

Poetic Translations

Moving between poetry and dance

ANNI KAILA



ABSTRACT

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| <p>In this written part of my master's thesis, I explore the connections between poetic writing and dance from a performer's perspective. My own poems act as introductions to the chapters and become a kind of poetic through line in the thesis. Writing as a dancer, I write with my whole body and move between what is already presently perceived and what can be imagined.</p> <p>The essays of dramaturg and dance theoretician Bojana Cvejić on imagination and poetics in contemporary dance serve as the main reflection points for my views. Cvejić's concept of 'feigning', used to describe the dancer's imaginary and a kind of bodily surrogate knowledge, becomes one of the central ideas in understanding the link between poetry and dance.</p> <p>In the first part of the thesis, I observe the ways in which poetry pierces contemporary dance practices today and also briefly describe the historical connections between poetry and dance. Writing about the poetry of the performer, I approach the topic through my own personal practice and outline different ways of writing and relating to poetic texts as a performer. The focus is on the interconnectedness of perception and imagination, and how this relationship can be viewed through the lens of both dance and poetry. Poetic image and the rhythm and weight of language also connect the act of writing to the dancing body.</p> <p>I use the term 'choreographic poetry' to describe poetic texts that serve score-like functions in a dance performance, and bring up contemporary dance makers who work with texts in this way. The act of translation is introduced both as a method for working as a dancer and as a philosophical frame for understanding the paradigmatic nature of dance, as philosopher Jacques Rancière sees it.</p> <p>In the second part of the thesis, two artistic processes serve as concrete examples of working with poetic texts and translation in the context of a dance performance.</p> <p><i>Puutarha (The Garden)</i>, my own choreographic solo work, started from the idea of turning confessional poetry into a dance performance. My own poems became the main source of material for the solo. I focus on the writing process and the editing of the poems into a script, and how these poems informed and affected the performance and the bodily expression in it.</p> <p><i>LOVE I–III</i> is also a solo performance, based on the poetic score written by Norwegian poet and choreographer Janne-Camilla Lyster. I describe my process of working with the score and the performance guidelines provided by Lyster and the translation of these poetic texts into dance.</p> | | | |
| ENTER KEYWORDS HERE poetry, poem, dance, performing, writing, perception, imagination, feigning, choreographic poetry, choreographic score, translation, performer's process, performer's practice, solo | | | |

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| TAITEELLISEN / TAITEELLIS-PEDAGOGISEN TYÖN NIMI <i>Their Limbs Their Lungs Their Legs</i> , koreografia Lea Moro, ensi-ilta 18.1.2019 Teatterikorkeakoululla. Taiteellinen osio on Teatterikorkeakoulun tuotantoa <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Taiteellinen osio ei ole Teatterikorkeakoulun tuotantoa (tekijänoikeuksista on sovittu) <input type="checkbox"/> Taiteellisesta osiosta ei ole tallennetta <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Kirjallisen osion/tutkielman saa julkaista avoimessa tietoverkossa. Lupa on ajallisesti rajoittamaton. | Kyllä <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ei <input type="checkbox"/> | Opinnäytteen tiivistelmän saa julkaista avoimessa tietoverkossa. Lupa on ajallisesti rajoittamaton. | Kyllä <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ei <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>Opinnäytteeni kirjallinen osio käsittelee runollisten tekstien ja tanssitaiteen välisiä yhteyksiä esiintyjän näkökulmasta. Omat runoni toimivat alustuksina luvuille ja muodostavat työlle eräänlaisen runollisen selkärangan. Kirjoittaessani tanssijana kirjoitan koko ruumiillani ja liikun havainnoimisen ja mielikuvittelun välisellä alueella.</p> <p>Dramaturgi ja tanssiteoreetikko Bojana Cvejićin esseet nykytanssin mielikuvituksesta ja poetiikasta toimivat keskeisimpinä heijastuspintoina omille ajatuksilleni. Cvejićin käsite 'feignig', joka kuvaa tanssijan mielikuvittelua ja eräänlaista ruumiillista sijaistietoa, on yksi olennaisista ajatuksista tanssin ja runouden välisen yhteyden ymmärtämisessä.</p> <p>Opinnäytteen ensimmäisessä osassa havainnoin sitä, kuinka runous lävistää nykytanssin praktiikoita tänä päivänä ja kuvaan lyhyesti runouden ja tanssin välisiä historiallisia yhteyksiä. Kirjoittaessani esiintyjän runoudesta lähestyn aihetta oman praktiikkani kautta ja hahmottelen erilaisia tapoja kirjoittaa ja suhtautua runollisiin teksteihin esiintyjän näkökulmasta. Keskiössä on havainnon ja mielikuvituksen välinen yhteys, ja se kuinka tämä yhteys voidaan nähdä sekä tanssin että runouden kautta. Myös poeettinen kuva sekä kielen rytmi ja paino yhdistävät kirjoittamisen tapahtuman tanssivaan ruumiiseen.</p> <p>Käytän käsitettä 'koreografinen runous' (choreographic poetry) kuvatakseni runollisia tekstejä, jotka toimivat scoren tavoin tanssiesityksissä, ja nostan esille joitakin nykypäivän tanssintekijöitä jotka työskentelevät tekstien kanssa tällä tavoin. Kääntäminen (translation) esitellään sekä tanssijantyön metodina että filosofisena kehyksenä tanssin paradigmaattisen luonteen ymmärtämiselle, kuten filosofi Jacques Rancière sen näkee.</p> <p>Opinnäytteen toisessa osassa kaksi taiteellista prosessia toimivat konkreettisina esimerkkeinä runollisten tekstien ja käännöksen kanssa työskentelystä tanssitaiteen kontekstissa.</p> <p><i>Puutarha</i> on oma koreografinen soolotyöni, joka alkoi halusta työskennellä tunnustuksellisen runouden kanssa tanssiesityksessä. Omat runoni toimivat soolon pääasiallisena materiaalina. Keskityn runojen kirjoitus- ja editointiprosessiin ja kuvaan sitä kuinka nämä runot vaikuttivat esityksen muotoutumiseen ja ruumiilliseen ilmaisuun.</p> <p><i>LOVE I–III</i> on myös sooloteos, ja sen pohjana toimii norjalaisen runoilija-koreografi Janne-Camilla Lysterin kirjoittama koreografinen runokäsikirjoitus. Kuvaan työskentelyprosessiani käsikirjoituksen ja Lysterin antamien esitysohjeiden kanssa ja kirjoitan siitä, kuinka käännös runotekstin ja tanssin välillä tapahtui kyseisen esityksen kohdalla.</p> | | | |
| ASIASANAT runous, runo, tanssi, esiintyjäntaide, kirjoittaminen, havainto, mielikuvitus, kuvittelu, koreografinen runous, score, kääntäminen, käännös, esiintyjän prosessi, esiintyjän praktiikka, soolo | | | |

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INTRODUCTION

*Tässä asennossa, lapsen ja eläimen asennossa,
polvet kainaloissa,
kantaluut syvällä istuinluiden sylissä
minä aloitan*

*In this position, the posture of a child and an animal,
kneecaps in armpits,
heel bones cradled by sit bones
I begin*

(22 October 2019)

In this written part of my master’s thesis, I will explore the ways in which my practices as a performer and as a writer intertwine, and look at the use of poetic texts in dance also through a choreographic lens. I am especially curious about the imaginative potential that exists in the in-between—the space between poetry and dance that could be regarded as the space of translation.

Writing has always been a very physical thing to me, and through dance I have encountered a language rich in metaphors and ambiguities. The language used to describe movement often has a poetic quality, and relating to this language physically requires a specific kind of bodily imagination. The interconnectedness of imagination and perception permeates my understanding of both poetry and dance. Through the materiality of what is already here, we can access the realm of the imaginary, the potential of what “might happen.”

The first part of the thesis explores the possibilities of writing as a performer in artistic processes and the ways in which the process of translation happens between poetic text and dance. I begin by observing how poetry pierces dance in contemporary practices

and briefly outline the historical connections between writing and dance. I use the term ‘choreographic poetry’ to describe poetic texts that have score-like functions in a dance performance, and write about how I approach these texts as a performer. Dance theoretician and dramaturg Bojana Cvéjic’s essays on poetics and imagination in contemporary dance serve as the main reflection points for my views, and along the way I also reference other writers and thinkers.

In the second part of this thesis, two different artistic processes serve as concrete examples of different ways of working with poetic texts in the context of contemporary dance:

1. *Puutarha (The Garden)* - a solo I created in the first year of my studies at the Theatre Academy, performed in August 2018 at the Theatre Academy
2. *LOVE I-III* - a poetic score written for one dancer by Janne-Camilla Lyster, translated and performed by Anni Kaila, premiered in June 2017 at Perdu, Amsterdam

Both pieces are solo performances, and both incorporate poetic text and the body, but do so in different ways. *The Garden*, my own choreographic work, started from a desire to work with confessional poetry in a dance performance, and my own poems became an important source of material in the process. I explore the ways in which these poems were formed and how they informed the body and the creation of the dance. In regards to *LOVE I-III*, I will write about my approach as a performer to a poetic score written by someone else, and focus on the translation from text to dance.

Some of the chapters begin with poems that act as short introductions to the different topics, both for the reader and for myself. The poems, written in both Finnish and English, also introduce the act of translation to the thesis in a concrete way. Even though I have chosen to write this thesis in English, it feels important to include some Finnish into it as well. It is my mother tongue, a language I learned slowly by growing into it, and so it has grown into me, it has become a part of my body.

For me, operating in two languages can offer a more nuanced, even tactile sense of the materiality of writing. Through translation, something is revealed, something new can unfold. I have often experienced that while translating one has to tune more deeply into the substance of what is being communicated, and this is something that I think is fundamentally true about dance as well, if one considers it as “the art of translation,” as Jacques Rancière suggests (Rancière 2017, 127).

PART I: WRITING AND READING DANCE – THEORY AND PRACTICE



POETRY PIERCING DANCE

*Sormenpäiden silmukat, kyynärpään kerä, lanka jonka purit loppuun asti, iho jonka avasit saumasta ja irrotit, jonka annoit valua mykkänä yltäsi ja ripustit puun oksalle ja pakenit,
katso, se tanssii sinulle, se tuodaan sisään sateesta ja ripustetaan kahteen kertaan, kuivumaan
ja laulamaan:
polvien taipuessa
jotain valuu lattialle*

*The loops of your fingertips, the clew of your elbow, the yarn you unspun until its final fibres, the skin you slit open at the seam and shed, mute as the sky, the skin you hung on the branch of a tree and fled, look, it dances for you now, it is brought in from the rain and hung now, hung twice,
out to dry and
to sing:
as the knees bend
something leaks onto the floor*

(24 October 2019)

You could say that poetry is enjoying a kind of renaissance in the 21st century. Poetry slams, spoken word, rap, auditory text-based performances and digital platforms have reshaped the way poetry is created and consumed in our society. Poetry also seems to be making its mark on dance, though not by far for the first time in history. In the canon of Western dance, the link goes back several centuries. Already the earliest court ballets, similarly to ancient Greek dramas, were fusions of dance, verse and song, and it was only later that text and movement were separated and ballet became an art form in its own right at the initiative of Jean Georges Noverre (*Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre* 26 January 2020). The word choreography, Latinised from Greek, has its origins in the

words ‘khoreia’ (dance) and ‘graphein’ (to write) (*OED* 25 October 2019). Dance is also often, so often in fact that it has become a cliché, described as ‘poetry in motion’ or ‘silent poetry’. In the 19th century, French poet and critic Stéphane Mallarmé famously linked the two in his essays on dance, calling dance “the superlative form of theatrical poetry.” He stated, somewhat controversially, that a dancer does not dance—she writes a corporeal form of writing, “a poem free of all writing apparatus.” (Mallarmé according to Lewis Shaw 1988, 3)

