011: 2) in a world where global migration puts shifting corporeal proximities into play. She proposes that the scale of migration means that 'proximity itself is on the move and constitutive of mobility' (2011: 2) and suggests that new understandings of, and challenges to, the traditional paradigms of mobility might be enacted through the notion of practice. This model provided a robust framework through which the practical insights of my studio research could be further understood and challenged. Pellegrino's arguments call for recognition of the interplay between mobility, (im)mobility and proximity as well as an understanding that mobilities are inherently negotiated through political discourses (2011: 3). These ideas fed into my research inquiry and by using the studio process and the performance as models through which to explore the alloying of proximity and mobility, I examined the concepts of perspective and agency in my final exposition work (discussed in chapter 4).

4.4. Text as a Processual Component

The idea of language as a physical gesture guided my exploration of text as a processual element, allowing me to introduce language as an unbounded physical proposition, incorporating rhythm, motion, flow, disruption and (im)mobility. Linguistics scholar and practitioner Elisabeth Zsiga discusses the infinite possibilities of language where it 'can be broken down into smaller, individual pieces, and these pieces (which may in themselves mean nothing) can be combined in different ways to create an infinite number of messages' (2013: 15). I wanted to examine the constellation of messages that language might invoke while negotiating with other entry points, jostling for position and displacing the dancer.

An example of the use of text as an entry point can be seen in Joshua's struggle with the practical task of layering of text, movement and scenography. In this particular case the collaborative writer on the project created abstract text on gentrification via a series of tag

words.[68] This non-linear narrative approach to text follows Barba's assertion that disorientation is needed to create 'labyrinthine pathways', where the theme of the work constitutes a common path through which a 'coherent dramaturgy' is sought (Barba and Barba, 2000: 60). Joshua was called on to relate the abstract text to the thematic issues of BLOCK and considered multiple options, struggling to find pretexts that resonated with the core subject material of the work. Barba's premise informed the rationale for this task and I hoped to create struggle and hindrance by presenting a monologue that had no apparent narrative, yet echoed aspects of the subject material in an abstract way.

At this stage I was not interested in the specific interpretation of each word; it is conceivable that a multitude of alternative words might have been used because of their abstract nature. The dancers were aware that we were investigating displacement and social loss as the 'point of departure' (Barba and Barba, 2000: 60) and this tacit understanding was carried throughout the studio process. I wanted to test whether language could facilitate a re-formatting of the movement; for example, if the rhythmic delivery of the words was altered, slowed down, paused or quickened, while the movement sequence was altered on contrasting planes, would the turbulence and hindrance thrown up by the dancer's struggle with the multiple entry points yield any insights into a re-articulation of the movement?

Because of the non-narrative nature of the text the exercise proved a struggle for Joshua to accomplish and he spent considerable time searching for a method to remember the words.[69] I wanted him to explore the rhythms of the text using the words as physical objects, to make the words dance: exploring the choices that each word held in meaning, alliteration and rhythm, separately and as a continuum. To achieve this technically, we discussed the use of syllables, alliteration, merging of words, rhythm, plosives, texture, pause and breath, which I called textual harassment.

Zsiga talks of speech as using movements that call on the vocal articulators to dance in order to determine the level of versatility that can be achieved. She concludes, 'the movements that create each step of the dance of the articulators are articulatory gestures' (2013: 16), and it was

---

[68] Martin Stannage, the writer collaborating on BLOCK, gave the following text to Joshua: Woman, child, benefit, Cap, bottle, crack, smile, Fear, spine, devil in, Disguise, wide-eyed, Skyline, rise, satellite, Revel in, shirt, tie, Severing, space, time, Ritual, medicine, Dirt, pride, tenement.

[69] Joshua was unaccustomed to remembering text without accompanying mimetic movement imposing a narrative on it. For this task I asked that he did not do this.

the interaction of these 'articulatory gestures' with the dancer's movements that eventually revealed insights through this task. After an hour of struggle and what might be termed frustrated labour, the Joshua stood up and spoke the text while I observed. I immediately identified a fixed, comfortable pattern and asked him to speed up the delivery so that it became almost a mantra, a non-stop rhythmic train with no pauses. This caused Joshua great difficulty as his frustrated labour continued and he began to get stuck in places, becoming immobile, unable to speak or move, unable to retain a chain of thought because of the new imposition of turbulence via the collision between speed, intention and retention: he found himself navigating (im)mobility.

In the next stage of the process the Joshua was asked to develop a short krump dance sequence to demonstrate a list of words.[70] I deliberately selected demonstrative movement as a starting point, as it offered the dancer a stable process where he could concentrate on the meaning of the word and its mimetic articulation through the krump style of dance. The task provided a period of security for the Joshua, a safe, steady state that could then be intruded on to displace what he had laboured to create: to frustrate his labour. After some considerable time, I set up a final task, asking Joshua to return to the abstract list of words that he had wrangled with in the first exercise and to speak them at pace while dancing the demonstrative sequence slowly. Joshua described the struggle he encountered in his journal entry for this day:

> I had a list of words to learn which was very difficult for me because it was just a list as I saw it, which didn't have any meaning to me, and this made it very hard. On top of this I had to add a phrase, which was made up to a set of different words.
>
> (Joshua, journal entry, day 4)

This approach, exploring the tensions between words and movement, bears similarities to the work of dramaturg Katherine Profeta. In describing her working process with Ralph Lemon, she discusses words as agents that comment on and jostle alongside the movement. Profeta argues

---

[70] Martin Stannage, the writer collaborating on BLOCK, gave the following text to Joshua: Animal, mankind, Territory, cave-dwellers, high-rise, never seen, property development, Investment, spearhead, stick, pierce flesh, alien, bleed, sentiment. 'Krump movement initiates from the torso, rippling through the central trunk of the body and into the extremities of the arms and legs. Krumping [places] emphasis on torso articulation in the "popping" of the chest and hips. [Krumping] is a public dance form, done in groups with featured solos [and it is] closely tied to the rhythms of hip-hop music, and mimic of those rhythms in the percussive nature of their movement vocabularies' (Nereson, 2010).

in favour of future collaborative exploration of the 'tension between the word and body, speech and gesture' (2015: 29). She asserts that these conditions drive the creation rather than limit it, corresponding to the ideas I have proposed in relation to layered multiple entry points creating an unsteady state condition.

The unfamiliar structural principles that I explored during these tasks challenged the dancer's aesthetic and physical routines and created effects that responded to the principles of the steady-state–unsteady-state condition: invoking momentary periods of steadiness, through familiarity, set against transitions that denied the dancer maintaining a steady state. The blogger Leonie Higgins who was observing this process at the time captures how these principles reverberated in the space:

> Joshua is given a text. He learns it in a frankly impressively short amount of time. He's then instructed to 'forget' the text, and create a short piece of krumping. It is hard, fast, noisy and powerful. I can hear and feel every breath and stamp. Joshua performs it a few times, then Paul asks him to speak the text at the same time. It becomes strange and exhausting. To the layman (me) it looks like his whole body is rebelling against the words, but that he is forcing them out anyway.

This then was an obvious struggle, a hindrance and an imposition of turbulence as Joshua became increasingly frustrated and challenged by the task. I noted when the movement automatically synchronised with the text and vice versa, as we explored the possibilities of the struggle and I encouraged Joshua to develop new technical means to navigate the tasks. However, compromises were evident as small adjustments infiltrated the dancer's movements to accommodate the text. In response to this intruding fixity, and in support of maintaining the unsteady state condition, I continued 'constructing the confusion' (Barba and Barba, 2000: 65) by finally placing the dancer on top of two single mattresses and asking him to perform the same task. This intensified the Joshua's struggle as he fought with the simultaneous objectives implied by the text and the movement, while reflexively absorbing the destabilising forces of the mattresses.

Barba and Barba's metaphor 'like a sailing boat that wants to go west, while the wind is blowing from the south and the currents are carrying it towards the east' (2000: 59) aptly describes the moment when Joshua was thrown and plunged, swallowed up and hindered by the mattresses. Barba notes that 'the equilibrium between these [competing] tensions is the creative route' (2000: 59) and, echoing this, the unsteady state condition I had invoked impacted on both the movement and the words, forcing Joshua to improvise a new equilibrium and, in doing so, to navigate new ways of moving, speaking and doing. Through this process and emergent in my

studio practice was the idea that text is considered as movement in itself, as an entry point and part of a layering process, inhabiting the movement, inflecting it, sometimes remaining and other times departing, to be felt as a trace or noted by its absence from the dance.

5. Reframing Virtuosity

Moving into BLOCK my research proposed that HHDT is dominated by the habitual compulsion to spectacular movement, derived from its vernacular roots and the subsequent capitalist commodification of the form. Therefore, a studio process that focused on attention and intensity through the methods I have described, might, I thought, support a new notion of virtuosity in HHDT. This exploration considered the framing and presentation of the dancer as re-defined by the scenography and the interplay between proximity, (im)mobility, perspective and agency, influencing how the audience sees the body in space. Moving on from this notion, the BLOCK project led me to reconsider and reframe the notion of virtuosity within my research project and I have discussed this in detail in chapter 2, where virtuosity weaves into my discussion of the metaspace of HHDT.

Lepecki discussed stillness as an act of resistance in dance, where stillness is a reactive choice to dominant capitalist conditions, creating forward momentum by challenging the stasis of the spectacle: shifting the focus towards attention and intensity (2006: 58). Acknowledging these concerns BLOCK called for a new reading of virtuosity in HHDT, considering virtuosity as the multi-layered capacity of being, doing, making and engaging with. This reframing drew on the insights of the studio work, recognising a correspondence between mobility and immobility (Pellegrino, 2011: 3). In doing so, it moved away from the idea that the visual properties of the spectacle frame the virtuosic in HHDT. This is not to devalue the virtuosic technique of the spectacle, but to suggest an alternative contextualisation of hip hop dancer artists in the space of UK dance theatre. Informed by my studio research, this lens proposed that virtuosity is not expressed solely in corporeal technique, but that corporeal technique enabled it to occur as a different construction, still complex, but in a different way. I employ the term ‘virtuosity’ to refer to a notion that extends beyond the idea of corporeal achievement, denoting dancers’ ability to engage with turbulence when creating the unsteady state condition. This newly positioned notion of virtuosity incorporated the dancers’ developed reflexive capacity to work within conditions of hindrance and displacement where movement is equally contained in moments and movement of not doing and doing, cessation and motion.

6. Conclusion

BLOCK demonstrated an aesthetic approach that is new to HHDT, informed by the sociopolitical roots of the vernacular context and an examination of the present day institutional discourse. Exploring dramaturgical methods as the nexus for choreographic practice with UK hip hop dancers exposed a processual layering that proved intrinsic to the outcomes. From this central idea, the practice itself gave up insights that suggest a complex interaction between movement generation and processual components, which are currently defined here as multiple entry points, represented by subject material, text and scenography. Supported by structured methodological thinking, the interaction of these components in the studio and their placement in the final performance was guided by the choreodramaturg's process and methods of working in the studio. In this way, the hybrid role of the choreodramaturg was tested as a component of the processual architecture. Furthermore, through an intimate dialogue with the dancers the task-based process navigated by the choreodramaturg gave rise to a further unpicking of the agential balance of this relationship.

The BLOCK project enabled me to identify how practical methods of displacement and hindrance create physical turbulence. In doing so, turbulence, and the interrelated role of the layered components that inform its invocation, was established as significant when creating the unsteady state condition. Considering scenography proved important in identifying the loss of the vernacular experience of the hip hop cypher in the institutional setting and supported a reconsideration and reclamation of the cypher via the practice. In doing so, the scenographic architecture for BLOCK guided a kinesthetic and empathetic exchange between audience and dancers. In these space(s) of performance, a complex interplay between proximity, (im)mobility, perspective and agency was observed, giving rise to reconsider perceived notions of virtuosity in HHDT.[71] These outcomes suggested that a complex web of interactive elements impact the physical expression of HHDT. Furthermore, these outcomes indicated an emergent new understanding of working with artists involved with the form and fed into the next stage of research.

These key research concerns could only have been arrived at through undertaking practice research and the practice research methodology revealed the knowledge of the practice in and

[71] I find it useful to employ the acronym PIPA for the interplay between proximity, (im)mobility, perspective and agency.

of itself. The BLOCK project led to an extensive period of reflection, reading, ethnographic research (via interviews) and writing. During this time I found that ‘multiple entry point layering’, though useful as a starting point, did not fully capture the complexity of what I observed happening in the studio. Therefore, I developed another term, ‘processual accretion’, to help describe the complexity and multiple facets of the process I was unearthing, and this is discussed in chapter 4. Emerging from the BLOCK project, I needed to define a space where I could move more effectively, conceptually and corporeally, and find a terminology that better transmitted the interwoven nature of what I was attempting to do artistically and theoretically.

At this point I read the work of postmodern political geographer and theorist Edward Soja (1996) and learned about his notion of a Thirdspace (discussed in chapter 4). The BLOCK project led me to consider the unsteady state condition as a Thirdspace, one that encompasses a constantly shifting landscape of sociocultural and political meaning. This perspective urged an alternative way of considering binaries and called for a closer reading of Soja’s treatise on spatiality, which calls for a ‘radically open perspective’ (1996: 5). This idea of spatiality fed into the next phase of my research where I wanted to explore the interplay and stratification of the elements I have discussed and the relationship between sociocultural, historical, temporal and politically augmented manifestations of HHDT through practice.

Chapter 4

Process(ing) and Protest(ing) in the Metaspace of HHDT

1. Introduction

This chapter describes my final practice research phase.[72] I also consider an unfolding and unavoidable debate surrounding my participation in the economic, artistic and political circumstances that my wider research highlights as problematic in the field of HHDT. Through doing so, the discussion questions my place as an artist working closely with dancers in the metaspace of HHDT and the various conditions and constraints that inform my work and position as an (un)funded, (un)paid artist employing other artists in this work. The micro projects enabled me to unpick the idea that choreographic approaches in HHDT have become reified through their encounters with dominant processual models that are linked to cultural industries' outputs. By processing the complexity of these conditions through my praxis, I explored a radically different approach. The final phase of practice, therefore, incorporating two micro projects and a final exposition, wrestled with this conundrum by exploring a mode of working that encompassed notions of 'process(ing) and protest(ing)' in the studio.

Drawing from the key concepts arising from the BLOCK project, I wanted to consider how the unsteady state condition might be elaborated through further research into the process of entry point layering and how the complex dialogic relationship between the metaspace and dancers might be illuminated through the choreographic process. I was interested in this final phase to experiment further with 'the unsteady state condition' set against ideas of precariousness and precarity and their relationship to my working process.[73] I was curious to see whether I might

---

[72] For film documentation of the final practice research phase visit the galleries in the e-portfolio.

[73] I use precariousness and precarity to mean lacking in predictability, an unstable existence that lacks security. Precariousness is associated with conditions of precarisation distributed by governments. Political theorist Isabell Lorey argues, 'Understanding precarisation as governmental makes it possible to problematise the complex interactions between an instrument of governing and the conditions of economic exploitation and modes of subjectivation, in their ambivalence between subjugation and empowerment' (2015: 13). Cultural anthropologists Shaw and Byler write, 'Understanding life as precarious suggests that social existence itself depends on interdependency through the care of others. The bodies and affective labor of other humans and nonhumans sustain our survival. We also come to depend on institutionalised forms of recognition, infrastructure that shapes our place in the world. When these systems of care and support are fragmented by the uneven impacts of capitalism and global

disrupt or 'unsteady' some conventional or habitual approaches (mine and the performers) to making and performing HHDT, by implementing particular strategies and methods such as widening the scope for improvisation by embracing 'Disorder' (Barba, 2010: 17) and distilling the cypher down to its essential scenographic framework. This chapter discusses the final phase of my practice research and addresses the following questions:

- How might a choreodramaturgical approach make it possible to explore the borders between process and protest with hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre?
- How might Soja's (1996) notion of Thirdspace inform the development of process(ing) and protest(ing) strategies and devices?
- How might the unsteady state condition inform the conceptualisation of a Thirdspace for hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre?
- How might this research inform an evaluation of my role in this field and invoke a critical appraisal of my position as a practising artist within the metaspace of HHDT?

2. Terminology

In this chapter I use particular terminology to help frame the processes and practices employed.

2.1. Precariousness and Precarity

Political theorist Isabell Lorey describes a normative state of insecurity and precarity as one that has become an instrument of government and, at the same time, 'a basis for capitalist accumulation that serves social regulation and control' (2015: 1). She argues that we have now entered a dominant space of precarity as *the* state of being and of governance, and that 'if we fail to understand precarisation, then we understand neither the politics nor the economy of the present' (2015: 1).[74] I find it useful to draw on Lorey's view in my analysis that HHDT moves in a

---

forms of racism and exploitation, precarity emerges as an acute expression of precariousness. Precarity is thus fundamentally concerned with politics. It describes the way that the precariousness of life is exploited, how the lives of underemployed minorities, their struggles and suffering, are rendered abject and meaningless' (Shaw and Byler, 2016).

[74] As opposed to post-war UK environment when jobs, education, housing and welfarism were promoted and developed, denoting a wider sense of social stability: a state of security that many people still consider redeemable and strive for with little success and in doing so become governed by a state of insecurity. Professors of theatre and

space that reaches far beyond the final space in which a performance takes place. This wider conceptualisation of space implies there is a fundamental governmental precarisation that is entangled within supervisory strictures and structures derived from metaspatial discourses, where themes of gentrification and the financialisation of culture resonate.

