

Start from scratch; discard all you've worked out so far. Once you abandon a rational approach, your dance will leap to life. And while the shapes that rise to the surface might be amorphous, they will truly reek of you. Dance doesn't need a structure, but it must be as detailed and lifelike as a miniature portrait. Performing inevitably involves the use of intentional and nonintentional elements. We won't get a clear glimpse of your inner life unless you let go of yourself. Your dance now embodies that formless yet distinct presence surging forth from the depths of your soul. Look. What's happening with the sky? Accept with good grace all that spontaneously emerges from inside of you. What on earth is happening to those clouds? Spread your limbs freely. Your hands and feet will move of their own accord as soon as they are no longer fettered by conscious control. Your limbs must move in unison with your heartbeat. (Ohno, 286).

Introduction

This research consists of the documentation and analysis that depicts the creation of a scenic work that departed from the investigation of the concept of *vulnerability*. The writing of this document consists of the combination of my reflections on my experience as creator and choreographer/director, the responses and reflections of the dancers involved and the words of other artists and writers who inspired me throughout the whole process.

There were five main purposes to this work. I wanted to step out of the stage -as a performer- so that I could focus entirely on the direction of the creative process and scenic work; to test myself and become a creator and guide of a research process that would culminate in a stage piece; to investigate vulnerability looking for a scenic language that would later aid the creation of a piece; to bring together a community of dancers to investigate the concept of vulnerability and later make a piece, and; to incorporate my Theatre background to my current Dance learning to lead a research process and make a scenic work about vulnerability.

I decided to employ and develop a methodology that was closely informed by both my theatrical and dance experience. Throughout my years as an undergraduate student of Theatre and Dance, I have been deeply influenced by the things I have learned and which have shaped me as an artist. For this research I chose to work with emotions, physicality in order to access altered states of consciousness, movement research, improvisation, use of the voice, meditation, writing, use of music, Butoh-informed practices (in which the use of the voice, guided visualizations, inner work, intuition, introspection, images and the work with elements such as water, sand and fabric were included) and, performance practices (which were informed by the concepts of non-likeness, presence, the role of the performer, risk, violence, investment, trial & error, honesty).

Despite having been previously acquainted with all these means and feeling a certain affinity for each of them, their use represented an important challenge. They would be deposited in the dancers who were -by default- the primary tools with which I would work with to make a piece, as taught by this paper's director, Ray Eliot Schwartz.

This investigation -especially the research/creative process- also became a place of exchange between its participants regarding the concept of vulnerability and what each of us reckoned about it. The concept was vastly approached both in direct conversation and in writing with the dancers.

In the first part of this document I will use a writing that helps me support the research done during the investigative and creative process and which in turn became the foundation where the piece was constructed. This portion will be comprised of my ideas regarding the work I wanted to do and how I aid myself with what diverse dance and theatre makers have gifted to the field, where I can mention Deborah Hay, Kazuo Ohno and Anne Bogart. It is also aided by what important authors have written about art, philosophy, the body and vulnerability, such as Elaine Scarry and Tim Etchells.

The second part of the paper will be devoted to the documentation of the work sessions held over a period of four and a half months, from January until May 2010. This fragment of the work will be supported by descriptions of the strategies, tools and exercises provided to the dancers. It will also contain my observations and reflections on the discoveries and outcomes of the practices, about how these shaped the group and the work that we did. Furthermore, it will be comprised of what the dancers reported about their individual and collective experience within the research process¹. Additionally, the chapter will be aided by a photographic and video archive that will help the reader connect more easily to the practices exposed.

The third part of this dossier will be dedicated to the creation of the stage piece. It will offer relevant information on how these practices, tools, strategies and exercises were translated and transported into the actual creation of the piece, how they became scenic material. It will moreover present technical aspects of the creation of the piece, such as the choices in music, costume, light and visual effects designs².

The final fragment of the paper will deal with my reflections, observations and conclusions regarding all the work -the purposes and goals, the creative process and the piece itself, as well as my part as guide and choreographer/director.

1 In this section of the document, the words shall be presented in Spanish -the original language in which they were written- while each footnote will indicate the reader where to access the translated quote in English.

2 At the end of the document there will be a CD and a DVD containing a photographic and video archive of the investigative/creative process as well as the performance of the piece. Throughout the chapters *Accessing Vulnerability* and *Aquellos Silencios*, the reader shall be directed to such material.