The current rise of poetry across the performing arts could perhaps be seen as a kind of opposite pull to the demands of the neoliberalist marketplace. Most of the writing that happens in and around dance and performance these days has a lot to do with managing the conditions that make art-making possible. We write applications, descriptions of our works and of ourselves, we draw links between our work and the work of theorists and philosophers in order to legitimise our art and its value for society. This is something that dance theorist and dramaturg Bojana Cvejić also observes in her essay “An Unfaithful Return to Poetics <in four arguments>.” She posits that the work of the artist has transformed into praxis, “whereby artistic labor is extended, atomized and dispersed in a variety of activities in which the artist manifests his/her will.” This is largely due to the internalisation of capitalist means of production by both art institutions and artists themselves. (Cvejić 2016)

The result is a stressed, time-pressed artist with an extremely wide array of tasks to fulfill and expectations to meet. In another essay, Cvejić excellently frames the problem facing the praxis-focused artist: with all the things that have to be accomplished, there is little time left for actual poetics, the art of making, forming and composition. Inconveniently, poetics requires time, and the ability to imagine a future, to entertain the curious question “What is the art I would like to see?” It is inconvenient to have to imagine a future in a world which seems to be locked in the present. Presentism is the social mood of the neoliberal market, “No future” its bitter message. (Cvejić 2018a)

To counteract this grim reality, an almost covert operation has to take place: a carving-out of time, of an imaginary space, where the questions of ‘what would I like to see, sense, and experience’ can take place. When it is inconvenient to imagine a future, it is

often inconvenient to work with the body, to have a body to begin with, with all its uncomfortable messages of pain, decay and time. There is so much that the body has to take on, that it can get stuck in. To be able to dance, one must find ways to free up at least some of the pressure. Here, ironically, I also find a way to answer at least partially to the expectations of usefulness that we as artists set for ourselves and that the society also has laid out for us. Could the artist, as an expert on maintaining a capacity for imagination and a connection to the body, help guide the way in a society that seems to be in urgent need of both? I would like to think so.

What poetry can do, perhaps, is unlock an imaginary future for the body to inhabit. “The poetic means — — that it might happen” (Rassel according to Cvejić 2016). To practice poetics is to practice having hope. To return for a moment to the history of dance, Cvejić draws an interesting link between the emergence of dance and the way that poetry seems to now be “piercing contemporary dance.” Referring to the history of experimental art practices often punctuated with “offbeat manifestations of poetic writing,” she disputes the contentious claim that modern dance was the legacy of the twentieth-century democracy, born in America, and instead suggests that dance was “present all along, emerging in those sites of Neo-avantgarde experiments (visual arts, happenings and performance art, experimental music) that allowed it.” (Cvejić 2016)

And now that writing has become more important than ever before to all artists as a daily practice of managing expectations and surviving in the market, it is vital to claim writing also for ourselves, to use it for pleasure and poetics, to let it pierce our existence with urgency. It can be an emancipating process to write with the body and with the dance, not only about dance in the form of funding applications and marketing announcements. At least, this has been my experience.

Next, I will write about the way that poetry has pierced my personal practice as a dancer and as a performer. I will also explore the ways in which imagination, perception and poetry are linked to each other and to dance performance.

POETRY OF THE PERFORMER

*Jotain on kivettynyt. Lapaluun louhos tutkitaan liian kirkkain lampuin.
Niiden valossa nimeämättömät mineraalit erotellaan
muovihanskoin ja metallipihdein. Kaikki ei ole kovaa,
jotain hajoaa saman tien tomuksi.*

*Louhostoiminta lopetetaan. Pitkin selkää edelleen nimeämättömien mineraalien
lapset kierivät,
valuvat, rapisevat ja pysähtyvät
lantion maljaan täynnä marmorikuulia, pallomeri, kaukainen ranta.*

*Something petrified. They search the quarry of the shoulder blade with blazing
lamps.*

*In the light of them, unnamed minerals are arranged
with plastic gloves and metal pincers. Not everything is hard,
something at once turns to dust.*

*The quarry is shut down. Across the back, the children of still unnamed minerals roll,
drip, rustle and stop
in the bowl of the pelvis full of marbles, a ball pit, a distant beach.*

(5 November 2019)

As a dance performer, I often work in a kind of non-verbal space, with materials and materialities that have other affordances than those offered by language. The potential of writing in this space is an interesting one: when there are fewer words than usual, the words that do exist become somehow heavier. Of course, language is always present in artistic processes at least in the form of communication between the members of the working group. Even in a solitary process, the inner monologue can sometimes be

almost constant. Poetry is language, but it is language distilled into a concentrated form, even when that form is a dense and rich tissue, overflowing with a multitude of expressions. Writing can help condense thought and silence chatter and in this way actually make it easier to access those states of non-verbal clarity and specificity that make movement and the performing of movement possible.

Poetry, like dance, is largely about the experience it creates, the effect it has on the reader/writer/dancer/spectator. This set of words related to different agencies is perhaps how I would best describe my own professional position, or the position I often gravitate towards as an artist. Approaching writing and poetry through dance, and vice versa, I allow myself to inhabit the in-betweens, the places where translations and transformations occur from one medium and one position into another.

On perceiving and imagining

The link between perception and imagination is one significant area where a profound connection between poetic writing and dance can be found. As dance deals with the body, both seen and experienced, and performance is always an event that we witness by being with it in the entirety of our being, questions of sensing and perception are always present in some way when talking about dance. Perception is also central to the performer's experience of and their contribution to the performance. The ability to deepen, shift, even manipulate the way we sense and perceive starts from the performer's own body and practice, as the performer is simultaneously the creator and inhabitant of any performance.

Another crucial ability for the performer is the capacity to imagine something that does not exist yet. Historically, imagination was seen as something contingent on but essentially less than perception, a kind of recalling and rearranging of something already previously perceived. Immanuel Kant was the first one to talk about poetic or productive imagination, meaning imagination as the capacity to create wholly original representations. (Cvejić 2018b, 39–40) French philosopher Gaston Bachelard, whose work is permeated by poetry and poetic writing, saw imagination as something fully

other than perception, equally antithetical as presence and absence (Bachelard according to Cvéjić 2018b, 43). On the other hand, he also wrote about imagination not as the capacity to form images, but rather as a “faculty of *deforming* images provided by perception” (Bachelard according to Kaplan 1972, 2). This would seem to point towards an understanding of imagination and perception being more intimately connected.

For my own purposes, I tend not to see perception and imagination as two opposing pulls, one grounded in reality, the other in fantasy—they are interconnected in a more complex way. The present and the perceived are always here, and so is the possibility of imagination. As a dancer, the co-existence of the real and the unreal holds a great potential for me. The performer’s imaginary is always tied to the material reality and immediacy of their body, and so there is a constant movement between the presently perceived and the potentially imagined. Through writing poetry and dancing, I practice my capacity to “unceasingly reimagine”¹ the world while inhabiting the world at the same time, in a very real way.

Bojana Cvéjić links the dancer’s imaginary to an act of ‘feigning’, a kind of pretending to know. Somatic practices which promote and are contingent upon idiosyncratic, bodily knowledge could also be seen as a matter of this kind of imagination. That a somatic technique becomes a question of imagination rather than a question of knowledge does not mean that its value is in any way diminished, on the contrary. Cvéjić argues that instead of seeing this kind of imaginary knowledge as inadequate, we could regard it as “a surrogate knowledge, which takes confusion and contradictoriness as part of our engagement with the things that we don’t know.” (Cvéjić 2018b, 46–47)

Feigning can be a way of accessing poetic ideas and images through the body. Working with poetic texts as a dancer, it can become the primary mode of knowledge that the performer has. Accessing this knowledge in a way that can also be transmitted outside of the immediately personal sphere of the performer, for instance in a process with others, can sometimes be difficult, since so much of imagination and feigning has to do

¹ For Gaston Bachelard, “the poetic function is to give a new form to the world which poetically exists only if it is unceasingly reimaged” (Bachelard according to Kaplan 1972, 3).

with intuition. Writing can help us tap into this area of ‘surrogate knowledge’ and turn private information into shared communication.

Writing with the whole body

Writing as a dancer, I write with my whole body. In the process, something can become shifted from its place, I can transform my perception of something in or outside myself or become more accurate in it. The idea of deforming images provided by perception is an appealing one, as it is something that I recognise in my own writing. “The quarry of the shoulder blade searched with blazing lamps” is an image that arises from a vague feeling of pain or stiffness, but the words create a particular sensation, they both deepen and transform my experience while also creating a fantasy that is independent from the perceived source.

When I attune myself to the site of writing that is my body, I realise how much is already there. ‘Writing in the site of writing’ is an exercise I encountered in a writing workshop held by Ana Teo Ala-Ruona called Words Make Worlds. The site of writing refers to all the material elements already present in the moment of writing—the writer’s body, the space, the pen, the paper etc. As a distinction, ‘the world of writing’ could be thought of as encompassing everything involved in the act of writing, both material and immaterial. (Ala-Ruona 28 February 2018) The writer’s own imaginary, their thoughts, feelings and sensations in the process, exist in a way both as part of the site and part of the world of writing. They are the bridge that carries over from the material into the immaterial.

The process of writing can sometimes be a lot like dancing: I begin by writing a stream of consciousness, akin to improvising dance, and a world begins to emerge. In stream-of-consciousness writing, the writer writes continuously without pauses, attempting not to inhibit or edit themselves. Despite this free flow of expression, the texts that arise are never completely random or unintentional—instead, they start to resemble Kant’s original representations of poetic imagination. Quickly, they begin to follow some internal, often broken logic, simultaneously “inventing and applying laws as in aesthetic

judgment.” (Cvejić 2018b, 40) Sometimes I stutter on a word for longer, writing and rewriting it. I taste it. I write the rhythms I taste in my mouth. At the end, sometimes days later, I might come back to the text, revise and rearrange, creating a composition.

Sometimes I write differently. A sentence settles into me and follows me around, I write it down and start looking at it. I feel it and I hear it, I say it out loud and it sounds different than I thought it might. I dance my way towards it. Slowly, the sentence calls other sentences to itself, it becomes a magnet for words. No matter how I write, however, I always find myself moving while writing. I might suddenly realise that I have shifted positions or moved in space to a new location. This is what I mean by ‘writing with the whole body’. I could also say ‘with the whole being’, since there is no use in separating the body from the mind. With the entire system in motion, who is to say where the actual words originate from?

Writing as a dancer, I practice a multitude of things: my ability to translate, to contain many things at once, to not know, to question, to perceive and perceive differently, to imagine and re-imagine, to form and deform. These things and many others. Unlike Stéphane Mallarmé, I don’t see dancing as analogous to writing. Dancing-as-writing could perhaps be understood as a kind of technical mastery of movement, the precision of the body in space functioning as a system of signifiers. There are certainly dance techniques and styles that could be seen as fitting this description, and this is perhaps also the way that dance read through dance notation has been historically understood. With poetic writing and the movement produced by it, however, there is a constant uncertainty and deforming that happens. Instead of mastery, strangeness appears. Language is destabilised, the body steps to the forefront.

I would argue that, in poetry, there is always a body. ‘Runoilla’, the Finnish word for writing poetry, is a word entirely free from ‘writing apparatus’. The roots of the word are in a tradition where poems were spoken and sung and thus transmitted to future generations. These were poems contained by the bodies of those who knew them intimately, not by written text. These are the roots that I recall when I write with my whole body.