Emerging from BLOCK, the conceptual underpinning of this practice stage, I drew on ideas of precariousness and applied them to my practice, exploring how I could instigate precariousness in the studio so that I might better understand it as a process. Through this approach I aimed to provoke and explore precarity as a prodigious mode of working, expecting that it might enable me to resist and disturb the formulaic processes and gestures of HHDT. The dance theorist Bob Schram writes that 'precarity brings diverse bodies into alliance, if tenuously and contingently, in the name of representing a shared condition that needs to be challenged and contested in conflict with the powers that be' (2013). Taking a similar idea in the studio setting and applying it in developing movement tasks that unsettled or challenged habitual ways of doing and thinking, I recognised that creative opportunity resides within the predicament of precariousness and its relationship to the shared unsteady sate condition.

2.2. Processual Accretion

The term 'processual accretion' evolved from my need to define a processual approach that moves beyond the idea of the studio-based entry point layering method discussed in chapter 3. I describe entry points as a nexus for devising, where individual task-based components such as text, scenography and movement are sequentially introduced to the dancer engaged in a specific devising task. From these multiple entry points a compositional layering process then develops from which detailed and textured performance material emerges. However, reflecting on the studio practice of the previous project (described in chapter 3) I realised that I was also doing many things simultaneously alongside the entry point layering method wherein layers of conceptual thinking, reflection and analysis came into play, linking the physical practice with broader sociopolitical themes circulating within the broader conceptual metaspace. Therefore,

---

performance arts Nicholas Ridout and Rebecca Schneider argue that 'precarity is life lived in relation to a future that cannot be propped securely upon the past. Precarity undoes a linear streamline of temporal progression and challenges 'progress' and 'development' narratives on all levels' (Ridout and Schneider, 2012: 5). Professor of English Lauren Berlant writes, 'At root, precarity is a condition of dependency – as a legal term, precarious describes the situation wherein your tenancy on your land is in someone else's hands' (Berlant, 2011: 192).

this notion moved my understanding and application of the entry point layering from solely working with a targeted physical method towards a complex accumulative process of entering, re-entering, evaluating and revisiting the accumulative effects of this process on the evolving performance material. In other words, the material I was making in the studio became infused by broader issues, themes and contexts existing outside the studio space, which influenced my thought process and orientation towards the work as it evolved and fed into the devising process. Furthermore, the idea of accretion moved my understanding towards how the evolving material functioned in relation to the evolution of conceptual ideas and my thinking practices.

The geological use of the term 'accretion'[75] denotes 'the imperceptible accumulation' (Anand, 2006) of material relating to time. I use this definition to refer to the wider process of osmosis between practice and theory that has occurred through my practice research. I use 'processual accretion' to house the idea of myself as an artist becoming more porous in a subtle internal shift, which has enabled me to absorb sociocultural and political themes. These themes arise from the iterative cycle of doing and reflecting wherein I apply a wider sociopolitical lens, which impacts on my work by implicating the physical and perceptual movement(s) of dancer(s), spectator(s) and myself. I use 'processual accretion' to capture the processual and accumulative nature of what I do, and put the previous physical notion of entry point layering in dialogue with theoretical ideas, enabling a space of dialogue to occur between practice and theory. This enables me to absorb political themes and trends that imbricate my practice, some of which might already be present in dancers' bodies or the spaces in which we move, and others which manifest around me such as the Grenfell Tower fire disaster (discussed in this chapter), and through the work itself. I use 'processual accretion' to facilitate an openness and awareness to themes, issues, trends and agendas hanging in the air and enables me as a practitioner to acknowledge certain elements that attract my attention and play to the themes of my inquiry, then I can draw on this awareness through practice research. Thus I capture the evolving and mobile nature of this process.

---

75 The term 'accretion' is often used in geological contexts to define a process of layers building on each other over time. 'Accretion is the natural process of growth, slow addition of soil material, such as clay, silt, sand, or gravel, to land by deposition through the operation of natural causes. The land is added by the gradual or imperceptible accumulation of such material to a bank or a shore' (Anand, 2006).

3. Final Phase Project Timeline

Micro Project 2.1

This project took place at Contact Theatre in Manchester over two intensive six-hour working days on 2 and 3 April 2017 in which I worked with one male dancer in order to explore the relationship between precariousness and precarity and the unsteady state condition.

Micro Project 2.2

This took place in a small, shared office space at Praxis Studios in London N16, over three evening sessions, each of four hours' duration on 5, 6 and 7 May 2017. I worked with three dancers (two male and one female) from the BLOCK project of 2015-16. The dancers were working solo and each dancer worked with me individually for one of the sessions. The aim of this stage was to further explore precariousness, precarity and the unsteady state condition, focusing on improvisation and exploring a Thirdspace (Soja, 1996) model for HHDT. The project intrinsically sought to question my 'steadiness' as an artist searching for the unsteady state condition.

Final Exposition

The exposition of practice took place at the University of Chichester, Dance Studio One, on 8 January 2018 at 4pm. I worked with the two male dancers from micro project 2.2. Preparation took place on 6 and 7 January and continued until the time of the exposition. The third (female) dancer from micro project 2.2 was unable to join the ensemble owing to injury. The exposition placed the research into an identifiable format, which enabled spectators and participants to see, and take part in, the process(ing) and protest(ing) that emerged as a final iteration of my practice research.

4. Micro Project 2.1 Precarity

Practical ideas of precarity arose from BLOCK as a means of conceptualising the unsteady state condition, one in which competing task-based components demand improvisatory responses from the dancers.[76] Emerging out of BLOCK, precariousness became a useful

[76] Political theorist Isabell Lorey notes that 'the liberal mode of governing produces precarities as economic, social and legal relations of inequality through systematic categorisations and hierarchisations according to "body" and "culture"' (2015: 37). 'Precariousness relates not to life itself, but rather to the conditions of its existence' (2015: 19).

concept that I envisioned in a practical studio environment, where precariousness could be summoned through task-based methods that prescribed physical precarity for the dancer. In this experimental micro project I wanted to explore the unsteady state condition through practice, and precariousness presented itself as useful umbrella term to house practical and conceptual ideas of turbulence and the unsteady state condition.

At this stage, I had not yet developed Soja's concept of a Thirdspace imaginary as a major theme in my practice or conceptualisation. However, the interplay between perceived, conceived and lived spaces that Soja discusses had begun to draw my attention towards complex ideas of spatiality that would develop out of micro project 2.1, and emerge as a major theme in the final stages of my practice (Soja, 1996).

A series of targeted sub-questions guided each of the two micro projects. Micro project 1 questioned:

- Through what practical methods might I induce precarity in the space and dancer?
- How might practical notions of precariousness develop and demonstrate unsteady state conditions in the studio?
- How might a state of precarity reveal itself in or on the dancer's body?
- What are the implications of this method of working for the dancers and myself as a choreodramaturg?

In the studio, I began to explore precariousness as an invoked state by talking to the dancer about his struggles as an older artist securing work and support, the financial difficulties of living in London, his separation from his young daughter and other issues. This initial accretionary layer comprised a form of tacit probing that I carry from my many years as a theatre and dance practitioner and had developed in my practice research. I used it as a method of investigative conversation, a sociopolitical discourse that relied on a sense of empathetic listening and reflexive response, in order to create work rooted in the dancer's personal experience, providing him with a strong reference point from which to explore the unsteady state condition. I have observed in previous work that this form of working often produces a type of material that allows dancers to connect with spatial politics beyond a superficial level. Through facilitating an empathetic connection to his life circumstances, I hoped that the dancer would be able to transcribe the conceptual metaspace into a corporeal understanding.

From this initial probing conversation, I identified that the dancer was describing a state of precariousness wherein spatial politics informed the conditions of his life as an artist and

person, though it is debatable whether these two personas are separable. The inseparability of the performer from the politics of life frequently circulates in my practice research and in this respect my approach aligns with the work of practitioners such as Lloyd Newson and Augusto Boal.[77] Boal believed that the political and personal are intertwined through osmosis and that theatre is capable of reflecting and affecting this discourse (Boal, 1994). Newson's work is politically charged, explicitly depicting a wide range of social conflicts drawn from extensive research and practice with the ensemble of dancers. In micro project 2.1, I hoped that spatial politics would be reflected in our exploration of precarity and its effect on (im)mobility in the studio. As a choreodramaturg, it was important to approach the work in this way because the connection between the metaspace and the studio space had become inseparable in BLOCK. I now deliberately sought to connect the two processually so the complex interplay between the two spaces might be further unpicked.[78]

By inviting precarity into the work space I hoped to increase the potential to keep ideas in flux, remaining open to new departures and radical shifts. I did this by employing tasks designed to make the dancer struggle and become disorientated, such as repeatedly executing a b-boy set while I stood over him or crowded in on him, disrupting his spatial awareness and requiring him to maintain eye contact with me throughout as I circled him while he changed pace and levels (figures 4.1 and 4.2).

[77] The work of Newson, the artistic director of DV8, 'inherently questions the traditional aesthetics and forms which pervade both modern and classical dance, and attempts to push beyond the values they reflect to enable discussion of wider and more complex issues' (DV8, 2018).

[78] The role of the choreodramaturg carries an explicit political resonance (as described in chapter 1).

Figure 4.1 Crowding in on Marso

Figure 4.2 Crowding in on Marso

I began by deliberately entering the studio with nothing more than soundscape material, a small amount of text to unpick and a willingness to improvise. I considered at the time that my approach would demand that the dancer and I improvise in response to the outcomes of accretionary tasks. I imagined, to some extent, that this approach would create conditions of corporeal precarity for the dancer and myself. However, after two days of exploration I concluded that I had not invoked processual turbulence or precarity to any significant degree to move myself towards a new spatial imaginary for my practice. This was partly because I had not been prepared for the degree to which the dancer would struggle with the conditions I imposed, and my inability to move beyond the limits of my embodied processual framework. From this I learned that I was contributing to the processual fixity in the space through my inability to develop beyond my steady state condition, and that I needed to radically challenge this by destabilising myself.

4.1. A Sudden Impasse

I had not expected the confrontational outcomes of my research that surfaced during micro project 2.1, which resulted in what I initially perceived to be a sudden and problematic realisation: while struggling to distil ideas around the unsteady state condition, I became aware

of my embroilment within the practice research. In summary, I was faced with a dancer who was so tightly bound by the techniques and conventions of HHDT that his corporeality was seemingly impenetrable, and his habits of improvisation and visualisation were rigidly embodied. I had assumed that he would be able to improvise within any processual task I set him, yet it proved to be a mode of working that was counterintuitive to his previous experience and training within the arguably confining and restraining field of HHDT.

Bob Österlind argues that habits incorporate positive and negative attributes that are used to navigate everyday life, but 'unreflexive habitual actions constitute an important aspect of social reproduction' (2008: 71). In the studio the 'unreflexive habitual actions' equated to the corporeal reproduction of hackneyed and predictable dance motifs and this was problematic. I wanted to move beyond reproducing the dancer's old habits garnered from HHDT in order to push the boundaries of what a new space for HHDT making and doing might look like.

The fixity we consistently encountered working together in the studio can be illustrated through a task where, drawing from the material of our initial probing conversation, I asked the dancer to engage with visualisation (figures 4.3 and 4.4).[79] I wanted him to combine the acts of looking, remembering and visualising to open his body to a possible connection with an imagined event. In doing so I hoped to invoke a palpable sense of unease and disturbance in the dancer, a sense of imbalance caused by being in a real moment, which might later emerge as movement.[80] However, after some time observing him I was not intuitively convinced by his seemingly blank stare into the distance and intervened to talk him about his young daughter, from whom he is separated, and his feelings and sense of loss when he is away from her.

---

[79] Score:

Stage 1: Stand and look out of the studio window down into the open car park below and fix your gaze on one car. Imagine that your young daughter is looking out of the back window while being driven away and it will be the last time you will ever see her.

Stage 2: Keeping your back towards me, create an external–internal exchange and when you are ready begin to move in any way you feel. BUT you must maintain the literal visual focus on the car which contains your daughter.

[80] This exercise is standard fare for actors but proved challenging for this dancer when the possibility of movement was not initially available and he was asked to be mobile in his imagination only.

Figure 4.3 Visualisation into movement

Figure 4.4 Observing the visualisation

The dancer re-engaged with the exercise and after some time I asked him to improvise movement in response to his situation, while maintaining the visualisation. I was initially confronted by what I refer to as ‘the system’, when the dancer went into his default

movement(s), ones that I felt paid lip-service to the task. In other words, he began to act out the emotion of the situation via practised techniques drawn from his background of hip hop and contemporary dance. It all looked wonderfully choreographic and reflected, I argue, how a mainstream dance audience might expect the emotions of love, loss, turmoil to be signalled in dance theatre. The dancer's movements created a sense of external representation as opposed to an embodied, visceral response to the task, which might invoke a sense of vulnerability and expose his honest engagement with the subject matter and his emotional response. The demonstrative way of moving that the dancer adopted often resides within HHDT and contemporary dance techniques to signal catharsis and struggle, the face wearing a glazed, mournful look, which displayed deeply felt emotions. Furthermore, I witnessed an inherent seeking of constant mobility and, once again, I was drawn further towards ideas of (im)mobility and stillness.

Ana Vujanović argues that still acts interrupt the flow of movement and in doing so challenge the 'modern dance paradigm of movement [obtaining] a political dimension by the fact that it is the very paradigm of modernity and modern subjectivity in the Western world' (2013: 189). The dancer acknowledged that it was extremely difficult to resist moving continually as he felt safe and in control doing so. Responding to this, I began to explore tasks to move him out of his comfort zone. Yet, the dancer appeared so disciplined by embedded corporeal training that the link between mind and body seemed prechoreographed and knowable. Here, I saw resonances of Lepecki's (2013) idea of choreopolicing and of Foucault's description of technical apprenticeships producing recognisable subjects:

> The modelling of the body produces a knowledge of the individual, the apprenticeship of the techniques induces modes of behaviour and the acquisition of skills is inextricably linked with the establishment of power relations; strong, skilled agricultural workers are produced; in this very work, provided it is technically supervised, submissive subjects are produced and a dependable body of knowledge built up about them. This disciplinary technique exercised upon the body had a double effect: a 'soul' to be known and a subjection to be maintained.
>
> (Foucault, 1991: 294)

This Foucauldian idea can be used when considering the linking of process to product that I describe in chapter 2, where funding and institutional structures maintain formulaic training programmes aimed at replicating commercially successful HHDT production techniques. In this instance, it was possible to consider the effects of the metaspace of HHDT and how the production of the dancer, or the dancer as product, operates within it.

In the practice research setting of the studio, the dancer's practised physical vocabulary limited his ability to 'let go', be still, or explore new propositions. Consequently, the movement pathway emanating from each of the tasks became identical and followed a gestural route, with archetypal movements signifying loss, grief, happiness and other emotions, often repeating themselves. The dancer was unable to engage with the task in a deeper way and his embedded movement vocabulary, garnered over many years dancing in the UK hip hop, contemporary and HHDT scenes, now appeared to confine him. The dancer's inability to move in the unsteady state condition grew over the two days as I introduced text, sound and strategies of (im)mobility such as scaling down movement(s) to a bare minimum that registered only slightly larger than an impulse. I observed that he was in a precarious state, an unsteady studio environment where his normal *modus operandi* was negated as he was called on to explore intensity and density.[81] The dancer was unable to move within the conflict of the unsteady state condition in the studio.

Chiming with this circumstance, Adorno discusses an emerging culture industry where 'there are no longer any real conflicts to be seen', arguing that they are replaced by simulacra of 'no real consequence' (1991: 69). This simulacrum was written on the dancer's movements, where staged habits acted out the presumed conclusions to the tasks rather than opening up new reflexive possibilities. There was no visible conflict and my attempts to disrupt the dancer's corporeal habits continually failed, he could not stop himself repeating embedded motifs, often not realising he was doing it until we discussed it. My predicament as an artist was clearly revealed as I realised that I had a part in this and was working within the same parameters and constraints as the system that my research was critiquing, despite veering off-piste. I became aware that it was not only the dancer carrying steadied states as an embodied corporeal mechanism, but that despite my supposed state of awareness I also carried and enacted embodied mechanisms derived from years of (im)mobilisation within the dance theatre industry. Perhaps, the most embedded aspect of this was my struggle to reimagine my position as a participant in the processual precarity; consequently I had automatically stayed in my safe space of knowing, feeling the strain of leadership and fearing stepping fully into the fray. On reflection, I came to describe this as a sudden realisation slowly formed as, although it appeared to confront me suddenly in the studio, I had in fact reached this conceptual and

[81] I use 'intensity' to signify something deeply felt in an emotional sense, while I use 'density' to refer to something that resides beneath the surface level of movement and in doing so becomes the nexus of movement.

physical precipice because of the cumulative work of my practice research over an extensive period.

Micro project 2.1 culminated in key problematic outcomes. I struggled to maintain the unsteady state condition with the dancer and observed that I was creating work that moved in a way I had predicted before entering the studio, and which therefore reflected my fear of exploring processual precarisation, precarity and the unsteady state condition. By stepping outside the commercial dance environment of my previous professional practice I had revealed my formulaic approach to creating work, through the time and space of my doctoral practice research. Consequently, I was forced to acknowledge my position in the HHDT metaspace as a hierarchical figure perpetuating dominant models of movement content generation. I had reached a personal precipice, one that I had unwittingly drawn myself towards. This led me to reflect that I was a part of the problem that I had identified in my research and I now needed to question what the difference was between the work I had already made and what I aspired to make. I began to think about the idea of a withdrawal of labour, not as full and final as a non-appearance or non-engagement, but rather as an interplay between the need to stay with the trouble (Haraway, 2016) and to be radically non-performative in the accepted sense or prescribed domain of HHDT.[82] Responding to this sudden artistic impasse I instinctively and immediately contacted the ensemble of dancers from the BLOCK project to organise micro project 2.2, as I felt that having been previously introduced to this provocative way of working they might be more attuned to challenging their accrued habits further. Through this second, previously unplanned, project I continued questioning my practice method, while wrestling with the provocations I had unearthed in micro project 2.1.

