

# Choreographing in nomadic traces

JENNI-ELINA VON BAGH



MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME IN CHOREOGRAPHY

**THEATRE  
ACADEMY**

**X UNIARTS HELSINKI**

**2018**

---

THESIS

# Choreographing in nomadic traces

JENNI-ELINA VON BAGH



ABSTRACT

Date:

AUTHOR Jenni-Elina von Bagh		MASTER'S OR OTHER DEGREE PROGRAMME Master's degree programme in choreography	
TITLE OF THE WRITTEN SECTION/THESIS Choreographing in nomadic traces		NUMBER OF PAGES + APPENDICES IN THE WRITTEN SECTION 71 pages	
TITLE OF THE ARTISTIC/ ARTISTIC AND PEDAGOGICAL SECTION a life -nomadic melodrama. The artistic section is produced by the Theatre Academy. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The artistic section is not produced by the Theatre Academy (copyright issues have been resolved). <input type="checkbox"/>			
The final project can be published online. This permission is granted for an unlimited duration.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	The abstract of the final project can be published online. This permission is granted for an unlimited duration.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>This written part of my final theses work focuses on my own choreographic work through a nomadic framing. I go through methodologies and principles in choreographing, that bring us closer to a question of non-identification, pre-individuality and nomadism. I am curious to consider the phase of my artistry as a transitional phase concerning my personal relationship to dance and choreographing but also considering a general atmosphere in philosophical discourses and art; a step from postmodern and poststructuralist discourses to the realm of new materialism and posthumanism. Through my writing and exemplification of my own artistic works, especially my artistic final work: <i>a life -nomadic melodrama</i>, I want to analyze how a co-resonance of specifically Gilles Deleuze's philosophy influence and give support to artistic work and artistic thinking.</p> <p>In the first chapter I go through couple of general aspects in my choreographic working. I articulate three different perspectives that can be generalized as artistically valuable. These are such as translation as a choreographic method, semantic and somatic as compositional co-partners, and the question of body in the realm of becoming.</p> <p>In the second chapter I introduce theoretical backgrounds to my artistic working through philosophic concepts such as "becoming", "assemblage", "nomadism" and "a life" that specifically resonated in the way I approach my artistic work as non-essentialist.</p> <p>The third chapter is an investigation of my artistic final work <i>a life -nomadic melodrama</i>. First I elaborate some theoretical and artistic influences for the starting point of the process. Then I introduce some methodologies used in the process. I will also introduce the structure of the piece to exemplify how the before mentioned concepts concretize in this particular work.</p> <p>In the fourth chapter I go through certain nomadic principles that has affected especially the artistic process of <i>a life - nomadic melodrama</i> and my artistic thinking in general.</p>			
ENTER KEYWORDS HERE nomadism, becoming, assemblage, a life, new materialism, posthumanism, transformation, body			



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	9
INTRODUCTION	10
1 GENERAL ASPECTS IN MY CHOREOGRAPHIC WORKING—IN THE PLACE OF DISPLACEMENT	14
1.1 <i>Translation freely interpreted as an artistic method</i>	15
1.2 <i>Semantic and somatic as compositional elements</i>	19
1.3 <i>Body in the realm of becoming; from phenomenology to posthumanity</i>	23

---

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS IN ARTISTIC WORKING	30
2.1 <i>Becoming</i>	32
2.2 <i>Assemblage</i>	34
2.3 <i>Nomadism</i>	36
2.4 <i>A life</i>	39
2.5 <i>Some thoughts about the starting point (a life) – in a life nomadic melodrama</i>	41

---

3 A LIFE—NOMADIC MELODRAMA	45
3.1 <i>About the beginning phase of a life -nomadic melodrama</i>	46
3.2 <i>Methodology used in the process</i>	49
3.3 <i>Description of the space</i>	56
3.4 <i>Structure of the piece</i>	57

---

4 NOMADIC PRINCIPLES AND EXPLORATIONS IN THE PROCESS OF A <i>LIFE - NOMADIC MELODRAMA</i>	62
5 CONCLUSION, IN THE ERA OF POSTHUMANISM	78
REFERENCES	81





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Working group of *a life -nomadic melodrama*: Johannes Purovaara, Jussi Suomalainen, Hanna Raiskinmäki, Ingvill Fossheim, Virpi Nieminen, Ville Kabrell, Otto Sandqvist, Elli Salo and Luca Sirviö

Tero Nauha: Thank you for your supportive and constructive supervising with this written part of my final theses.

Liisa Risu: Thank you for sensitively supporting me through and with the artistic final work *a life nomadic melodrama*.

Kirsi Monni: Thank you for the incredibly valuable support, wiseness and artistic guidance during my choreography studies.

Sara Gurevitsh, Sebastian Lopez-Lehto and Iiro Näkki: Thank you for all the inspiration, friendship and loyalty, all the spent time together.

Juhana von Bagh, Astrid von Bagh and Olavi von Bagh: Juhana, Thank you for all the support, love, patience, and for taking a big responsibility of the family during these past three years. Thank you, Astrid, and Olavi for being in my life. I love you.

## INTRODUCTION

Following my personal life narrative, there has been different phases what comes to my relationship to dance, how I approach art and performance, also how I place myself in this field. Already my past as a dancer is very layered. A professional narrative starting from engagement with very physical style-oriented organic and technically skilful mastering of movement, like when working with Kenneth Kvarnström, to completely the opposite as when working with postmodern choreographer Deborah Hay who approaches dance as a perception practice and opens the dancer's creativity differently, can be distinguished in my career as a dancer.

Because of these already layered phases in my past, a step into a different kind of artistry as a choreographer has been at times even challenging. Strong influences of others easily mix up my own creativity resulting into confusion. Besides, there has also been an inner trust about creative toning and artistry around me. I have lived with art-making relatively long time already. My layered past has encouraged me to recognize the affects and resonances that pass by, re-enter and circulate and wake interest for then trying to grasp these as material in an artistic process. I have tried to see the different perspectives to dance as fluctuating and force giving, rather than trying to stabilize myself.

Still it is clear that some of my strongest influences for making choreography and approaching dance emerge from postmodern perspective (specifically Hay's approach) which considers dance and body as relational and experiencing, rather than reviewing a performance as representation or illustrative, as in traditions of classical ballet or modern dance. Through working experience (with Hay for example) and embodiment of certain other influences around me, I have in different ways been absorbing artistic practices of non-representation. Here it is relevant to point to a historical reference of the so called New Paradigm in the ontology of dance, mainly manifested in 1950 s and 1960 s among different artist in specifically New York. This ontological shift, meaning shift from classical ballet and modern dance into postmodern era, a shift of representative way of approaching body and performance into an

approach of processual, emergent, phenomenologically perceived body, has clearly affected my artistry and my configuration of dance as art-form.

Besides, it has been relevant for me to not get stabilized into any specific genre, to not imitate, for example, methodology used in the 60 s in New York. During my choreographic studies, I have been curious to investigate new choreographic methods to enter in communication with today's world, current phenomenon in art and society.

Some clear theoretical influences that have affected my choreographic thinking during my studies relate to new materialistic approaches where the focus point is shifted from the human experience to processing of all other entities, also non-human, but also questions of materiality itself as processual. This approach of new materialism has been clearly present as a theme during my master studies of choreography, opening windows both thematically and methodologically into questions of the relevant global questions of the role of the human itself, but also opening choreographic thinking into the investigation of materiality of art and non-hierarchical structures in thinking, creating and composing. Also, thematically it has engaged me in asking roles of object and subject, human and non-human. Through my artistic works, I have wanted to elaborate how these philosophical influences manifest in artistic process.

The influences of new materialist theories have further lead me to approach the choreographic practice and performative event both methodologically and thematically approached as an aspect of floating identity; pre-individual and nomadic. That could mean to demand a performative process to deal with disciplined sensitivity in tracing of unpredictable paths in terms of performance structure, composition and performing body. In relation to this particular question, I am interested in seeing the relationship between different meaning systems evolving in the process as all the time connecting networks. As well, the question of process and creativity itself can be looked at from a nomadic window what includes elements of unpredictability, change and processual toning with the materiality. These aspects are guidelines that follow me through this whole work of writing.

Through my own artistic choreographic processes, I have been able to distinguish certain more established methodologies that support these before-mentioned aspects. One of them could be brought up as an aspect of translation, more precisely translation of a philosophical concept into context of a performance. In act of translation, specifically when processing something complex, the interest lies in artistic co-resonance and aspect of freeing up artistic intuition instead of representation of the concept. Another tendency, more concerning compositional level in my choreographic works could be distinguished as a juxtaposition between semantic meaning systems, and body as a somatic component, meaning pairings with language and body, linearity with non-linearity. In this case the question is to investigate the multi-layered psychodynamic body as a compositional assemblage, where different compositional elements operate in some kind of co-resonance, not melting together but causing effects of agitating dynamics, cracks and dislocations. In the question of semantic and somatic, language is not given an over-coding power but used as a compositional component operating as a co-part in all the time emerging web of meaning-structures. In connection to this I will also elaborate the aspect of body itself as a compositional element. How is body approached as an element in a state of becoming? All these aspects I will analyze specifically in the first chapter.

The second chapter includes more detailed theoretical background. I want to dive into a couple of contemporary philosophical concepts like "becoming", "assemblage", "nomadism" and "a life" and see how they specifically intermingle and support the artistic processes. These concepts are almost all at least partially derived from philosophical thinking of Gilles Deleuze which means that they are striving towards breaking of cartesian division, categories of human and non-human, life and death. In this sense, they are supportive base concepts not only in relation to my artistic final work, *a life -nomadic melodrama*, but also in relation to some new materialist approaches that have more recently lifted these concepts into current philosophical discourses. I am specifically interested in these concepts not only because of their non-essentialist approach, but also because of their suggestion of giving an alternative model for thought which suggest a question of rather pre-individuality than an already traced path.

In the third chapter, I will go through my artistic final work *a life -nomadic melodrama* and draw some connections with the introduced theoretical groundings in the process. I try to elaborate how these concepts in a practical level have given support in finding new resonances, artistic attempts in creating composition and choreography. I will especially approach the structure of the piece and methodologies used in the process.

In the fourth chapter, I will further dive into some nomadic principles that have been relevant in operating with specifically in the process of *a life -nomadic melodrama*. I try to define certain important aspects that have affected my artistic thinking and toning with especially this particular work.

This written work is strongly influenced by philosophical discourses in general and their co-operative force in creative working. Through this work of writing, I want to ask how current influences can in philosophy, such as nomadic thinking and post humanity, operate in performance and art. How does a jump from postmodern and poststructuralist into posthuman show up in possible methodological and processual aspects in artistic working? In this work of writing, I try to co resonate with this question, specifically through my own experiences in artistic processes, and specifically through my artistic final work *a life -nomadic melodrama*.

This work is an investigation of artistic resonance, of nomadism, and of struggle and joy of these aspects in a same picture.

# 1 GENERAL ASPECTS IN MY CHOREOGRAPHIC WORKING—IN THE PLACE OF DISPLACEMENT

During my choreographic studies, I have tried to evaluate the aspect of composition and choreography by looking for different alternatives thematically and compositionally. I have been curious to investigate how performance would appear as an event in its most, meaning de-solving stabilized representations, and breaking division of object and subject in the actualization of a performance. I recognize an overall tendency in my previous works of an interest to operate in a place of displacement and realm of becoming. That has happened through approaching composition as materially processual, where the richness of it emerges in the play of different kind of compositional elements operating through different expressional registers, such as language and somatically affective body. Then the whole choreographic process and finished work resonates in an unstable balance point. This is both a question of artistic thematic starting-point, compositional methods, and bodily practices in choreographic work. In this chapter, I will approach the nomadic notion of displacement through aspects of translation, semantic and somatic as compositional elements and body in a state of becoming.

First, I will approach the aspect of translation as a possible mechanism to examine a relational bond between philosophy and art. Translation brings forth a question of not only understanding or mastering, representing or informing any philosophical theory, but almost vice versa. It is an attempt to reveal the process of co-resonance with a certain source-material. Then I will approach compositional aspects of semantic and somatic as something valuable in approaching dislocation as a compositional perspective. Lastly, I will go through an elaboration of the body as a component itself by trying to articulate the most affective influences that resonate in the way I approach body itself as nomadic and related —in a state of becoming and as a multiplicity.

### 1.1 *Translation freely interpreted as an artistic method*

Looked from my own perspective as a choreographer, the aspect of translation means often a translation between theoretical discourse or philosophical concept into an artistic work on stage, an act of translation between different mediums; philosophy and art. On the other hand, translation could be approached as something that happens on a microlevel during an artistic choreographic process, like translating a written instruction into the medium of moving body, or translating a visual perception into immediately receiving body, or by letting philosophical concept inform the practicing/performing body by practicing a resemblance of this certain concept. Still the question arises: what does a translation mean exactly? What happens in the act of translation itself? Especially, why to call a relationship between theory and practice as an act of translation? I have found some possible perspectives into that question.

The artistic practice of translating from one medium to another (philosophical discourse into artistic work) for example, or from another artist work to another artist work, could be perceived as some kind of 'perversion'. Victoria Perez Royo opens up the aspect of translation in an artistic context through documentation of an international art-workshop for students (Erasmus intensive 2013) in the book, "Practicing Composition: Making practice" (2015) in the chapter of "Subjectivation in solo work". She opens the idea of collective artistic practice in solo-working, where translation is used as a method to practice artistic exchange between different artists solo-works. This method developed for this workshop was, according to Perez Royo, based on two poets' works: Silvana Franzetti and Leopoldo Maria Panero. Especially through writings of Panero, Perez Royo enlightens the aspect of 'perversion' as radicalization of the understanding of translation. According to Panero, perversion is "a play on words with *version* and *per-version*" (Perez Royo in Monni and Alsopp 2005, 116). Through writings of Panero, 'perversion' is understood as an affirmation of a difference and a consideration of infidelity to the original. "Translation is always based on reading, which is by necessity personal, subjective and different to the original. The focus is now set on explicitly fostering this difference and working creatively with it." (Perez-Royo in Monni and Allsopp

2015, 116.) These aspects of translation were introduced by especially Monni to our choreography program during the first year of our studies through different "translation practices" between different solo-works. Later I wanted to consider the use of theoretical discourses as source material in artistic practice through this similar kind of aspect of translation.

Through consideration of the aspect of perversion, translation means a mixture of both respect and non-respect for the original. There is in this case a rigorous consciousness of a play of ownership and not ownership, (in this sense tightly related to nomadic thinking). When using a philosophical concept as a resource for artistic translation, it should be freed up for the use of creativity. The juxtaposition of intuition and interpretation enables a creative process which enables artist in question to remain a distanced relation to the material and at the same time being close to it. The artist gives her or himself away -for the activity of translation. In this way the art in process is freed from only representing the original and gives an opening for something intuitively essential and true in a poetic manner.