There are many people who have inspired my ways of writing and approaching the body through writing. I am drawn to the idea of ‘écriture féminine’, a term coined by the French writer Hélène Cixous in her seminal work *The Laugh of the Medusa* (1975). Hers is a way of writing that reclaims the body and bridges the gap between physicality and authorship. There is an urgency to the writing of Cixous that I find relatable, a quality of something almost piercing through the body. Her work reaches through writing to the realm of psychoanalysis, a field of study that has always been strongly affected by poetry, and vice versa. Gaston Bachelard inhabits a very different space than Cixous in my mental landscape, but there is also a strong connection to psychoanalysis in his oeuvre.

I have also been inspired by the work of Janne-Camilla Lyster, Norwegian choreographer, poet and author, whose choreographic score *LOVE I-III* I will explore later in this thesis. In other masterclasses and workshops of writing lead by different authors, poets and artists I have received tools, feedback, and the sense of the vastness of possibilities that writing can have. All of this is present in my writing, in the same way as all of the different dance teachers, colleagues and choreographers that I have come in contact with over the years are present in some way in my body.

Image and rhythm

Through writing for and with dance I have become more aware of my own habits as a writer, and also my habits as a dancer. I have realised that I have a tendency to use similes, describing how things are ‘like’ other things: *Your fingers are like lichen*. Writing as a dancer, the urgency of a metaphor can often feel stronger than the simile: *Your fingers are lichen*. The strength of the image can become more immediate, more felt. The poetic image can also move beyond the simile and the metaphor, it can be a chain of images or a torrent of words which together create a wholly new representation: *Fingers, lichen, licking, sticking to the wet underside of the rock, pricking them with the needlepoint of the grass*. Language can be used to confuse and fuse together things that otherwise would be kept apart, creating deformed images and original representations.

Through poetic language and imagery, the performer can broaden and find specificity in their bodily imagination and expression. At the point where image turns into movement, a kind of somatic fiction is created through the feigning and physicality of the performer. Breaking down perception through both physical practice and poetic use of language has taught me a lot about the nuance and sensitivity of being a performer. So often performance deals not with the ‘what’ but with the ‘how’—an arm can drop down, or it can decay, becoming soil for a flower to be planted in. Language can feed the body, it can increase the performer’s sensitivity to affects and, through this, expand their capacity for perceiving and imagining.

The poetic image with its expansiveness of affect is with me even when I don’t write, even when my observations and sensations cannot be articulated into words and sentences. But poetry is not limited to the image—poems also have a rhythm and a weight to them, and the extraordinary capacity to contain almost anything. Poems can consist of mistakes, single syllables and endless repetitions, they can cannibalise and metabolise any other text, they can sound or it can be mute. Poetry is quick to transform and also slow—like a painting, a poem requires time from its reader.

Through its use of rhythm, poetry has made me more aware of my dynamics and approach to time as a dancer, and my tendency to keep moving, keep going, as if afraid of the stillness that might set in otherwise. In a poem, the empty spaces are often at least as important and meaningful as the words that surround them. Their emptiness frames and fills the writing. The stillness which can never be fully realised, the pauses, the slowings down—these are the ‘empty spaces’ of movement, the points of condensation that slow down our sense of time. These stillnesses can make our perception sharper and at the same time shake the very idea of what it is to perceive.

It is in these moments where language and dance turn toward an apparent emptiness, that perception and imagination can start to almost bleed into each other. We become unsure of our senses, start colouring in the present quite unconsciously. In dance, I have had this experience for example when I have either physically done or watched others doing very slow, butoh-like movement or something seemingly repetitive for a long

time. In these extremes of physicality, a kind of paradox emerges. Within stillness, there is an infinite amount of movement, within repetition, nothing is ever the same. A similar experience can occur while visually sinking into a texture or colour, like watching a work of art or staring into a natural surface such as water or fire, or stone. The field of vision starts to come alive, tremble and shift. Certain poems can have the same effect as well. The rhythm of language becomes an echo that transcends sensorial limits, allowing a kind of naturally synesthetic experience to emerge—the poem is heard, felt and seen at the same time.

This excerpt from T.S. Eliot's *Burnt Norton* has always stuck with me because of its uncanny description of the strange nature of dance, stillness and movement:

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor
towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
I can only say, there we have been: but I cannot say where.
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time.

(Eliot [1936] 1943, 5)

The dance described in the poem is both in motion and still, of the body and somehow incorporeal at the same time. Eliot chose dance as the site of his transcendental experience, something that could not quite be reached through language. Since its initial publication in the era of Ballets Russes, Eliot's poem has inspired many dancers and dance makers and become material for dance theorists as a reflection of the beginnings of modernism in dance. For me, it comes close to describing the paradoxical experience I spoke of earlier. Reading and re-reading it, I understand less but somehow know more.

Poetry in a process

This opaqueness, a kind of inexplicability that poetry has, can be both exhilarating and frustrating at the same time. With its lack of transparency, poetic writing stands in such clear opposition to the requirements of communication that we mostly face in our daily lives, both as artists and in the society in general. This, however, makes poetry the perfect place to practice a kind of personal artistry that is not limited to any specific project or production. For me, poetic writing can be a way of reflecting on the artistic processes that I engage with and also a way of checking in on my personal fantasies that exist outside of them. Often, questions such as ‘what excites me?’, ‘what kind of art would I like to see?’ or ‘what do I dream of?’ feel too general, navel-gazing and difficult to answer. When I write, I don’t think of these things, but often end up inadvertently answering them. So, besides being a way of practicing skills of perceiving and imagining, writing can also be a tool for reflection.

As a counterpoint to the ephemeral nature of dance, writing can also act as a way of leaving behind traces of a process that otherwise might leave very little ‘evidence’ behind. Poetic writing has often been for me as much a way of documenting, of recalling and remembering, as it has been an act of producing language around the imaginary spaces of dance. Yet, a poetic document will always remain somewhat opaque, it will resist perfect transparency—it cannot be, nor does it attempt to be, a straightforward transcription of a process.

In several artistic processes, I have practiced a kind of ‘poetry of the performer’ by keeping a diary during the performance process. I think of it as a poetic dialogue with the artistic process, where I metabolise the elements of the performance into poems and reflect on my experience from within the piece. This is a way of creating a personal relationship with the piece, and also a means of getting a sense of personal dramaturgy and agency within it already from the beginning. This approach has been especially helpful in processes with large working groups and when the artistic content of the piece has felt difficult to approach as a performer. Through writing it is sometimes possible to grasp something intuitively interesting within the process, something that might have been impossible to come by or explain otherwise.

I kept this type of poetic diary during the process of the artistic part of my master's thesis, the performance *Their Limbs Their Lungs Their Legs* (2019), and found the writing process especially helpful during the performance period and while touring the piece. The poems stemmed from different bodily states, experiences and intuitive imaginings that felt almost obvious at the time of writing, but returning to them later allowed me to recall the process and what had felt interesting to me as a performer during it. The experience of formulating the process into language that felt personal to me also helped with having a sense of meaning and purpose within the piece, which sometimes felt difficult during the rehearsals. I may not have had an artistic overview of the whole work, but I had a sense of individual agency, which allowed me to access the world of the piece and make proposals within it.

Artistic processes often start to create a kind of idiosyncratic language and way of communicating as the piece develops. This process of language creation is an organically emergent one: scenes, movement qualities, characters, pieces of scenography all acquire names and descriptions and, after a while, the shorthand is so fluent that no one can quite remember anymore where it all originated from. In processes where I have kept a process diary quite consistently, there has been a sense of poetic recall, as I have been able to trace the language used in the present back to its roots. This has allowed me to regain something that had been there previously that might have gotten lost on the way, as the language of the rehearsals became more settled. The poetic scores that I explore in the second part of this thesis also had somewhat similar functions for me during the solo processes—they were texts that I could return to whenever I felt lost in the forest of all possible meanings. The actual words written down served almost as anchors for the dance that otherwise could have gone almost anywhere.

In some processes I have also experimented with different kinds of collective writing with the working group. When the act of writing moves from the personal sphere into a shared space, it transforms into a tool of collective imagination and world-making. Collective writing can be a great tool for mining the imaginative potential of the working group, even if the texts are not meant to be used in the artistic end product.

During the Words Make Worlds workshop already referenced earlier in this chapter, we wrote together in small groups on large pieces of paper. In silence, everyone could contribute as much or as little as they wanted, and soon each paper became a microcosm of words with its own internal logic and language. Later, during the performance of *Nowhere in Particular* (2018), Ana Teo Ala-Ruona's artistic thesis work that was created based on the texts written during the workshop, I still had a sense of being part of a collective that writes together, even though now we were speaking the words instead of writing them. The solidarity of sharing the space felt similar, the act of listening to others and speaking reminded me of carefully reading the traces left by different pens and pencils and writing in the gaps.

After describing my personal relationship with poetry as a performer, I will look at poetic texts more specifically through the lens of choreography, first shedding light on the topic of choreographic poetry, then exploring the idea of poetic translation as a method and mindset. I will touch on a few different ideas of dance and translation along the way and also bring up some choreographers working with poetic texts today.

CHOREOGRAPHIC POETRY

Asioita jotka kaatuvat: valo, vinosti huoneeseen.

Sääriluu, nilkan päältä hienona hiekkana.

Metallilla kiillotetut äänet jotka vihlovat ikenissä,

tuovat säätä sisään avoimesta ikkunasta,

satavat sylkeä.

Kerään kaiken syliin ja ripottelen itseeni,

revin hiuksenpäitä reitille mennessäni.

Palatessa: maa palaa.

These are the things that fall: light, diagonally into the room.

The shinbone, off the ankle in a fine powdery sand.

Metal-polished sounds that grate on the gums,

bringing the weather in through the open window,

raining spit.

I collect it all in my lap and sprinkle it inside,

pulling and scattering ends of my hair as I go.

Upon return: the ground burns.

(4 December 2019)

When I speak of choreographic poetry, I refer to written scores for dance that are poetic in form and content, or poetic texts that become part of a dance performance in some way. Choreographic poetry, simply put, is poetry written to be translated into dance. It is a term I have used since 2015 to describe my own writings. Oxford Reference places the term in a music context: “An [orchestral] work designed for ballet but also self-sufficient because it has something of the quality and form of a tone-poem, e.g. Ravel's *La Valse* (1920), described on the score as *poème choréographique*.” Music is of course an art form which, much more than dance, has historically been connected to scores and notation systems. Against this backdrop, it is only natural that also the more

experimental ways of working with scores emerged within music first, whereas “the very notion of notation is experimental to a contemporary dancer” (Lyster 2016).

Choreographer and poet Janne-Camilla Lyster proposes a subdivision of text-based scores for dance into two main categories: instructional scores and allusive scores² (Lyster 2016). Choreographic poems fit mainly into the latter category, as they do not use language explicitly to bring about a certain expression or execution, but instead utilise the poetic potential of language, allowing for heterogeneous readings and interpretations. Already at its conception, choreographic poetry presumes that an embodied translation will take place. While the translation creates a link between the poem and the performance, both can also exist separately, the poem there to be read and re-imagined separate from the dance, the dance becoming an entity of its own. As a performer, my interest lies especially in what takes place in the space between the two, the poetic translation that I will expand upon in the next chapter.

As scores written directly for the dancer, choreographic poems can act as a kind of clearing in a dense forest of all possible meanings and materialities, “framing a specific potential for the performer-reader to engage with” (Lyster 2016). The frame is important, but so is the emergent, imaginary potential within it, the gap between what is written and what it will evoke, what has already been imagined and what will be imagined next. There can be great autonomy in this kind of reading as performing, since every performer-reader has their own way of engaging with a text. The allusive score encourages this personal approach rather than attempts to achieve a consistent, uniform expression.