[82] Haraway's notion of staying with the trouble, while emerging from a new materialist ecocritique of environmental issues, proves pertinent to this research inquiry. Haraway warns against quick fix solutions to specific problems and advises us to stay with particular issues and work through, work with and dwell in the complexities that certain problematic situations present, as opposed to rushing towards an imagined, utopian future. The notion of staying with the trouble applied in this research derives from and illustrates the complexities of the institutional, economic and artistic HHDT metaspace concerns as I perceive them, while simultaneously protesting against such a metaspace construction. The strategy of labour withdrawal, explored in micro project 2.2 and the final exposition, is one means by which I practically explored Haraway's conceptual arguments within the space of the dance studio.

5. Micro Project 2.2 Improvised Journeys into Thirdspace

In micro project 2.2 I explore a radically different process in the studio in order to disrupt my habitual way of working. Up until this point my working method veered towards constructing the processual architecture and observing dancers moving within it, rather than moving within the processual turbulence with dancers and working it out from within (figure 4.5). I needed to set one foot in the cypher and the other in the outside world, to straddle the two in order to connect them.

Figure 4.5 Moving within processual turbulence

I agree with Pugalis and Giddins (2011) when they argue that any investigation of the production of space ‘is as much about the assembly process as it is about the assembled

product', drawing from their reading of Henri Lefebvre's (1991) work on spatial trialectics.[83] I delved further into the assembly of my process to re-assemble the space of my practice. My approach in micro project 2.2 resonated with Randy Martin's suggestion that politics might be imagined from within mobilisation, while at the same time responding to his clarion call to 'preserve a space where new formations germinate' so that co-optation does not consume the emergent 'energies and demands that issue from social movements' (1998: 13). In this micro project I decided to do very little structural preparation for the various movement devising sessions, preferring to improvise in response to the dancer's responses and corporeal personalities, and the design, construction and atmosphere of the space we were working in. I wanted to know and predict less as I entered the studio. I needed to make what Robin Nelson refers to as a leap of de-familiarisation and reinvention (2013: 28). I wanted to dwell in a 'place of suspension', a term used by Rosemary Lee to denote a spatial–temporal link where the choreographer is between two places, where they have been and where they might be going, where they want to catch a glimpse of what is beyond, but perhaps do not want to leave what they know behind (2006 168).

The process of layering the movement tasks via multiple entry points, which emerged when I explored the unsteady state condition in BLOCK (discussed in chapter 3), did not adequately house the complexity of my research practice following micro project 2.1. For instance, to withdraw my labour I had first to identify the sedimentary layers of assimilated behaviour that had been unquestioned in my practice. I had to determine how my labour, as well as that of the dancers, was being legitimised and supervised, and how I embodied unconsciously assimilated behaviour in my practice. Therefore, in micro project 2.2, the choice to further unsettle my habits and to reflect on 'habitus' led me to use the term 'processual accretion' (Bourdieu, 1984: 170).[84] Reflecting on the interplay between 'individual habitus, institutional habitus and choreographic habitus' in HHDT practice, accretion became a useful term relating conceptually to the

---

[83] 'Thinking trialectically is a necessary part of understanding Thirdspace as a limitless composition of lifeworlds that are radically open and openly radicalisable; that are all-inclusive and transdisciplinary in scope yet politically focused and susceptible to strategic choice; that are never completely knowable but whose knowledge none the less guides our search for emancipatory change and freedom from domination. Trialectical thinking […] is disorderly, unruly, constantly evolving, unfixed, never presentable in permanent constructions' (Soja, 1996: 70).

[84] 'Habitus is neither a result of free will, nor determined by structures, but created by a kind of interplay between the two over time: dispositions that are both shaped by past events and structures, and that shape current practices and structures and also, importantly, that condition our very perceptions of these' (Bourdieu, 1984: 170).

dispositions of the metaspace (Wainwright, Williams and Turner, 2006: 535). The metaspace of HHDT resounds with complex relationships between individuals, collectives and institutions, which are influenced by historical, sociocultural and political discourses. Recognising this complexity, my conception of processual accretion as a slow building up of layers that subtly shift and displace each other over time enabled me to unite broader conceptual thinking with the physicality of my choreographic practice.

In the studio, accretion adheres to a notion that every contact between choreographer and dancer leaves a trace. This supports my understanding of how multiple processual elements such as scenography, music, sound, text and bodies inform and unsteady each other. Additionally, I employ the term 'accretion' to denote how metaspatial contacts, such as allocated mentorships and funding demands, might contain notions of historic oppression and colonial encounters that have been embedded over time in institutions, individual psyches and the dancing body, a point argued by scholars in a variety of contexts, including dance and performance (Gotman, 2015; Harvie, 2005; Hoch, 2006; hooks, 2006). Equally, the accretion process was further informed by my absorption of sociopolitical and sociocultural themes, and contemporary news items, which affected me and fed into my process as a choreodramaturg.

In order to conceptualise how the spaces of studio practice, metaspace and the ephemeral space of process might interrelate, affect and disrupt each other my final phase of work was informed by the theories of political geographer and cultural theorist Edward W. Soja (1996). I undertook a practice-led approach to consider how Soja's concept of Thirdspace might enable me to imagine another spatiality in my practice and in doing so better describe the unsteady state condition and its constitutive components. By using Soja's ideas in my physical practice I unearthed and unpicked complex spatial relationships that inform the negotiations between myself as a practitioner and spectator, and the dancers. Additionally, Soja's (1996) ideas chimed with my use of processual accretion and the acknowledgement that complex dialogic layers implicate the movement(s) of dancer(s), spectator(s) and myself as a practitioner.[85]

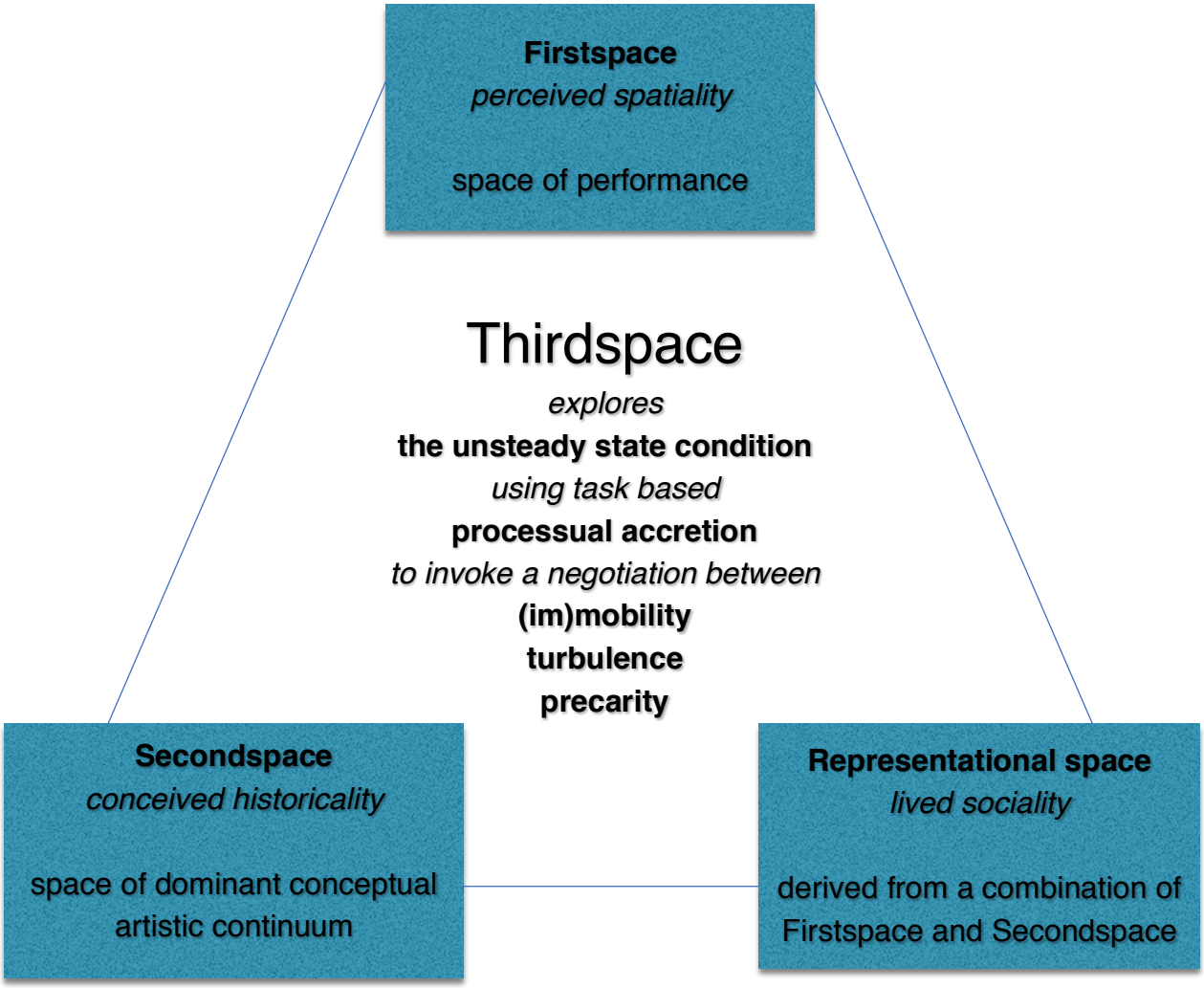
---

[85] William Givens unpicks the term accretion in relation to a *Life* magazine article (23 August 1943), which proclaimed, 'after sixteen years of evolution and accretion, the Lindy Hop has become Americas national dance' (Givens, 2017: 744). Givens argues that the evolution and accretion relate to a form of legitimisation and grafting on of whiteness that could 'theoretically legitimise it to an American consumer base' (2017: 744).

Micro project 2.2 enabled me to envision and explore practically a Thirdspace for HHDT, one that considered a dialogic relationship between three spaces that are not equally privileged in the discourse of HHDT (Figure 4.6).

- the perceived material space of performance represented by institutional buildings such as Sadler's Wells, The Place and the Barbican with their architectural, scenographic and staging traditions
- how conceived histories inhabit the conceptual space of dance theatre, materialising through dominant artistic concepts that perpetuate continuums and movement paradigms
- representational space, which designates the lived reality that emanates from the privileging of Firstspace and Secondspace in defining the lived space of performance.

An example of the latter is the representational space of HHDT currently defined by a Firstspace where the architecture, staging and material production frameworks are inherited and assimilated into HHDT processes and performances. The Secondspace in HHDT can be seen where dominant conceptual canons of artistic and aesthetic practice manifest on stage through ideas such as privileging virtuosity as physical excess, the conceived ideas of the four elements, or West-End-inspired staging full of synchronised dance routines and demonstrative action. From these two privileged spaces emerges a binary dialogic dominance that defines the conceptual and material framework of how HHDT looks and moves, constructing the representational space. Therefore, emerging from the privileging of a discourse about Firstspace and Secondspace, the representational space designates who performs where, when, how and under what conditions.



Three dialogic ontological fields informing the Thirdspace imaginary:

spatiality – historicality – sociality
perceived – conceived – lived
first – second – representational

Considering the ontological discourse between Firstspace and Secondspace, with an equal privileging of representational space (representing lived spaces of representation), leads me to explore a Thirdspace to unsteady the dominant spatial discourse, in micro project 2.2.

Figure 4.6 Thirdspace Model of HHDT

I secured an arts administration office space I had not seen before (shown in Figure 4.7) and entered it with just a few pieces of abstract music and some images. I was initially taken aback by how small the space was, full of props and office furniture. However, this unplanned spatial dynamic demanded processual and physical improvisation, fostering unforeseen outcomes that responded to the unsteady state condition that I had been conceptualising. In doing so, I could challenge the representational space of HHDT. In HHDT the perceived and conceived spaces of practice are very much mediated around a type of studio space commonly associated with UK contemporary dance, often a reasonably sized open and empty space with special flooring. Yet, as my discussion of the HHDT metaspace suggests, these structures are not empty and contain inherited traces of convention that explicitly and implicitly suggest a certain way of doing things, a certain manner of process(ing) and moving. These signatures are constituted by multiple components, including architectural and scenographic, that represent 'extant norms and conventions' (Kowal, Sigmund and Martin, 2017: 1), a perceived way of behaving based on conceived notions of creating movement that resonate in these traditional spaces. Therefore, by proposing a dialogic relationship between size, proximity and altered perspectives, the space of micro project 2.2, allowed me to investigate an-Other (Soja, 1996) way of process(ing) with HHDT artists.[86] The office space embodied the administrative hold over creativity that my research problematised, raising complex notions where my work could be considered as both a product of and a challenge to the creative industries model that the office represented. This was an unanticipated outcome where the shifting of space was productive in itself. Ironically, I had been forced for economic reasons into the small space, to move in(to) a non-traditional HHDT setting, cluttered with the debris of arts administration, and yet the space was productive for my practice. The space and circumstances demanded that I reflexively reimagine what I had done to date, leading me to act more intuitively. I wanted to test the link between Soja's ideas of spatiality and my emerging ideas about processual and corporeal unsteadiness and improvisation in HHDT. To achieve this, I thought about Soja's ideas in relation to my studio process to consider how they applied to my work.

[86] Lefebvre, who was great influence on Soja's thinking, argued '*il v a toujours l' Autre'*, there is always an-Other term. With Autre/Other capitalised to emphasise its critical importance' (Soja, 1996: 7).

Figure 4.7 Small spaces, micro project 2.2 with dancer Jordan, 6 June 2018

An initial task at the beginning of each four-hour session was creating the space for dialogue (probing) with each dancer. This allowed me to enter the dancers' lives and discuss the spatial politics of their encounters since we last worked together. I had instigated this probing approach in micro project 2.1 but with less success, perhaps because I was encountering a new dancer and the process was brief. The empathy between the ensemble and dancers' willingness to share, established with the BLOCK project dancers, allowed these dialogues to emerge holistically over time in micro project 2.2. This action chimed with the idea that 'the dance ensemble is a microcosm of world structure, related in important ways to the larger concerns of societies and cultures' (McKechnie and Stevens, 2009: 93). In micro project 2.2 I wanted to build on the principle of empathetic ensemble sharing to make it an intrinsic part of my process. As we sat together in close proximity discussing our lives with each other, the probing action created a kinesthetic and empathetic starting point, which was particularly amplified in the confines of the small, intimate space. Stemming from the probing, each solo dancer stood in the space and slowly navigated an unsteady state condition, invoked as I introduced layers of instructions and stimuli such as images, music and text. At times, I improvised instructions in response to the emerging material created by a dancer or altered my instructions in order to

prevent the performance of a favourite or habitual physical motif from occurring. An example of such a task is presented here through a diary extract from my studio process journal:

> Standing with their back towards me the dancer spent time absorbing a series of images relating to displacement. The images were taken from the drowning of a three-year-old refugee boy called Alan Kurdî (Figures 4.8 and 4.9) that flooded the media in 2015, coming to symbolise the plight of Syrian refugees. Additionally, I shared images of homelessness (Figures 4.10 and 4.11), identifying in my conceptual argument a link between the precarity and turbulence of being displaced, whether on a local or global scale. I did this because I wanted to explore (im)mobilisation both physically and emotionally and how the dancer and myself might move and respond in a landscape built from what I considered to be politically charged stimuli. The images contributed to a bricolage of accretionary material that was, for me, representative of the political moment we were moving in. After some time, the dancer began to move in response to the images and during this period I would, for instance, explore instructions to change pace, extend, contract or minimise as they continued the improvisations.
>
> (Studio Journal, 6 May 2018)

Figure 4.8 Alan Kurdî

Figure 4.9 Alan Kurdî

Figure 4.10 Homeless people in London

Figure 4.11 Homeless people in London

The extract above illustrates how my studio practice engaged with three ontological fields equally, a trialectic discourse, where each contains the other (Soja, 1996: 70–72), allowing me to work in a mode that I felt protested the dominant dyad of Firstspace and Secondspace that dominates the representation of HHDT. In other words, my studio work equally privileged a consideration of historically driven conceptual performance paradigms, inherited performance spaces and the actuality of mine and the dancers' lived sociality. In this way, the metaspace was in an explicit dialogical negotiation with my practice and I began to see a possible Thirdspace of practice emerging from and within the negotiation between Firstspace, Secondspace and Representational space. In Soja's (1996) treatise on Thirdspace I found an appropriate conceptual idea capable of further explaining and informing the space(s) that my practice research negotiated with. This experimental space of unknowing is not a comfortable place to be, as Rosemary Lee acknowledges. However, in the studio it became a necessary place to be, where the logic and rigour of 'Disorder' (Barba, 2010: 17), discussed in chapter 1, constituted the unsteady state condition. I see in Lee's description of unknowing a resonance with Soja's concept of Thirdspace wherein where we have been, in this case choreographically, is not cast off in favour of the space we hope to glimpse, but scrutinised in order to reimagine it.

Expanding on Lee's premise, my practice research identifies a complex metaspatial dialogue that resonates in HHDT movement(s). Here my imagining of a Thirdspace emerging from a dialogue between perceived, conceived and representational spaces helps me to engage with the complexity of the politically charged spatial dynamic of HHDT to explore practical alternatives in the studio.