Walter Benjamin analyzes the role of translation in an introduction text for Baudelaire-translation in an essay "The task of the translator" (1923). According to him, respect for original, a genuine attempt to communicate the original version and share it to a different language means that there is never a possibility to give an exact copy in the act of translation. —It is a question of transformation. In this way the "life" of an original gets an "afterlife" (Benjamin 2000, 1) and this is how the original or the mother-tongue of the original gets also transformed. The original will either "never become the same" (Benjamin 2000, 1) after the process of translation. According to Benjamin, translation is a mode, a state of readiness. It is a question of a work's translatability. Somehow this translatability is the one that describes the real need for translation. Benjamin describes this as a call for translation. An original work either has this, or it has not (Benjamin 2000, 1).

The act of translation is something that clearly changes and shakes the stability of a concept of original overall. By doing this, it kind of concentrates on the translatability, spirit of the work, which then is also in the travel and mode of transformation. Considering this, the act of translation sounds like a



paradoxical method in establishing and researching the original, but then causing a total questioning of the relevance of originality and ownership. This is confusing and ungraspable. More shortly put, I wonder if translation is a tool to acknowledge pre-individual forces, to be in contact with creativity itself. This means that as a method it opens a gate for free, but rigorous artistry. In a process of translation, I am as an artist (together with a working-group) kept together with a certain word/ words/discourse/something else but then freed up to let the compositional imagination to inform more about the chosen original material.

Methodologically translation could be approached as an aspect of nomadism, a state of in between, a place of confusion, which is at the same time a moment of concentration but also a moment of risk-taking, a gray zone, which means crossing a threshold. This crossing a threshold of a specific meaning system is actually necessary as a creative aspect itself. As Rosi Braidotti defines in her book *Nomadic subject* also writing in one's own language means writing as a foreigner in one's own mother tongue: "Becoming a polyglot in your own mother tongue: that's writing" (Braidotti 2011, 43). This taken into account translation is as an artistic method, something which enhances the aspect of nomadism. To let the foreign, "unknown" resonances support and inform the creative process.

In my own previous works, the act of translation has also meant quite intuitive relation to the chosen philosophical concept or discourse. What has interested me is how to concretize, how to surrender, to co-resonate next to a chosen materiality as philosophy, a concept for example? As, for example, in my final thesis work *a life -nomadic melodrama* the concept of "a life" is already as a starting-point naturally inspirational and naturally suggesting something compositional or performative. What gets materialized and transformed to the stage is the question of artistic toning. It is a matter of what interest here us as a working group, what is drawing attention and also what comes with as a surprise in the process of translation.

In my earlier works such as *Papers and Pens*, *Posthuman*, and *a life -nomadic melodrama* the translated material has taken form in different levels or registers of materiality in the performance. These could mean, for instance,

concrete theoretical writings or bodily practices adopted from the source material. In all these works, a relevant aspect has been also to notice the quality of the situation where we were as a working group, when working with these chosen themes as a starting-point. What has interested me there as a choreographer has been the paradoxical question of knowledge, our relationship to theory, when standing by for instance an academic knowledge. What does these sensations bring with them when placing oneself next to them? Something like fluxes of embarrassment, confusion, opening body for a state of admitting has evolved from these processes. On the other hand, some theories, writings, have dealt with discourses that have been honestly interesting as source material for choreographic work. In this way, the translation happens in many different registers and through different methods. The source material is evolving into another kind of medium by juxtaposition of different ways of relating to it. In a way the act of translation helps to give a push to a new kind of universe to be born which still retains its own secrete quality.

In the act of translation, the focus lies in the act of "how" instead of "what". In this sense, the shift or jump from one medium to another has more value than the source material itself. It is still not completely arbitrary what is being translated, what is the starting point. That is why it is interesting artistically to investigate the whole question or importance of a starting point in an artistic work. There the question of framing steps in. Possibly the research of the theme and starting point gets reformed in the process of translation. Sometimes it is necessary to reframe the theme. This happened in a way also in my artistic final work *a life -nomadic melodrama*, where the concept of "a life" in its translation process got reframed into more a question of research of drama, psychology and pre-personality as a mixture with the concept of "a life".

Overall, I see translation as a possible praxis in looking at the connection between the theory and practice, also the juxtaposition of lingual semantic levels and bodily methodology. It is a notion about an elaboration of a process which combines theme-wise structured framings and choreographic bodily research. The aspect of bridging/translating between philosophy and choreography is probably also in this way connected to my recent interest of using semantic meaning structures and somatic cellularly perceiving body as

co-compositional co-partners in artistic processes. That aspect I will elaborate more in the next chapter.

## *1.2 Semantic and somatic as compositional elements*

Compositional frictions, or a conscious play between compositional components put next to each other, have been something relevant as a mechanism in my previous works. This has been, to artistically approach the whole performative event as an act of some kind of dislocation in composing. Those components can be such as body, language, objects on stage, music, costumes, sound, audience. For me, the interest has been in researching the ever-changing web of relations and sensations that the compositional play realizes.

In almost all my works during my choreography studies, I have, for some reason, felt that it is valuable to use text and language as a part of a performance process or as a compositional element in a performative event. I am interested in the linearity of it in contrast to non-linear methods of perception practices. This aspect could be distinguished as a play between somatic body and semantic signs and language. This could mean to approach somatic body and semantic language as compositional partners so that the often dominating language would not take a powering position over other compositional elements like body. In this kind of use of language, I recognize some provocativeness towards myself, since in my own history as a performer and dancer with for instance in Deborah Hay's postmodern pieces, I have been introduced to leave linearity completely (on stage). No words, no sentences, no linearity of music and so on (as a process though Hay's works has a tight connection to language, in form of practices of questions and guidance of score-structures) On the contrary, interest toward language and voice, body together with language, body in the same room with human body has developed from many years of practice of Interacting with the Inner Partner. This is "psycho-physical" practice, developed by Ivan Vyskocil, here in Finland led by for

instance Alexander Komlosi. (There the body as an active element next to voice and language is equally balancing as co-operators towards each other.) As mentioned earlier, the interest towards language in a performative setting probably also derives from the rather theoretical starting-points in my recent choreographic works.

When approaching closer the question of semantic and somatic, we suddenly realize that this aspect is wide, bringing together also questions of concrete gestures, abstracting body, signs, symbols, and breaking of the signs.

In a choreographic practice, I usually want to investigate a ground-resonance of somatic-perceiving body being there as a ground ready to let gestures and language to enter, to emerge, to get condensed. That means that when body gets concretized on stage, there is an openness to get immediately distanced and see it as a material that already is in relation to performers' somatic body. This juxtaposing between different expressional registers is demanding, and to some degree, also hard to frame as a practice. However, somehow the core of this question lies in the dislocation and dynamism and movement between different expressional registers. It is the movement between different levels of cellularly attuned body and concrete emerging elements of semantics. It is a question of juxtaposition of all the cellular corporeal layers that are let openly arrive to inform also the communicative register of the psychophysical whole and vice versa. All these registers intermingle as flows and counter-flows, as layers and webs of relations, sometimes separated sometimes mixed.

In a textual level, I try to attune with the movement of language, "lines of flights" inside the textual—semantic material and also shifts of contexts and shifts of discourses. (For instance, to use source material from a fictional film contra commenting a present situation located in the certain actual place.) This means also separating the language from its natural causality or natural context— de contextualizing, which as an effect leaves the perceiver to sense both the natural tendency to try to fulfil the narrative logic and the effect when not letting this happen. The language is taken away by this way from its groundings by creating movement of dislocation. This probably brings the language also into the realm of its own materiality.

When composing textual material, I usually happen to compose that alone, by myself (sometimes collectively though), by playing with imaginary situations on stage. This kind of arranging words in a spatial-temporal relationship supports creating text in its contextual situation. In this sense, it is already from the beginning mixed with aspects of performative, affective body, received by imaginary audience. Often in a writing situation language is already melodic, imagined with sound. Then also the question of rhythm, pauses and intensities of volume, nuances are involved. Also, if writing a dialogue, for example, I usually position already in imagination the contrasting body as busy with another specific task.

The most relevant, important aspect for me is the co-resonance, the compositional suggestion, where language is approached as co-composing with body, and freed up into its own materiality. Language has a more condensed and sign setting power. It is informational. It leaves a trace. How to play with this kind of tool besides of all the other elements? Post narrative, cutting— to play with it in the way that it is approached as formable material.

This aspect or artistic interest of investigating all the different expressional registers as compositional co-partners is partly unconscious flux, but partly also more rigorous attempt to grasp the possible problematic aspect of, for instance, language itself in the contemporary world. I am curious about revealing the life between words, co resonance as bodily richness—unexpected, ungraspable sides of the presence. I guess the main resonance in this question is to investigate an alertness of non-categorization. It is a question of experimenting the relativity of the body as multiplicity and in a constant realm of connections.

As a compositional mechanism, the play between semantic and somatic must be something that works for me in the aspect of juxtaposing between different expressional modes or registers. When zooming in the very aspect of somatic semantic into compositional suggestion of bringing a wide range of expressional modes, mechanism together, it is worth zooming in the fine-tuned aspects of the compositional forming of these elements.

Language itself is both instrumental and poetic. As Walter Benjamin defines through writings of Kathrin Bush, there is both an "expression through

language” and an ”expression in language”. This ”expression in language” is a latent side of a poetic aspect, something hidden between the lines, magical language according to Walter Benjamin. This kind of hidden latent meaning is particularly clear in poetry, choreography and other modes of expression. The ”expression through language” points out to languages’ instrumental communicative side, where a specific content is transferred (Monni and Allsopp 2015, 144-145).

The question arises how to play with this latent side, how to embrace it. What kind of compositional structures does it demand? For instance, in poetry, words function both as language ”communicating with” and language ”communicating in”. Poetical composition evaluates the co resonance of the latent, by structuring space gaps, possibilities to arrange differently the informative, content side of the composition. Also, the starting-point of a philosophical concept can be approached as a ”communication with”, ”expression through language”, and the artistic outcome as ”expression in”, as poetical outcome.

In the latent magical side, there seems to lie a mechanism of non-causality itself. The effect of the latent side is unpredictable. ”The effect is not produced mechanically and is not the tangible result of ritual acts: it goes beyond them ” (Mauss in Allsopp 2015, 146). In this sense, the latent includes a mode of surrendering, risk-taking and wonder. Latent means that it will also always remain partly ungraspable, never cleared out fully, which causes a sense of poetry in itself. In this sense, language as a compositional element enables to set the body as a compositional co-partner in position of latency, wonder, unpredictability and partly ungraspable.

The importance in dealing with language lies in the aspect of composition itself. The language in its syntaxes and communicative levels is as a useful co-partner in playing with shifts of order. As Ric Allsopp enlightens in the book of Practicing composition, making practice, in the article of ”Something else, on latency of composition” through writing of Franco ”Bifo” Berardi: ”We should move from ideas of revolution as an old metaphor for social change...and move toward a mode of ”insurrection as a process of recombination” (Berardi in Monni and Allsopp 2015, 149). Bifo introduces different alternatives in allowing

the latent side in composition to emerge, like "error, misuse, misunderstanding, misapprehension, misperformance" (Berardi in Monni and Allsopp 2015, 149). The play of recombination, strategical shake with syntaxes and structures is possibly the mechanism in the compositional play that has potentiality of causing change and artistic resonance. These are useful notions in supporting the view of approaching composition as an act of shaking stabilized patterns and structures. The methodology in using linear aspects of semantics as contrasting power to a body in a non-linear state of becoming is a tool for creating this kind of "errors" and "dislocations".

When using language and approaching speech and language as a compositional co-operator in the whole compositional play, I find it very fruitful to play the game in English. That is because it is not my mother-tongue. It is a tool, for distancing, for hearing, for seeing the language as material, that already is somehow set in a quality of a certain expression. There is a quality of internationality, academic and educational tone also that interests me. It is a measurement for one's educational level and that feels nasty in a good way. As a Finnish person, I find it interesting to throw myself into a place of confusion, precisely with this language, since that creates a paradox. I try to survive with a language which is not mine.

### *1.3 Body in the realm of becoming; from phenomenology to posthumanity*

What does it mean then, looked from a choreographic perspective, to approach "body" as a compositional element? Or what does it mean to see body as cellular, as non-linear, (as mentioned in the previous chapter)? In this chapter, I want to analyze my relationship to the body from a current perspective of a choreographic interest. My perspective to the question of the body keeps on changing and it is difficult to articulate it clearly. How to approach it, since as I mentioned in the introduction, many different practices, many different influences resonate simultaneously because of my divided past with different body practices. I still wonder if there are some clear distinguished ways to approach the body artistically, methodologically as a compositional, possibly non-essentialist element.

One of the most affective influences in my past and current practices must have been the postmodern approach of Deborah Hay's; her way of reconfiguring body into over billion cells—practicing the cellular awareness of the body. My experience in working with her includes only two works, but they have left a long-lasting effect into my own bodily research. Her approach is complex, many-dimensional and rich. In some way her approach to the "body in question", cellular body, bodily thinking, the whole body at once as a teacher, could be seen from the philosophical point of view as phenomenological. Body is seen as experiencing, historical, relational. In that way it opposes dualistic division between mind and body.

As a dancer in her works, I have through disciplined practice (perception practice with many varying questions) learned to practice the self as not fixed, but all the time changing, reconfiguring, opening for new possibilities. The dancing means bodily perception. The body is wise and layered, rich and surprising. Her approach to the body is full of paradoxes— practice is performance, performance is practice. Complex questions, such as "What if my whole body as over million cells had a potential to perceive each moment equally unique?", are paradoxically hard themselves. The cellular body will "never get it" (looked from a psychological perspective), and at the same time it is all the time fully related. That is why the point with the dancing body is in the practice itself, staying in the practice— not arriving to a goal. It is about being all the time in between.

Her choreographies are also very tightly connected to language and there is a connection with the body and language. (Though recognizable language rarely appears on stage). That is shown in the way she uses variety of long and complex questions, to keep the body in a state of a question. That is also essential in the way a performance is often written down in a form of a libretto. This libretto does not usually include only strict time, space-oriented orders, but includes poetical expressions, set in a rhythmical form, which the dancing body will then solve through the questions simultaneously guiding the body. This is the way the choreographing happens— through a poetical but disciplined interplay with body and language.



It is clear that some of the mentioned aspects of Hay's have affected my own choreographic methodology and insight to body as cellular and related. The aspects have awakened my interest to consider the body as vital, interesting, both strongly personal, but at the same time pre-personal. As a choreographic influence, Hay's dance-ontology has affected me to deal with the creative process and bodily practice through questions of how instead of what. That means to rigorously question the notion of representation. This kind of artistic factor has a strong effect in my artistic thinking.

A current question for me now is: how do I approach the body as a component in my recent choreographic methodologies. As mentioned before, it is hard to make a clear definition, but it is worth mentioning the influence that some of the new materialistic philosophies have had in the past couple of years in approaching further the concept of body, and perspectives of the body in the realm of process oriented, non-anthropocentric perspectives. These theories link the question of body to current issues, and inevitably resonate in creating artistic methodology and new bodily practices.

Lisa Blackman mentions in her book *The Body* some new materialist philosophers such as Rosi Braidotti and Elisabeth Groz as examples of feminist philosophy representing a corporeal turn within feminism, meaning an approach elaborating body as non-divided from cultural, body as an aspect of difference, and through that sex and gender as non-categorized. This corporeal turn in feministic discourses can be seen as a reaction to social constructionism where body was still approached in some extent as essentialist (naturalistic) (Blackman 2008, 72).