As a dancer, I have come into contact with a multitude of bodily techniques during my studies, in workshops and in my professional engagements, and these techniques all bring with them a certain history and a certain aesthetic tied to that history. Whenever I dance or place myself in a performance situation, all of these references are present, whether I acknowledge that they are or not. So as I speak of autonomy of interpretation,

² This concept also originates within the field of music. Writing about allusive scores, Virginia Anderson quotes Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman “on that such scores can attain intrinsic value and become independent artworks through their philosophical, literary or poetic content/form; thereby become free of their possible and expected musical fulfilment/realization.” (Anderson according to Lyster 2016)

I don't mean to suggest that through choreographic poetry (or through any other set of tools or techniques) we can somehow become completely 'free' of aesthetic references and histories or find an entirely 'new' expression, something that exists separate from the limitations of other practices. Choreographic poetry can, however, be one way of accessing the vast potential of different expressions already in our bodies. To quote Bojana Cvejić:

— — there is something to be learned from the situation in which artists seek out poetry to divorce their work from the aesthetic norms and economic contracts linked to their specific mediums. The upshot is an increase of uncertain, speculative, non-necessary (“abductive”) thought, as well as opaque and heteronomous expressions. (Cvejić 2016)

While scores for dance can take many forms, there are certain dance artists whose work with writing and dance I would see through the frame of choreographic poetry. Deborah Hay, American choreographer active in the Judson church and still today, is perhaps the most influential example of a choreographer working with poetic, text-based scores. For Hay, “editing language is editing choreography” (Lyster 2016). My own experience with dancing Hay's choreographic poetry is from a workshop led by Vera Nevanlinna, Finnish dance artist who took part in Hay's Solo Performance Commissioning Project in 2007. Performing the score, the dancer follows Hay's intricately crafted ‘performance directives’, translating them through her own bodily imagination and curiosity. Questions of space, time and movement quality rise to the surface, and no answers are ever found. Humorous and absurdist at times, the text allows the performer to enter very specific physical and performative states through the use of poetic language alone.

Norwegian choreographer, author and poet Janne-Camilla Lyster has in her own work expanded the notions of choreographic poetry, formulating her way of writing and approaching literary scores for dance in her artistic research project at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts. In 2014, Lyster also took part in Deborah Hay's solo commissioning project, and she considers Hay's work as informative to her own (Lyster 2016). Her book of choreographic poems titled *Choreographic poetry* was published in 2019 as part of her artistic research. I will elaborate further on her choreographic poetry and my performer's approach to it in the chapter on *LOVE I–III*. Other artists that could

be mentioned in relation to choreographic poetry are Eleanor Bauer, whose current project focuses on choreography as the melting of the words ‘dance together’ and ‘write’, and Mette Edvardsen, whose work is often entirely crafted with words yet still inhabits a distinctly choreographic space.

In 2008, choreographers Mette Ingvartsen and Alice Chauchat edited a collection of performance scores titled *everybodys performance scores*, which is free for anyone to download as a PDF online. The collection addresses “questions of notation, reproduction/interpretation, documentation, history and score independence [sic]” and “seeks to reveal different models and approaches to work.” (Ingvartsen 2008) By making the scores accessible to any and every body, the editors practice a politics of transparency and openness that is not always the most typical attribute of the field of performing arts. The questions of originality and source independence brought about through these kinds of open source platforms is an interesting one. In the next chapter, I will address the idea of translation as a tool for the performer and as a way of understanding the very nature of dance—a topic surrounded by similar questions about authorship, ownership and agency.

POETIC TRANSLATIONS

*Tulet tilaan toinen jalka toisen takana, toisenlaisena,
toinen maisema tiivistymässä tässä.*

*Tähän tilaan mahtuisi myös toisenlainen sana
kantaluun paksuinen, värisevä
vääränvärinen vääräsäärinen väreilevä*

*You step into the space sole after sole, singular,
a separate scenery, solidifying here.*

*In this space another kind of word might fit
heel bone thick, oscillating
off-colour off-centre undulating*

(18 November 2019)

Philosopher Jacques Rancière writes in his book *Modern Times*, in the chapter titled The Moment of Dance: “— — the performance of dance cannot be reduced solely to the performance of a moving body. Dance is not the origin of art. Instead, it is an art of translation” (Rancière 2017, 126–127). In this chapter I will approach the work of the dancer as that of a translator, and explore what it might mean to view dance through this lens. Alongside Rancière’s complex theoretical writing and one example of a choreographer’s approach to translation as a method, I will bring up a work of fiction, written by speculative fiction writer Ursula K. Le Guin, as it deals with the idea of translation from a more poetic perspective.

What happens in a translation, when one thing turns into another? This has been a growing curiosity of mine since I began working with choreographic poetry and become more observant of the ways in which texts and embodied expressions relate to each other, and sometimes flow into each other. I have also worked as a translator of language between English and Finnish, and this work has undoubtedly imprinted upon

the way I perceive artistic processes. Translation as moving between two spoken and written languages is quite different from translation as moving between two distinctly separate media—movement and text. However, as a method and as a mindset, there are perhaps some similarities as well.

To carry across, turn over, redirect – translation as a method

The word translate means literally to carry something across³. In Finnish and many other languages the word⁴ can be literally translated into turning something over, or redirecting it. The translator embarks upon a contemplation on what contents, properties and qualities one chooses to bring with them when moving from one language to another, or from one medium to the next. It is not only representation and reproduction, not only mechanical matching that takes place in a translation. The translation creates a fold, and something new is created in that fold. In my experience this is true even when, for example, translating fairly technical texts from one language into another. In the previous chapter I spoke of a gap “between what is written and what it will evoke,” and this is precisely the site of translation, the place where the fold is created.

Why I find the word translate so poignant has to do with both the etymology of the word (as explained above) and also the immediate practical implications of it in terms of working with textual sources and choreographic poetry. To be able to translate, we must first grasp our source, it has to become known to us, even if this knowing is an intuition or a feeling of knowing. Then there needs to be a recognition in us, a sense of a way of carrying this source across into another form of expression of which we have intimate knowledge. In the process, some distance is bridged between the translator and what I have here called the source. The source, the ‘original’, becomes ours also in some way and never quite remains the same after it has been translated and transformed into something else.

³ *Trans*: across, beyond; *Latus*: carried, borne (*OED* 25 October 2019)

⁴ In Finnish: kääntää, in Swedish: översätta

Choreographer Jenni-Elina von Bagh describes the process of translation between philosophy and art in her written thesis, in the chapter “Translation freely interpreted as an artistic method.” Referencing the writings of Victoria Perez Royo, von Bagh describes the artistic process of translation as “a mixture of both respect and non-respect for the original” (von Bagh 2018, 16). Perez Royo uses the term ‘perversion’ (a term that plays with the words ‘version’ and ‘per-version’) to highlight the subjectivity and individuality of each reading and, by extension, each translation (Perez Royo according to von Bagh 2018, 15). Earlier I spoke of a fold between the source and the translation, the site where something new is created, and perhaps this could be thought of as the place of perversion.

Translation as a way of working has an inherent affinity for a kind of decentralised agency - “a rigorous consciousness of a play between ownership and not ownership” (von Bagh 2018, 16). This is something I have often experienced in practice as a performer, especially when working with texts written by others, or when I have brought my own texts, thoughts or choreographic ideas into a process, and then seen them transform into something else entirely. “The act of translation is something that clearly changes and shakes the stability of a concept of original overall” (von Bagh 2019, 16). Through translation, the work of the artist becomes a series of transformations, a paradoxical process of seeking connection to the source/original and perverting that source/original at the same time.

Speaking of paradoxes, I recognise that it is also somewhat paradoxical to speak of translation when addressing the fold between language and dance. The two media are so inherently different and so specific, and to lose this specificity would not serve either one. There will always be uncertainty in a translation between text and movement, and to allow it, to rejoice in the complexity of this fold that has appeared, is part of what draws me to work with writing as a dancer. The untranslatability of the translation creates a friction, and friction is often what is intriguing in art. It is embedded in the nature of dance that there is not really a point where the dance is ready, and so the translation takes on a quality of continuous reshaping and reconfiguration. The fold between what is written and what is danced keeps shifting, revealing to us the inconstancy that is inherent in all communication.

Translation in “The Author of the Acacia Seeds”

This thinking about translation is what brings me to the fiction of author Ursula Le Guin. In her short piece of fiction writing “‘The Author of the Acacia Seeds' and Other Extracts from the Journal of the Association of Therolinguistics”⁵ we are introduced to the fascinating world of therolinguistics, of researchers deciphering and attempting to translate the kinetic texts of ants, dolphins and penguins. At the end of the text, the president of the ‘Therolinguistic Association’ imagines the broadening of the linguistic sphere even further, to the phytolinguists able to read Eggplant and to the first geolinguist, who

ignoring the delicate, transient lyrics of the lichen, will read beneath it the still less communicative, still more passive, wholly atemporal, cold, volcanic poetry of the rocks: each one a word spoken, how long ago, by the earth itself, in the immense solitude, the immenser community, of space (Le Guin 1974).

In the short span of a few pages, Le Guin masterfully, and with great humor, expands our notion of language and brings to the forefront both the immense difficulty and the importance of translation. Her researchers are fully invested, investigative and empathetic - they want to understand, with their limited human capabilities, the words spoken by bodies so different from their own. A parallel to dance is also drawn, with the ballet translation of the Adélie penguins’ kinetic text garnering much admiration from one therolinguist researcher:

No verbal rendering can approach the felicity of Miss Serebryakova's version. For, quite simply, there is no way to reproduce in writing the all-important multiplicity of the original text, so beautifully rendered by the full chorus of the Leningrad Ballet company. (Le Guin 1974)

It is interesting, and perhaps significant, that one of the most nuanced understandings of translation that I have come across comes in the form of a piece of speculative fiction writing. There is something fascinating also in the idea of a text that is impossible to

⁵ I encountered this text in the process of the performance *Their Limbs Their Lungs Their Legs*, where it was introduced early on by our dramaturg.

reproduce in writing, a text containing multiplicity in a way that only a ‘chorus’ of bodies can translate and embody—a choreographic poem if there ever was one.

The word interpretation could perhaps be inserted in the place of translation, but I would argue that there is a subtle difference between the two, even though sometimes they are used almost interchangeably. Interpretation is literally ‘the action of explaining the meaning of something,’ whereas translation leaves more open the meaning of what is being communicated. Interpretation sets itself immediately at a distance from what is being interpreted, and reduces the complexity of possible meanings to something more straightforward, an explanation.

Dance as translation

For Jacques Rancière, the idea of dance-as-translation expands into a larger philosophical frame—the very nature of dance as an art of translation gives, to Rancière, its paradigmatic function. He writes, in the book *Modern Times* already quoted at the beginning of this chapter, about the double movement of translation happening in dance. Rancière argues that this is what gives dance its paradigmatic nature, challenging the idea (of Jean-Luc Nancy and Alain Badiou for example) that dance is “the origin of art,” a kind of pure movement capable of returning us to a root of some kind. He describes the modernist film *A Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), by Soviet filmmaker Dziga Vertov, in which three ballerinas come in towards the end, superimposed on a montage of images (factory workers, machinery) and with their dance provide a kind of translation of the film, spinning in circles. Rancière writes about dance as the art of translation:

— a translation is not a transmission of movement. Mallarmé reminds us of the difference. Between the performance of the artist and the translation of the spectator there is a gap. Dance is not the movement which produces another movement. It is a singular synthesis of sensible states which requires, from the part of the spectator, another synthesis. This relation has no proper language. It is expressed in the form of a chiasm: there is the movement of the body and there is the reverie which tries to bridge the gap by inventing an equivalent of this

movement. It has to do so because the movement itself is divided. This is what is meant by the provocative Mallarmean statement that the dancer “does not dance”. Instead, she writes. (Rancière 2017, 120–121)

Synthesis following synthesis, translation following translation, per-version following version. If I try to relate as a dancer to what Rancière is laying out here as a theorist (and very much as a writer), I start to recognise the multilayered quality of performing dance, the impossibility of distilling its happening into a single sentence. The site of dance, like the site of translation, is in many places at once—in the body of the dancer, in the space and in the relations between the bodies on stage and the bodies off-stage. It is in the past and it is in the present, and in the future, in the “text still to be written, in another language, by those who look at it” (Rancière 2017, 122). The concrete actions of a dancer, an arm lifting and a leg twisting, are part of the dance, but it would be essentialist to say that they are the dance. Instead, dance is the whole web of relations, syntheses, perversions and translations, occurring at once. The “movement itself is divided”—it does and does not belong to the dancer, is and is not of the dancer. Here, the decentralised nature of translation comes into play again.