As the dancers' improvisations evolved, I introduced music to limit the temporal framework of the improvisation and disrupt the continuity of movement. The music track, 'Have Mercy on my Mother',[87] was 2.22 minutes in length. I chose this track because it evoked an emotional response in me without my needing to understand, or be distracted by, the lyrics. The track conveys a strong sense of grief in the way it is sung, where audible gasps and exhalations of breath continue throughout, giving the music a sense of longing and mourning. However, emotional response to music is a complex area to unpick and it is not my intention to attempt to do so, remembering Meyer's warning that 'any discussion of the emotional response to music is faced at the very outset with the fact that very little is known about this response and its relation to the stimulus' (1956: 6). However, the music had various effects on the dancers and me, as noted in my studio process journal:

> Jordan is moving, suspending and collapsing, as if the breaths of the singer run through him, invoking palpable sensations of intensity and unsteadiness in the tiny space. The improvisations continue repeatedly for a long period so that Jordan becomes immersed in the process, accruing responses of varying complexity. At times he becomes immobile, whilst at others contorting inwards or gently rolling through extended limbs as the collision of music, images, scenography and physical tasks maintain the unsteady state condition. The competing tasks interrupt each other, forming layers that are steady in moments yet in others become unsteady and unpredictable. Jordan moves through different levels of energy and placement, demonstrative movement is displaced and corporeally precarious suspensions and collapses based on the singer's audible breaths are explored. I can see the development of precarisation as a spatial condition, unsettling him, not allowing him to settle or gain respite from the accumulative processual material, encouraging him to explore the corporeal sensibility of precarity in an on-going and at times, relentless manner.
>
> (Studio Journal, 6 May 2018)

For the final stage of the exercise, I replaced the music with another track, tasking the dancer to ignore the new music while retaining the original music and imagery in his body and physical

---

[87] Taken from a compilation of songs entitled *They Will Kill You if You Cry* (2017) recorded by Khmer Rouge Survivors. To listen to the track follow the link in e-submission.

responses. This task led me to develop a method whose accretionary components worked to displace each other, invoking a sense of turbulence that affected the way in which the dancer chose to be (im)mobile. This is illustrated by an extract from my studio process journal:

> In the temporarily demarcated area of the experimental task Jordan instilled the space with an intensely felt state of precarity. To myself as an onlooker, his struggle in the space – his real line of action created by the task, yet set against an almost rabid sounding musical track[88] – encapsulates the unsteady state condition, becoming virtuosic because of this ability to negotiate and dance within these disorderly multiple layers of competing stimuli/entry points. My observations are informed by Jordan's execution of movements that are unpredictable, often in momentary free-fall as they reach a point of sudden stillness, a pop, jab or breathe re-igniting the struggle and intensity of the dance in response to the fragmented chaos of the accretionary tasks intermingling and colliding.
>
> (Studio Journal, 6 May 2018)

I continued testing these conditions with each individual dancer by invoking an iterative cycle (Smith and Dean, 2009) based on the initial tasks I had explored with dancer 1. Put simply, I repeated processual tasks with each dancer to ascertain the accretionary elements that might be relied on to produce the unsteady state condition. In this way, I deepened my knowledge of the dancers as individuals and responded choreographically through the implementation of accretionary disruption in order to continue to pursue reliable processual unsteadiness.

In a final example that illustrates the accretionary process, I explored a task that developed organically when I asked Jordan to read aloud some academic text that debated finance, gentrification and commodified art. We discussed what he saw as the 'dense' wording of the text and the intrinsic meaning that lay within it, deciphering and translating any jargon into simpler language.[89] Through this process, Jordan comprehended the language of a certain style of writing, one that discussed metaspatial concerns that touched on artistic practice in the UK. As the task developed he began to explore moving within the language. I explored this task in response to a notion of exclusion that I believe resides in enclaves of academia and government organisations. In my experience, the level of formal education that facilitates the deciphering and understanding of discourses emanating from such enclaves is difficult to access for marginalised social classes in the UK. This argument stems from the personal

---

[88] Ensemble Klang, 'Nocturne for BJM', from the album *Music at the Edge of Collapse*.

[89] 'Dense' refers to the often oblique and inaccessible language used in academic writing.

experiences of the dancers and myself. Writing about the overuse of jargon in academia, Mulgan pointed out, ‘these are not flippant concerns [and] in an age when many more people have to work and communicate across disciplinary boundaries these things matter’ (1996). Furthermore, I argue that government bodies are increasingly guilty of using jargon to obscure their actions and this relates to the metaspace of HHDT. In an interview with Christian Borch, Soja describes an interrelatedness between class and space as a ‘socio-spatial dialectic, with social relations and forms (e.g. class) and spatial relations and forms (geography/spatiality) mutually constructed’ (2004: 115), each shaping the other. Here, Soja’s notion of the dialogic relationship between perceived, conceived and lived spaces illuminated my practical parry in what I saw as an imbalanced relationship between class and a spatial dialectic. I deemed the deciphering task to be a political action or image designed to facilitate a structure where hip hop dance artists were seen and heard so they could comprehensively express the material they were navigating in the exposition. After all, the material communicated the metaspace that defined the dancers’ movements on stage and off stage.

Robin Nelson asserts the primacy of practice in practice-as-research, saying that ‘practitioner-researchers do not merely think their way through or out of a problem, but rather they “practice” to a resolution’ (2013: 10). In this case, as discussed in the examples of micro projects 2.1 and 2.2, I was returning to the studio after an extensive period of reflection following the large-scale BLOCK project, to practise my way through provocations surrounding my processual architecture. I emerged from this final practice research phase with a clearer notion of how to create the unsteady state condition practically through task-based processual accretion. I had come to recognise that the ability to create, and move within, precarious spatial conditions was central to my idea of process(ing) and protest(ing) the position I had found myself in through my many years working with hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre. In order not to be a part of the problem, I had begun to stop (re)producing the standardised model of HHDT creation, yet I was staying with the trouble (Haraway, 2016) by exploring new processes. My subsequent task was to maintain the iterative cycle of my methodological approach by once again reflecting on my practice and returning for one final time to a performance space to share my research journey.

6. Final Exposition: Process(ing) and Protest(ing)

My decision to bring the outside world (the metaspace) into the studio meant that my practice research did not happen in a vacuum and it reflects the socioeconomic times in which it

took place. Therefore my thinking has been framed not only by intimate conversations with dance artists but by the news footage of events that have occurred around me. As a practitioner, these events have informed my choice of stimuli and themes for exploration and influenced how I consider bodies and movement in particular circumstances and environments. In dialogue with these concerns, the emerging Thirdspace of my practice acknowledged (im)mobility and how it might be explored choreographically. It was a notion that allowed me to consider the wider societal context and set it against the processual and performance architecture of my choreographic approach. In accord with Kowal, Siegmund and Martin's assertion that 'dance and politics move and move one another in complex and myriad ways' (2017: 1), my practice brought dance and politics together so I could examine the complexity of the wider events that I was witnessing, becoming a locus for my subject material. For instance, through my conceptualisation of a HHDT metaspace I perceive the impact of gentrification on hip hop dance artists wanting to explore theatre. My investigation of this complex relationship is drawn from a deep engagement with the working processes and performance of HHDT. My working and observational interactions with artists moving through HHDT have enabled me to develop an appropriate and rigorous conceptual framework to my practice. I apply this lens to analyse the experiences of dance artists, including myself, who are working within and without HHDT.

Access to housing, travel and secure living conditions is inextricably linked to the financialisation of the city and the individual, so the rising costs of subsistence in London define the routes that many artists must take in order merely to survive. Consequently, events such as the Grenfell Tower fire, which happened in the exclusive and wealthy borough of Kensington and Chelsea, filtered into my project. Katrin Bennhold wrote for *The New York Times*, 'Ferraris and Opera Were Urgent but Grenfell Tower Risks Went Unheeded … the charred remains of Grenfell Tower have become a shocking symbol of inequality at the heart of the capital itself' (2017).[90] Bennhold's article aptly summarises what I and many others (e.g. Bloomer, 2017;

[90] In the same article Bennhold wrote: 'Today, the face of London is the Muslim son of a bus driver. Sadiq Khan, the city's directly elected mayor, in many ways represents how the city sees itself: multicultural, liberal and socially mobile. But much local governing authority is devolved to the councils that run London's 32 boroughs, which can look very different from that. Of the Kensington council's 50 members, 46 are white and 37 are Conservatives. The cabinet, led by Ms. Campbell, is entirely white. One of her fellow councillors is Lady Catherine Faulks. Another is Feilding-Mellen, the stepson of the Earl of Wemyss and March. Another is Prof. Sir Anthony Coates, known locally as a man of letters – the letters being those he lists after his name to highlight his credentials' (Bennhold, 2017).

Vulliamy, 2017) see as the social cleansing that is taking place in London. ‘Gentrifiers focus on aesthetics, not people. Because people, to them, are aesthetics’ (Kendzior, 2014) and it is not unreasonable to assert that as London rapidly gentrifies so does its artistic output. In a discussion of the arts’ role in gentrification, Kendzior argues that ‘urban decay becomes a set piece to be remodelled or romanticised [and this] is hipster economics’ (2014) and I argue that, in dance, this involves the co-optation of vernacular forms to be remodelled by the dominant Western canon. In this way, HHDT can be examined as a microcosm of a wider metaspatial discourse (as discussed in detail in chapter 2).

During the final stages of my research, the impact of gentrification on societal and artistic (im)mobility became an unavoidable point of interest in my work and an exploratory component of a potential Thirdspace, one that questioned the concept and reality of gentrification. Soja argues that ‘we must be insistently aware of how space can be made to hide consequences from us, how relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life, how human geographies become filled with politics and ideology’ (1989: 6). Pine and Kuhlke implicitly refer to similar sociopolitical themes when they write that dancing bodies ‘contort to specific sites where they are dancing, the cultural codes that constrict what movements are acceptable’ (2014 207). My physical practice, not unlike Soja’s or Pine and Kuhlke’s theoretical ones, is influenced by a wider spatial perspective, a politicised domain where human geographies are unpicked, a perspective that cannot be avoided by retreating to the studio, but, I argue, must be brought into the studio. Therefore, bearing the weight of these concerns, in my final exposition I wanted to discuss and radically challenge the processual and performance model of HHDT. In doing so I hoped to identify a wider societal context that is filled with political and ideological movement(s) that inform the choreography of what is seen on stage. Pellegrino identifies ‘practice as the situated and material locus where proximity, mobility and immobility are put forward, challenged and realised [and] where different assemblies of (im)mobility and types of proximity are practiced and constructed’ (2011: 3). The following examples illustrate how my final exposition responded to Pellerino’s argument by exploring new choreographic assemblies in HHDT, where proximity, (im)mobility and other spatial components were re-imagined through practice.

6.1. Motifs

In my final exposition, Process(ing) and Protest(ing) (8 January 2018), I presented a corporeal introduction in the form of a conventional and predictable hip hop dance motif that exemplified a particular form of movement identity. This summarised the HHDT product and what the dancers

and I perceived to be a widely propagated and formulaic notion of a particular corporeal image. We wanted to choreograph a form of archetypal phrase that can be seen across a broad range of work that lays claims to hip hop dance. This choreographic task involved capturing the physical essence of a formula that can be observed in HHDT shows, on music videos, in dance challenges and in the content of competitions such as BBC Young Dancer, where there is a specific category for street dance.[91] I chose the opening dance motif to represent physically the dangers of formulaic work deriving from hegemonic expectations (Uno, 2006) and the choreographed beginning of the exposition explored physically the co-optation of hip hop dance by outside producers. I wanted to employ a subliminal flash of imagery that would be gone almost as soon as it had appeared, an image strong enough to register with those who glimpsed it, but not long enough to place and take hold of the space. This task had a sense of fun and created a useful starting point to a journey that was eventually to demand a lot from the dancers and to some degree from the audience.

I asked my dancers to create what they considered to be a clichéd, corporate mainstream hip hop dance routine. The dancers spent some considerable time distilling the movements to their finest emblematic point so that it became an ironically choreographed demonstration of choreopoliced movement (Lepecki, 2013).[92] This was one of the few choreographed phrases in the exposition, an image that contained and framed what we would unpick and dismantle in what was to follow. This micro-moment at the beginning of the exposition was significant in my thought process and created a physical representation of what Gotman describes as the 'image of the institution' (2015: 66).[93] Additionally, this theme responded to the idea that 'movement always represents more than itself' (Johnson, 2009: 7) and in this case the physical motif illustrated some of the complex discourse of (im)mobility that my research engages with. In a simple and visceral way, I wanted to begin the exposition with a physical reminder that resistance via social movements is all too easily co-opted and subsumed by what Adorno

---

[91] For examples follow the links in e-submission to see music videos by: *Usher – My Way* (2009); *Beyoncé – Formation* (2016); Dance Challenge: choreographer Brian Esperon's response to the 'lemon dance challenge' that was issued by NERD after the success of their single; BBC Young Dancer: Darren Hamilton and Steven Blake dance to 'Feel like that' by Dogg Master for the BBC Young Dancer 2017 Street Dance Final.

[92] Discussed in detail in chapter 2.

[93] For a detailed discussion of Gotman's (2015) reading of Walter Benjamin's (1999) concept of a dialectics at a standstill see chapter 2.

describes as the ‘culture industry’ (1991: 98). Although Adorno coined the term in 1947, the discourse surrounding the culture industry continues to invoke scrutiny (Gotman, 2015; Harvie, 2013; Lepecki, 2016) and scholars continue to debate the culture industry’s (or more recently used terminology of culture industries) expansive and coercive grip on the arts, including dance and theatre.

While I regard the UK cultural industries as representing a form of power, I also recognise that ‘power is not evil. Power is games of strategy’ (Foucault, 1997: 298). Therefore, although I argue that HHDT artistic practice is predominantly connected to commercial imperatives, this does not mean that I think it is completely driven by them or beyond the possibility of resistance or engagement in complex commercial negotiations. As an example, young artists like Botis Seva continue to rise within the realms of cultural industry prerogatives while at the same time resisting the dominant paradigms associated with HHDT. In an interview for the *Guardian*, Seva clearly asserts the need for more experimental work to access centre stage saying, ‘there needs to be much more, especially within the hip-hop theatre world. Even Sadler’s Wells […] is very traditional in ballet and contemporary dance’ (Williams, 2018).

6.2. Withdrawal of Labour as Nonperformance

The withdrawal of labour that I wanted to explore in the process and performance of the final exposition phase resonated with Lepecki’s borrowing from Fred Moten of the term ‘nonperformance’ (2016: 14). I find it useful to use this term to describe the dancers’ non-engagement with the normative state of HHDT performance. The idea of nonperformance in and of itself can invoke a feeling of vulnerability and precarity for HHDT performers and makers, who work in conditions that demand that they fill the space with movement. Kwame Asafo-Adjei spoke of the movement demands placed on HHDT artists saying, ‘maybe it’s the systematic form of being in a studio creating choreography, that systematic repetition of doing that has almost in a sense brainwashed you into believing you don't have to be disciplined to just be still at that moment. It comes from hip hop because it’s very active’ (interview with the author, 20 June 2017). My exploration of the withdrawal of labour challenged the physical excess associated with HHDT, in order to engage with density and intensity through complex processual accretion. However, the idea of nonperformance as a political act is not new. Members of the Judson Dance Theatre (1962-1964) explored ways of rejecting the dominant dance performance codification of ballet and modern dance and in many ways signalled the arrival of postmodern dance as outlined in Yvonne Rainer’s famous ‘no’ statement (Banes, 1987). A rejection of staging and scenographic models such as the proscenium arch allowed

Judson to challenge dance performance conventions and became a way of 'examining their own identity [and in doing so] they examined the identity of the arts they practiced' (Banes, 1987: 101). By withdrawing labour, via the nonperformance of expected canonical conventions, my exposition carried lineage from artists like the Judson group who responded to the precarious political times of post-war 1960s America by rejecting the performance aesthetics of the moment. The embroilment of dance aesthetics with politics is as evident today as it was then and the final stage of my practice responded to the precarious political times that I witnessed developing around me, finding possibilities in exploring what might be deemed nonperformance (Kowal, Siegmund and Martin, 2017).

6.3. Improvisation

Adding to the challenge of nonperformance, my practice revealed improvisation as a key component in the creation and maintenance of the unsteady state condition. Here, I use the term 'improvisation' to refer to the development of free movement within a set of tasks and boundaries defined by processual accretion.[94] As an example, in the final exposition, the central improvised task was bound by the length of the soundscape, the architectural structure of the mattresses, and recorded narratives. In this way, the improvisations were both structured and destabilised: temporally, scenographically and aurally. This approach is rare in HHDT and challenges the elevated role of choreography within the format. In many ways, I argue that the final exposition created space for the dancers to return to an aesthetic of improvisation that can be found in the vernacular cyphers of breaking, krump, house and other manifestations of hip hop dance, yet without the expectation of virtuosity implicit in a battle context.

Writing about constraint and improvisation, Danielle Goldman echoes Foucault's (1991) writing on practices of freedom to argue that symbiosis necessarily exists between constraint and freedom and that improvisation arises from, and moves in relation to, these circumstances. Improvised dance, Goldman argues, is 'giving shape to oneself by deciding how to move in relation to an unsteady landscape' (2010: 5). My doctoral exposition illustrated this argument as a broader notion that moved beyond the literal physical practice of individual dancers to examine how an improvisatory practice can permeate and surface within the processes and structures of HHDT performance. To explore and illustrate this process I returned to the destabilising, precariousness thematic that had been hinted at in BLOCK, using mattresses and

[94] Readers interested in dance improvisation more broadly might refer Midgelow (2019).

a scenographic cypher formation to position spectators. I wanted to develop the thematic further so that the proximity between the dancers and spectators implicated the spectators as active spatial co-habitants able in some way to exercise agency. By reconfiguring the spatial proximity of the dancer and spectators for the final exposition, I hoped that questions about perspective, agency and (im)mobility might emerge.