Both writers have also influenced my choreographic processes during the past couple of years, especially in works such as *Papers and Pens*, *Posthuman*, and *a life -nomadic melodrama*. These influences have been visible both concerning the starting point for the performances but also the ways the framing of different practices has happened.

Braidotti and Groz, also in some degree different in their philosophical approaches, both represent something as corporeal feminism. It enhances the tuning into affective body which highlights the aspect of difference itself, and

through that suggests a non-essentialist approach of breaking categorizations such as woman, man, nature culture for instance. (In this way, to reconfigure the body into billion cells, as in Hay's practices, where the self is not fixed, but sensing and affective, is not, in some way, far away from the new materialistic approach of the body in writings of these female contemporary philosophers.) The body is approached through corporeal feminism bringing forth the concept of body itself as not only limited to a one singular person, but considered as non-limited, tightly into surroundings related and all the time new combinations making component. For Braidotti and Groz the body is about intensities, in a constant state of becoming (Blackman 2008, 78).

Through analyzing a perspective to the body as an enactment, Blackman also introduces a philosopher, writer, dancer, Erin Manning, who specifically approaches body as constituted through movement. Influenced by Gilles Deleuze, Manning sees the Body not as a question of organism; it is rather a question of open systems, constantly connecting relations to both human and non-human, bodily thinking through movement (Blackman 2008, 105). Manning shifts the question of what the body is, into the question of what it can do. "Bodies are considered open systems that connect to others, human and non-human, so that they are always unfinished and in a process of becoming" (Blackman 2008, 105). The aspect of an open system suggests the body seen as a part of an assemblage, always making new connections. A specifically exemplified body within this frame of body as an enactment, body as active through movement constitutive is "a dancer". The sensation of the body happens each moment in movement through enactment with the surrounding.

One of the key concepts for Manning and also for many other process-oriented scholars is the concept of Bodies without Organs (BwO), derived from writings of Deleuze and Guattari (1972). BwO goes beyond seeing body or an organism. It rather sees body as extending beyond itself creating connections, possibly mutating, changing and transforming (Blackman 2008, 109- 110).

Tero Nauha explains in his doctoral work *Schizoproduction: Artistic research and performance in the context of immanent capitalism* (2016) the concept of Bodies without Organs originally deriving from writings of Antonin Artaud—more precisely he's script for a radio play *To have done with the judgment of*

*God* (1947). In this script Artaud briefly defines this concept as "a devise for the production of true freedom from something" (Nauha 2016, 62).

*You can tie me up if you wish, but there is nothing more useless than an organ. When you have made him a body-without-organs, then you will have delivered him from all his automatic reactions and restored him to his true freedom. Then you will teach him again to dance the wrong side out(...) and this wrong side out will be his real place* (Artaud in Nauha 2016, 62).

Influenced by Artaud, BwO is then further elaborated by Deleuze and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus* (1972). In this work BwO gets developed as a concept of opposing Freudian Oedipal psychoanalytical tradition as an institution in relation to capitalistic mechanisms in society. The Body without Organs explains being produced by non-productiveness, additionally it is not a projection of an original nothingness, or a result of a lost totality. It is an organless, imageless, and non productive body, that has nothing to do with the body itself or with an image of a body. It "exists right there where it is produced..." (Deleuze, Guattari 2000, 8).

The aspect of change in relation to BwO is a political vision for Deleuze and Guattari. They saw the transformation and change as something possible, but never necessarily actualized. The aspect of mutation, and interconnections has been as well widely essential aspects in Braidotti's and also Donna Haraway's works. The focus lies in approaching body as not-one but mixed and interconnected. Braidotti has investigated, for instance, mixings of animals and humans through different representations in literature and popular-culture. Haraway in turn, has investigated particularly human and machine in her figuration of a Cyborg (Blackman 2008: 111). Blackman elaborates Haraway's work describing that: "The concept of separation is replaced with a radical relationality that explores the connections and linkages which make it possible to enact multiple bodies that do not end at the skin, and which are always oriented towards Otherness (alterity)" (Blackman 2008, 120).

When I think about some of the recent choreographic methodologies of mine, such as pairing the component of body with the component of language, or setting up a component of body next to a non-human object, I think noteworthy

is the act of separating these components methodologically to investigate, to witness the connectedness, mixtures as well and the emerging assemblage of them. It is the compositional pairing and play of relations that creates the sense of becoming and co-resonance.

It is still difficult, to some extent also unnecessary, to seek differences between phenomenological and new materialist/posthuman approaches to body. There is no straight line, and there are various amounts of possible differences. Still, I am curious and interested in asking how the posthuman body would be presented on stage or through artistic approaches? Through what kind of elements would that be manifested? Theme wise and compositionally, materially it has been on the table in many contemporary choreographers works already in the past ten years or over. It is still a complex and relevant issue. How to approach body as posthuman, not only phenomenological? How to approach the body as not only limited to the skin, but crisscrossing between both human and non-human, animal and human, cultural and natural components? This is also an important guideline in articulating choreographic methodologies rendering political issues. How to shake established power-structures of human centered established orders in the arrangement of society? This has been an important artistic theme in some of my recent choreographic works, and also important guideline in articulating artistic practices.

Some of the strongest artistic tendencies considering the aspect of posthuman body concern specifically my recent works such as *Posthuman* and *a life nomadic melodrama*. In both performances, theoretical starting points were affected by themes such as non-categorization, pre-personalities and non-limitedness into human body. That manifested materially through specifically laying a performers body practicing its affective relationship with both other performers and non-living material, often different objects, such as fruits, balls (tennis ball and basketball), sticks, plastic pipes, wigs, shoes and different costumes as well. The posthuman body, became researched concretely through questions about objects and subjects, through dealing with different non-human and human materialities. It has manifested also in the whole compositional framing, where (as I have elaborated in previous chapter) linearity and non-linearity, semantic and somatic as compositional elements create mutations, change, frictions, and dislocations.

*A life -nomadic melodrama* was an investigation of body constructed of vibrations, layers, intensities, and qualitative contradictions such as deep and light, real and fake. Through that, it specifically operated in area of nomadic, never establishing body, rather approaching the body as a question of flows and counter flows, as traverse and light and through that also all the time new connections making assemblage, which operates also in different expressional registers, such as language, singing, gestures, emotions, imagination, imitation, abstraction. That work—seen as an artistic translation of a concept of "a life"(Deleuze) is in one way exemplifying an approach to body as nomadic and processual, also posthuman, since "a life" is a ground for an explanation for the meeting point for breaking categories, such as organic and non-organic life. I will investigate more particularly the process of this work in the fourth chapter.

## 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS IN ARTISTIC WORKING

Before examining closer the creative process of *a life -nomadic melodrama*, I want to separately introduce some clear theoretical background concepts that have had the most influence on this particular work. The next introduced concepts (becoming, assemblage, nomadism and a life) are most clearly pointing to a philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, but when looking closer into the process of a concept development, it is hard to point out clearly the credits of a certain philosopher. However, these concepts are certainly operating as theoretical approaches in the area of contemporary philosophy, poststructuralism and new materialism.

The concept of "becoming" can be seen as a fundamental ground concept relating to the other concepts of "assemblage", "a life" and "nomadism". It opens a theoretical base in articulating aspects in choreographic methodology used in *a life -nomadic melodrama*, as rendered already in the previous chapter. It elaborates the nomadic aspect in investigation of the performing body. The concept of becoming will appear specifically when I analyze choreographic methodology used in *a life -nomadic melodrama* in the next chapter (Chapter 3).

The second introduced concept "assemblage" relates to compositional structuring, artistic process itself and artistic practices used in *a life -nomadic melodrama*, which I will also elaborate particularly in the next chapter (Chapter 3). Assemblage will also appear frequently as a concept when I approach it closer in relationship to "nomadic principles in my working" in the fourth chapter.

The third concept "nomadism" is artistically valuable for me as a co-resonance in evaluating composition, and evaluating creative process itself. I will analyse this concept closer in relation to the whole process of *a life nomadic melodrama* (Chapter 3). I will also relate nomadism to other for me interesting "nomadic" ground principles used in the artistic process of *a life -nomadic*

*melodrama* (Chapter 4), such as laugh, desire, actual and virtual, duration, singing and melancholy. When looking for a main concept of all these four (becoming, assemblage, nomadism and a life) it is hard to make any hierarchical order, to structure them in a clear relation. Still, I want to approach the core of my whole written thesis work mainly through aspect of nomadism, which manifests through all the different perspectives I analyze. It is a question of transformation and change, and challenge to confront the perspective of nomadic thinking in art-making, which draws my attention to this concept in relation to choreography and creative process. In this sense nomadism could be a key-concept that traverses almost all the thoughts and themes in this work of writing.

The fourth concept "a life" is the main target in my artistic final work. It is a starting point and theoretical source material in the process. I will return to this concept specifically when going through process, starting point and structure of my artistic thesis work in chapter 3. In connection to that concept, I will lastly introduce specific artistic influences considering my artistic final work, *a life - nomadic melodrama* through introducing some supportive thoughts into the concept of "a life" through philosophical thinking of Erin Manning and Friedrich Nietzsche.

Overall, the reason why I find it artistically important to approach philosophy, especially the contemporary writers like Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Henry Bergson, Friedrich Nietzsche and some of the new materialist writers like Rosi Braidotti Karen Barad and Erin Manning (some most important for me to mention) is because of their non-essentialist approaches that connect strongly with some of my own earlier experiences in dancing and performing and through that to my interests in choreographing. They also seem relevant and related to current philosophical and political, also feminist discourses such as posthumanism which is in touch with this particular time, the moment we are living in right now. Some of the texts that I have read clearly give support for making my own connections between different embodied experiences and wider social, philosophical and political issues. This is probably the deepest reasons why I naturally get hooked in these conceptual definitions. In addition, these concepts also support me to open up and articulate my own bodily experienced sensations out toward other people as a choreographer or in other

sort of collaboration. They also give grounding for me to approach the question of choreography and composition as a rich, challenging and complex process.

## 2.1 *Becoming*

The concept of becoming can be elaborated through the history of process-oriented philosophy, commonly approached as opposing *substance metaphysics*, the dominant research paradigm in the history of Western philosophy since Aristotle (Stanford dictionary). By contrasting *substance metaphysics* and its focus on reality of what there is, process oriented philosophers analyze becoming and "what *is occurring* as well as *ways of occurring*" (Stanford dictionary).

The history of process philosophy, and through that the origin of the concept of becoming, extends far into antiquity, both in approaching eastern and western philosophical thought. In the western tradition a Greek theoretician Heraclitus of Ephesus (born ca. 560 B.C.E.) can be seen as a philosopher behind process oriented philosophical thought considering world as not being stable, but rather "championing a philosophy of ubiquitous and radical flux, a dynamics, as an ever living fire" (Stanford dictionary). This cosmic fire is according to him the "source of change of all observable cosmological and natural processes" (Stanford dictionary).

Variety of philosophers since Heraclitus to this day can be considered as influenced by process oriented ontology, such as Aristoteles (his description of kinesis and energeia), G.W Leibniz(monads) and Georg W.F. Hegel (self unfolding dynamic structures of templates). The most championed among the later process philosophers has been Alfred North Whitehead and specifically his "Philosophy of organism" that he worked out in the beginning of the 20th century. The basic unit of reality in Whitehead's system is an event-like entity called "actual occasion", "which is the procedural integration or concrescence of processes of data transfer (prehensions) into unities that become new data" (Stanford dictionary)



It is necessary to understand the background of the concept of becoming to analyze more recent perspective to it through philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and later some New materialist writers like Rosi Braidotti, who clearly belong to a process oriented philosophical approach. My investment and investigation around this concept derives mostly from philosophy of Deleuze. When reading philosophical writings of today, the concept of becoming is often related to his philosophical approach to this concept.

The way Deleuze analyzes this concept is radical and complex. Inspired by Nietzsche, he approaches becoming as unlimited and unending, without having any true point of origin or destination. "Becoming can never be given: it is as Deleuze shows, always in between the past and the future since it moves both directions at once and always eludes the present" (Young, Genosko, and Watson 2013, 40). Deleuze further introduces some other important sub concepts for becoming like "becoming woman", "becoming animal", "becoming imperceptible. In these conceptual definitions he does not mean something arriving to its endpoint as animal or woman for instance, but rather as becoming towards an animal, becoming towards a woman, as all the time crossing boundaries. (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: xiii). In this sense, Deleuze grounds his philosophy of becoming tightly to Nietzsche and his claim of reality consisting only of forces, intensities, wills to power.

Becoming as a concept has a clear demand of stepping out of essentialism or cartesian dualism. It zooms into the question of intensities, dynamics between entities, and eternal state of becoming. "Becomings explode the ideas about what we are and what we can be beyond the categories that seem to contain us: beyond the boundaries separating human being from animal, man from woman, child from adult, micro from macro, and even perceptible and understandable from imperceptible and incomprehensible" (Sotrin 2005, 99).

In this sense, the concept of becoming resonates strongly as a performative inspiration for artistic possibilities for change. It gives support to research the performative body as alert and relational, not being fixed, not a stabilized knowing-subject. The concept of becoming could be both approached from the perspective of body practices and from perspective of composition. It is a useful

tool in approaching choreography as an artistic practice as also as processual and political. For me as a choreographer, becoming is most strongly a compositional question. How are compositional elements set together in a way that we enter as witnesses, performers in a mode of an event, resonance, which is not stuck into already known or representing already known traces?

My personal relationship to the concept of becoming has been relevant and crucial in connection to approaching dance, movement and performance as an event. It resonates as a philosophy to next introduced concepts like "assemblage", "a life" and "nomadism". Besides its complexity as a philosophical concept, it is a concrete reminder of action and perception through movement, but of not going forward but as if always coming toward as returning. Trough that, it asks about the political tools for operating in non-predictable traces, in the sensitive place of artistic emergence.

## *2.2 Assemblage*

Secondly, it is relevant to look closer to another concept, the concept of assemblage, to give possible support to also understanding the relationship between becoming and composition. I will now approach this concept mainly through philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Jane Bennett and Karen Barad.

J. Macgregor Wise writes a chapter about the concept of assemblage in the book *Deleuze –Key concepts*. He explains this concept deriving from the French original term "agencement", meaning rather "putting together" or "laying out". Assemblage is not only a living collage, but itself the very action of arranging. It also asks what an assemblage can do. Assemblage is not just a stable collection, but a sum of entities that can have a function or a character as a sum. Further, it is either a collection of things, because "things themselves are qualities, speeds and lines" (Wise 2005, 78).

Additionally, Bennett elaborates the concept of assemblage in her book *Vibrant matter* through inspiration of Deleuze's: "Assemblages are kind of *ad hoc* groupings of diverse elements, of vibrant materials of all sorts. Assemblages are "living, throbbing confederations that are able to function despite the persistent presence of energies that confound them from within" (Bennett 2010, 23).