So what of the concrete implications of thinking about the whole art of dance as an art of translation? For me the thought feels like an intuitive extension of what I have already tentatively been exploring before. The idea of something so inextricably linked to my physical body being also inherently in a state of constant transformation and not entirely belonging to me is oddly intriguing. Whereas von Bagh spoke of the choreographer’s translation between theoretical discourse and a work of art, and Rancière refers to the spectator’s translation of the dancer’s writing, I am, by virtue of my professional position, interested also in the ‘microlevel’ translations occurring on the scale of an individual performer. Besides happening between a poetic text and the body, this can also happen in many different ways during a rehearsal process. Translation deals with the ‘how’ of taking part in an artistic process. How do I take something, whether it be an instruction, a prompt, a text, an object or a piece of music, and translate, turn it into a performative act?

In the second part of this thesis, I will explore two artistic processes to observe the various micro-translations that take place in a performer's creative process, and how writing can inform the work of the performer.

PART II: FICTIONING AND TRANSLATING – THE PROCESSES



THE GARDEN – CONFESSIONAL POETRY OF THE BODY

*Palaan puutarhaan,
vuosien jälkeen kantapäät juuttuvat mutaan.
Täällä on eläinten koloja ja luita, kolmen kuolleen kesän omenat,
edelleen komposti, edelleen ampiaispesä seinän sisässä.
Tärisen pienten siipien kanssa, lyön auringon taivaalta.
Olen vuotava puutarhaletku, kuuntelen pimeässä
kuinka hyönteisten jalat rapisevat lehtien läpi kaatosateen jälkeen.*

*I come back to the garden,
Years later my heels get stuck in the mud.
There are animal bones and burrows, the apples of three dead summers,
Still the compost, still the wasps' nest in the wall.
I tremble with the narrow wings, beating the sun out of the sky.
I am the leaking garden hose, I listen in the dark
As insect legs rustle through the leaves after heavy rain.*

(4 November 2019)

This chapter deals with the creation and performance of the solo *Puutarha (The Garden)*, a performance I created at the Theatre Academy in August 2018. In terms of style and genre, *The Garden* could be situated somewhere between a poetry reading and a dance performance. After writing about my starting points for the performance, I will focus on how the poetic text of the performance came about and how it informed the creation of the dance and my way of performing.⁶

⁶ The choreographic poem and its English translation can be found in the attachments.

Stepping into the garden – starting points and interests

Already for a long time, I have been interested in confessional poetry in the style of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton, and in the solo I knew wanted to work with it in some way, searching for ways that confessional poetry could be manifested in dance.

Confessional poetry is a style of writing that emerged in the 1950s and 60s in North America and continues as a thread through to the contemporary poetry of today. It is the poetry of the “I” that addresses private, sometimes traumatic experiences. The poetic self and the writer of the poem are inextricably linked in this style of poetry. The poems can be highly emotional and charged, yet the writers of confessional poetry always maintain a high level of craftsmanship, paying careful attention to the use of prosody: the use of rhythm and sound in poetry, or the patterns of stress and intonation in language. (*poets.org* 20 November 2019) Confessional poetry could perhaps be seen as embodying one strand in the category of writing called autofiction, where fictional elements are mixed in with autobiographical writings.

What intrigued me the most, for the purposes of a performance, were not actually the poems themselves, but the process of turning an intimate experience into something carefully crafted, something that could reach beyond the personal and expand into a poetic space. I was also drawn to the rhythm and force of feeling, seemingly real and nearly pathetic, which could be heard on the audio recordings of the poets reading out their own works. What I had set out to do initially was to use these recordings of others as a background to a dance that I would craft in the same way that one might craft a confessional poem. However, my process was halted by other events and when I came back to the solo, I could not grasp what I had originally intended. What remained, however, was the yearning for that poetic space that could be carved out from an intimate experience, and the desire to feel something, strongly.

From poem to performance – methods and movements

I wrote in January 2018, as I attempted to continue on with the process I had abruptly finished in December 2017:

On ankkuroiduttava johonkin. Kiinnityn runoon, annan teoksen vuotaa paperille ja kehooni samanaikaisesti. En tee käsikirjoitusta vaan rinnakkaisen version siitä maailmasta jota tutkin liikkeessä. En yritä selittää sitä, sillä en tiedä mitä selitän.⁷

I had been writing a series of poems already for some time, and in 2017–2018 I took part in a poetry workshop at the Theatre Academy, where I continued writing and editing the poems. Even though I had not planned to do so, the simultaneous processes started melting together, and I ended up using the material of the poems in the performance. Part of me also felt that this could be a way of finally being able to free myself up to write something else, as some of the sentences had been with me for years, as if they were just looking for the right place to settle down, and I could not find one. Bringing the poems into the performative sphere had a vague sense of finality about it.

As I changed my mindset from writing poetry to writing a performance, the short, tight poems started to flow slowly into a longer river, like a muscle finally unclenching. Alone in the studio, I soliloquised what I had written over and over again, sometimes improvising and sometimes taking long pauses, and connections started appearing between different poems, a world slowly emerging from them. Within the frame of a performance, I was able to do something with the poems that I had not been able to do before—I could play with them, mess around, cross things over and bring them back, something that I had been encouraged to do earlier but for some reason had found impossible to do. In the studio, I wrote by speaking, moving, stopping to notate, lying on my back and imagining. The poems became detached from the paper and transformed into something physical, they were in my body and in the space surrounding me.

⁷ “One must anchor themselves to something. I attach myself to a poem, let the piece leak onto the paper and into my body simultaneously. I am not writing a script, instead I am writing a parallel world to the one that I am studying in movement. I don’t attempt to explain it, as I have no idea what I’m explaining.”

When I chose to bring the poems into the performance, I thought back to the recordings of the confessional poets reading their work out loud. Their heightened way of speaking and urgency of expression was intriguing and somehow off-putting at the same time. I thought of prosody, the way rhythm and sound pierce language, and how they pierce the moving body also. I wanted to anchor myself in the materiality of language, allowing the words to inform my movement and vice versa.

The use of a microphone became a key part of the performance. I have seldom used one as a performer, and the fact of hearing my own voice from a speaker meant that I could hear the words as if someone else were speaking them. The different sounds the microphone made as it made contact with my clothes, my breath and the floor, also became part of the soundscape of the piece, and the microphone's long cord another performer in the space. As I read the poem, I gave myself a movement task and the heightened expression of a pop star slowly melting into a child and back, the contrast between the body and the text creating a friction that intrigued me. All of this also affected my way of speaking the words, and as I became more exhausted or found myself in strange positions, the delivery of the text changed as well.

Whereas the poems had started out as fairly autobiographical, through the process of rewriting and performing them they had changed into something quite different. A kind of fictioning had taken place. As I rehearsed the piece, I felt myself turning into a kind of unreliable narrator. I became interested in the flexibility and unreliability of memory in the body as well—could the body be an unreliable narrator? I played around with paradoxical movement tasks, trying to reveal to myself something of the precariousness that was so present in my writing.

There are also some very clear physical gestures in the text: resuscitating someone, the two hands on top of each other like two mating animals; being bound by thumbs and toes like a witch being drowned. I wanted to physically visit these places that I wrote and spoke of, but not be limited to them. In the end, the central metaphor of the snake skin that “curls around the finger as if a part of the snake were attached to it still” became a performative instruction for me as a dancer. A kind of body in transformation,

holding on to something yet at the same time forgetting to hold on to it, started to emerge. I began to translate the multiple bodily states, descriptions and transformations of the poem into movement.

The landscape of the performance

The poems all have a sense of time and place about them, they seem to evoke a lost time, a kind of crooked childhood. The poems inhabit different spaces inside a house or a garden, either concretely or in my imagination. The house and the garden became almost mythical places of sorts, they expanded and became unfixed, revealing their precarious, alive quality through transformations and uncontrollable growth. There is a link between the house as a home, our most intimate space, and the body; both of them constitute a kind of inhabited map of memories.

The French phenomenologist Gaston Bachelard writes about the childhood home in his book *The Poetics of Space*:

It is on the plane of the daydream and not on that of facts that childhood remains alive and poetically useful within us. Through this permanent childhood, we maintain the poetry of the past. To inhabit oneirically the house we were born in means more than to inhabit it in memory; it means living in this house that is gone, the way we used to dream in it. (Bachelard 1994 [1958], 16)

For Bachelard, the childhood home as the archetypal house and our ability to daydream are inextricably linked. Daydreaming and the act of writing poems seem connected to each other as well, as if daydreaming was the first stage of imaginative reverie, later required for the composition of poems. It is as if one has to go back to the way they used to dream as a child to maintain the poetically active imagination in the present. Something of childhood is, and has to be, always with us. This link between daydreaming and the house, our childhood and our poetic imagination echoed within me as I was writing the outlines of the script. I had come across *The Poetics of Space* already a year or so earlier, and perhaps remembered some of what had spoken to me on an almost unconscious level.

The house and the garden, first evoked and then broken apart and melted, become the mythical, metaphorical poetic space of the performance. Within it, several bodies appear, transform and disappear. The poetic ‘I’ speaks throughout the poem to a ‘you’, whose identity is never defined. Before the performance process, I had named the ‘you’, but by removing this identification the audience suddenly becomes implicated in the language of the poem from the very first moment. Speaking to someone rather than merely about someone became a big poetic and performative shift during the process. The poem begins with the repeated use of the word ‘katso’⁸, which can be read both as an instruction for the spectator and as the first introduction of the ‘you’ that the poem addresses. Because the other characters named in the text are a father and a brother, the ‘you’ becomes by association a part of the family as well. The audience is invited to become a part of this intimate set up, and they can choose to see themselves in it or merely as a spectator looking in.

Dramaturgically speaking, the solo is very simple. I experimented a little, but finally, due to the limited time frame, ended up with a straightforward structure. A dance, a text, a dance, a text. Of course there was an overlapping happening at least in my own performer’s experience, but this is the form that you could decipher from the outside. In the following paragraphs, I go through the structure of the piece, italicising certain keywords that relate to the different poetic aspects that I touched on during the making process.

The audience was sat on the floor in two semi-circles, facing each other, as if around a fire, the classic structure of listening to a story being told. I assumed the position of the *storyteller*, but also shifted away from it. In the beginning I was already moving in and out of the circle, inaudibly whispering to myself. The physical task I had set out for myself was ‘moving as if trying to remember, then forgetting’. As the audience had sat down, I slowly made my way to the microphone on the floor in the middle of the circle. The microphone made sounds as it made contact with my body, and when I found it with my mouth, it picked up my whispering and started to amplify it. I began my *reading*, speaking the text as I transitioned from position to position, first more slowly,

⁸ Finnish for ‘look’ or ‘watch’.

then faster, assuming the body gestures of a pop star and a child, constantly weaving around the cord of the microphone.