6.4. Exposition Architecture

The cypher–exposition format became a scenographic construct capable of maintaining amplified connections between the dancers and spectators in performance. Using a small cypher as the central unifying structure, I could elicit kinesthetic empathy between the spectators and dancers. The cypher created close physical proximity between the dancers and spectators, questioning the spectators' traditional role in HHDT by blurring the lines between participant and spectator. In this setting the spectators became liminal individuals 'neither here nor there […] betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremony' (Turner, 1966: 94). The cypher exposition drew the dancers and spectators towards a sense of collectivity by asking them to occupy a liminal space in its explicit physical protest of mainstream expectations of them both.

The architecture of the exposition called for intimate physical proximity between the dancers and the spectators through the configuration of the space. I had placed marks on the floor to demarcate standing positions for the spectators – with two free spaces allowing for movement from one mark to another. This enabled spectators to change position and examine different perspectives in the space if desired. This structure demanded a sense of what one spectator described as 'care for each other' (audience feedback, in conversation with author, 8 January 2018) and another as questioning one's causal part in the precarity (figures 4.12 and 4.13). One question voiced by several of the participants afterwards was, 'if needed would you catch the falling dancer or step out of the way?' (audience feedback, in conversation with author, 8 January 2018). This questioning indicates a sense of a shared precarity, where the architecture of the unsteady state condition influenced notions of personal and collective agency. The spectator's questioning can be viewed as an imaginary, spatial contemplation, derived from the possibilities suggested by the dynamic of the cypher and its components. Additionally, the question implies a need to be ready and prepared, to improvise and react to the unfolding situation (Goldman, 2010). Dance studies scholar Imani Kai Johnson makes a similar observation when describing hip hop cyphers and circles as 'unscripted' (2009: 1), involving a 'dynamic exchange' (2009: 2) between participants. In the final exposition event, the spectators

and the dancers were all part of the exposition cypher and, in this ‘tight space’ (Goldman, 2010: 6), breath, sweat and struggle intermingled, the lines of participation became blurred and notions of a duty of care, demanded by the proximity, were summoned. The conceptual and physical architecture of the exposition responded to the idea of a Thirdspace (Soja, 1996) practice, where new themes emerged, often unexpectedly, as with the complex and fluctuating interplay between proximity, (im)mobility, perspective and agency (PIPA), expressed in the spectators’ comments. Shifting dialogic elements including scenography, text, sound and corporeal intimacy created the tight physical space of the exposition cypher. In this environment, the dancers’ corporeal engagement with im(mobility) was in dialogue with the spectators’ proximity, housing ideas of constraint and dissent where participants’ roles were questioned.

The central improvised section of the exposition unfolded over a six-minute period performed by two dancers on top of two precariously balanced mattresses. The section was neither a solo nor a duet, but embraced and demanded moments of both from the dancers.

Figure 4.12 Proximity, kinesthetic empathy and precarity

Figure 4.13 Proximity, kinesthetic empathy and precarity

The improvised movement score employed within the exposition's partially framed structure enabled me to explore very clear spatial concepts and physical conditions. The spectator–witness–dancer relationship raised the question of an ethical responsibility to 'hold' the performance and performers and to consider their engagement with the issues and their place in the metaspatial construct. One spectator asked if I wanted them to 'take part in the issues or the corporeality and the movement' (audience feedback, in conversation with author, 8 January 2018), to which I answered that I wanted the corporeality and movement to encourage them to take part in the issues. I wanted momentarily to shatter the illusion of individualism by encouraging collectivity and the architecture of the cypher became a starting point for that by blurring the line between spectator and dancer and between individual and collective. The competing accretionary components created turbulence and precarity for the dancers as they wrestled to engage with them and this filtered through to the spectators who, as indicated in their previous questions, felt moments of conflict or vulnerability. A sense of nuanced collective dramaturgy could be felt in the exposition cypher and resembles the collective dramaturgy that exists in the hip hop dance cypher, reclaimed here as a staging mechanism and bound to ideas of kinesthetic empathy.

The exposition model allowed me to explore the idea that 'precariousness relates not to life itself, but rather to the conditions of its existence' (Lorey, 2015: 19) and the choreographing of the spectators and dancers allowed me to create precariousness as a choreographic output and a means of testing a Thirdspace for HHDT. The exposition created a structure where multiple components could interact, for instance, in the central improvisatory section between the dancers and the simultaneous voiceover narratives of former Grenfell Towers resident Nadia Zoraya Asili (Appendix 4.1.) and Professor Loretta Lees' academic presentation on gentrification (Appendix 4.2.). Asili (aka Dj Isla) was one of first people on the scene of the Grenfell Towers fire and the recorded narrative of her account used in the exposition is extremely visceral in its delivery, encapsulating an emotional and angry reaction to the events and what she viewed as a media cover up when she arrived at the scene. Prior to the final exposition, I allocated a particular narrative for each dancer to follow: dancer 1 was directed to Lees' narrative, while dancer 2 was directed to Asili's transcript. They improvised their movement material on the top of one set of single, doubled-up mattresses. This created the scenographic circumstance of a sinking raft or a tiny enclosed space and placed the dancers in extreme proximity to each other. Lees' and Asili's voiceovers were played simultaneously in the exposition, and the participants attempted or chose to (un)follow one or both while the physical proximity defined by the cypher formation added to the empathetic exchanges: between dancers and spectators, material and dancers, and material and spectators.

The parameters for the central improvisation were discovered in studio tasks where I asked the dancers to stand in the space and listen to each narrative. I then put the soundtrack on a loop so the dancers could spend time with it and work towards externalising movement(s), being (im)mobile, in relation to how they absorbed the narrative. I gave no further instructions and observed the dancers' engagement in an external–internal–external continuum, where the external narrative found internal empathetic, corporeal space in the dancers' bodies and navigated its way outwards via their movement, wrestling with (im)mobility. Dancing to Lees' narrative, dancer 1 intermittently embodied tense krump movements to then arrive at a place of exhausted stillness, as if he was shocked by the cold facts that he was hearing and absorbing. Through this device, he was rendered immobile in his dance in a manner that reflected his description of struggling to move within the city. Moving differently, dancer 2 attempted to flow through the narrative using softer movements but still containing movement 'pops' born of contractions in the arms and chest. Interestingly, however, dancer 2 also encountered spaces of immobility within his solo material, as if ground to a halt. I interpreted this as a process through

which Lee's narrative of displacement and precarity merged with the dancers' bodies and together they illustrated the particular themes and concerns of the text of the soundtrack.

Moving from Lees' academic narrative of gentrification I wanted to see how the dancers would inhabit Asili's words and emotions and how this might juxtapose with Lees' almost clinical, academic definition of gentrification. In the studio explorations, dancers 1 and 2 were frozen through the first listening and as the narrative looped and they began to dance, they called on physical jabs, contractions and pops, and foot stomps associated with krump, to release the anger that was seeking a route outward, from the internal to the external. Both dancers wrestled with these routes, not able to dance in many moments, but seemingly filling-up, paralysed or perhaps immersing themselves in the emotive energy and imagery of the words, and the guttural grief that was often conveyed within them. Consequently, when the movement was released it was intense and powerful, as if created and chosen in that very moment to protest the metaspace the narrative described. It was, I felt, movement as an empathetic corporeal protest containing the (im)mobility allocated by precarisation, and a felt sense of social injustice. At this point the dancers were working independently of each other, yet I recognised that precarity created a unifying spatial energy that, when deliberately sought out, influenced those within the space.

6.5. The Narrative of Marx: Historico-temporal Constraint

Although pre-dating Lepecki's (2013) description of choreopolicing, in *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (2001 [originally written in 1852]) Karl Marx described a similar idea about the burden that dominant histories impose on the present (Appendix 4.3.). Furthermore, Marxist themes run through the particular aspects of Foucault's work on domination and the practice of freedom which I have discussed in detail in chapter 2 (Olssen, 2004). Adding to the implicitly Marxist thread that emerged through my inquiry, Soja's concepts of the spatiality of life illustrate how geography and Marxism join together through Thirdspace thinking. Therefore, In a short exposition that aimed to impact, evade, protest, re-define, reject and retreat from the space HHDT was contained within, I felt that Marx's writing succinctly defined a part of my process(ing) and protest(ing), as demonstrated in this extract from the original by Marx: 'Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living' (2001:7). The extract resonates with my ideas on several levels and I employed it at the start of the exposition as a form of historical perspective. Speaking the words while carrying the heavy

mattress on his back, the dancer physically inscribed a temporal timeline across the space, his struggle to traverse it emphasising the content of the speech. Additionally, Marx' speech contains ideas of accretion through the notion that every contact leaves a trace throughout history, becoming a form of historical transmission, describing the coercive nature of history bearing down on the present.

The metaspatial narrative I describe in relation to HHDT is informed by the historico-temporal constraints Marx describes and illustrates in his narrative. This is clarified in the final part of the original passage where Marx writes that at 'precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honoured disguise and borrowed language' (2001: 7). Marx's speech warns of the coercive impact of historical traditions, suggesting historical precedents. Therefore, rather than suggesting that HHDT 'contributes to political causes [or that it might] prepare the ground for future political action' (Kowal, Siegmund and Martin, 2017: 4), I drew on Marx to further illustrate that HHDT moves within a domain that resonates with politics, 'the politics of dance' (4) and 'as such' (4) it is political.

To extend the writing's accessibility to a younger demographic, I collaborated with BLOCK writer Martin Stannage. He adapted the passage to echo the zombie horror genre so that it began with 'we live in a perpetual Night of the Living Dead. While we sleep, the corpses of past generations pull themselves from their graves, scratch at our windows and whisper ideas from the past' (Appendix 4.3.). Stannage concluded the metaphor by writing:

> but they keep coming, lumbering forward, mindlessly mumbling their hateful slogans at us. Even when we pull out our shotguns and blow the heads off their shoulders, more of us just get covered in their brain matter, dripping in dogma, swallowing dead ideology.[95]

I wanted briefly to explore re-igniting Marxist theory in a theatrical context, working towards a clearer and more immediate understanding of his writing by placing it in an empathetic and visceral theatrical scenario. This strategy immediately brought Marx's writing alive in the space and contextualised it as an image within the piece. The section contributed to a form of Thirdspace positioning in which political theorising was made corporeal and visceral

[95] Personal communication (Stannage, 2018).

by those who I argue are being blocked out of the wider political discourse of gentrification as represented in the hegemonic supervision of HHDT.

Figure 4.14 Jordan dragging the mattress

The Marx narrative appeared at the beginning in the final exposition as dancer 2 arose from his position on the fringes of the space, collecting the mattress he had been lying on and, turtle like, trudged with it on his back towards the centrally lit spot where another mattress and another dancer sat (figure 4.14). Here, with the help of the second dancer, a fellow member of the precariat, he dragged his mattress onto the existing one and they supported each other to step up onto the precariously balanced construction. As he made the short but arduous journey towards the light he spoke the words of the updated speech and they seemed to weigh doubly heavy as they meshed with the corporeal moment, conjuring notions of displacement, history repeating itself and failed revolution. This moment influenced the dynamics of the space as the audience and dancers broke the comfortable and normative HHDT convention of end-on performance, replacing it with an immersive proximity and intimacy. In doing so, shifting perspectives and empathetic connections were encouraged. It might even be said that agential shifts were questioned as the cypher formation blurred the lines between looking at, being looked at and being within for those present. Accompanied and inspired by the Marx-inspired soundtrack, this moment illustrated a form of process(ing) where virtuosity was not demonstrated through an excess of movement, but rather when considering the complex

accretionary components that informed the moment the dancer was navigating within. In this context, scenography, text, subject matter and movement juxtaposed each other and in this framework of competing elements, the dancers' corporeal struggle illustrated not only process and protest, but also a high level of virtuosity. Furthermore, rather than demonstratively illustrating Marx's text, I instead blended scenography and corporeality to choreograph a moment that embodied the conceptual and physical precarity that he discusses.

7. Conclusion

The final exposition developed a creative model through which the construction of the unsteady state condition was realised in processual and performative approaches. To achieve this I followed a choreodramaturgical approach and in doing so developed the explicitly political nature of the role, as previously defined in chapter 1.[96] Following what I initially saw as the failure of micro project 2.1, I explored improvisation as a means of unsteadying the normative processual and performative architecture of HHDT and my practice, recognising improvisation as a powerful processual component that I had not acknowledged until this point. To get to this point I reflected on micro project 2.1, not as a failure but as a revelation that placed a tight lens on my practice. In doing so, I could critique and subvert habitual, conventional modes of working, thinking and doing that sit not only inside the dominant HHDT model but also in my working processes as a practitioner, thereby exposing conventions and constraints. In practical terms, I achieved this by allowing the studio and performance framework to breathe and adapt, seeking other ways of creating movement(s) and in doing so challenged my fixity. I relied much more heavily on chance and improvisation than I had in my previous practice research phase. The improvised quality of this approach challenged the collective who engaged in the exposition process, and in many ways the exposition process then became a part of the process(ing) itself, as I observed new insights emerging from the dialogic relationship between the audience and the dancers.

The architecture of the final exposition (the design and construction of the creative process and the final exposition staging) deliberately guided the ensemble of participants towards momentarily reconsidering the prevailing social and institutional subjectification of

---

[96] The choreodramaturg proposes a useful package – a split personality – that relates the micro level of movement to the macro level of the world; a politicised dramaturg who choreographs brings the outside world into the space, questioning how the institution moves and defines movement.

HHDT artists. These outcomes accord with the notion of a Thirdspace practice for HHDT practitioners in that the spatial dynamic of the exposition, with its competing layers of construction, manifested a view, or perhaps created a momentary micro-model, that reflected the 'spatiality of our lives' (Soja in Borch, 2002: 113) through a faciliatory framework of physical interaction. Practical processual strategies and techniques such as processual accretion emerged from this final practice research phase enabling me to identify a reliable framework within which I am able to construct the unsteady state condition. I believe the unsteady state condition is a conceptually informed processual method that can be applied in the studio to explore the potentiality – a dialogic relationship between the corporeal, political and aesthetic – of HHDT artists. To achieve this I developed a practical working method that uses processual (task-based) accretion to create states of turbulence for the dancers, which place them in a state of precarity; I term these combined states the unsteady state condition. These collective corporeal states are housed within my overall creation of a Thirdspace conceptualisation of hip hop dance artists seeking to explore the potentiality of dance theatre in the UK. In summary, the practical creation of the *unsteady state condition* through *processual accretion* invokes *turbulence and precarity* for the dancers in the studio, which impacts their (im)mobility leading to a *Thirdspace* exploration of practice with hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre.

In both micro projects the unsteady state condition became an overarching practical component by re-imagining and disrupting the fixity of my studio practice and placing it in dialogue with Soja's (1996) Thirdspace ideas. This allowed me to re-conceptualise my work with UK hip hop dance artists making theatre. In this way, the final exposition could provide a reliable framework that negotiated the unfolding and unpredictable moments of the unsteady state condition my practice was proposing. Furthermore, the academically informed spatial model offered an encounter between dancers and spectators, which encouraged each to question their perspectives within HHDT modalities. In doing so, I could shift some of Soja's ideas from abstract critical theory to a live corporeality, in a process of re-imagining 'an-Other' (1996) way of moving and participating in performance-making processes for UK HHDT artists.

Through the final phase of research, with its problematic encounters in micro project 2.1, I realised the need to place a closer lens on myself, and my participation as a practitioner. As a practising artist I questioned and re-defined my position in the metaspace of HHDT. In my final practice stage, a refusal to perform the excess expected from myself, and the steadied form, to make it unsteady, became a locus of process(ing) and protest(ing). The exposition format, anchored through the proximal relationships of the cypher formation, facilitated a conceptual

discourse through the choreographic construction of a physical exchange wherein ideas of collective responsibility were explored. Therefore, as a choreodramaturg working in and contributing to the metaspatial politics of HHDT, I found it necessary continually to develop my metaspatial knowledge and metaspatial conception in order to reimagine and develop my practice.

To arrive at such junctures I had ‘overtly engaged in conceptual debate’ (Nelson, 2013: 31), facilitating my transition from practitioner to practitioner–researcher. In doing so, I made it possible to explore a new processual approach that sought out ‘defamiliarisation’ (31) of my practice. Within a cycle of doing and undoing, the ‘affirmation’ (31) emerged that my practice could propose a processual structure that supported the iterative creation of the unsteady state condition, one that allowed the new to emerge during each new iteration. However, I realised that to accord with the experience of my practice research I must sit within the precarity of the unsteady state condition, learning to reside within deliberately invoked turbulence. It is an uncomfortable state and one that might, in its rejection of the legitimised formulaic model of HHDT, be seen and felt as negative and provocative. The practice research journey leading up to the final exposition certainly confronted me with these possibilities. Drawing on Adorno’s *Aesthetic Theory* (1997), Kowal, Siegmund and Martin suggest that ‘only by a negation that denies a realisation of hopes in the here and now may the work of art be political, its negativity being the source for both its critical potential and its utopian promise’ (2017: 4), and following the final exposition I confronted myself with the potential of that idea.