Karen Barad enlightens the philosophy of assemblage in her article *Posthumanist performativity— Towards understanding how matter comes to matter* when dealing with the paradoxical role of dominating power of language. She asks how language could rather be seen as an element of other fluxes, an element of assemblage in relationship to other elements like body, affects, animals, that mean other assembling elements. In a post-anthropocentric discourse assemblage is linked to the aspect of questioning the power-position of human itself. It asks other alternative awareness in understanding the relationally evolving systems (Barad 2003, 802).

Assemblage is a clear separate concept, but it is clearly connected to other concepts like becoming, line of flight, rhizome and desire, for instance. In this sense, all these mainly Deleuzian philosophical concepts seem to arrange as an assemblage with each other. By doing this, they also reveal the complexity of philosophical thinking of him as non-hierarchical and networking.

For me the concept of assemblage is fresh, radical and necessary when getting involved with artistic perspectives in terms of composition. During the first year of choreography program, assemblage was one of the introduced perspectives into approaching composition. Later, it has arrived into my practices as a multi-layered suggestion. It seems radical and fruitful viewpoint to art and composition in terms of approaching composition as emergent, a question of organization and change. As a compositional tool, it gives a way to investigate different expressional registers also as elements of an assemblage— For instance, a particular sound that is let out from performers' mouth next to a tightly structured dialogue between other people, plus an object(apple) between them. There are elements getting arranged, but these elements have also affects as a part in an assemblage. These elements are flows that are circulating and mutating. Instead of a stable unit, this whole has a function

more as an expression or a character, as "an open ended collective" (Bennett 2010, 24).

In the book of Deleuze and Key Concepts J. Macgregor Wise also writes about the question of technology, considering it as a strongly affecting element in the present time and in the future. He introduces a whole chapter of seeing the contemporary societies arranged with technology. He defends the aspect of human and technology as non-hierarchically operating parts in an arranged assemblage. Humans and technology are also inseparable. They are mixed and intermingled, such as culture and nature, human and non-human. We always also enter into assemblages locally, and assemblages opens the "gates" to us locally (Wise 2005, 80-81).

In this sense approaching assemblage as a philosophical suggestion strives — put in more psychologically enclosed — us towards a demand of surrounding and fearlessly opening minds for new possibilities in terms of widening a non-human centered perspective, philosophy of posthumanity. It is a concept of widening up the consciousness of current issues in approaching human and non-human as non-hierachically structured and relationally affective assembling elements.

My own choreographic interest relating to assemblage have manifested in various ways, mostly through investigating the role of a language in relation to body, the relation of human body and other elements on stage, and through asking what the relation of audience and performers is and how the body is approached as mosaic-kind, assembling, non-hierarchical.

### *2.3 Nomadism*

Thirdly, I will introduce theoretical background to nomadism. I will mostly approach this concept through writings of Deleuze about Nietzsche and through feministic discourses of Braidotti. Nomadism is a frequently appearing concept in contemporary philosophies, especially in the field of new materialism. Its

background is layered. It has a 'political' resonance and has a multi-layered connections with feministic and new materialist discourses. As Braidotti writes in her book *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of becoming*: "For philosophical nomadism, the subject is fully immersed in and immanent in a network of non-human (animal, vegetable, viral) relations" (Braidotti 2002, 122).

In this way, subject means a non-stable element, movement and cross-movement. It is a term that has a connection to minorities, change and traveling populations. This brings an etymological background resonance into the word that suggest already decoding against institution, decoding of center power of a nation, deterritorialization. In this sense it has a straight forward political resonance, that tries to see possibilities for change, the way for new arrangements in societies, populations in relation to state, institutions, norms, culture and religion.

In the edition of Deleuze's writings from 1967-1986 titled "Autioma" (essay: "Nomadinen ajattelu") he identifies groundings for nomadic thinking through influences of philosophical works of Nietzsche. By exemplifying different perspectives to nomadic principles, Deleuze introduces nomadism as a necessary alternative force against the power of a law and institution. Inspired by especially writers like Franz Kafka, Samuel Becket and philosophical thinking of Nietzsche, he clarifies the notion of nomadic thinking also having a connection to an outer force rather than meaning simply a revolution. Nomadic thinking is a flow of thoughts and contra-flow, floating and the movement of floating, the movement of deterritorialization. In this way, there is a quality of blurriness and undefined what comes to Nietzsche's approach to nomadic thinking. It is a question of something not before mentioned, something not before thought. It is a question of forces and intensities. Nietzsche grounds his thinking and writing "to an immediate relation to the outer" (Deleuze 1992, 12).

In a distinguished way Deleuze handles nomadic thinking as an example of a Nietzschean aphorism: "Aphorism does not mean anything, it does not have a form (*signifiant*) nor a substance (*signifie*) as elements" (Deleuze 1992, 13). Further, he clarifies that "aforism is a state of forces, it is the last and most actualized and furthest force" (Deleuze 1992, 13).

However, this clarifies to myself the concept of nomadism approached through writings of Nietzsche. It is a question of a possible "active force". That is of course something highly connected to art. It is more about resonance, sensations than rational mind.

Thinking about times of advanced capitalism, globalization, mechanisms of labour, migration movements, Braidotti positions the concept of nomadic subject in a political light as a suggestion of opposing an institution "methodological nationalism and euro-centrism" in her book, *Nomadic subjects* (Braidotti 2011, 7). "The point of nomadic subjectivity is to identify lines of flight, that is to say, a creative alternative space of becoming that would not fall between the mobile/immobile, the resident/ foreigner-distinction, but within all these categories" (Braidotti 2011, 7). In this sense nomadism as widely approached is a notion of questioning the division of different categories. It is a matter of both movement and stability. Rosi Braidotti's starting point to the concept of nomadism is complex in its feministic influences. Her relationship to psychoanalytical approach, for instance, by seeing a body as a multilayered complex and split is reasonable, but on the other hand, her project of nomadism is taking stand to those often non-female psychoanalytical and poststructuralist philosophers such as Lacan, Derrida and Deleuze in order to encounter the feminine, especially the concept of "becoming woman" (Deleuze) as a question of sexual difference. She wants to defend the sexual difference as positive force and through that, approaches nomadism in its political ontology as embodied materialism. She emphasizes that in question of nomadic subject operates both unconscious slow and sometimes painful layers together with conscious political choices. This defines the question of effective feminist politics (Braidotti 2011, 38).

Braidotti connects nomadism to multiple identities in considering it as a key notion for desire. The question of I, is not a matter of "internalization of given codes". It is more about negotiation of different layers. With this connection Braidotti sees desire as productive, "because it flows on, it keeps on moving..." (Braidotti 2011, 41).

According to Braidotti nomad is a "transgressive identity" (Braidotti 2011, 42). The transitory nature of nomadic subject "is the reason, why 'she' can make

connections at all” (Braidotti 2011, 42). Quoting Julia Kristeva, Braidotti writes: “The state between languages and translation is the common condition of all thinking beings” (Braidotti 2011, 43).

As seen in the before mentioned points, aspects of nomadism can be tackled from multiple perspectives. As a phenomenon, it describes a situation of contemporary world, with a high range of movement of population between countries and cultures. As a concept, it approaches itself as a possible positive politic of a subject. As concept of non-identification, it can also be enlarged out into post-humanism, possible suggestions on to understand a contemporary subject as more empathically surrounded by other living and non-living entities. It is also a political feministic program that rigorously questions the established power structures in the society.

My artistic relation with nomadism considers a free artistic influence and a creative co-resonance with this concept. It gives an interesting theoretical reference for possible alternatives to choreographic structuring as emergent, non-stabilized composition, and for to understand artistic process as unpredictable, but still artistically active and politically resonant.

#### 2.4 *A life*

Lastly, I will introduce the concept of “a life”, which especially worked as a theoretical background to my artistic final work, *a life -nomadic melodrama*. A life is a concept of Deleuze, that somehow summons up all of his philosophical works. The (essay) of “a life -pure immanence” was the last essay he wrote, before his death. This essay is a very condensed description of the concept of “a life”. Paradoxically now, when thinking about the tragical accident of Deleuze jumping off his balcony after writing this essay, it is a questioning of the boundaries between life and death, radical immanence. It is beautifully yet complexly described as a singular essence, impersonal, “freed from accidents of internal and external life” (Deleuze 2005,10-11).

John Rajchman defines the concept of "a life" in the introduction of Deleuze essays of "a life - radical immanence" as "impersonal and yet singular". In "a life", there is in a connection to sensations as something pre-personal. As Rajchman explains, Deleuze's philosophy is a jump from phenomenological approach into something as transcendental empirism (Deleuze 2005,10-11). Here sensations are something that "precedes" the self. It doesn't handle logic of sensation as for example Maurice Merleau- Ponty define as something pre-existent "we", which still can be seen as an aspect of more phenomenological approach. A life is the force of "life living" which is not enclosed within a personal identity. This logic of multiplicity is no longer dialectical and transcendental. "It is a logic of an AND prior and irreducible to the IS of predications" (Deleuze 2005, 10-11). This logic of an AND Deleuze originally takes from David Hume. He quotes Hume: "Think *with* AND instead of thinking IS, instead *for* IS: empiricism has never had another secret" (Deleuze 2005, 11).

This means that Deleuze's project of philosophy rigorously breaks down the separation between an object and a subject, human and non-human. In relation to this notion "a life" is a clear example of putting the human life next to other event straight forwardly questioning the traditionally understood word of life only belonging to a certain life-path of an organic life.

Deleuze himself defines "a life" as "pure immanence". According to his writing it is "immanence of immanence, an absolute immanence, complete power". (Deleuze 2005, 27) In this sense the concept of "a life" is a question of immediate consciousness.

*This indefinite life does not itself have moments, close as they may be one to another, but only between-times, between-moments; it doesn't just come about or come after but offers the immensity of an empty time where one sees the event yet to come and already happened, in the absolute of an immediate consciousness (Deleuze 2005, 29).*

Further Deleuze elaborates that "a life" "contains only virtuals" (Deleuze 2005, 31). With virtuality he means "something that lacks reality but something that is engaged in a process of actualization following the plane that gives it its particular reality" (Deleuze 2005, 31). It is the virtuals and plane of immanence that lead us into "a life" (Deleuze 2005, 31).



## 2.5 *Some thoughts about the starting point (a life)* – *in a life nomadic melodrama*

### Erin Manning

For the first time I got attached to the concept of "a life", was when reading Erin Manning's book *Always more than one*. In this book, Manning approaches body as a "multiphased relationality" through for instance processing artistic experiments with autistic writers. In one specific chapter, she goes through concepts of both "life" and "a life" (influenced) by Deleuze. She writes: "Life as defined here in no way privileges the human. Nor is it constituted as an envelope for experience. Life is life-living, in act, replete with the indefinable force of a life coursing through it" (Manning 2013, 22). Here the relationship between the concepts of life and "a life" is defined. Life is the course of organic life, but it is always about "the double capture", the life living exceeds this or that life. The contact with autistic persons illustrate this double-capture in an enriched way, because of the clearly other kind of way of experiencing non-categorized perception of the world —a place of preindividualities. She also writes: "Life is a hunger for difference, an appetite for the more than" (Manning 2013, 22).

Manning draws a connection between preindividualities and "a life"; In a similar manner as, pre-individuals are the "germ of potential in every activity" (Manning 2013, 17), Manning described as force of becoming as a pull from the Deleuzo-Guattarian virtual coming combined with the actual, the concept of a life is the force exceeding this life, necessary in experiencing this life (Manning 2013, 17).

The force of preindividual is the reminder that "a life" is a force of surpassing it rather than something in it or outside it. In this way body, individual, object is also always "more than the forms they inhabit" (Manning 2013, 17). This brought further, "the body is always the how of its emergence" and "a life" is

what according to Manning is a force that liberates body from its forms. In this way "a life" is another term for preindividual, something that remains unresolved, in the taking of form (Manning 2013, 19).

An important notion of "a life" is also what Manning writes about "feeling". "Feeling" is, according to her, the way "a life" is perceived. The feeling does not mean human feeling or emotion. "It is an affective tonality" (Manning 2013, 21). By this, she describes "a life" as a tonality of feeling, referring to Alfred North Whitehead (philosopher considered as influential for new materialism) and his definition of feeling, that does not belong to human, but is described rather as a realm of impersonal "generative force" (Manning 2013, 21). The aspect of feeling was later very much a guiding concept in the process of *a life - nomadic melodrama*. It guided the process specifically by different framings for different bodily practices, as "How do I feel in my life right now"-practice, which I will come back to later in the next chapter.

Overall, considering Manning as both philosopher and choreographer/dancer, I found it useful to read her texts. Her way of writing exemplifies the importance of embodied experiencing in philosophizing. She also connects choreography, dance and philosophy together through concrete examples. Her writing style is very poetical, rhythmical and actively in connection to bodily practices. As she also mentioned in her actual visit in the Theatre Academy (2017), philosophy is practice, active experimenting. Thinking, articulating and philosophy are tightly interwoven with body and its kinaesthetic affective relation to the surrounding.

Through her writing, I grasped "a life" as something overwhelmingly important and forceful, but at the same time as ungraspable, and complex. Concretely I connected "a life" with a dancing body; it connected with a sensation which is somehow essential to dance itself. In an associative field it resonated with joy and richness of life-living; sensations, colors, seeing, hearing, smelling, connecting, loving, hating, emotions, time passing, but especially a miraculous, mysterious site in each moment, or between moments.

## Nietzsche

Before the artistic process of *a life -nomadic melodrama* I also happened to read Deleuze's book about Nietzsche, *Nietzsche and philosophy* where Deleuze brings forth some of the main aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy, specifically a relation to power and force. For Nietzsche there is only force and more specifically "will to power". He also separates will to power in two registers, namely "active power" and "reactive power" (Deleuze 2005, 60-61). He criticizes Christianity as an institution, and specifically Judaism, because of its dialectical tendency, which has given birth to guilt. In this way, Nietzsche argues active power of being necessary also in relation to art and creativity, but also the core in understanding "admitting life" (Deleuze 2005, 25).