After this, I danced *a living room dance*, in which I played around with continuously switching between heightened bodily tension and letting go of that tension, then catching it again. I think of the living room dance (olohuonetanssi in Finnish) as the kind of dance a child might perform for their parents at home, or a dance you dance only for and by yourself in your own private space. In the frame of the performance, I thought of it as a kind of dance translation of a *soliloquy*, a text spoken by an actor as if to themselves. This dance followed the circle of the audience and became a kind of ritualistic translation of the text I had spoken.

I finished my solo and script in a cathartic *fantasy* of breaking apart the house and the garden, liquefying their structures and letting the streams carry with them all the things that had constituted the place to begin with. As I spoke this final text, I walked out of the circle and joined the audience on the floor, looking at the same imaginary fire in the place where my body had been. The practice of *melting a place*, through writing, visualising and embodied translation, was something I had already experimented with in another performance process, and it had stayed with me, the imaginary potential of becoming free from existing boundaries somehow glinting at me through darkness.

In performing the solo, I set quite a momentous challenge for myself: I wanted to conjure up a complete, poetic world both through movement and through language. Even though my poems were perhaps autobiographical in nature to begin with, I don't see the text that finally made it into the performance as pure confessional poetry. A great deal of *fictioning* happened during the process, and the text as well as my reading of it started to live lives of their own. Looking back, I could describe the process of writing and rewriting as a kind of deforming of images, à la Gaston Bachelard.

For this thesis, I decided to translate the score also into English, and another kind of deforming started to take place. In the international sphere of performing arts, texts are often translated whether they 'call to being translated' or not. It is an interesting challenge to translate something one has written in another language, completely

disregarding even the possibility that a translation into a different language might take place. Since it is my own text, however, I have immediate access to the origins of everything and can make more free artistic decisions also in the process of translating. Through writing this chapter and translating the choreographic poem, I begin to think about a possible afterlife for the solo. I would like to go further with exploring how the acts of writing (and translating) can entwine with dancing, and what possibilities can unfold from there.

LOVE I–III – TRANSLATION OF A CHOREOGRAPHIC SCORE

*Joku heittää lattian täyteen lauseita,
joku toinen ottaa ne kiinni, asettelee kimpuiksi varpaiden väleihin,
tiloihin jotka on tehty toisista tiloista,
ihoihin jotka on tehty toisista ihoista.
Kaikki tihkuu,
välillä liljankukankierronkurotuksesta kaatuu niskalleen ja välillä
oppii lukemaan,
ja lopussa varpaat laulavat.*

*Somebody casts the floor full of sentences,
some other body catches them, arranges them in bundles in the spaces between each
toe,
in spaces made of other spaces,
in faces made of other faces.
Everything seeps,
and every once in a while you fall on your neck from a lilyflowertwistreach and
every once in a while
you learn to read,
and at the end, the toes sing.*

(26 November 2019)

My process with *LOVE I–III* started in early 2017, when I received the score and the accompanying performance notes from poet and choreographer Janne-Camilla Lyster. The solo was created during Janne-Camilla Lyster’s artistic doctoral research period at the Oslo National Institute for Performing Arts, where her research subject was “Choreographic poetry – creating literary scores for dance.” I have here approached the same topic from a performer’s perspective.

Textual origins

There are three separate texts that form the textual origins of the performance⁹:

1. The score. A three-part choreographic poem forming the actual score, outline and dramaturgy of the performance. This is the only text that the audience also has access to.
2. Performance notes. A poetic text meant only for the performer, to enhance and deepen the interpretation (translation) and performance of the score.
3. Guidelines for the performer. Written in a more straightforward manner, these guidelines offer more practical insight into the work of the performer.

I worked on the translation initially for approximately four weeks over several months, and kept reworking it for subsequent performances in different spaces. The score is a choreographic poem in three parts written for one dancer. Apart from the few guidelines for the performer, the way this score is translated into a performance is left almost completely up to the dancer. This full performative autonomy of the dancer is part of Lyster's approach to her work with literary scores for dance. During the rehearsals, we communicated a little, but there was no direction given to me apart from the initial instructions on how to relate to the score.

Writing about Janne-Camilla Lyster's work and specifically about the piece *Escape and Transformation* (2015), Bojana Cvejić brings up the term catachresis, "originally the Greek stylistic figure that designates a semantic error or a necessary misuse of language, which often entails crossing categorical boundaries with words." This kind of language, which reaches beyond the metaphor and searches for a different kind of expression, is also present in *LOVE I-III*. The writing is used to bring dance into being, "to generate an imagination of movement beyond specific representational categories of dance" (Cvejić 2016).

⁹ All of these texts can be found in the attachments.

The idea of moving across and beyond these specific representational categories is something that I think about a lot when I work with poetry and dance. I question how much it is truly possible to separate myself from these categories, how much of my dance is always informed by the aesthetics that I have already encountered? This has to do, again, with the push-and-pull between perception and imagination. It is not possible to imagine something completely separate from the world we live in and the experiences we have had. Categories exist and cannot simply be thought or willed into not existing. However, ‘an imagination of movement’ that goes beyond them is still possible—a matter of feigning, or pretending to know, perhaps.

Guidelines for the performer and performance notes

In the solitary process of *LOVE I–III*, the guidelines for the performer and the performance notes accompanying the score became important tools. The guidelines are practical and instructive—they could perhaps be regarded as an example of an instructional score as opposed to an allusive one. But even though the guidelines are written in a more straightforward manner than the more poetic texts, there is still space to interpret them in slightly different ways. The guidelines offer insight into the aesthetic preferences of the choreographer while at the same time leaving plenty of room for the performer’s own ideas about movement and performance.

There is a lot written in the guidelines about curiosity, enthusiasm and exploration:

Do not work in longer stretches than your enthusiasm allows you.

It is your job to mobilize enthusiasm for the work.

There is room for curiosity and exploration, even in the finished material.

The attitude towards work is serious but also curious and full of enthusiasm. These guidelines ended up largely informing the way I found myself working in the studio. Especially the second one, about it being the performer’s job to mobilise enthusiasm for the work, became an almost existential point of questioning at times. It was an

interesting attempt to mobilise enthusiasm while at the same time listening to the authenticity of that enthusiasm and not pushing past it. With this in mind, the practice of reading the score also became a practice of listening to myself.

In terms of the aesthetics, the guidelines that most affected my translation and interpretation were:

Explore the difference between ‘resembling a migratory bird’ and ‘being in migratory-birdness’; and the difference between conveying an image of singing, and to sing with the body. In this process, the latter in both examples applies. Use your movement imagination and physical-mental association capacity.

Avoid an aesthetic that showcases “I explore”. (You can still explore.) Be specific, even in the unsettled and unresolved; not everything has to be resolved. Sometimes the specificity of the impossible makes the most sense.

These are guidelines that I relate quite strongly with my own conception of working with poetic translations and the poetry of the performer. In the first guideline, the idea of ‘being in migratory-birdness’ instead of ‘resembling a migratory bird’ connects to the difference between a simile and a metaphor and goes even further than that. You are not *like* a migratory bird, and not only that, you are also not *simply just* a migratory bird—you are searching for a migratory-birdness as a state of being, inhabiting that state with your body. These compelling distinctions are something that I tend to think about even when I don’t work with Janne-Camilla’s material. The paradox of “the specificity of the impossible” is another example of an area that is accessible through poetry and can translate well into dance. All the multiple layers of potential representations are equally possible and impossible. Being in the not-knowing and exploring these layers can easily take on a quality of vagueness, and to resist that and insist on specificity even in the unsettled and unresolved is an interesting challenge.

There are also some guidelines that connect very practically and hands-on with the work of the moving body:

Avoid movements that by the audience can be identified as symbols or mime (e.g. pointing at something with an index finger). Gestures are welcome.

Know where your weight is at all times. No hanging or flopping around.

These more practical guidelines felt like welcome limitations in the open spaces of the score. They also affected the overall physicality and aesthetics of my movement, although here one can also question many things: what are gestures that do not become symbols or miming in any way? Is it possible to know where your weight is and still allow it to hang? Is it more important to resist the image of being floppy or to resist my own perception of my body being floppy? Negotiating with different possible interpretations of the guidelines became a kind of meta-layer in the rehearsals. Although I mainly focused on the guidelines in the beginning of the process and stopped looking at them at some point, feeling as though I had internalised them in some way, I would occasionally revisit them and challenge my own interpretations.

The guidelines relate both to the internal work of the performer and to the audience's perception of the performer. This was interesting, as it brought the awareness of the spectator already into the earliest rehearsals. Translating the score and going through it alone in the studio, I already felt as though I was practicing performing it also. This way of working reminds me of the artistic practice of Deborah Hay, which is always focused on practicing performing, even when there are no spectators.

Very different from the guidelines, the performance notes constitute the poetic internal experience of the performance. Only the name 'performance notes' gives an indication of the way that this text, largely a collection of verbs that relate to the title of the piece, *love*, is meant to be read. The typography suggests that the words are in a constant sloping, downward motion, like a waterfall finally falling off the page. This, coupled with the fact that most of the words are indeed different actions, happening in rapid succession, gives the poem an almost dizzying pace, quite different from the score itself which I will discuss in the next chapter.

The constant stream of different actions relating to *love* gave me a sense of 'trying out' different modes of being, doing and existing within the performance. The fact that these

verbs are also kept in a separate section, away from the actual score which hardly has any verbs, was also instructive somehow. The performance notes reflect the personal physical space and movement of the performer inside the performance, whereas the score lays out the frame, the different places that are visited by the performer. The performance notes are, curiously, also the only text where the actual title (love) is mentioned, even repeated several times. The performance notes can then be read as the clue about the actual topic of the performance, which the score itself does not address but only frames.

Together with the more straightforward guidelines, the performance notes helped set the groundwork for beginning to work with the score itself. The way the performance notes are written felt from the beginning very easy to approach from the standpoint of the performer—I could concretely go toward all the actions mentioned, I could experience the sense of motion from within the poem. The three-part score itself, though fewer in words, took longer to open up to and to internalise as a performer. Whenever I felt stuck or confused, I could go back to these other texts, and their flow and different tone could give me some room within the work, a new understanding or a direction to try out.

Reading and translating the score

The original score was in Norwegian, and before Janne-Camilla could translate it into English, I tried my hand at a translation myself. Even though I can read Swedish quite well, Norwegian is already a step further and it was quite hard to decipher the meanings of certain words and phrases within the context of a poetic text. The misunderstandings and limitations I experienced with a language quite foreign to me added an interesting layer of materiality to my experience of the language, even later on when it was fully in English. The already-translated quality made the score more transient, already in movement somehow.

The score of *LOVE I–III* is in three parts, and each part is quite unique in both its content and visual arrangement. Due to the arrangement of the words on each page, the typography, the score is as much a graphic score as it is a poetic score. The lay out felt from the beginning like an instruction for the shaping of the performance. I used the

arrangement of the poems as a way of placing the words in space, so that walking in the space felt almost like walking through a three-dimensional map in which different phrases floated and demanded translation. To read the score through walking the score was my way of familiarising myself with it.

I spent time with the poems, getting to know them in a way that went past the words and into the body. I spent time away from the poems, just dancing, moving through the echoes left in the space by the words. I went back to the poems. The words became so familiar to me they became something other than words entirely, the way a word can lose its meaning if you repeat it out loud enough times. I kept sewing the seam between the poems and my dance, like pouring water constantly between two containers. The site of translation, the fold between the poems and the dance is there: the needle, the string, the water.

As each part has a different graphic-poetic logic to it, they seem to suggest different ways of reading. The instructions are, in a sense, written in, and at the same time they are confusing, or can lead to multiple readings at once. In the first part, the syntax is broken completely, the different three-word bundles, like evocations, listed on the left and scattered across the page on the right. In the second part, there are four sections of text, with two variations repeated twice but in different orders. Each section can be read by itself, or the whole text can be read from left to right, creating different readings in both the upper and the lower section. The third text is written in the form of a circle, or a flower, a reading which comes from the content of the poem. The words can be read circling in clockwise or anti-clockwise, circling out, bouncing from one side to the other—there is no one way.