Conclusion

In this thesis I describe a choreographic praxis that responds to the sociocultural, historical and political environment in which HHDT has emerged in the UK, using a practice research methodology. By conceptualising a complex and politicised metaspace I challenge the normative processual and performative modes that currently dominate HHDT and, in doing so, bring to the field a new way of thinking about and making work with hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre. The research has enabled me to explore the hybrid role of the choreodramaturg as an agent of change, a politicised dramaturg who choreographs using multiple dialogic tasks, which bring the politics of the outside world into the space. I have been able to address the questions I set at the outset of my research and have reconceptualised my position as a practitioner working with hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre.

The thesis presents a practitioner's perspective and the iterative cycle demonstrated throughout the research links studio practice, extensive artist interviews and reflective thinking and writing. In my thesis I investigate three distinct processual and performance phases – the large-scale BLOCK project, the micro projects and the exposition event – by exploring practice and theory. The intention of describing these projects was to examine how and why HHDT moves as it does and how it might move in a newly imagined choreographic environment. Applying a conceptual lens to the discussion of the three studio projects, I consider a transition whereby choreographic thinking extends beyond the walls of the studio and performance space to reimagine choreographic practice.

Through intimate dialogue between practice and theory, I investigate and demonstrate the supervisory structures that run through HHDT as corporeal and aesthetic themes. I unpick the structure of the UK arts funding environment to highlight influential and dialogic relationships between processes of gentrification and choreographic outputs in HHDT. Furthermore, using practice as a primary tool, I argue that legitimised pathways limit the possibility for HHDT artists to step outside the current formulaic model of movement and performance production for HHDT practices.

The development of metaspatial thinking as a conceptual lens is useful in HHDT because it proposes a broad, mobile and nuanced framework within which choreography can be practised and positioned. By applying the metaspace to HHDT I have been able to define and critique HHDT practice in the UK, a context in which hip hop dance is under-researched. To employ the notion of metaspace is to consider how 'choreopolicing' operates in the guise of institutional

supervision, where funding, mentorships, culture industry imperatives and artistic curation influence choreographic outputs (Lepecki, 2013). Metaspatial thinking is a concept that extends beyond the arena of HHDT, proposing a useful lens through which to consider how sociocultural, political and historical themes resonate in dance in general. It argues for a consideration of the spatiality of practice beyond the walls of the studio or performance site to ask why, how, when and where dance takes place, and who is granted access to it and under what conditions.

By describing, and ultimately protesting, the HHDT metaspace, the thesis proposes a dialogic encounter between developing conceptual metaspatial knowledge and the practical development of the unsteady state condition in studio-based practice and resulting performance outcomes. The architect of the unsteady state condition in this process is defined as the choreodramaturg, a role that is potentially productive for both choreographic and dramaturgical practice beyond the field of HHDT. The explicitly politicised praxis of the choreodramaturg emanates from an engaged and ongoing reflection on the choreographic nature of the metaspace and how its historico-temporal, sociocultural, political and economic manoeuvrings filter down to impact on the movement(s) of hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre. Responding to the politicised metaspace, the choreodramaturg develops and introduces themes and competing task-based layers of engagement to dancers, defined as processual accretion. This new term captures the complexity of the studio process, where an interplay between metaspatial thinking and layers of movement, text, scenography and subject matter takes place. The constant jostling for primacy between these dialogic elements leads to the construction of the unsteady state condition. The research defines a new processual and performative approach for working with hip hop dance artists in the space of UK dance theatre and, in doing so, has the potential to impact on the choreography, staging and performance practices of HHDT.

The thesis offers rich potential for future research and could be developed to encompass a broader critique of the culture industry's close relationship with gentrification and how culture is being made integral to urban development, harnessed as it is to complex processes of financialisation. It is by no means new to apply a choreographic lens to the wider field of sociocultural and political studies (Desmond, 1997; Lepecki, 2013, 2015; Martin, 1998), but by following a methodological approach that transcribes theory into practice and practice into theory, this research holds the potential for future development. For example, the metaspatial model introduces a highly complex concept, the full potential of which I will continue to engage

with beyond the realms of this thesis, and which other practitioners and theorists across dance genres could also employ. The same latent potential is housed within the processual methods my practice research has allowed me to discover; I argue that it is necessarily a practice in flux and therefore the practice research must remain in motion and could be developed by practitioners across genres. My praxis will continue to engage with and develop the idea of the choreographic lens extending beyond the physical movements of a dancer. Other dance practitioners might also develop the conceptual and practical framework that has emerged from the practice research of this thesis.

The idea of gentrification's intimate and ongoing relationship with the cultural industry and the shifts it prescribes contributes to a cross-disciplinary discourse and might also be useful to scholars, practitioners and activists in related fields of human geography, cultural theory and social activism. This research aspires to disrupt practices, conventions and norms and in doing so provokes new modes of engaging with the politics of choreographic practice. It argues for a constant and vigilant questioning of the spaces in which we create work, proposing that multiple and shifting factors shape and shift these sites, impacting on the way dance moves. The research illustrates the potential for dance research praxis to explore and challenge complex metaspatial relationships and promotes a more democratic and empowered approach to dance making, performing and ultimately viewing.

Appendix 1.1. Butterworth's (2009) Didactic-Democratic Spectrum Model of choreographic roles, with HHDT column added

Process 1	Process 2	Process 3	Process 4	Process 5	HHDT
Role – choreographer as					
Expert	Author	Pilot	Facilitator	Collaborator	Choreodramaturg
Role – dancers as					
Instrument	Interpreter	Contributor	Creator	Co-owner	Creator
Skills – choreographer					
Control of concept, style, content, structure and interpretation. Generation of all material.	Control of concept, style, content, structure and interpretation in relation to capabilities and qualities of dancers.	Initiate concept, able to direct, set and develop tasks through improvisation or imagery, shape the material that ensues.	Provide leadership; negotiate process, intention, concept. Contribute methods to provide stimulus, facilitate process from content generation to macro-structure.	Share with others' research, negotiation and decision-making about concepts, intention and style, develop, share and adapt dance content and structures.	Drives exploration of choreographic metaspace. Competing tasks as the driving creative force. Creator–facilitator, agent of turbulence, instigates 'the unsteady state condition' out of which the dance emerges. Editorial voice.
Skills – dancer					
Convergent: imitate, replicate.	Convergent: imitate, replicate, interpret.	Divergent: replicate, develop and create content, (improvise and respond to tasks).	Divergent: develop and create content (improvise and	Divergent: develop and create content (improvise, set and respond to tasks), shared decision-making	Divergent: develop and create content (improvise, respond to tasks), create movement

			respond to tasks).	on aspects of intention and structure.	vocabulary that emerges from the 'unsteady state conditions'.
Social interaction					
Passive but receptive, can be impersonal.	Separate activities, but receptive, with personal performance qualities stressed.	Active participation from both parties, interpersonal relationship.	Generally interactive.	Interactive across group.	Engage across group with choreopolitics.
Teaching methods					
Authoritarian	Directorial	Leading, guiding	Nurturing, mentoring	Shared authorship	Shared authorship
Learning approaches					
Conform, receive and process instruction.	Receive and process instruction and use own experience as performer.	Respond to tasks, contribute to guided discovery, replicate material from others, etc.	Respond to tasks, problem-solve, contribute to guided discovery, actively participate.	Experiential. Contribute fully to concept, dance content, form, style, process, discovery.	Respond to tasks problem-solve, contribute to guided discovery, actively participate.

Appendix 3.1 Description of BLOCK in Performance

Blogger Leonie Higgins attended several BLOCK rehearsals and watched the performances on film. After the BLOCK project performance at Cambridge Junction on 16 November 2015 she wrote this review, which she posted on 28 November 2015:

> Now the audience sit on mattresses on four sides of the performance space at Cambridge Junction, waiting for the performance to start. They are squeezed together, and they look uncomfortable. Some have opted for the cross-legged position; others have pressed their knees together, clinging onto them in a bid to take up less space. My lower back twinges in sympathy. In the stage in the middle are three more mattresses, made up like proper beds.
>
> The lights dim. A clock ticks loudly, interrupted periodically by an industrial-sounding crunch. The dancers move into the space in a tangle of arms and legs like one being, or like a machine. They keep nearly being separated but finding each other again, clinging on until, finally they are torn apart. Each of them is all alone.
>
> They are whirled about the space. The violence of the movement looks like a shipwreck, like they're lost underwater and at the mercy of the waves. Jordan, Josh and Christina are washed up onto the mattresses, while Lisa is still tumbling in the shallows.
>
> For some reason *The Tempest* springs into my mind as I think of the shipwreck and the exile. Perhaps it is something about how small and vulnerable their humanity looks, each alone on their tiny island. The audience are small as well, crouching hopefully on their mattress rafts. The people on stage are performing exile and isolation, while the audience sit in a dark, unfamiliar room, squashed up with strangers, waiting to see what will happen next.
>
> Throughout the performance the characters played by Jordan, Josh and Christina try to express their loneliness. They use language to bridge the gap between their lost selves and the onlookers, attempting to be reasonable, rational, even funny, but their anger and fear spills hopelessly over. Sometimes it spills over in words, like when Jordan is trying to talk about peaceful protest, setting a good example and writing letters to his MP, but then quietly (almost cheerfully) reveals that he would 'top himself' if it wasn't for his kids.

Appendix 4.1 Nadia Zoraya Asili

Transcribed television interview

Yesterday, I heard what had happened and I came down and I brought all my friends, people from all over, all over the United Kingdom came and we brought barrels and barrels of clothes, and we brought untold food and so much of everything, and I didn't want to watch the news because I didn't want to watch that my friends had died, so I didn't watch the news until i got back, after fifteen hours of being on my feet....I came back for them to say that there were seventeen people dead, have you seen the building? There's more than seventeen people dead! And then I thought.... where are the missing people? where's the list of the five hundred people that live in that building, six hundred people that live in that building, where's the list on the news, the list on the news shows about ten people! Where's the rest? Where's the rest of the five hundred people? Why is everyone walking around with missing on their, on their...where is everyone? Where's the victims? Why are we doing this? Why are we doing it? We're packing boxes were sending food were send, were pa..to who?! They've died! Because they wanted to make it look pretty and it's an inferno. They burnt them...It was gone in five min...fromfif ..fifteen minutes it took to burn...who's alive? Where are they? where are the victims? I haven't met one and I've been here for two days. I live here, I haven't met one victim I've met volunteers and I've met people that want to help, but I haven't met, I haven't met, anybody, no victims, none of the people that I grew up with, I can't find anyone...where are they? where are they? Go and sell it, sell all the boxes and pay for the funerals because there's going to be five hundred funerals that you need to pay for! This is (bleep) Im not doing it, Im not volunteering anymore! Whoever put that pretty stuff around there, that made it an inferno and the reason that the fire brigade told them to stay in there, is because protocol says stay in your stay in your apartment you know why it says stay in your apartment because it hasn't got that inferno. You know when you see a building and there's, someone's had a fire there will be one window that's black and that's the house that burnt right? Right? But, because they put an inferno the fire went up, across and down. They were trapped. How, where they getting out? You're in a building that's got a fire doing that and their telling you to go down the stairs and their trying to go down the stairs and their feet are burning. So, were doing this for who, who are we doing it for? Everyone's died! Everyone's died! and no one wants to say it, not the news they don't want to say it. I have to hear a little kid say "my friends have died. Where are my friends?" A little kid five years old, six years old, where are their friends? Everyone, everyone has died and no one is telling them, no one is telling people and were all

here bringing water, boxes, packing, clothes, this for what? We all went to bed and woke up all right, they all went to bed and woke up with dead family. And there's a kid that got thrown out of a window and who's paying for that, that person, that, that, where’s the rest of the five hundred? Where are they? Im seeing people walking around with missing on their, on their pieces of paper, but the news can't pick it up. I'll pick it up....

Akala

This happened to them because they are poor. We are in one of the richest spaces not just in London, but in the World.

Appendix 4.2. Professor Loretta Lees

Transcribed lecture on gentrification

So, gentrification, this thing, it's not just this borough, this city, this country, it's happening all over the world and the thing everybody neglects to talk about is where do the people go that get displaced, bottom line, where do they go? Now the types of gentrification that are affecting London area varied as we all know. So, we've got for example the super gentrification by the super-rich, we have got 'hipsterfication' as people are calling it, by creative types.

Nadia's speech (Track 2) comes in at this point: so that they are sometimes simultaneous and other times solo as they weave together in a soundscape.

The gentrification I think is most critical and most important at the moment is the gentrification of council estates. Why, why do I think this is the most important gentrification going on at the moment? Because I think that council estates are one of the last barriers to almost complete gentrification of inner London and once they've gone we've lost its gone. So gentrification then as a process obviously has mutated over time, when Ruth Glass was talking about gentrification in 1964 it was a very different process to today. Gentrification, as Spike Lee has said, has become a global brand, it has gone from what I want to call 'conspicuous thrift' to 'conspicuous consumption'. But the branding, the branding has become really important, so for example the East Village in New York city is a big brand, it's a big brand for gentrification. We've now got if you go to the Olympic site E20, we now have our own East Village in London, OK, with re-development of the Olympic Village. Gentrification has become this very broad process of social and economic change and what's happening is that the kind of white collar, middle class consumption habits, are kind infiltrating and kind of expanding around our cities and pushing out anything else and its causing a kind of, I guess, a kind of economic, but also a kind of cultural barrier between rich and poor and I think both of those, the economic and the cultural, are really important.

Governments knowing it's a dirty word have used neutral labels so labels like Urban Regeneration, Urban Renaissance, Urban Redevelopment, but also new labels that have this kind of liberal moral discourse attached to them: 'Mixed Communities' policy and the one we all know about, Urban Sustainability. And, also, another one the kind of economically feel good term the Creative City, the Creative City, the Creative City, the Creative City. Now of course what they

all have in common is that they're programmes of gentrification but there hidden. They soft pedal programmes of gentrification and they're marketed in a very particular way, so what's happened here is a kind of marketing of class change that's of positive process for cities - London, New York, but also cities Worldwide now - that have a series of what they call trickle down affects. So what they do is kind of put forward this false proposition that somehow if people mix in the neighbourhood, rich and poor, low income and high income, there will be some kind of trickledown effect where all social and cultural capital, the education, the aspirations, the manners, the behaviour, of the middle classes will somehow dribble down, percolate down to the poor. Now of course this is a false proposition. But I think the key point here is that gentrification is not a boost for everyone, despite the rhetoric, despite the propaganda. The overwhelming evidence from over now fifty years of academic and policy research on gentrification is that overall it's a negative, not a positive thing.

What happens to the people where do they go? Quite simply, when council estates are redeveloped as mixed income communities, when the middle classes are about to move in, the lower classes are moved out, they're displaced. So, what you get is not social mixing, you don't get this kind of filtering process, what you get is gentrification and social segregation. So, you actually get the opposite of what these policies are sold as. London needs to wake up to what's happening here, but more importantly we need to wake up to what the alternatives are, because this social cleansing is escalating, because this social cleansing is escalating, because this social cleansing is escalating, because this:

Appendix: 4.3. Marx

***The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* by Karl Marx**

Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living. And just as they seem to be occupied with revolutionising themselves and things, creating something that did not exist before, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honoured disguise and borrowed language (2000: 7)

Adaptation of the above by Martin Stannage (aka Visceral)

We live in a perpetual Night of the Living Dead. While we sleep, the corpses of past generations pull themselves from their graves, scratch at our windows and whisper ideas from the past. We can try running, but they keep coming, lumbering forward, mindlessly mumbling their hateful slogans at us. Even when we pull out our shotguns and blow the heads off their shoulders, more of us just get covered in their brain matter, dripping in dogma, swallowing dead ideology. They are the unseen menace lurking in the shadows.

References and bibliography

Abbott, I. (2018). Ian Abbott on Theo 'Godson' Oloyade's K.R.U.M.P. Macbeth at Trinity Laban, *Writing About Dance*. Available at: http://writingaboutdance.com/performance/theo-godson-oloyade-krump-macbeth-trinity-laban/ [accessed 6 August 2018].

Adey, P. (2010). *Mobility*, London: Routledge.

Adorno, T. (1991). *The Culture Industry*, Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Adorno, T. W. (1997). *Aesthetic Theory*. London: The Athlone Press Ltd.

Ahearn, L. (2000). Agency, *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, Vol. 9, No. 1–2, pp. 12–15.

Ahearn, L. (2001). Agency and Language, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 30, pp. 28–48.

Anand, R. (2006). Accretion, *Oxford Public International Law*. Available at: http://opil.ouplaw.com/view/10.1093/law:epil/9780199231690/law-9780199231690-e1372#law-9780199231690-e1372-div1-1 [accessed 12 December 2018].

Anderson, Z. (2011). In the Dust, Zoo Southside, Edinburgh, *Independent*. Available at: http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/in-the-dust-zoo-southside-edinburgh-2343966.html [accessed 4 September 2017].

Anderson, Z. (2018). East Wall, Tower of London, London, Review: Hofesh Shechter's Large-Scale Dance Show Storms the Tower, *Independent*. Available at: https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/east-wall-review-tower-of-london-hofesh-shechter-dance-lift-a8455911.html [accessed 25 July 2018].

Anon (2008). Northern Soul: A Related Cousin to B'boying? *B'Boy World*. Available at: http://www.bboyworld.com/forum/showthread.php?65362-Northen-Soul-A-related-cousin-to-bboying [accessed 7 December 2016].

Arts Council England (2013). *Great Art and Culture for Everyone: 10-year Strategic Framework*. Available at: https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Great_art_and_culture_for_everyone.pdf

Baker, H. (2001). *Turning South Again: Re-Thinking Modernism/Re-Reading Booker T.*, Duke University Press.

Banes, S. (1987). *Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-Modern Dance*, 2nd edn, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.