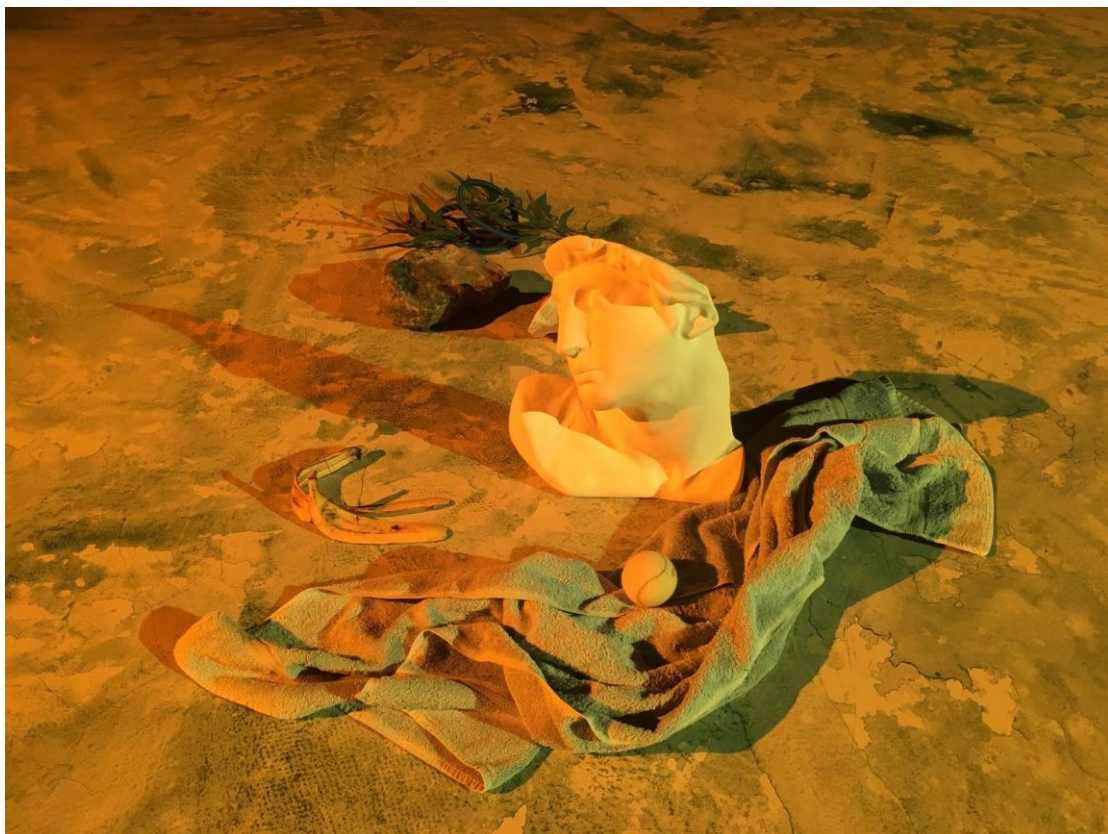
Nietzsche gives a clear sight into the whole understanding of concepts as plane of immanence and through that to "a life". As a separate unit the philosophical thinking of Nietzsche is enriching as itself in relation to action, drama and tragedy. The most important push and effect into the work of *a life -nomadic melodrama*, was Nietzsche's theory of joy and tragedy as elementary supporting and non-separable components together. He ties tragedy and joy together by explaining that tragedy is not about hate or despair, but only in the multiplicity and more particularly in the multiplicity of an act of admitting. Deleuze quotes Nietzsche and *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872): "Tragedy is an esthetic form of joy, not a question of medical pattern, not a question of moral solution for suffering, fear or pity" (Deleuze 2005, 31). He puts two figures of martyrs in comparison, Dionysus and Christ, by claiming in them manifesting a question of same phenomenon but working through opposite directions. The first one is about life that admits and justifies suffering (Dionysus), the second one is suffering that insults life making it something that must be justified (Christ). Through this comparison the one that Nietzsche relies on is clearly Dionysos as a metaphor for admitting, tragedy and joy together as an active force (Deleuze 2005, 28).

In the process of *a life -nomadic melodrama*, considering previous theory, I wanted to specifically grasp the aspect of admitting, to research it through bodily layered practices, to release joy in active disciplined way both through different practices and dramaturgically, compositionally and thematically.

Specifically considering performers and performing qualities, I wanted to approach admitting in the context of performance-situation, which includes the pressure of being watched and confronting the eyes of the audience. The dynamism of performance setting gave a platform for practicing admitting, in variety of forms, in the reach of "active power".

From the choreographer's point of view, the aspect of admitting guided me in the framing of the practices and in constructing composition. I was interested in bringing the personal and public to co-operate next to each other, by for instance forming a task with Therapy and Theatre, which I will elaborate further in the next chapter.

### 3 A LIFE—NOMADIC MELODRAMA



*a life -nomadic melodrama*, chor. Jenni-Elina von Bagh, picture: Luca Sirviö

*A life -nomadic melodrama* was my artistic thesis work.

It was performed in Kallio-stage (Pengerkatu). It is a work for three performers (Hanna Raiskinmäki, Johannes Purovaara and Jussi Suomalainen). The other artistic group members are Ingvill Fossheim (costumes), Virpi Nieminen (scenography), Luca Sirviö (lighting design), Ville Kabrell (sound design) Otto Sandqvist (dramaturgy), Elli Salo (dramaturgy)

The description of the work in a program was like this:

A life suggests a translation of the philosophical concept "a life" into the context of performance. It is inspired by a radical suggestion of life that includes not only the organic but also the inorganic, not only life but also death. At the same time, it asks about the very place where we are in our lives right now.

*The indefinite life does not itself have moments, close as they may be one to another, but only between-times, between-moments; it doesn't just come about or come after but offers the immensity of an empty time where one sees the event yet to come already happened, in the absolute of an immediate consciousness. —Deleuze*

The performance brings forward a language, voice and body in a constant state of compositional play, where lightness, deepness and tragical are entangled with each other creating infinite web of relations.

### *3.1 About the beginning phase of a life -nomadic melodrama*

I knew already from the beginning of the process of *a life -nomadic melodrama*, that I have difficulties to contextualize myself and the process in hands, to give clear signals to my co-partners about what kind of area, stylistic field we would operate in. It was even difficult to articulate to myself an artistic possible vision of a possible end result, or at least an area of operating. The starting point was rather non-located. Partly, because of that, it was also hard to find a shared vocabulary in the discussions and practicing situations. Still, as a working group, we could somehow handle the confusion, as if this confusion was something almost essential in this work process.

The challenges probably depended on my attempt to choreographically operate in the field of non-representation but methodologically also use language, situations and linear—cultural references as compositional elements. The balancing-point was fragile, and it was difficult to reach verbal articulation and

communication with others; it just had to be articulated through materiality of the process, in the tasks and elements brought into the rehearsals. An experience of previous similar kinds of situations encouraged me to savor the insecurity and to not completely run away.

We still had a clear theoretical starting point for the work, the concept of "a life" (Deleuze). This is thematically very big, overwhelming and difficult concept to manage, because it in some sense summarizes whole of Deleuze's other concepts, and his whole career as a philosopher. It felt provoking to bring a word into the process that I or (probably also we as a working group) could in no circumstance master or completely understand. For me though, the aim was not to present my understanding of the concept but to see how it "feels" to spend time and "be with" shared thoughts and theories. As mentioned earlier, my interest was not to analyze this theme only thematically, but to get close to it in a level of composition, to let the concept vibrate in a form of a co-resonance. I was interested in what aspects are brought up about "a life" when dealing with it in a context of a performance, in a place of a theatre, in a circumstance where people come to watch and share an event.

So, the artistic intention was to research the concept analytically and theoretically, getting to know the concept as a definition of Deleuze, of pure immanence, which "does not refer to an object or belong to a subject" (Deleuze 2005, 25), but is rather about the question of becoming, by this meaning a close definition of sensation, "a passage from one to another" (Deleuze 2005, 25), and to approach it artistically, compositionally as a process of translation. As a choreographer, I was interested in seeing the artistic process also as a definition of "a life", to evaluate the artistic process as a comparison for the word of "a life" itself—a creative process manifesting as an example for this concept.

In this sense, this transcendental field—a life, which eludes all transcendence of subject and object, an immanence if immanence, could be approached as tuning or vibration, which avoids all definitions of individuals, but refers to pre-individualities and to a question of possibility of change. It is an artistically supportive concept also in bringing life closer to art and the question of power of art as well approached through force of life.

The dealing of the concepts in a first state happened through concrete reading of different texts together and separately, through talking and analyzing. We also did some "reading circles" where reading of the text could happen with free action on space with others. My interests with this was to catch the motion, dynamic movement and flow of the text and the elements that are on stage and to let them resonate in the spontaneous composition with the reading— to let the concept of "a life" show up for us. We don't know what it means. There is no need even to find a puncture for the sentence or a result of a research-process. Again, the question was to perceive the concept in an act of translation.

The theoretical starting-point could be something else too. Anyway, there is a reason why I wanted to use this particular concept, why I chose this word as a theoretical ground for my artistic final work. As mentioned before, "a life" means life but according to Deleuze also non-organic life and also death. It is a question of plane of immanence, opposing cartesian divisions; non-divisions of objects and subjects, human non-human, culture-nature. Then this concept is also a definition of an approach that is (as whole of Deleuze's philosophy) essentially nomadic. Considering that the act of translation means a task to imagine otherwise, to set a thought process next to question of change and creativity. It is a mode of question and staying with the struggle, with impossible complexities. When practicing pre-individuality, or when practicing virtuality, flows and energies get in contact with affects, personal life-stories, problems, fears, humanity, also psychological registers, but they are in the realm of practice freed up from the reactive habitual traces. When human and non-human are put together in a compositional universe, they both show their layers. Individuations as humans and individuations of non-humans are full and rich as separate but on the other hand inseparable components. With the component of human, I mean that we are existential beings, we are towards the unknown death with our fears and hopes. We are attached to the experience of human understanding and human life, but this experience is in connection to the virtual, non-human, pre individual; otherwise there is no human experience possible. (I have to believe into something in order to be inspired, attached to the concept of "a life") This kind of an act of being with and translating frees up material that has intensity enough to set movement on stage, to manifest as an expression.



### *3.2 Methodology used in the process*

In this chapter, I will clarify some important and relevant methodological points in the process of a *life-nomadic melodrama*. To choose one perspective into the methodology, I will clarify some clearly distinguishable practices. These often took form in a so called open form, of all the performers acting simultaneously. Different practices revealed new aspects and kept on mutating, which made us do new framings of new practices. Some of them remained the same during the whole process.

I sometimes used camera and filmed some of the sessions, to catch details, phrases of language, different timings and important coincidences.

The methodology, was not so structured and clear to begin with. New practices, new try outs stepped into the process.

#### 1) Perception practice; seeing

Perception practice and more precisely a practice with one of Hay's most recent bodily questions, which is: "What if I presume I am served by how I see?" worked as an important ground-practice during the process. (This particular question has been appearing in Hay's practices, especially since the year 2010 and forward. In her latest book, *Using the sky— a dance* (2016) she exemplifies different variations of this question situated in her working during recent years) This question is very rich and opens a complex configuration around one self and the cellular body. Seeing is clearly part of our experience in our bodies. It is also often strongly automatized. What I see important in this practice is the consideration of seeing as immediately bodily experienced, to surrender for the unknown movement-paths or in our body underlying sensations. Seeing is also a tool for understanding the connection between time and space. The power in this question is the aspect of letting go habitual patterns in seeing, to be attached to the seeing experience, that is not only mentally understandable, but

approaches bodily experience as a dwell that includes fears and monsters as well. Seeing is also what we don't see. Seeing is in between images. Seeing "nurtures the body". Hay clarifies the connection between presuming, serving and seeing in her notes from the year 2014 in this particular question in her book "Using the sky—a dance" (2016):

*"What if I presume I am being served by how I see?" stirs movement that changes my cellular body. I move with feelings of gratitude that arise from the question. How I see helps prevent my dwelling on the pleasure of being served and the overconfident pitfall in presuming. The sensuality of gratitude is not modified as my movement changes* (Hay, 2016: 129).

The practice of seeing demands a fragile body, a body with openness to emotions, but without sinking into them, letting the seeing appear as a question and play. It is just what if since we will never know all of it anyway. It is always partial, it is always just a part, just next to the truth. In that way seeing is both very superficial and deep. It is an opening to infinite number of possibilities, but it is also always just one perspective of opening. —Approaching seeing as cellular, already part of the perceiving body, enlarges our experience. In this way it is also a bridge out from the categorized, habitual; it opens new potentialities, possibilities. The body alertly reconfigures itself, just staying in the question, lightly witnessing the body in constant change, constantly connected.

This practice became as a ground-practice for us in the *a life-nomadic melodrama*. It became a warm up, but worked also as an underlying practice in all the other practices, as the "theatre and therapy-practice". It felt important to stay disciplined with some certain practice and have a some kind of a routine in tuning in the body. What I think is overwhelmingly important, and will resonate further on with this practice, is the question of perception in overall. Jeroen Peters writes beautifully in his book *Through the back* also quoting Jean-Francois Lyotard about the double bind of seeing and not seeing: "One must cease to perceive, stop trusting one's eyes, make oneself blind, or at least abandon oneself to blindness" (Peeters 2014, 31).

In this practice creativity and imagination emerges from the acceptance of the complexity of seeing, which includes both seeing, and not-seeing— the unpredictability and uncountability in the entanglement of body and perception.

## 2) Interacting with the Inner Partner

This practice, IwIP, originally created by Ivan Vyskocil (a writer, performer, psychologist and teacher, born in Prague in 1929.) worked also as a separate unit as a clearly framed form during the process. As a practice, it helps to free certain psychological blocks considering social interaction and patterns of thoughts. In this sense it has a therapeutical effect, but without being entirely that. It is a discipline and practice focused on spontaneous action, which does not aim at balanced configuration of mind, but rather concentrates on witnessing agitating dynamics in expression and through that supports the toning of creativity in general.

It is usually practiced in an empty space in a solo-form often maximum ten other members witnessing the situation in beforehand determined time frames (often 3-10 min per practice-round) Methodologically it separates different agitating dynamics in our behavior. These dynamics are through disciplined sensitivity always spontaneous, emerging and uniquely arising in each time, each round of a practice, even though some overall tendencies (characters) might be appearing frequently.

This practice can be looked at from variety of theoretical angles of philosophy and psychology, but my personal perspective and interest with this practice is in the play of juxtaposing with private, personal and psychological aspects intermingled with tonalities of non-personal forces. In this sense it is a practice of creativity, which does not concern one single fixed person. It is also clearly a practice of investigating the complexity of different registers of expression, such as body (in action through both concrete and abstract), voice (with its semiotic and semantic, affective and communicative levels).

During the process of *a life -nomadic melodrama* we practiced this form of discipline several times, in guidance of me and Hanna Raiskinmäki (one of the performers, who is as well a practitioner of this discipline). The effect of practicing this on the artistic process is hard to define even afterwards. I guess this practice worked through different aspects with each performer and also through me as a choreographer. Especially certain fundamental principles in performing seem to work out by themselves through practicing Interacting with the Inner Partner. Those could be the following; the variation of intensity in expression, the play with tonalities that are not yet cleared out but still partly definable, the finding of interest in the very immediate relation to the surrounding, to practice the resonance of the voice and connection between voice and body, to let the dramaturgy to solve out by itself through the practice by configuring the emerging logic of the emerging situation.

### 3) becoming: How do I feel in my life right now

One of the main tasks we did together with the performers in the beginning phase of our process was a practice called "How do I feel in my life right now?" Or, "The very place where I am in my life right now". This task was a very free practice with text, action, body in relationship to time and space, also language and voice included. We often did this practice with three people and some objects. I usually filmed these sessions. The core in a very clearly methodological level was the connection between highly personal to the very pre- personal/ preindividual toning. That means the relationship between revealing a personal thought, or letting a reaction emerge more in a psychological level, and then letting the expression be perceived as material again, and in so doing again sensing the juxtaposition between "personal" and "pre-personal".