Next, I will separately address each of the three sections and describe my way of translating them.

I

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | 3 |
| [shadow spread slender] | | | | | |
| 2 | | 3 | | 7 | |
| [untold arms wind] | | | | | |
| 3 | | | 2 | | |
| [particularities light undersides] | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | 1 | 5 |
| [longing lily vision] | | | 5 | | |
| 5 | | 7 | | | |
| [loosen tenderness white] | | | | | |
| 6 | | | 4 | | |
| [pour half-silk skin] | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | 6 |
| [dreams tissue timeless] | | 1 | | | |

The first part of the score seemed the most complex at first, but its structure turned out to be the most clearly instructive for me. There are seven numbers, which are each assigned a set of three words written in brackets. This gives the syntax a kind of fragmented, almost broken quality, which is emphasised by the numbers being scattered across the page to the right. “Shadow spread slender,” “untold arms wind”—the word sets are not quite sentences, instead they seem to be like fragments of longer phrases or sentences where certain words have been omitted. The word bundles evoke specific sensations and images that would also not exist if the words were written separately.

I started out by making physical translations of each set of words. My translation here depended very much on my intuitive sense of the words and their web-like relation to each other. In a sense, I imagined my dance to be the larger whole from which the fragments were written down in brackets. Instead of set movement structures, I chose to stick to certain predetermined movement signifiers for each number and let my bodily imagination and association capacity fill in the rest. The fixed signifiers could be, for example, a specific tonus in the body or some part of it, a certain temporality or limiting the activity to certain parts of the body. These signifiers helped specify each of the fragments from early on when there was not yet much to hold on to. Once I felt that

each numbered section had a sense of identity and particularity about it that I also could relate back to the poem, I started playing around with my interpretation. In the end, certain fragments became more set and others kept shifting from performance to performance more drastically.

In terms of the spatial arrangement, I started out by following the map of the numbers quite exactly, although I always tried different pathways and ways of moving from one number to the next. After some time, I let go of the very rigid approach to the map of numbers and allowed a pathway to develop more instinctively. I was less focused on ‘hitting’ all the numbers and instead saw the whole first poem as a web of full and empty spaces, which I could navigate with my movement, or as a forest with thickets and clearings.

II

with the syntax of piano keys
hair, crowns, soft hands, and
change, queen wolf, honey wolf,
the hands of the feet, if not
longing, to remember nothing

long threads of light and blossoming
nothing, you are the shaping of
a low tense summer sky, dear horse
fog, if not rain, if not
but see everything

long threads of light and blossoming
nothing, you are the shaping of
a low tense summer sky, dear horse
fog, if not rain, if not
but see everything

with the syntax of piano keys
hair, crowns, soft hands, and
change, queen wolf, honey wolf,
the hands of the feet, if not
longing, to remember nothing

The second poem evokes a series of images which come into being in slightly different ways depending on the way the poem is read. There is something spell-like about the language, its rhythm and animal imagery. Even though the poem is quite short and consists of two sections that are repeated twice, it is extremely dense. The multiple different readings and the quickly shifting images left me almost breathless at first. This bodily experience brought on by the first reading meant that this second poem

immediately had a sense of innate physicality for me. I tried approaching the poem first in a straightforward manner, reading it from beginning to end, but quickly realised that because of the shape of the poem there is not really a beginning or an end, or indeed there are multiples of each.

You are the shaping of became the line that started my translation, perhaps because of the way it is directly addressed to whoever is reading the poem. Depending on the way you read the poem, the line continues:

You are the shaping of / change

You are the shaping of / hair

You are the shaping of / a low tense summer sky

Shaping became my bodily ‘tense’ for this poem. This meant a state of being that is constantly in motion, and constantly in transformation, but in a way that is also connected to a specificity of shape, an awareness of the transforming shape that the body projects to the outside. When one shape is about to become fixed, another is already entering, like the different images of the poem flowing into each other. “To remember nothing / but see everything”—to never be able to fix, since fixing would require remembering, but still perceive the process of continuous change precisely, the poem seemed to be suggesting.

The connection to hair and hands stands out from the poem, and in my translation these became the focal points of my movement. Even though I was always moving as a whole, my attention was on my hands—and my hair, which is especially intriguing since it is part of the body but cannot be sensed or moved similarly to other parts. I explored my hair as essentially part of me yet not under my command, with its own unique way of moving and behaving. I thought of the hair that covers almost all of my body, not only my head, and this way of relating to hair brought with it a sense of wholeness and also strangeness—unlike skin, hair can be difficult to sense, and yet it is very much a part of the skin from which it grows. It grows constantly, a visible reminder of the never ending process of change that is our body. The hair also connects

to the fur and hair of the animals mentioned—queen wolf, honey wolf, dear horse—and to the *crowns* which at first felt like a fairly disconnected thought in the middle of the poem. Thinking of these different human and non-human shapings of hair as crowns that grow out of the body rather than are worn was something that I spent a long time doing in the studio, feeling out the thought with my body.

This second poem remained the most freely improvised throughout the process and the performances. Somehow the wild feeling of the poem, its explosion of images, seemed to call for a more freely associating way of being. I also felt that I had internalised the weight and feel of the words enough so that even when I improvised, I could still maintain a sense of specificity of translation. “The syntax of piano keys” sparked a particular sense of rhythm for me. Even though the piano can produce many different kinds of syntaxes, the poem reminded me of a piece of piano music that I had heard and could somehow vaguely remember. I searched for this piece of music for quite some time and eventually found John Cage’s *3 Easy Pieces: No. 1 Round*. This short piano piece became my internal music, and I also used the piece itself in one performance where I experimented with having sound.

III

folding
in the tense of the flower

folding
in the tense of the flower

time

folding
in the tense of the flower

makes

the trees
sing

makes

makes

The third poem became the shortest and in some sense simplest section in the performance. The circular form gives the poem a sense of wholeness, and I wanted to translate this into an idea of one continuous, circular movement. “Folding / in the tense of the flower” seemed to evoke the temporality of a flower that blooms, wilts and eventually decomposes. As I started physically exploring what this folding could be, what being in the tense of the flower might actually produce in the body, I found a subtlety and a sense of slowing down which had been absent from the previous poems. The word ‘time’ is placed at the centre of the circle. This also seemed to underline the use and experience of time in this third poem, whereas in the first two poems I had thought much more about space.

“The trees sing,” another line in the centre of the poem, calls forth another form of plant life. Exploring a kind of plant body, first a flower folding and then a tree singing, was my main curiosity in this third poem. I tried ‘rooting’ or ‘planting’ myself in different ways and then growing out of these rooted positions, eventually folding to the floor and then re-growing to sing with the body. I found the strange position of planting my head and shoulder to the floor in an asymmetrical way, imagining my legs growing up through my spine. From here, a folding would happen, continuing to circle and uncurl the body up and eventually out of the space.

This kind of imaginary working with the body could be linked to the idea of feigning. Through pretending that my legs indeed grow up through my spine like plants from soil, I eventually create a new kind of understanding of my body, I feign this imaginary knowledge into being. This kind of bodily imagining is familiar to me from different somatic techniques and also some performative processes, where a kind of inner, lived experience is almost willed into existence through imagination. Eventually, the line between what is actually perceived and what is imagined becomes blurred, and the movement happens in the space in-between.

Performing the piece

The rehearsal process of *LOVE I–III* required a great deal of both physical and poetic stamina, and performing the piece was a kind of culmination of this process. Every performance felt quite different from the others, as a poem might feel different when you return to read it after a while. I also realised, as I got closer to performing, that I had to step away from the texts and the poems and focus on the specificity of movement on its own. In a sense, I had to rely on the internalised knowledge that my body already had of the score and the performance notes so that I could focus on my work as a performer. This also reminds me of the work of a translator— there comes a point where one has to look only at the translation and not the original to see if everything truly feels coherent and intuitively makes sense.

Perhaps the greatest challenge in turning the translation into a performance was bringing all the sections together in a way where I could still maintain the specificity and integrity of each part while also feeling the piece as one whole. The different venues also presented unique challenges, and I had to adapt my translation to fit different spaces. I experimented both with dancing in silence and having sound as part of the performance and tried to come up with ways of having the score as part of the performance in some way. The latter happened eventually in two different ways: the score was either projected onto the back wall of the performance space as I danced, section by section, or handed out on paper to the audience to be read at their convenience.

Time became a curious thing during the process and especially in performing. If I were to time how long it would take me to read the entire poem out loud, even with longish pauses the entire duration would come to less than ten minutes. There is so much white space. The solo itself was between 18 and 35 minutes, depending on the version performed, the day, the space and the circumstances. With the poem projected onto the wall and in the one performance where I used sound, the timing came partially from the outside, but in silence with no projection I could determine it completely by myself.

It is already stated in the performance guidelines that it is not the job of the performer to make the audience understand what is written in the score. It is not possible to extrapolate somehow the content of the poem from my movements, and vice versa. Then what is the function of the parallel existence of the two? This is something I thought a lot about as I adapted the translation to different spaces and had to rethink constantly the inclusion of the score. The existence of both the dance and the text side by side offers up the observation of the fold, the site of translation. In the performances where the score is projected into the space together with me, we exist in a kind of temporal togetherness, and when the score is merely handed out to the audience, this simultaneity is broken. One can read any sentence without knowing at all where I am in my internal sense of the score. The multiplicity of reception is interesting, although it can also be challenging for the performer. I had to make sure that I concentrated only on the part that I could have some control over, my own work as a performer.

There are also a few performance guidelines that had to do specifically with the way of performing:

Avoid a seeking gaze at the audience that conveys “I am alone on stage in a contemporary performance situation”.

Avoid projecting the feeling that you know something the audience does not know. Your unidentifiable actions are there to be experienced.

These were things that I could only practice while performing, although I also tried to bring them into the rehearsals as much as I could. The way I eventually tried to relate to the way of being on stage and to the audience was to think of it as though I am reading out the poem without trying to act it out. To avoid the seeking gaze, I also gave myself certain simple tasks that had to do with looking, or with imagining something visual in the space. For example: ‘use the gaze as an extension of your movement’, or ‘try to see the traces left by your body in space’. I tried to be aware of and curious about the space and everything in it equally—the floor, the people, the empty spaces, the score on the wall, somebody coughing, my left leg shaking. The perceived and the imaginary both existing at once is perhaps the greatest challenge and also the greatest reward of this kind of work for the performer.

Bojana Cvejić writes about the experience of the audience in *Escape and Transformation*: “The audience, too, are compelled to dwell in the opaque and ambiguous, to readjust their attention to something akin to listening, discerning detail through time, in spite of the prevalence of sight” (Cvejić 2016). I hope that this subtle awakening and attunement of the senses was also present during my performance of *LOVE I–III*.

CONCLUSION

*Lopulta loppu, suljen polvitaiteen tiukasti itseään vasten.
 Väliin pääsee ilmaa joka sulaa nopeasti hieksi.
 Väliin pääsee kauan sitten unohdettu lause, jonka luulin keksineeni itse.
 Ikkunasta: monttu joka täyttyy hiljaa lumella,
 sulaa sataessaan.
 Sen takana jäänyt kenttä, jolla lapset lipsuvat pallon perässä.
 En ole ennen istunut tässä.
 Yksi jalka on jo nukahtanut laskevan auringon valossa—se näkee unta,
 nykii ja vapisee unessaan.
 Lopulta irtoan tästä kuin hiukset irtoavat ihosta,
 ne lentävät ilmassa, jäävät vieraisiin takinhelmoihin kiinni.*

*And in the end, the end, I shut the knee tight in on itself.
 In between, air that quickly melts into sweat.
 In between, a long forgotten phrase that I thought I had invented myself.
 Through the window: a gravel pit, slowly filling up with snow,
 melting while falling.
 Behind it a frozen field, where children slip and skid after a ball.
 I have never sat here before.
 One leg has already fallen asleep in the setting sun—it dreams,
 it fidgets and quakes in its sleep.
 At the end I come apart like hairs slip away from skin,
 they fly through the air, get stuck on a stranger's coat hem.*

(10 December 2019)

A group of penguins huddling together, writing with their bodies, in the solitude of the icy landscape, a kinetic text impossible to decipher and write down in words.