Banes, S. (1994). *Writing Dance in the Age of Modernism*, Hanover: Wesleyan University Press.

Banks, D. (ed.) (2011). *Say Word! Voices from Hip Hop Theater*, University of Michigan Press.

Barba, E. (ed.) (2010). *On Directing and Dramaturgy: Burning the House*, London and New York: Routledge.

Barba, E. and Barba, J. (2000). The Deep Order Called Turbulence: The Three Faces of Dramaturgy, *TDR/The Drama Review*, Vol. 44, No. 4, pp. 56–66.

Barthes, R. (1977). *Image Music Text*, London: Fontana Press.

Barthes, R. (1986). *The Rustle of Language*, New York: Hill and Wang.

Barton, B. (2005). Navigating Turbulence: The Dramaturg in Physical Theatre, *Theatre Topics*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 103–119.

Baudrillard, J. (1994). *Simulacra and Simulation*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Bauer, B. (2011). Enfolding the Aesthetic Experience: Dramaturgical Practice in Contemporary Dance, in *Dance Dramaturgy: Catalyst, Perspective + Memory*, 34th Annual International Festival, Toronto: York University and University of Toronto, p. 15.

BBC (2014). Musical Theatre, *BBC Bitesize*. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/music/music_20th_century/music_theatre1.shtml [accessed 12 January 2016].

Beech, D. (2015). Incomplete Decommodification: Art, State Subsidy and Welfare Economics, *PARSE Journal*, No. 2. Available at: http://parsejournal.com/article/incomplete-decommodification-art-state-subsidy-and-welfare-economics/.

Benjamin, W. (1999). *The Arcades Project*, Cambridge, MA, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Bennhold, K. (2017). Ferraris and Opera Were Urgent, but Grenfell Tower Risks Went Unheeded, *New York Times*. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/world/europe/london-inequality-grenfell-tower-fire.html?mcubz=3 [accessed 25 July 2018].

Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Besemer, S.P. (2005). ‘Be Creative!’, *October*, Vol. 13, No. 4.

Bevan, R. (2016). Olympicopolis Architects on their £1.3 Billion Vision for E20, *Evening Standard*. Available at: http://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life/olympicopolis-architects-on-their-13-billion-vision-for-e20-a3198041.html [accessed 2 August 2016].

Bigger, S. (2009). Review Article: Victor Turner, Liminality, and Cultural Performance: Studies in Religion and Education, *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, Vol. 30(2), pp. 209–212, Vol. 7672, No. February 2015, pp. 37–41.

Bloomer, N. (2017). Social Cleansing: Hundreds of Families Moved Out of London Boroughs Immediately After Grenfell, Politics.co.uk. Available at: http://www.politics.co.uk/news/2017/09/14/social-cleansing-hundreds-of-families-moved-out-of-london-bo [accessed 8 January 2019].

Bloomfield, R. (2015). Olympic Park: Essential Guide to Buying a Home in East London's Five New Housing Zones, *Evening Standard, Homes & Property*. Available at: http://www.homesandproperty.co.uk/property-news/buying/new-homes/olympic-park-essential-guide-to-buying-a-home-in-east-londons-five-new-housing-zones-47631.html [accessed 5 September 2016].

Boal, A. (1994). *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy,* London: Routledge.

Borch, C. (2002). Interview with Edward W. Soja: Thirdspace, Postmetropolis, and Social Theory, *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 113–120. Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1600910X.2002.9672816?journalCode=rdis20

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The Forms of Capital, Marxist.org. Available at: https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/fr/bourdieu-forms-capital.htm [accessed 26 July 2018].

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste.* London: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (2010). *Distinction*, Oxon: Routledge Classics.

Brooks, P. (1996). *The Melodramatic Imagination: Balzac, Henry James, Melodrama and the Mode of Excess*, Yale University Press.

Brown, W. (2015). *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution,* New York and Cambridge, MA: Zone Books: MIT Press.

Burk, J. (1918). The Fetish of Virtuosity. Retrieved June 12, 2018, from https://archive.org/details/jstor-738057/page/n1

Butler, J. (2004). *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence*, London and New York: Verso.

Butterworth, J. (2009). Too Many Cooks? in J. Butterworth and L. Wildschut (eds), *Contemporary Choreography,* London and New York: Routledge, pp. 177–194.

Butterworth, J. and Wildschut, L. (eds) (2009). *Contemporary Choreography: A Critical Reader*, Oxon: Routledge.

Carroll, N. and Seeley, W. (2013). Kinesthetic Understanding and Appreciation in Dance, *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 2, No. 71, pp. 177–186. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/23597553.

Carter, A. and O'Shea, J. (eds) (2010). *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader*, 2nd edn, London and New York: Routledge.

Carter, P. (2014). Touchez: The Poetics of Turbulence, *Performance Research*, Vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 1–6.

CBCnews (2012). Crowd Control: What Is Kettling? CBCnews, Canada. Available at: http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/crowd-control-what-is-kettling-1.1133313 [accessed 8 August 2016].

Cetina, K.K., Schatzki, T.R. and Von Savigny, E. (eds) (2001). *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, London and New York: Routledge.

Chang, J. (2005). *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*, New York: Picador.

Chang, J. (2006). *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*, New York: Basic Civitas.

Cherjovsky, N. (2010). *Virtual Hood: Exploring the Hip-Hop Culture Experience in a British Online Community*, University of Central Florida.

Cocotas, A. (2016). Design for the One Percent, *Jacobin*, p. 14. Available at: https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/06/zaha-hadid-architecture-gentrification-design-housing-gehry-urbanism/.

Collins, J. and Nisbet, A. (2012). *Theatre and Performance Design: A Reader in Scenography*, Oxon: Routledge.

Cooper-Albright, A. (1997). *Choreographing Difference*, New England: Wesleyan University Press.

Cresswell, T. and Merriman, P. (2011). *Geographies of Mobilities: Practices, Spaces, Subjects*, Farnham: Ashgate.

Cresswell, T. (2006). 'You Cannot Shake That Shimmie Here': Producing Mobility on the Dance Floor, *Cultural Geographies*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 55–77.

Cross, R. (2018). Summer University. Retrieved November 4, 2018, from https://www.sadlerswells.com/jerwoodstudio/summer-university/

Crossley, N. (2001). *The Social Body: Habit, Identity and Desire,* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cvejic, B. (2010). The Ignorant Dramaturg, *Maska*, Vol. 16, No. 131–132, pp. 40–53.

Cvejić, Z. (2016). *The Virtuoso as Subject*: *The Reception of Instrumental Virtuosity, c. 1815–c. 1850*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Available at: https://www.library.yorku.ca/find/Record/3647700

Danaher, G., Schirato, T. and Webb, J. (2000). *Understanding Foucault*, St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Davis, E. (2006). Found in Translation: The Emergence of Hip Hop Theatre, in J. Chang (ed.), *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*, New York: Basic, pp. 70–77.

Debord, G. (1983). *Society of the Spectacle*, Detroit: Black and Red.

Debord, G. (1994). *Society of the Spectacle*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith, New York: Zone Books.

Dedman, T. (2011). Agency in UK Hip-Hop and Grime Youth Subcultures: Peripherals and Purists, *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 5, pp. 507–522.

DeFrantz, T. (2004). Black Beat Made Visible: Hip Hop Dance and Body Power, in A. Lepeki (ed.), *Of the Presence of the Body: Essays on Dance and Performance Theory*, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, pp. 64–82.

Del Seamonds, L. (1996). The Fourth Wall, *The Museletter*, Vol. 9, No. 3.

DeLaet, T. (2013). Re-inventing The Past: Re-enactment in Contemporary Dance and Performance Art, *Research Centre for Visual Poetics*. Available at: http://www.visualpoetics.be/?action=project&id=16 [accessed 28 December 2016].

Deobhakta, S. (2014). *Analysis of Social Costs of Gentrification in Over-the-Rhine: A Qualitative Approach,* University of Louisville.

Desmond, J. (1997). *Meaning in Motion*, Durham and London: Duke. Available at: https://www.dukeupress.edu/Meaning-in-Motion/index-viewby=subject&categoryid=15&sort=newest.html.

Dodds, S. (2011). *Dancing on the Canon: Embodiments of Value in Popular Dance*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

DV8 (2018). Artistic Policy, DV8. Available at: https://www.dv8.co.uk/about-dv8/artistic-policy [accessed 12 December 2018].

Dyke, J. (2015). ZooNation and Breakin' Convention Secure over £1 Million Funding from Arts Council England, Sadler's Wells. Available at: http://www.sadlerswells.com/press/news/2015/09/zoonation-and-breakin-convention-secure-over-1-million-funding-from-arts-council-england/ [accessed 26 June 2016].

Elden, S. (2007). There is a Politics of Space because Space is Political: Henri Lefebvre and the Production of Space, *Radical Philosophy Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 101–116.

EUIPO, Breakin' Convention 014662183, European Union Intellectual Property Rights. Available at: https://euipo.europa.eu/eSearch/#details/trademarks/014662183 [accessed 9 December 2018].

Felluga, D. (2015). Simulacra (Simulacrum) and Simulation, in *Critical Theory: The Key Concepts*, Oxon and New York: Routledge, pp. 282–283.

Fogarty, M. (2011). *Dance to the Drummers Beat*. PhD Thesis. University of Edinburgh. [accessed 12 June 2015]

Fogarty, M. (2012). Each One Teach One: B'boying and Ageing, in P. Hodgkinson (ed.), *Ageing and Youth Cultures*, New York and London: Bloomsbury, pp. 56–65.

Foster Leigh, S. (1998). *Choreography and Narrative: Ballet's Staging of Story and Desire*, Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Foster, S.L. (2011). *Choreographing Empathy: Kinesthesia in Performance*, New York: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1980). The Confession of the Flesh, in C. Gordon (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, pp. 194–228. This interview was conducted by a round-table of historians.

Foucault, M. (1990). *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1991). *Discipline and Punish*, 3rd edn, London: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1997). The Ethics of the Concern of the Self as a Practice of Freedom, in P. Rabinow (ed.), *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, vol. 1, New York: New Press, pp. 281–301.

Foucault, M. (2002). *Archaeology of Knowledge*, London and New York: Routledge Classics.

Gardner, L. (2011). When Every Edinburgh Show Gets Five Stars, Rating System Inflation Has Won, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2011/aug/21/critics-notebook-lyn-gardner [accessed 10 June 2016].

Gilbert, J. (2014). *Common Ground: Democracy and Collectivity in an Age of Individualism*, London: Pluto Press.

Gilroy, P. (1991). It Ain't Where You're From, It's Where You're At, *Third Text*, Vol. 5, No. 13, pp. 3–16. Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09528829108576284 [accessed 25 May 2016].

Givens, W. (2017). Lindy Hop, Community and the Isolation of Appropriation, in R.J. Kowal, G. Siegmund and R. Martin (eds), *Oxford Handbook of Dance and Politics*, Oxford University PressHand.

Goldman, D. (2010). *I Want to Be Ready*, Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Gotman, K. (2015). The (Spectral) Lure of the Past, *Performance Research*, Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 62–70.

Grotowski, J. (1981). *Towards A Poor Theatre*, 2nd edn, Methuen & Co Ltd.

Gunderson, J. (2014). Lefebvre, Henri. The Production of Space (La production de l'espace). Translated by D. Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991. Original French version, 1974. Retrieved June 3, 2018, from https://sites.utexas.edu/religion-theory/bibliographical-resources/spatial-theory/annotated-bibliography-for-spatial-theory/theoretical-models-of-space/

Gunderson, J. (2014). Soja, Edward W. Third Space: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places. Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 1996. Retrieved June 8, 2018, from https://sites.utexas.edu/religion-theory/bibliographical-resources/spatial-theory/annotated-bibliography-for-spatial-theory/theoretical-models-of-space/

Hacking, I. (2001). Why Ask What? In *The Social Construction of What?* Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, pp. 1–35.

Hagendoorn, I. (2004). Some Speculative Hypotheses about the Nature and Perception of Dance and Choreography, *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, No. 11, pp. 3–4.

Hansen, P. and Callison, D. (eds) (2015). *Dance Dramaturgy*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Haraway, D. (2016). *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Hargittai, E. (2008). 'The Digital Reproduction of Inequality.' In D. Grusky (Ed.), *Social Stratification* (pp. 936–944). Boulder, CO.

Harney, S. and Moten, F. (2013). The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study. Available at: http://www.minorcompositions.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/undercommons-web.pdf [accessed 20 September 2018].

Harvey, D. (2007). Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 610, pp. 22–44.

Harvie, J. (2005). *Staging the UK*, Manchester: Manchester University Press. Available at: http://www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/cgi-bin/indexer?product=9780719062131.

Harvie, J. (2013). *Fair Play: Art, Performance and Neoliberalism*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Hazzard-Donald, K. (2004). Dance in Hip-Hop Culture, in M. Forman and M.A. Neal (eds), *That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*, New York: Routledge, pp. 505–516.

Heathcote, E. (2015). Where Will London's Artists Work? *Apollo*. Available at: http://www.apollo-magazine.com/where-will-londons-artists-work/ [accessed 17 June 2016].

Herrenstein Smith, B. (1983). Contingencies of Value, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 1–35. Available at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343404.

Higgins, C. (2005). Sadler's Wells Chief Unveils Strategy to Give Dance a Lift, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2005/mar/07/arts.artsnews1 [accessed 9 August 2016].

Hill, L. (2014). Status Quo Preserved in Arts Council's NPO Funding Round, *Arts Professional*. Available at: http://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/status-quo-preserved-arts-councils-npo-funding-round [accessed 13 August 2016].

Hoch, D. (2006). Toward a Hip-Hop Aesthetic, in J. Chang (ed.), *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*, New York: Basic Civitas, pp. 349–363.

Hodges Persley, N. (2015). Hip-hop Theater and Performance, in J. Williams (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hip Hop*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 85–99.

Höfling, A. (2006). Resistance from the Inside: An Analysis of the jogo de dentro in Brazilian Capoeira Angola. *Journal for the Anthropological Study of Human Movement*, *14*(2), 83–90.

Hoggard, L. (2016). Breakin' Convention, Dance Review: Breakin' Good with the Hip Hop World, *Evening Standard*. Available at: http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/theatre/breakin-convention-dance-review-breakin-good-with-the-hip-hop-world-a3238831.html [accessed 4 August 2016].

hooks, B. (2006). *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations*, 3rd edn, Oxon: Routledge.

hooks, b. (2015). *Yearning, Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*, Oxon: Routledge.

Hughes, H. (1998). Theatre in London and the Inter-relationship with Tourism, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 445–452. Available at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0261517798000417.

Hunt, P. (2017). Buckingham Palace Repairs Funding Approved by MPs, *BBC News*. Available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-39280770 [accessed 1 October 2018].

Huntington, C. (2007). *Hip Hop Dance: Meanings and Messages*, Jefferson and London: McFarland & Company.

Hutchinson, D. (2016). Local Authority Arts Funding 'Cut by More than £56m', *The Stage*. Available at: https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2016/local-authority-arts-funding-cut-by-more-than-56m/ [accessed 3 July 2017].

Jackson, S. (2011). *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, New York: Routledge.

Jackson, S. (2012). Just-in-Time: Performance and the Aesthetics of Precarity, *TDR: The Drama Review*, Vol. 56, No. 4, pp. 10–31.

Jameson, F. (1988). Postmodernism and Consumer Society, in A. Kaplan (ed.), *Postmodernism and its Discontents*, London and New York: Verso, pp. 192–206.

Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism, Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, New York: Duke University Press.

Johnson, I.K. (2009). *Dark Matter in B-boying: Race and Global Connection in Hip Hop*, University of Southern California.

Jones, O. (2014). It's the BBC's Rightwing Bias that is the Threat to Democracy and Journalism, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/17/bbc-leftwing-bias-non-existent-myth [accessed 28 June 2016].

Kehoe, A. (1991). *Christian contradictions and the world revolution: Letters to my son*. Dublin: Glendale.

Kendzior, S. (2014). The Peril of Hipster Economics: When Urban Decay Becomes a Set Piece to be Remodelled or Romanticised, Aljazeera. Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/05/peril-hipster-economics-201452710552115888 5.html [accessed 12 February 2019].

Kolb, A. (ed.) (2011). *Dance and Politics*, Bern: Peter Lang.

Kowal, R. J., Siegmund, G., & Martin, R. (Eds.). (2017). *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kowal, R., Siegmund, G., & Martin, R. (Eds.). (2017). Introduction. In *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Politics* (pp. 1–6). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kumar, A. (2012). Special Report: Want to Cleanse Your City of its Poor? Host the Olympics, *CeasefireMagazine*. Available at: https://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/olympics-opportunity-cleanse-city/ [accessed 10 September 2016].

Lee, R. (2006). Expectant Waiting, in C. Bannerman, J. Sofaer, and J. Watt (eds), *Navigating the Unknown: The Creative Process in Contemporary Performing Arts*, London: Middlesex University Press, pp. 158–185.

Lees, L., Slater, T., & Wyley, E. (Eds.). (2010). *The Gentrification Reader*. New York and London: Routledge.

Lefebvre, H. (1974). La Production de l'Espace. *L'Homme et la Société*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 15–32.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Lefebvre, H. (2009). Reflections on the Politics of Space, in N. Brenner and S. Elden (eds), *Space, World: Selected Essays*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p. 169.

Lepecki, A. (2006). *Exhausting dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement*, Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Lepecki, A. (2010). The Body as Archive: Will to Re-Enact and the Afterlives of Dances, *Dance Research Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 28–48.