In this practice, three dancers did relate to each other or did not. As a tool to play more straight forward with the pre-individual, cosmos-level, we practiced a "resemblance of virtuality". With the word resemblance I mean more particularly a freer relationship to that word. A resonance that informs the relationship by doing in practice. How would this tool or vehicle of a word of

virtuality help the performer to play with more than possibilities, with a state of becoming?

With the word feeling I point to Alfred North Whitehead's consideration around the question of process-oriented ontology, non-division of object and subject. As already described earlier, feeling is in relation to concern, happening of all the entities, not only human, psychologically approached. As Manning writes in her book, *Always more than one*: "For Whitehead, every occasion of experience is composed of feelings. These feelings fold through the affective tonality-the concern of the event in its emergence" (Manning 2013, 156).

The aspect of approaching feeling more as a resonance of relation, a shift of a focus point out from one's self-psychological mechanisms, means in a way being alert for perceiving and noticing the surrounding. It means noticing the surrounding by vision, sound, rhythm and also free play with also emotional psychological registers. More simply put, the task was to focus on the verbal task of telling, revealing of one's own feelings, but when the practice of the question of virtuality is there as another layer, it opened relations to the surrounding space, material around, distances, and relations between the players as well.

In this sense, this practice was a question of becoming in the sense that returning to the very place, sensation in the very place, asks an event of not going forward, but approaching becoming as genealogical, not in time, but in space.

#### 4) Playing assemblage

Composition has shown me new possibilities when approaching body in relationship to other "bodies" on stage like different materialities or non-living objects. It has been important to consider composition like an ever changing play of relations, specifically in *a life -nomadic melodrama* (in that compositional play also audience is included.) (In relation to "a life" it felt necessary to examine the possible translation-process of "a life" by introducing non-human materiality as equal next to human performer.) In this sense,

assemblage concretizes the question of becoming, process, materiality and pre-individualities. Who is acting as subject, what is acting as object, or are they non-separable components in the kinaesthetic realm of experience? The play of assemblage can be considered as an approach to agency, where human and its for granted given position as a centre figure is questioned.

In relation to composition, assemblage as a concept suggested some concrete practices. How would a body, language, speech, space, costumes, scenography create an assemblage, a living collage? Assemblage as compositional suggestion for dynamics, movement and towards transgressing ready categories, meant balancing on a line, where nothing gets stabilized, but is still forming, arranging relations and webs of meaning. Nothing is already recognizable. Or if it is, it is not for very long time. What I was looking for together with the performers was again an act of "becoming" in relation to the surrounding.

As defining this exercise as something very concrete, I try to illustrate different perspectives to "practicing assemblage" that were present in our artistic process of *a life -nomadic melodrama*.

Practicing object, practicing subject:

In this practice, the body is imagined to be either object or subject. The object is a receiving element, the subject is intentionally acting, arranging element that has a power of organizing. These elements are operating in a field of perceiving body that is alertly juxtaposing between these elements. The "acting like a subject" or "acting like an object" then maintains its ephemerality, openness, ready to be either or. This is a practice to witness the non-definability of an object and a subject. It wants to break the border between those elements. It is also a tool for opening the body for different levels of expressional registers such as language, emotions, abstract, concrete, because the possibility to juxtapose between these elements (object and subject) also allows entering into these different expressional states.

### Approaching body as an assemblage:

In this practice, the body or body-parts are seen from an outer perspective as connected parts in an assemblage. The eye into the task is placed outside to see how different body-parts, different parts of stage materiality and other performers body-parts are arranged through assemblage. For instance in *a life-nomadic melodrama* a fake stone, a performers leg, other performers costume-part, could together compose a living collage. That made the performer concretely set next to different elements or to gather stuff around him or her and to constantly realize the arrangement of assemblage changing, each passing moment.

### Assemblage of words (theatre, therapy):

Sometimes we practiced a resemblance of two guidance-words like theatre and therapy. Too words that don't really fit together, but crash, are set together resonating in the practice simultaneously, leading to some kind of friction or dislocation in the expression. The words theatre and therapy seem to resonate in a way that a lot of pressure and intensity is released because of multitasking. Our exercise was to freely "act" "on stage" by perceiving the relation to the surrounding, time and space, and letting the speech and voice, gestures and abstract movements mingle, letting two words; *theatre* and *therapy* just be there with us, inform the action. That enabled a sort of assemblage in the event, a displacement, which in its quality was both recognizable and unrecognizable. That kind of arrangement also created pressure for the performer to constantly "ask" about the quality, which kept the performer busy in order to "a life" as a tonality to emerge.

The words, *theatre* and *therapy*, emerged in the process in a dynamic way. They were found by other framed tasks and framed as qualitative expression of the performers, through the given other tasks and to articulate these words where kind of a necessary reframing. Both words, though being very different, brought up a slightly awkward fragility and possibility for shame to appear. Like a quality of expression that is both outward expressive and personal.

Assemblage as semantic and somatic:

Methodologically, the whole process of a life -nomadic melodrama was about to tune up a compositional assemblage between semantic and somatic components. To compositionally play with linear structured parts like movie-references, and mix them with other tasks through perceiving body. To mix culture, nature, human, non-human, manifested through the intra connection between semantic communication and somatically practicing multiplicity of the body.

### *3.3 Description of the space*

In a *life nomadic melodrama* audience was seated around the stage area in four corners, in rows of ten chairs each corner. Altogether, there was place only for 40 seats. The stage area was middle sized; there were black pillars in the sides of the stage-area.

The stage was colored with green Spirulina- color, with uneven coloring, creating a rectangular form in the middle area of the space. On stage, there also other objects such as a head of a Greek- sculpture, tennis-ball, towel, banana-shell, two shells, couple of fake-stones, four middle-sized wind-machines. The space was otherwise black; the floor around the green middle-part was light grey. On the long sides of the hall, there were black pillars in each side of the long sides.





*a life -nomadic melodrama*, picture: Karoliina Niemenkari

### *3.4 Structure of the piece*

The structure of the performance could be divided into six separate parts when looking at it in a linear manner. On the other hand, this kind of division is partly arbitrary, it could be devised also differently. However, I will now write out a linear score of the piece through a detailed description of the action on stage.

#### 1) Prologue

The first part happens while audience enters the stage taking a seat. Performers are already on the stage practicing a couple of simultaneously evolving tasks, like "seeing practice", "object subject practice", "simultaneous stops" "ridiculousness", "resemblance of virtuality". They interact with the objects and each other. Once a wind machine is put on and put off. They cue each other to execute two separate simultaneous stops.

## 2) Melodrama 1 and Melodrama 2

After the second simultaneous still-positioning, movement is again released into previous multitasking and a part with language starts—the so-called play-part. This part includes two separate plays: Melodrama 1, and Melodrama 2.

The performers pursue beforehand preplanned speech acts, dialogues and just separate lines or sentences. They move and use placing in some degree preplanned manner. They also execute some simultaneously resonating tasks, which are the same as in the beginning. Some movements, accents or movement directions are more exactly pre-decided. In the middle of these two "plays", performers disappear outside the stage and come back.

The play-scene ends by the performers rolling down, "middle-slow-tempo" to the floor. They end up all lying on the floor: Lights change, music changes, lights go off, lights go on.

## 3) Middle part

The third part starts by Hanna(Georgina) "standing up" from the floor. She finds one shoe and walks slightly weirdly walking with the one shoe to one of the audience rows and performs a monologue including a couple of lines (the monologue is about performing).

Then she walks again with one shoe to the opposite audience-row and performs the same monologue again, but the speech is interrupted by the other guys singing a harmony together shortly of one song that will come later in the end of the piece. Right after they speak out simultaneously, a short cut from an Ancient play of Antigone, a play by Euripides is played. While doing this they change corners by approaching together one audience row at a time.

## 4) Struggle

The chorus part ends with Johannes(John) putting the wind-machine on again and a so-called "struggle-part" starts. Soon the other wind machines start also manipulated from outside. Then follows a non-verbal part with again simultaneously evolving tasks and some pre-planned action. This part is a play with an imaginary storm, flow and counter flow, real struggle and "fake struggle". The performers create for themselves a physicality which plays with a quality of survival. They fall on each other, get smashed against the wall, pillars, they let the wind affect themselves (which comes from the wind-machine). They use each other to get somewhere. There is no clear destination;

all the directions are simultaneously desired to survive, — again, on the other hand a clear expressional distance is remained through this whole scene with the physical mental states the performer enters. Some quality of falseness and ridiculousness, together with real existential quality of survival creates layers of "deep and light". Couple of sentences are randomly screamed, like "Does this look real?" or "Is this real?". In the middle of the scene, the performers find white, brown rain-jackets which are made of sticky material, the jackets get dressed /transformed on the performers, the scene continues. Some random sounds of phone-calls are heard in the middle of the sound-mat, where Johannes(John) is supposed to answer "Hello". The "Antigone-play" is reappearing, but now the performers are on another level, on their knees, jackets on, they look like "nomads" "monks" or some "ancient characters". At some point, the jackets are taken off, performers helping each other. Some random other clothes are taken off. The struggle continues and lasts still. Soon performers also separate into divided tasks as one creating an assemblage with stage elements as wind machine and stone and a jacket, one other performer practises "becoming animal" the whole scene slides into a change of sound and light and an entering into a dialogue between Hanna(Georgina) and Jussi(Nick). The dialogue is from a film of "Deer hunter". Johannes(John) is in an opposite corner creating an assemblage with some objects in hands. Hanna(Georgina) is playing at the same time a character of Meryl Streep and a character that Meryl Streep is playing in the film *The Deer Hunter*. They play "lovers" with Jussi(Nick). Johannes(John) is taking part only with one sentence saying: "He is a liar." (pointing to Jussi(Nick))

##### 5) Becoming animal + drunk- scene

The whole struggle and film scene slides, transforms into a scene with bright-green lights. Intensive sound scape escalates into a transformed club-music-sound. The performer creates formations of different animals and tasks of "becoming animal". Some other tasks are also present as repeating a movement and repeating a rhythm, as if also "dancing in a club". The performers separate more farther apart from each other. Music stops, performers release the action, entering into a so called "drunk-scene". The drunk scene starts with a moment of quietness soon followed by John's improvised sentence. It is related to a task "How do I feel right now in my life?". The performers disappear to the sides of the stage-area and soon come back again. The performers are acting some pre

planned sentences, dialogues about their "feelings" and suggestions of "leaving". They are "drunk", but also "virtual" in the bodily multitasking. The part is closed up with a simultaneously pronounced sentence by Georgina and John: "Oh shit, I have a stomach-pain; I don't have time for this kind of shit". While saying this, they simultaneously fall to the floor, first to their knees, then lying on the floor. Nick remains standing. Stillness. Then he says: "Now it's only me."— "Tell me what to say now." Johannes gets standing again and says to him: "Well, say I love you my brother, let's spend our life together." Soon Johannes starts to sing the song "I wanna know what love is"(Foreigner). The others enter into singing also by joining the phrase "I wanna know what love is". They stop the singing there. John says: "Wow, I really liked that song." Some other lines of speech are followed. The last of the lines is said by figure of Georgina: "I'm just so hard trying to be a nomad." After couple of seconds, follow three simultaneously performed movements (performed together by all the performers). Stillness, and one more time three simultaneously performed movements. The lights change into more clear rehearsal-lights.

#### 6) Fountain and song

Then an open "improvised" part starts where Georgina is "arriving to a point to perform a song". This means that she is playing a clear task, a disciplined practice of interacting with the Inner Partner, voice, language, body, action, and at the same time informing the audience about the next scene where she is supposed to sing a song in Swedish which was originally performed by Marie Fredrikson. Then at the same time, John and Nick are leaving the room from a side door to pick up a watering-machine. Georgina is sometimes commenting that action too by wondering "where are they going". Soon she arrives to a proper spot to sing the song. Boys come back, they create a labyrinth-form of formation with the hose-pipe and the watering-machine in the middle of the stage. Song starts with play-back-sound. It is *Den sjunde vågen* by Marie Fredrikson. Georgina sings along the whole song. In the end she arrives to the floor again lying. In the middle of the song, Nick goes to set the water-machine on and water showers for a short time creating a fountain. John and Nick are creating a chorus on the opposite side of the room and singing the remaining chorus parts: "Ta det bara långsamt, världen kommer finnas kvar, ta det bara långsamt, långsamt." Music stops as if in the middle of the last refrain, followed by wave-sounds of a sea in the soundtrack. John and Nick enter into a same

multitasking with the objects as in the beginning. A sound from one of the sea-shells is appearing, which includes some theoretical definitions of the concept of a life. The sentences are manipulated by the sound, mutated so that the speech is almost undefinable. The movement continues a while on the stage (same multitasking as in the beginning). Then lights are fading slowly down. The whole performance lasts approximately 50 minutes.

## 4 NOMADIC PRINCIPLES AND EXPLORATIONS IN THE PROCESS OF A *LIFE -NOMADIC MELODRAMA*

In this chapter, I want to introduce some nomadic principles that I could see as guiding principles in operating with the performance of *a life -nomadic melodrama*. They are principles that all connect to concept of "a life", but they are also aspects that try to define a specifically nomadic approach into choreographing. These aspects could be defined as helpful to define nomadic influences in the process, for keeping the focus more disciplined in the non-understandable, but also keeping the focus in the affective sensitive place of becoming and process.

### Style

In the book of *Dialogues II*, Deleuze analyses the concept of style and links it with the concept of becoming and "a life": "Becomings— they are the things which are the most imperceptible. They are acts which can only be contained in a life and expressed in a style" (Deleuze 2002, 3). Deleuze exemplifies some writers, such as Franz Kafka, to elaborate the concept of style in connection to the use of words and syntaxes in writing. According to him, "style" is especially manifested in works of Kafka. His way of writing could be defined belonging to something as "minor-literature", a definition for writing which escapes dominant codes and conventions (Deleuze 2002, 3).

According to Deleuze, there is no literally precise words, but "inaccurate words", that can mean something exact. Then maybe style means something tasteless. Style is something that in average culturally is contextualized or understood through different media. It could be described as tasteless. Then the style is not "a signifier structure, not a reflection of an organization, or spontaneous inspiration, but an assemblage, an appearance of an assemblage" (Deleuze 2002, 4).

As I mentioned earlier about the difficulties in contextualizing the genre of style of the performance in process, of not even myself being able to figure out a clear field of operating, it is relevant to approach this case of process through Deleuze's definition of style. The style is in this way related to an open and hypersensitive openness for artistic tonalities, fluxes, piercing the process itself. It is also a question of active power as mentioned before, concerning balancing with the possibility of change and no-namable. The resonance of the style in performance is presented as a balancing point of force kept in motion. It is a question of active resonance that creates something 'new'. It seems that there is still something in the process that establishes in the beginning or at some point during the process— a logic of 'style' that informs the process from the material perspective. There is something graspable, but it is not anything stable or comparable to identity. It is a nomadic character that is resonating in a form of style. Deleuze writes that style is comparable to charm in life. A person that has charm is living because charm is a source of life. "Life is not your history" (Deleuze, 2002, 5). This considers a creative process too. The force of creativity is this resonance of style, which keeps up interest because there is an element of nomadic non-tracing.

Deleuze defines style more specifically through a description of its "double capture". Style is an "encounter" that has to be captured—stolen. It is an "asymmetrical block" a parallel evolution. This is again a question of becoming, a question of encounters. He elaborates a creative act as "absolute solitude" being populated with encounters. That means that creative work is not "one term becoming another, but each encountering the other" (Deleuze 2002, 6-7). This means that a block of becoming is a question of between and an AND, where encounters have nothing to do with one another. This asymmetrical block of becoming creates a parallel evolution, a new direction (Deleuze 2002, 7).

For me the notion of style helps to trust the artistic process itself. It is a reminder of the creative guider that informs in the materiality of the process in hands. The decisions and following the materiality is in connection to this balancing with the style. What I think is inspiring with this word is, that it still logically suggests that there is a style present. That paradoxical logic is interesting. As if the strongest and fine-tuned style is the one which has no style.

### Structure, chaos and composition

How to set material and how to play with the co resonance of spontaneity and control in the structure of the performance? How to follow the logic of style in the question of setting and framing? Structure and chaos could be seen as concrete tools for constructing the performance in order to enable the work to operate disciplined in nomadic traces. They could be approached also as contrasting compositional elements, that besides each other create rhythm and dynamics enabling different qualitative spatial and time-related aspects in composition to emerge. The question of chaos and structure are also dramaturgical tools for leaving space for coincidences in the event of performance. In structured choreographing next to chaos, there is space left open for coincidentally structuring composition.

Structure and chaos as compositional tools also help to figure out the notion that there is no less and more important moments. (We) are all the time in parts of an assemblage. It is a matter of juxtaposing more spontaneous and more structured choreographic elements next to each other, which can be elaborated through different approaches in the framing of the choreography. One way to approach this question, is to play with contrasts between concrete movement tasks and more openly framed situations and performative tasks—like a task of resemblance of a word in a more poetic way. Chaos and structure get organized through, for instance, an openly improvised scene next to preplanned detail of arriving into a preplanned choreographic instruction, concrete physical task, or structuring of language, speech, gestures, next to a body in a state of a question, or simultaneous, heterogeneously, differently organizing task between different performers. Concrete structures among non-structured chaos work as punctures for sentences.

Structure and chaos are still questions of composition. Composition emerges through the creative interplay between structure and chaos. In this sense how to structure, how to frame and how to stay in the process of an artwork is the question of complexity of creativity and composition. In relation to architecture Groz writes about the framing of an artwork in the book "chaos, territory, art" as following: "With no frame or boundary there can be no territory, and without territory there may be objects and things but not qualities that can become



expressive, that can intensify and transform living bodies...” (Groz 2008, 11). She writes further about the act of framing as cutting into the space and then connecting itself to the ”plane of composition” [...] ”Qualities are now loosened onto the world, no longer anchored in their ’natural’ place but put into the play of sensations that departs from mere survival to celebrate its means and excesses” (Groz 2008, 13).

In a *life -nomadic melodrama* the artistic interest was to embrace the body as practicing its intra-activity, relations with all the surrounding elements such as time and space and materiality of the space alertly relationally each moment. We are all the time in parts of an assemblage. The notion of chaos and structure is a question of rhythmical and spatial organizing. Considering that, they support the composition to happen and to be perceived.

### Laugh

Some of the contradictions and impossible mixtures of different tasks in our practices also created resonant qualities of humor. Maybe the reason why I personally was so attached to these kind of ”impossible” exercises was because I simply wanted to laugh. The interesting question is why and what creates the laugh. What is it that in this case makes us laugh or what does the laugh create? What is the meaning of it for me or possible on a wider scale as a sharable value in performance-situation?

The interesting point is that in laugh the meaning seems to really disappear. It is a place for loosing tools for understanding. It is a gap, and a leap for giving up or more exactly giving in, bodily acknowledging some simplicity. Letting the closest or simplest and the most stupid element to come and surrender. In a moment of laugh we enter a new place. We take a leap into a new territory. In that sense, it is kind of moment of deterritorializing. Moment of laugh is also both a feeling of connection but at the same time a leap out.

In the edition of Deleuze’s writings from 1967-1986 titled ”Autioma” (essay: ”Nomadinen ajattelu”/ ”Pensée nomade”) Deleuze writes about laugh in a

connection to nomadism. He connects laugh with deterritorialization and decoding. He writes: "It is impossible to hold laugh when codes stop working." He continues: "When you set thinking in relationship with the outer, springs the moments of Dionysian laughs forth; it is thinking under an open sky" (Deleuze 1992, 16). With these sentences he is carried by especially Nietzsche who according Deleuze often gets attached by low qualities of human behavior. Also, low and high at the same time, low and high attached to each other. (Deleuze 1992, 16.) In the book of *Dialogues II*, Deleuze writes about humor in connection to lines of becoming, "events that passes across irreducible domains" (Deleuze 2002, 67-68). He writes about humor as an art of consequences—a question of effects. Humor is, according to him, absolutely imperceptible, atonal, on the surface, pure event (Deleuze 2002, 68).

The aspect of humor and laugh is partly also the reason why I have felt important to use language in my works. I get interested in the effect of double-dynamic. To use language for me in the context of contemporary dance probably also connects to laugh. Language enters in as a straight arrow into a more fragile platform of bodily presence. In this sense language and a perceiving body are an interesting couple of collision.

It seems that humor has a quality of necessity. I use it as a tool for keeping up interest in a process of creation. As a performer, I use it as a tool for keeping myself on track of not being on track. Being concentrated, but not losing interest. Laughter is very close to a circle of an event and touches the question of sharing the event with an audience. A resonance under imaginary or real eyes. (Probably now it seems that I really can face it; I am usually a very frightened and sensitive person and also, I have a tendency for depression. To laugh, to play with that is enjoyable and necessary for me. It is a survival-mechanism also. When it is more conscious it is not only a question of a defence mechanism).

What then would be good definitions for the play tools in dealing with laugh from a choreographic point of view? I guess, it is important not to concentrate on searching for the comical, but freeing up a play and juxtaposition of different expressional registers like imitation and resemblance, concrete and abstract and to surrender and embody a challenge and possible struggle that the

situation demands. To play with the dynamics of being deeply engaged to a feeling or emotion and then distancing the view to the whole situation, not getting stuck anywhere. This means freedom and pre-individuality, rather than laugh. Then humor enters in anyway. It is like a side-effect, that really wants to join in, because the bodily spontaneity is surprisingly and deeply connected to some imitative qualities that are precise but not common. They are sharable but miraculous and they don't belong into any specific category, but they get articulated anyway.

In *a life -nomadic melodrama*, we still practiced ridiculousness as "a guidance word" in our "open practices", but we also talked about that thematically. First of all, we just let that word, ridiculous, be there to leave its traces in the process. I am more or less conscious that the quality of ridiculous is a tool for opening up space for possible change, opening up the body to a state of question and spontaneous action. Ridiculous brings up connections to other words such as no direction, pointless, staying or not being efficient, which operate in a way withstanding the mainstream of effective kinaesthetic imperative, as characteristics for modernity and also in some extent the tradition of modern dance. In the aspect of ridiculous, it is in the use of time, and when searching that, when other possible qualities of being with the concept of time or timeless open. This means that the life or joy or interest with this word lies in its relationship to use of time. It does not mean slowing down only, but being alertly questioning the linearity of time through the guidance of this word.

Besides, in the process of the performance of *a life -nomadic melodrama* the artistic interest was to research the fluxes of "ridiculous" and "deep" simultaneously. That happened sometimes just very simply playing with these words, not having any other tools. My guidance words for the performers could have been: "Try the same thing but through resonance of deep and light at the same time." That would bring us again in connection for thinking tragical and joy as layered aspects as well as opening up resonance of active power (Deleuze 2005, 58-62).

## Desire

The word desire resonates with sexuality, passion, need, (possibly unintelligent). From a perspective of contemporary philosophers, Deleuze and Guattari, this concept is defined in order to oppose desire as understood from Freudian psychoanalytical perspective (which relates desire to lack or need). In the book *Dialogues II* Deleuze describes desire as a force assembled as not integral to a subject and not directed towards an object, but completely the opposite: "it is strictly immanent to a plane which it does not pre-exist, to a plane which must be constructed, where particles are emitted, and fluxes combine" (Deleuze 2002, 89). He is opposing Freudian psychoanalysis in relation to desire: "Desire only exists when assembled or machined" (Deleuze 2002, 89). By this he means that desire is not a result of lack or in relation to law, but is always born and in an immanent connection with assemblages.

Eugene W. Holland writes in the book *Deleuze Key Concepts* how for Deleuze desire is defined as production of the reality. It is passion before a need. A need is born out of desire rather than the opposite. (Holland 2005, 54) Desire from Deleuze-Guattarian perspective is relevantly related to pre individuality, in this way, it is also related also to a concept of "a life" and also Nietzsche's concept, "will to power", but it is also and most strongly connected to the BoW (Bodies without organs). From a perspective of Deleuze, desire is a politically active attempt to oppose psychoanalytical institution, freeing up desire from organisms, desired objects, and categorizations. By quoting Deleuze and Guattari, Holland writes: "The BwO is desire; it is something that one desires, and by which one desires" (Deleuze and Guattari in Holland 2005, 60).

In relation to *a life- nomadic melodrama* the desire is passed through everything. It is non-personal life-force, where also fluxes of sexuality, fear of death and joy are assembled qualities. These fluxes are also sometimes inseparable and layered. In this process, desire appeared both as a theme, sometimes in a textual level in this piece, but can also be considered as resonating through the whole bodily practices and the whole process, as embracing the body in its all the time changing relatedness. That means that, the aim for finding the sensing bodily being in a state of becoming is in contact to desire.

Desire can also be approached something that constructs the assembling realities all the time in the process between all the elements involved, members in the working group, material, memories, life situations. All these assembling aspects are realized in desire. In this sense they can be materialized and caught into the process and looked at artistically. No assemblage can be characterized by one flux exclusively. That means also that desire is always immanent to an assemblage. It is always born when assembled. Desire is energy that bursts and is in constant movement and that does not belong to any specific subject. Desire is subjectless (Deleuze 2002, 89).

*Do you realize how simple desire is? Sleeping is a desire. Walking is a desire. Listening to music, or making music, or writing, are desires. A spring, a winter, are desires. Old age also is a desire. Even death. Desire never needs interpreting, it is it which experiments (Deleuze 2002, 95).*

### Actual and virtual

Deleuze elaborates in the book *Dialogues II* together with Claire Parnet the role of actual and virtual as each other supportive elements, where the virtual is described as a cloud of images around each actualization. Virtual is like a circuit along which they run. Virtuals also by encircling the actual renew themselves constantly by "emitting each other" (Deleuze and Parnet 2002, 148).

Virtual and actual mostly stemming from Henry Bergson's philosophy is clearly an important question in Deleuze's philosophical thinking. It seems that this pair of words are elementary when going through almost all the other concepts of him, like becoming molecular, line of flight, plane of immanence for example. They are the elements through which the change (without linearity), mutation and possibility for life are approached. Through actual and virtual, the plain of immanence is described — a philosophy opposing dualistic worldview. According to Deleuze: "The plane of immanence includes both the virtual and it's actualization simultaneously, without there being any assignable limit between the two" (Deleuze and Parnet 2002, 149).

According to Deleuze, there is also a virtual of higher order — a virtual cosmos, which is surrounding each virtual. He describes further: "it is the dramatic identity of their dynamics that makes a perception resemble a particle: an actual perception surrounds itself with a cloud of virtual images" (Deleuze and Parnet 2002, 148).

In a concrete way, I see virtuality and actuality important concepts in giving some guidance for a dancing or performing body to let the body be in contact with the question of change, but not change in relation to continuity but rather discontinuity/ becoming. We are this material body, but somehow only because there is a virtual cloud or resonance on the surface of the body, which enables sliding from the already known, already traced. They are (virtual and actual) tools for opening up the creativity. As tools in a dance-practice, I would not need so much more than the words actual and virtual to let the body be guided or tuned up in a slightly more specific and rigorous way towards the minor gestures and richness of alternatives. (Of course, before that it is important and fruitful to analyze the concepts more thoroughly). In a level of a body practice/perception practice, to surrender into researching the couple of virtuality/actuality is very radical in its nature, since it demands everlasting negotiation with the social behavioral mind and its psychological restrictions and our habits and in a social interaction learned habits.

In a way then, the practice of approaching virtual and actual are again interesting, when also the impossibility is shown and brought to the table. Virtuality is given its full power when that struggle is let to be next to this question. Somehow it feels that the body can never get it and by admitting this it starts to resonate, it is the approaching the virtual itself that enables the resonance of the virtual. It will always remain partly ungraspable non-actualized, non-articulated. By this way, actual and virtual become somehow realized as a form of an event, where they fully support each other.

Concepts of actual and virtual resonated in this sense most in the microlevel of the process of *a life -nomadic melodrama*. They were tools to play also with the free juxtaposition between semantic and somatic, abstract and concrete levels of expression. The tuning into experimentation of change, cloud of virtual,

enabled a certain flexibility to juxtapose between different expressional registers, witnessing the fact as if all the registers "are all the time there" ready to manifest in different multiple ways.

### Duration

Duration describes time as continuous. In general, it is a qualitative definition of time passing. When looking at the contemporary philosophy's roots of the concept of duration, it is necessary to link the word into Henry Bergson and his definition of it. There, I want to approach the concept, because it has a clear connection to virtuality that I have previously analyzed. I introduce this concept now mainly through Deleuze's writing *Bergsonism* and Bojana Kunst's notions about it in her book *Artist at work* (2015) and Tero Nauha's summary of duration in a lecture about the *Artist at work* (2017).

According to Tero Nauha, Bergson's duration is a definition that enables our experience of time, but belongs to non-actualized realm. The duration is a description of the past, but the past is virtual and timeless. In this way the duration means also something non-causal. It is a virtual component that is not really clearly distinguished as past or present, and the only way to get into contact with it is through our personal recollection, which happens only in action, movement that embodies the recollection (Nauha 2017).

In this sense duration is "not merely lived experience; it is also experience enlarged or even gone beyond; it is already condition of experience" (Deleuze 1991, 37). With this Deleuze means that duration is an element or composite that is kept as a separate realm, but constantly effecting in how we experience each moment. Brought further duration is in this way a composite of qualitative multiplicity, different as quantitative multiplicity which is related to space.

Deleuze explains duration as an "internal multiplicity of succession" (Deleuze 1991, 38), meaning that duration is the composite that makes the experience of change in time experienced in quality, in uniqueness. It is "fusion, of

organization, of heterogeneity, of qualitative discrimination, or of difference in kind” (Deleuze 1991, 38).

My interest in dealing with duration lies in the concept’s possible supportive nature in approaching methodology around the aspect; if art and contemporary dance would have any actively political power in the context of contemporary society’s power structures. Bojana Kunst takes up the question of duration in order to elaborate the possibilities in contemporary art to act and have an effect in society (which is postfordist, new liberalist, capitalist, global) also politically in her book *Artist at work*.