Lepecki, A. (2013). Choreopolice and Choreopolitics: or, the Task of the Dancer, *The Drama Review*, Vol. 57, No. 4, pp. 13–27.

Lepecki, A. (2015). Errancy as Work: Seven Strewn Notes for Dance Dramaturgy, in P. Hansen and D. Callison (eds), *Dance Dramaturgy*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 51–66.

Lepecki, A. (2016). *Singularities: Dance in the Age of Performance*, Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Logan, B. (2014). Breakin' Convention: A Comedy Critic's Verdict on the Hip-Hop Festival, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/may/06/breakin-convention-street-dance-sadlers-wells-hip-hop [accessed 3 August 2016].

Lorey, I. (2015). *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious*, London and New York: Verso.

Maizland, L. (2017). Grenfell Tower, Explained: How a Deadly Fire in London Became a Political Crisis, *Vox*. Available at: https://www.vox.com/world/2017/6/20/15829416/london-fire-grenfell-tower-explained-political-crisis [accessed 16 March 2017].

Markula, P. and Pringle, R. (2006). *Foucault, Sport and Exercise*, Oxford: Routledge.

Martin, R. (1998). *Critical Moves: Dance Studies in Theory and Politics*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Martin, R. (2012). A Precarious Dance, a Derivative Sociality, *The Drama Review*, Vol. 56, No. 4, pp. 62–77.

Marx, K. (1963) [1852]. *18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. New York: International Publishers.

Maxwell, R. (ed.) (2001). *Culture Works*, Minneapolis: Maxwell.

Mayor of London (2015). Take a Closer Look: A Cultural Tourism Vision for London 2015–2017. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cultural_tourism_vision_for_london_low_res_version.pdf [accessed 10 January 2018].

McCarren, F.M. (2013). *French Moves: The Cultural Politics of Le Hip Hop*, New York: Oxford University Press.

McKechnie, S. and Stevens, C. (2009). Knowledge Unspoken: Contemporary Dance and the Cycle of Practice-led Research, Basic and Applied Research and Practice-led Practice, in H. Smith and R. Dean (eds), *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 84–103.

McKinney, J. (2011). Empathy and Exchange: Audience Experience of Scenography, in *Kinesthetic Empathy in Creative and Cultural Practices*, Bristol: Intellect, pp. 221–235.

McKinney, J. and Butterworth, P. (2014). *The Cambridge Introduction to Scenography*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McRobbie, A. (2016). *Be Creative*, Cambridge: Polity.

Meyer, L.B. (1956). *Emotion and Meaning in Music*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Midgelow, V. ed. (2019). *The Oxford Handbook of Improvisation in Dance*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Morley, S. (2018). East Wall, Hofesh Shechter Company. Available at: http://www.hofesh.co.uk/productions/archive/east-wall/ [accessed 15 August 2018].

Mulgan, G. (1996). Beware the Jargon in Academic-Speak, *Times Higher Education*. Available at: https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/beware-the-jargon-in-academic-speak/91656.article [accessed 2 October 2018].

Musa, Z. (2017). Olympicopolis at London's Queen Elizabeth Park, *Culturetrip*. Available at: https://theculturetrip.com/europe/united-kingdom/england/london/articles/olympicopolis-at-londons-queen-elizabeth-olympic-park/ [accessed 8 February 2018].

Naukkarinen, O. (2012). Variations in Artification, *Contemporary Aesthetics*. Available at: http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=635 [accessed 11 August 2016].

Neil, M., & Forman, M. (2012). *Thats The Joint*. (M. Neil & M. Forman, Eds.) (second). New York: Routledge.

Nelson, R. (2006). Practice-as-Research and the Problem of Knowledge, *Performance Research*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 105–116. Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13528160701363556 [accessed 23 August 2014].

Nelson, R. (2013). *Practice as Research in the Arts*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nereson, A. (2010). Krump or Die: Krumping and Racist Ideologies in the Production and Reception of Rize, *Gnovis: A Journal of Communication, Culture and Technology*. Available at: http://www.gnovisjournal.org/2010/11/30/krump-or-die-krumping-and-racist-ideologies-production-and-reception-rize/ [accessed 17 October 2017].

Noland, C. (2009). *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures, Producing Culture*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Norman, N. (2015). Hofesh Shechter's Barbarians Review at Sadler's Wells – Short on Thrills, *The Stage*. Available at: https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2015/hofesh-shechters-barbarians-review-sadlers-wells-short-thrills/ [accessed 11 January 2017].

Oddey, A. (1996). *Devising Theatre: A Practical and Theoretical Handbook*, Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Oddey, A. and White, C. (eds) (2006). *The Potentials of Spaces: The Theory and Practice of Scenography and Performance*, Bristol: Intellect.

Olssen, M. (2004) 'Foucault and Marxism: rewriting the theory of historical materialism', *Policy Futures in Education*, 2(3), pp. 254–482. Available at: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2304/pfie.2004.2.3.3 (accessed: 5 July 2019).

Osborn, J., Kearney, D. and Fogarty, M. (2015). The Multiple Legitimacies of Tentacle Tribe, a Dance Company, in P. Guerra and T. Moreira (eds), in *Keep It Simple Make It Fast: An Approach to Underground Music Scenes*, pp. 535–546.

Österlind, E. (2008). Acting Out of Habits – Can Theatre of the Oppressed Promote Change? Boal's Theatre Methods in Relation to Bourdieu's Concept of Habitus, *Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance,* Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 71–82. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13569780701825328.

Osterweis, A. (2014). The Muse of Virtuosity: Desmond Richardson, Race, and Choreographic Falsetto, *Dance Research Journal*, Vol. 45, pp. 53–74.

Osumare, H. (2009). The Dance Archaeology of Rennie Harris, in J. Malnig (ed.), *Ballroom, Boogie, Shimmy Sham, Shake: A Social and Popular Dance Reader*, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, pp. 261–281.

Osumare, H. (2012). Global Breakdancing and the Intercultural Body, *Dance Research*, Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 30–45.

Patent Office (2016). Intellectual Property Office: Case details for Trade Mark EU014662183, GOV.UK. Available at: https://www.ipo.gov.uk/tmcase/Results/4/EU014662183 [accessed 15 September 2016].

Pellegrino, G. ed. (2011). *The Politics of Proximity: Mobility and Immobility in Practice*, Farnham: Ashgate.

Pine, A. and Kuhlke, O. (eds) (2013). *Geographies of Dance*, Plymouth: Lexington.

Poulantzas, N. (2000). *State, Power, Socialism*, London: Verso Classics.

Prickett, S. (2013). Hip-Hop Dance Theatre in London: Legitimising an Art Form, *Dance Research*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 174–190.

Prickett, S. (2016). Constrained Bodies: Dance, Social Justice, and Choreographic Agency, *Dance Research Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 3, pp. 45–57. Available at: https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/S0149767716000309/type/journal_article [accessed 9 December 2018].

Pritchard, S. (2017). Artwashing and Gentrification (or the Deeply Interwoven Web of Arts and Corporate Interests), blog, Colouring In Culture. Available at: http://colouringinculture.org/blog/artwashinggentrificationcomplexweb [accessed 19 June 2017].

Pritchard, S. (2018). In My Beginning Is My End: Transcript of My Prose Poem and Film, performed at Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival, Belfast, blog, Colouring In Culture. Available at: http://colouringinculture.org/blog/inmybeginningismyend [accessed 10 November 2018].

Profeta, K. (2015). *Dramaturgy in Motion: At Work on Dance and Movement Performance*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.

Pugalis, L. and Giddins, B. (2011). A Renewed Right to Urban Life: A Twenty-First Century Engagement with Lefebvre's Initial 'cry', Northumbria Research Link. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13264826.2011.623785 [accessed 13 June 2018].

Quinlan, M. (2017). Gaga as Metatechnique: Negotiating Choreography, Improvisation, and Technique in a Neoliberal Dance Market, *Dance Research Journal*, Vol. 49, No. 2, pp. 26–43. Available at: muse.jhu.edu/article/668981 [accessed 5 September 2018].

Rachwal, T. (2017). *Precarity and Loss: On Certain and Uncertain Properties of Life and Work*, Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Rancière, J. (2004). *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, New York: Continuum.

Rattrey, M. (2016). Review: Breakin' Convention 2016 (@BConvention), Breakin' Perception, *Am Hip Hop Magazine*. Available at: http://www.iamhiphopmagazine.com/breakin-convention-review-2016-breakin-perception/ [accessed 5 August 2016].

Reid, B. (2016). *The Journey from Hip Hop Theatre to Visual Theatre and Photography.* Available at: http://www.benjireid.com [accessed 20 June 2016].

Reynolds, D., & Reason, M. (2012). *Kinesthetic Empathy in Creative and Cultural Practices*. (D. Reynolds & M. Reason, Eds.). Bristol and Chicago: Intellect.

Ridout, N. and Schneider, R. (2012). Precarity and Performance: An Introduction, *Drama Review*, Vol. 56, No. 4, pp. 5–9.

Roberts, C. (2018). East Wall, Hofesh Schecter Company. Available at: http://www.hofesh.co.uk/productions/east-wall/ [accessed 25 July 2018].

Robinson, L. (2015). *Performing the Surplus, Making a Spectacle: Male Street Dance Crews on Television Talent Shows*, University of Surrey.

Roy, S. (2018). East Wall review – Hofesh Shechter's Dance Army Lays Siege to Tower, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2018/jul/20/east-wall-review-hofesh-shechter-dance-tower-of-london [accessed 25 July 2018].

Santos, T. (2014). On Turbulence: In Between Mathematics and Performance, *Performance Research*, Vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 7–12. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2014.958347.

Schloss, J. (2009). *Foundation: B-boys, B-girls and Hip Hop Culture in New York*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Schram, S. (2013). Occupy Precarity, *Theory & Event*, Vol. 16, No. 1.

Schroeder, F. (2015). Bringing Practice Closer to Research: Seeking Integrity, Sincerity and Authenticity, *International Journal of Education Through Art*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 343–354.

Schulman, S. (2013). *The Gentrification of the Mind Witness to a Lost Imagination*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Scott, A.B. (2001). Dance, in R. Maxwell (ed.), *Culture Works: The Political Economy of Culture,* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 107–130.

Scott, L. and Jackson, V. (2008). Bulldozed: Innovative Strategies for Addressing the Mental Health Consequences of Gentrification, Social Work Community Forum 2008. Available at: http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/ssw_forum/3 [accessed 12 January 2016].

SeeingDance (2016). Hip Hop from Around the World and Around the Corner, SeeingDance. Available at: http://www.seeingdance.com/hip-hop-from-around-the-world-and-around-the-corner-13042016/ [accessed 17 June 2016].

Seetoo, C.-Y. (2013). *The Political Kinesthetics of Contemporary Dance: Taiwan in Transnational Perspective*, University of California, Berkeley. Available at: https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5gg5d9cm.

Shapiro, R. (2004). The Aesthetics of Institutionalisation: Breakdancing in France, *Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 316–335.

Shapiro, R. and Heinich, N. (2012). When is Artification? Researchgate, pp. 1–16. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273921770_When_is_Artification [accessed 11 August 2016].

Shaw, J. and Byler, D. (2016). Precarity, in *Cultural Anthropology*. Available at: https://culanth.org/curated_collections/21-precarity [accessed 6 March 2018].

Shaw, K. (2008). Gentrification: What it Is, Why it Is, and What can be Done About it, *Geography Compass*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1–32.

Shenton, M. (2017). Pulling Lyn Gardner's Blog Is Another Nail in the Coffin of Arts Journalism, *The Stage*. Available at: https://www.thestage.co.uk/opinion/2017/mark-shenton-pulling-lyn-gardners-blog-another-nail-coffin-arts-journalism/ [accessed 26 March 2017].

Smith, Barbara, H. (1983). Contingencies of Value, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 1–35.

Smith, C. (2015). News: Funding Boost for Hip Hop Dance Theatre, Londondance.com. Available at: http://londondance.com/articles/news/arts-council-england-funding-boost-for-hip-hop/ [accessed 5 March 2016].

Smith, H. and Dean, R.T. (2009). *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Smith-Autard, J.M. (2010). *Dance Composition*, 6th edn, London: Methuen Drama.

Soja, E. (1989). *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, London: Verso.

Soja, E. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real and Imagined Spaces*, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing.

Solga, K. (2013). Virtuosity on Virtu(e)osity and Theatrical Community, *Contemporary Theatre Review*, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 76–79.

Spalding, A. (2013). The Diary: Alistair Spalding, FT.com/Life & Arts, pp. 1–3. Available at: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/3678cbfa-e949-11e2-9f11-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3UNa5z3Tz [accessed 1 January 2015].

St John, G. (2008). *Victor Turner and Contemporary Cultural Performance*, New York and Oxford: Berghahn.

Stalling Huntingdon, C. (2007). *Hip Hop Dance: Meanings and Messages*, Jefferson: McFarland & Company Inc.

BoyBlue (2019) *Emancipation of Expressionism*, *Boyblueent.com*. Available at: http://boyblueent.com/?page_id=16021 (accessed: 25 June 2019).

Taşkale, A.R. (2012). Kettling and the Fear of Revolution, Critical Legal Thinking. Available at: http://criticallegalthinking.com/2012/03/23/kettling-and-the-fear-of-revolution/ [accessed 7 August 2016].

Tatchell, P. (2016). David Furnish, There's No Equality in Snobbery, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/apr/06/david-furnish-equality-snobbery-elton-john-honours-system [accessed 29 September 2016].

Taylor, J. (2018). What Will Parliament Repairs Cost – and Where will MPs Go?, *The Week*. Available at: http://www.theweek.co.uk/91366/what-will-parliament-repairs-cost-and-where-will-mps-go [accessed 1 October 2018].

Lees, L. (2014). Gentrification and What Can Be Done to Stop It, online video. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMz1x5_yF2Q [accessed 16 March 2018].

Theodores, D. (2002). Rehabilitating Dance Criticism, SARMA Laboratory for Discursive Practices and Expanded Publication. Available at: http://sarma.be/docs/649 [accessed 20 March 2017].

Thornton, S. (1996). *Club Cultures: Music, Media, and Subcultural Capital*, Middletown: Weslyan University Press.

Thrift, N. (1996). *Spatial Formations*, London: Sage.

Trencsényi, K. and Cochrane, B. (eds) (2014). *New Dramaturgy: International Perspectives on Theory and Practice*, London and New York: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama.

Trencsényi, K. (2015). *Dramaturgy in the Making*, London and New York: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama.

Tucker, P. (2017). The Grenfell Tower Fire Was the End Result of a Disdainful Housing Policy, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/20/grenfell-fire-housing-policy-social-housing-tenants [accessed 28 November 2017].

Tufnell, M. and Crickmay, C. (1993). *Body, Space, Image*, Binsted: Dance Books.

Turner, V. (1966). Liminality and Communitas, in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell Paperbacks, pp. 93–203.

Uno, R. (2004). The 5th Element, Theatre Communications Group. Available at: http://www.tcg.org/publications/at/apr04/element.cfm [accessed 2 September 2016].

Uno, R. (2006). Theatres Crossing the Divide: A Baby Boomers Defense of Hip-Hop Aesthetics, in *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*, New York: Basic Civitas, pp. 300–305.

Urry, J. (2009). Mobilities and Social Theory, in *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*. pp. 477– 495.

Vujanović, A. (2013). Notes on the Politicality of Contemporary Dance, in *Dance, Politics & Co-Immunity*, pp. 181–191. Available at: https://www.diaphanes.net/titel/notes-on-the-politicality-of-contemporary-dance-2134.

Vujanović, A. (2016). On Precarity and the Freedom from Security, Social Text Online. Available at: https://socialtextjournal.org/state-of-insecurity/ [accessed 12 April 2018].

Vulliamy, E. (2017). Apartheid London: Social Cleansing Ruined the Minestrone Streets I Grew Up In, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jun/17/apartheid-notting-hill-grenfell-tower-development-social-cleansing [accessed 8 January 2019].

Wainwright, O. (2018). From Olympic Park to East Bank: How St Paul's 'Faux Pas' Led to Design Rethink, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2018/jun/05/goodbye-olympicopolis-hello-east-bank-more-plans-unveiled-for-troubled-site [accessed 5 October 2018].

Wainwright, S., Williams, C. and Turner, B. (2006). Varieties of Habitus and the Embodiment of Ballet, *Qualitative Research*, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 535–558.

Watson, J. (2018). Hip-Hop: Billion-Dollar Biz, abcNews. Available at: http://abcnews.go.com/Business/story?id=89840&page=1 [accessed 13 February 2018].

White, R., Gilet, S. and Alexander, A. (2002). What Is Unsteady State Heat Transfer? Available at: http://www.eng.fsu.edu/~schreiber/uol/exp240/whatisuss.html [accessed 1 November 2015].

Williams, H. (2018). Botis Seva: We Need a Massive Shift in the Dance Work put on Stage, *Guardian*. Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2018/jul/21/q-and-a-botis-seva-dance-hip-hop [accessed 5 January 2019].

Williams, J. (2007). *'Tha Realness': In Search of Hip-Hop Authenticity*, University of Pennsylvania. Available at: https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1093&context=curej

Winship, L. (2016). Plans to Create New Dance Hub in East London Announced, *Evening Standard*. Available at: https://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/theatre/plans-to-create-new-dance-hub-in-east-london-announced-a3245281.html [accessed 8 November 2017].

Wismayer, H. (2017). Grenfell Was No Ordinary Accident, CityLab. Available at: https://www.citylab.com/equity/2017/08/grenfell-was-no-ordinary-accident/536907/ [accessed 27 November 2017].

Zsiga, E. (2013). *The Sounds of Language: An Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology*, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.