She introduces a couple of examples of contemporary performance and contemporary dance in illustrating the aspect of duration. She absorbs duration as an alternative aspect of racing hope in approaching art in general and its role in society, where the artistic work is easily exploited to capitalistic system of production and profit. Duration could be a possible solution to resonate against the time-experience of a flexible and mobile subject formed by the contemporary working circumstances. Our time-experience is clearly ”economically conditioned and socially constructed ” (Kunst 2015, 130).

By exemplifying for instance, a contemporary dance performance by Eszter Salomon ”NVSBL ” (2007), Kunst illustrates the effect of the use of duration as a qualitative tool in causing vibration in contrast to our socially formed and organized time experience. In this performance, four dancers experiment movement brought into its minimum, movement that reminds of a recorded slow-motion. They are motionless, yet moving. The image is unstable, undefinable (Kunst 2015, 125). It seems like the aspect of duration, the qualitative experienced part of time, ” logic of sense”(Deleuze), is enhanced. The duration as such, apparent in this particular performance, seems to ”deprive us of control over our own perception and consequently of presumed control over bodies which our vision belied it could frame and interpret with its own memory models” (Cristina Demaria in Kunst 2015, 125-126).

In the process of *a life -nomadic melodrama* the question of duration could be seen as approached both in practice-level, and in more overall dramaturgical level. It got analyzed through experimenting with time that is not running



forward but manifesting in the notion of duration, and in contact to virtuality. This could be seen manifesting by tools of dealing with both linear language, linear scenes, but cellular, chaotic non-linear body next to it. In *a life-nomadic melodrama* the aspect of duration both connects to practices with virtuality, but also the experimenting of resemblance of ridiculousness. Probably the investigation of ridiculous is a tool for operating with duration. Duration, following to Bergson, is a complex concept, which is not easy to articulate out and to make a definition of. That is why, to operate next to duration means struggle. It has many layers and many openings, and demands a possibly terrifying notion of the fact of how we are as humans manipulated through the social. "Duration irritates us because it can reveal how deeply our most intimate perception of time (i.e. the feeling that we are active beings and constantly on the move) is socially constructed and economically conditioned" (Kunst 2015, 130).

### Singing

Music, or singing as territorialization of expression and deterritorialization of movement is something that has appeared frequently in some of my works as a compositional element but also as an investigation of nomadism. There is a rigorously affective power in melody, rhythm, voice and instruments. The sound that spreads and affects, traverses the body, cannot be rejected. What specifically has interested me recently is the linearity, popularity, and emotional aspect of it. I think it is interesting to investigate, how to use music's affective power as a co-compositional partner, but avoid falling into easiness or a form of entertainment of it. For example, a song as tightly culturally resonating reference is a question of conscious artistic choice, but at the same time a question of a framing that releases compositional randomness. Because of its forcefully affective quality, it cannot control the effect that gets born in the moment of receiving it. It is a question of affective uncontrollability. That is why it has been important for me to search music's and specifically human voice's artistic dimension in my artistic processes in general.

"Music is a line of flight from the home that the refrain constructs" (Groz 2008, 53). Groz elaborates in her book of *Chaos, Territory, Art* the aspect of deterritorialization of music. She defines refrain and rhythm as the content, and smallest unit of music, an expression of territorialization, and music an element of its own that gives it a power of deterritorialize, affect and spread out (Groz 2008, 52). "Music is a creative, active operation that consist in deterritorializing the refrain" (Deleuze and Guattari in Groz 2008, 53).

I consider music as an interesting compositional co resonance, an aspect of refrain, rhythm and melody. It is an affective sphere, which leaves a resonance, contrasting and connecting with the surrounding.

### Melancholy

The work of *a life -nomadic melodrama* was an artistic investigation of tonalities, vibrations, sensations of life-living. Possibly transgressive forces manifesting rigorously, not asking a promise. It was a project of investigating the artistic relationship to nomadism where the pre-personal fluxes resonate together with the lived experiences. It demanded to perceive and see all kinds of thought processes, to witness the non-separability of body and thought, of affects and articulations, of semantic and somatic, which operate also through my own life, but always connected to this time of living and the atmospheric sense of it.

Through that sensitivity, one of the key notions that guided us (the working group) through this process was a sense of transformation caused by the arisen consciousness of the state of the world and globe. The "catastrophic" situation, also looked from a human perspective, a state of clearly new era, posthuman, has shown its both frightening and transformative sides. The consciousness of the state of the world demands different kind of thinking. Things will forever be different. There is no return. Human has caused indispensable damage for the earth, causing a threat for itself. This new awareness, a state of transformation, could be described as an emotion, but also sensation, affection,

and an atmosphere, possibly melancholy, some kind of realization of a more collectively phenomenally manifesting energy in this particular time.

The notion of transformation in the world in general also awakens the melancholic sphere around just one's singular life. It tones oneself into the realization of the shortness of human life, and in this sense, melancholy is an atmosphere that pierces always one unique life-experience. It is a common phenomenon in some distinct but always experienced alone, through one's singular life.

How to face melancholy then and how to take it as a notion? Since loving melancholy, embracing it, is famously not a healthy thing. This does not bring along any happiness — getting stuck in the past, not seeing the value of this moment. (As more psychologically approached, melancholy is connected to some kind of state of mind, which is also very often related to depression, fear and stagnation.) Could melancholy still be approached as a valuable quality, as a tool for creativity?

In relation to the concept of "a life", my interest was to embrace melancholic energetic notion as a flux that is taking part in the force of life living. To let the melancholy, arrive but through approaching it as a strong affective resource for an artistic creativity and force, rather than perceiving it as reactive sick power. I was interested in to embrace it as a valuable quality for play.

It is still a question of confusion. That confusion creates a need for expression, for share-ability, an out-burst. If there is a need, must in creation, writing, working, painting, composing, it probably has something to do with a slightly melancholic toning, longing for something, that is not reachable—a sense of loss.

It is because human experience of life-living is so big, that melancholy can be clearly distinguished quality in our existence. It is the moment when a party is finished, people have left. There becomes a quietness and stillness, possible darkness, with completely different perspective into everything. This sensation is a sudden twist that turns everything upside down, shakes and leaves the body without clear coordinates. Still a memory of connection is there as a ghost. A life, a human, an animal, nature, landscape, colors, taste, smell, culture,

creating a sense of life, is so much, so overwhelming. Melancholy is a necessary pair with these elements because it reveals the other un-known site to life living.

Dance theorist, Andre Lepecky takes melancholy as one of the key notions in his book "Tanssitaide ja liikkeen politiikka" (2012). Melancholy is a project for modernity. That is because of modernity's strong focus point is in the presence, which we consciously lose all the time. By quoting Marcia Siegel, Lepecky explains how choreography through its natural characteristic of embracing the disappearance of the present moment strengthens the notion of melancholy, and through that has political potential that resists general economy. The affect of melancholy is in the core of this "disappearance point" which manifests in dance as an art form. This "point of a disappearance" resonates in a realm of an imperceptible, which escapes all regulation and control (Lepecky 2012, 258-260).

In this sense melancholy might enable the "change of affects" to release sick identifications, for example, in the context of colonialism. It is an affect that allows an ethics of remembering and change of affects (Lepecky 2012, 262). Embracing melancholy as political project might produce also novelty and change (Lepecky 2012, 262).

I wonder if melancholy could be approached as a clear flux, as a tool for artistic tuning, as desire. Then melancholy is linked to desire as seen as not desiring a loss of an object or lack of something, which could be the way described by Freudian psychoanalysis, but as a qualitative resonance of desire that belongs to Body without Organs, It could be released into the realm of creativity as all the time forming assemblage. As Holland writes in *Deleuze key concepts*: "For Deleuze and Guattari, the loss of the 'object a' is not a tragedy precipitating human beings into a vain attempt to restore a former fullness of being: it is rather joyful deliverance from fixation on any naturally, socially or neurotically imposed object or activity" (Holland 2005, 61).

Could melancholy be approached as a force intermingled with joy? Could the atmospheric moment in the state of understanding the world-situation be approach artistically as an arising hope and an active force in the ordering of

human and non-human thought? For me this might remain as an artistically complex and valuable question also further in the future.

## 5 CONCLUSION, IN THE ERA OF POSTHUMANISM

”To create is to lighten, to unburden life, to invent new possibilities of life. The creator is legislator—dancer” (Deleuze 2005, 69).

This time and era we live in now could be defined as a step out from postmodern, and from poststructuralism into posthuman era. My recent choreographic works in the Theatre Academy, such as *in between*, *Papers and Pens*, *Posthuman* and *a life -nomadic melodrama* have all been at least partly, thematically related to new-materialist /posthuman approaches. They all have been dealing and researching these themes through process oriented, analytical, theoretical and bodily thinking and through approaching artistic methodology next to these questions. In this work of writing, I have gone through some aspects, principles and methodology that bring us closer the nomadic, possibly non-human thought processes in relation to artistic creation specifically through my own artistic final work, *a life -nomadic melodrama*.

Through the resonance of this question I have especially elaborated the philosophical thinking of Deleuze, which in wide sense works as a ground for contemporary approaches as nomadic subject and matters of breaking categories such as organic and non-organic life, human and non-human, nature and culture. I have sorted out aspects of how this philosophical theoretical shift manifests in my own artistic thinking and artistic working. I have sorted out artistically interesting problematics in the operation of thinking differently, which brings with fluxes of both an affective experiencing human and pre-individually operating tonality.

A valuable notion in relation to nomadic thinking and creativity in general is the aspect of admitting, looked from a personal but at the same time pre-personal perspective. To release active power, to find a balance point, which manages artistically to bring forth a resonance of change, to be attached to an artistic tonality and creativity, means confronting change with affective

resonance. In relation to posthumanity and nomadism, the word of admitting connects itself to a struggle with the attempts of thinking differently —with complexity. It reveals the engagement with the whole layered operations that evolve in a complex psyche of a human. Admitting means struggle and a staying with the struggle. This might be the main notion that has cleared out for me through writing, but also through the artistic process of *a life -nomadic melodrama*. A search for change, choreographic operation in the paths of dislocation demands an affective level of confronting, an affective body with traverse fluxes, such as melancholic vibration. Creativity and artistic work is relational and sensational, not cutting of emotions. Art and creativity happens through an affective level of connecting. It demands courage to operate with complex processes, and again courage of admitting the complexity.

Through my choreographic studies, different changes in my personal life setting, a shift from dancer position to a realm of choreography, and additionally a sense of an overall transformation in the world has caused confusion and total shaking of encompassing questions of identity. The interest of pre-individualities and nomadism operate in relation to my personal struggles. To imagine a nomadic subject also hurts and feels difficult but is also a question of joy and vibration. Admitting that is the work of art.

I realize an overall tendency concerning the way I approach choreographic work. It seems that I need a certain kind of pressure in theoretical puzzling to release out intuitive freedom in creative act. Probably the same pattern follows this particular work of writing. I have chosen to operate in more analytical side here to possibly prepare space again for creative act and creative praxis.

As Virginia Woolf would still say: Think we must (Woolf 1938, 60). I agree. The dynamism between thinking hard and intuitive artistic resonance is important. This is a question of semantic and somatic, theory and praxis, or an artistic method of translation as I have elaborated in this writing. This brings forth a thought of role of art. It is always next to truth. Its role in general is light. It cannot have a demand on itself in first place to rescue the world, heal or give a predictable effect. The effect of it is always partly random. And that kind of lightness into the question is the hardest part in being an artist because it is a question of one's chosen life path anyway—a life choice.

The lightness and at the same time distance to current social, worldwide political, philosophical phenomena might be important. To not control, not master and not order means leaving space for co-incidence. In artistic work this is a question of giving space for coherently chosen artistic theme through approaching it with autonomy of art itself. This means freeing art from the pressure of solving problems, representing, making stagnated definitions. It is a matter of letting an artistic process be assembled.

I must leave my thoughts halfway since I notice here a sense of in betweenness. I will be continuing with these thoughts and processes, making new connections, and breaking connections again.



## REFERENCES

Barad, Karen. 2003. "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding How Matter Comes to Matter", in *Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol 28, no 3. Chicago: The University of Chicago, 801-829.

Benjamin, Walter. 2000. *The Task of the Translator in The Translation Studies Reader*. Edited by Lawrence Venuti. Translated by Harry Zohn. London: Routledge.

Bennett, Jane. 2010. *Vibrant Matter: A political ecology of things*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Blackman, Lisa. 2008. *The Body*. New York: Berg.

Braidotti, Rosi. 2002. *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Braidotti, Rosi. 2011. *Nomadic subjects*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. 2000. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

Deleuze, Gilles. 1991. *Bergsonism*. New York: Zone Books.

Deleuze, Gilles and Claire Parnet. 2002. *Dialogues II*. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. London and New York: Continuum.

Deleuze, Gilles. 1992. *Autioma—Kirjoituksia vuosilta 1967-1986*. Edited and translated by Jussi Kotkavirta, Keijo Rahkonen, and Jussi Vähämäki. Helsinki: Gaudeamus

Deleuze, Gilles. 2005. *Nietzsche ja filosofia*. Translated by Tapani Kilpeläinen. Helsinki: Kustannusosakeyhtiö Summa.

Deleuze, Gilles. 2005. *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*. Translated by Anne Boyman. New York: Zone Books.

Groz, Elisabeth. 2008. *Chaos, Territory, Art*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Hay, Deborah. 2016. *Using the Sky - a dance*. London: Routledge.

Holland, Eugene W. 2005. "Desire", in *Deleuze: Key Concepts*. Edited by Charles J. Stivale. Bucks: Acumen, 53-62.

Kunst, Bojana. 2014. *Artist at work*. Hants: Zero books.

Lepecky, André. 2012. *Tanssitaide ja liikkeen politiikka*. Translated by Hanna Järvinen. Helsinki: Like Kustannus Oy.

Manning, Erin. 2013. *Always more than one*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Monni, Kirsi and Ric Allsopp. 2015. *Practising Composition: Making Practice*. Helsinki: University of the Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy.

Nauha, Tero. 2016. *Schizoproduction: Artistic research and performance in the context of immanent capitalism*. Helsinki: University of the Arts Helsinki.

Peeters, Jeroen. 2014. *Through the Back: Situating Vision between Moving Bodies*. Helsinki: University of the Arts Helsinki, Theatre Academy.

Sotirin, Patty. 2005. "Becoming woman", in *Deleuze: Key Concepts*. Edited by Charles J. Stivale. Bucks: Acumen, 98-120.

Wise, J. Macgregor. 2005. "Assemblage", in *Deleuze: Key Concepts*. Edited by Charles J. Stivale. Bucks: Acumen, 77-87.

Woolf, Virginia. 1938. *Three Guineas*. London: Hogarth Press.

Young, Eugene B, Gary Genosko and Janell Watson. 2013. *Deleuze & Guattari Dictionary*. London: Bloomsburry Academic.

Other references:

Notes from Artist at work-seminar, lecturer: Tero Nauha. 8.4.2017.  
Helsinki: Theatre Academy

Cover-page-picture: *a life nomadic melodrama*. chor. Jenni-Elina von Bagh. picture: Sanni Siira