A snake skin, curling around the finger as if a part of the snake were attached to it still.

My grandmother's decades old handwriting in the margins of my copy of T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*, next to the passage I quoted in one of the chapters: "time & place, their relation."

Certain images, words and sentences stay with me as I try to think of a way to bring this thesis to a conclusion. I began by writing about my writing position, and once again I notice now that I have crawled, with my laptop in hand, into the same position; heel bones tucked close to my sit bones, spine gently curved, long arms extended to type these words. Perhaps I have written my body into this position.

I started by writing about the ways in which poetry can pierce dance and how it manifests itself in my own work. I wrote about perception and imagination, their relation and centrality in both poetry and dance, and happened upon Bojana Cvejić's idea of 'feigning', the surrogate knowledge of the dancer that seems to link both imagination of the not-yet-here and the very present perception. Having now explored the processes of *The Garden* and *LOVE I-III*, I feel I have a more practical grasp of what Cvejić means by feigning. It is related to a kind of suspension of disbelief, required of us when we encounter works of fiction and immerse ourselves in them. When we encounter fictions with the material realities of our own sensing-moving bodies, feigning is what happens as we imagine ourselves as inhabiting these fictions. Through this act of feigning, we can end up changing our perception. Imagination is a powerful thing, and to think of it as a different kind of knowledge rather than second-rate misinformation is to admit and allow that power.

Another poetic-practical idea that courses through this thesis is the idea of translation. In practice, especially when discussing *LOVE I-III*, I focused mainly on the 'micro-translation' of the performer, but earlier I also touched on the more philosophical frame of dance-as-translation, introduced by Jacques Rancière. I am still convinced by the

immediate practical implications of regarding the work of a dancer as akin to that of a translator, and I am keen to continue working with it, both as a method and as a mindset. The blurring of boundaries, of ownership, of source and per-version that happens in the act of translation holds an interesting potential. With *LOVE I–III*, I encountered this process in practice, translating from a score written by someone else into a dance. The process made me think also of the specificities of both media (text and dance) and how to work in a way that felt in-keeping with the poetic world of the score without sacrificing that specificity in my own performance. With *The Garden*, I think of how the original poems became the per-version performed in the piece, and how this synthesis further informed my bodily state in the performance. In dance, the translations always seem to be happening in multiple places at once.

In this thesis, the act of translation was also present in the small poems at the beginnings of chapters, and as I wrote in Finnish, I found myself almost unconsciously already thinking about the translation into English. I tried to play with this expectation also and set challenges for myself, but the knowledge was so present it was hard to sidestep. Translating the text of *The Garden*, on the other hand, I felt the resistance of a text not really wanting to be turned into another language. The poems had so much weight to them, some of the sentences having been with me for such a long time. This difference struck me as significant, and made me appreciate the materiality that writing and text themselves can have.

When I first began to think of this thesis, the image of a commonplace book popped into my mind. Commonplace books have existed since antiquity, and they could be described as scrapbooks of sorts, containing quotes, letters, poems, proverbs, lists, prayers and other bits of informative and artistic writing of all kind. However, right away I also realised that such an idiosyncratic archive, while charming, would be too cluttered and ambiguous to work as a thesis, and to be read by anyone other than myself. But something of the initial attraction stayed with me, and perhaps this final result, with my small poems at the beginnings of the chapters as well as the various kinds of textual sources—poetic, fictional and academic— could after all be considered a kind of synthesis of many different kinds of information, both real and imagined, perceived and feigned.

There are certain strands that I still hold in my hand, and I am interested to see where they lead me. I can see myself continuing with the methods and movements of *The Garden* and looking at other styles of writing besides confessional poetry to deepen my own poetic voice and bodily imagination. The focus on the autobiographic has felt natural during this period in my life, but I am now also curious about the potential for different kinds of fictioning. Likewise, I would like to continue working with other kinds of choreographic poetry, also written by others than myself, and to explore further the idea of translation as a method for the performer. Nevertheless, I will bring poetry with me into any process I enter, practicing the poetry of the performer regardless of whether any texts end up in the final artistic result or not.

And, finally, how to finish? The writing position seems almost solidified now, the backs of the knees are wet with sweat. Perhaps, when I have finished typing, I will close the laptop and sit for a moment in this squat, feeling the numbness of my knees spreading towards my ankles, the tingling of it. Then, perhaps, I will dance a small living room dance, read a poem, write something in the margins.

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Nowhere in Particular. Concept and coordination: Ana Teo Ala-Ruona (part of a thesis work for MA in Ecology and Contemporary Performance). Performers: Ana Teo Ala-Ruona, Alvi Haapamäki, Venla Helenius, Anni Kaila, Anna Kankila, Satu Kankkonen, Leena Kuusisto, Inna Lampinen, Nadja Leham, Milka Luhtaniemi and Gesa Piper. Dramaturg: Milka Luhtaniemi. Sound designer: Satu Kankkonen. Lighting designer: Johannes Vartola. Premiere 8 June 2018, Vapaa Taiteen Tila.

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Pictures

All photos are still images from a rehearsal video of *LOVE I–III*. Filmed and photo edited by Anni Kaila.

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- II “Ihopuhe”, “Skin speak.” 24 October 2019.
- III “Louhos”, “The Quarry.” 5 November 2019.
- IV “Asioita jotka kaatuvat”, “Things that fall.” 4 December 2019.
- V “Käännös”, “Translation.” 18 November 2019.
- VI “Puutarha”, “The Garden.” 18 November 2019.
- VII “Lauseita”, “Sentences.” 26 November 2019.
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Puutarha

Anni Kaila 2018

Katso

katso

katso, minä tuon sinulle käärmeennahan
ja jonkin muiston, kovan ja himmeän
likaisen maailmankartan
samean marmorikuulan joka kuumenee puristaessa

siinä sinusta tulee tuulilasinpyyhin
ja minusta kirkas lasi joka jatkuvasti kiillottaa itseään

minusta tulee kaunis kuin kansantalous
kasvava, kasvava, joka suuntaan kasvava
minusta tulee vahva kuin valaanhammas
sisältä halkaistu, joka suuntaan suora
minusta tulee hullu kuin hukutettava noita
kevyt kuin kohotettu kantapää

Talo ei koskaan pitänyt meistä, muistatko,
me kävimme harvoin saunassa, rikoimme kaiteet ja sadevesirännin
ja kerran kuussa sähköt menivät poikki, home kiipesi ikkunankarmeihin pimeässä
ja haju
raatokärpäset tulivat jo huhtikuussa, ja ampiaiset seinän sisään,
hiiret ullakolle, luteet vuoteisiin

me istuimme talon sisällä kuin jonkin suuren vihaisen eläimen suolistossa
tunnustelimme sokeana kosteita seiniä etsien ulospääsyä
kuuntelimme matalaa murinaa
haistelimme ja itkimme

puutarha alkoi versota vuohenputkea, sitä tunkeutui esiin hiekkalaatikosta
ja lipstikkapensaasta
maavarret avasivat maan rakoille,
piha halkesi päästä päähän, ruohonleikkuri leikkasi oman johtonsa poikki
otsahiukset kasvoivat suuhun
minä seisoin korkeassa ruohikossa
jossa hyvin matala koira makasi ja sai myrkytyksen
huoli rypistyi kasvoille kuin naamio
ja käsiin

minä niitin puutarhaa öisin askartelusaksilla ja hautasin hilettä kukkapenkkiin
levitin itseni kompostin päälle, tarkasti sinun äärirajojesi sisään niin kuin väritystehtävässä
minä mahduin niihin vielä

katso, minä tuon sinulle maailmankartan
tuon leikin jossa minut sidotaan kuin hukutettava noita
peukalo vastakkaiseen isovarpaaseen kiinni
ja viimeisenä tulevat vedet, ennen unta ja kuolemaa, aina

isällä on junankuuluttajan ääni, se kahisee ontossa korvakäytävässä, kutsuu minua unesta
veli säilyttää huoneessaan eläinten luita,
niitä löytyy tyynyiltä aamuisin kun olen ollut liian kiltti
sammakon takapäätä heiluttaen veli kiusaa: "mikä luu? mikä luu?"
minä en tiedä, luu puu kuu,
herään hiirenkallo posken alla, olen niin ihastunut että unohdan itkeä

me leikimme elvytystä
makaamme kevään ensimmäisessä aurinkoläikässä
minun selkäni on aivan paljas kun se painuu mattoon
sinä asetat kätesi toisen käden päälle
ne nousevat ja laskevat kuin kaksi sileää parittelevaa eläintä
ja myöhemmin samat kädet laskeutuvat kaulalle
lapset vaihtavat paikkaa pimeässä
leikki tulee toiseksi
oikea käsi on hikinen jäätelö jota pitkin sormet valuvat nuollessa
kylmyys asettuu ranteeseen, se on jähmeä siitä asti

veli jännittää suussaan akillesjännettä,
minun nilkkani taipuu, jää oven väliin,
sinusta tulee tuulilasinyhyhin, minusta ruohonleikkuri
joka leikkaa oman johtonsa poikki
minusta tulee kasvi joka kasvaa toisten kasvien päällä, epifyytti,
koko puutarhan kokoinen

herään hiirenkallo posken alla
se kutsuu minua unesta
minä olen valaanhammas, sisältä halkaistu, joka suuntaan suora
käärmeennahka, kielen aukko, silmänreiät, pienten kasvojen outo naamio,
iho joka antaa periksi kuin mieli,

kuinka se käpertyy sormen ympäri
kuin osa käärmettä olisi siinä vielä kiinni

(Loppufantasia)

Katso

me palaamme takaisin

isä pukeutuu snorkkeliin ja sadevaatteisiin

menee seinän sisään

myrkyttää ampiaiset

kutsuu minua unesta

veli hautaa eläimet puutarhaan, katoaa kukkapenkkiin, vuohenputket kasvavat pään yli, silmistä sisään

sinä levität itsesi kompostin päälle

enkä minä enää mahdu sinun äärirajojesi sisään

minä aloitan ovesta

puran yksi kerrallaan jokaikisen laudan

lattiat katon seinät rappuset

ja viimeisenä tulevat vedet

kiipeän kylpyammeeseen

taitan niskan taakse ja irtoan, kaikki raajat ajelehtivät erilleen,

pinnat liukuvat pois, vesi ja iho juovat toisiaan.

On ihanaa vihdoon irrota luista, kudokset paisuvat ja pumpaavat, kaikki on pelkkää

keuhkoverenkiertoa, lihakset loiskuvat lämpiminä, jänteet raukeavat, silmät kieppuvat pehmeässä pyörteessä

auki ja unessa

hampaat ovat korallia, kieli pieni eläin joka puikkelehtii niiden raoissa,

kyntää merenpohjaa

ja lopulta vesi nousee nopeasti käytäviin,

puu turpoaa ja taipuu

laasti liukenee

metalli ruostuu puhki

kaikki rakenteet pettävät yhtäaikaisesti

naapuri katsoo nenänvartta pitkin, kun kirjat ja taulut ja iho ja hiukset ja lihakset ja luut

seilaavat pitkin katua

ja tutiseva kivijalka painuu kallioon.

The Garden

Anni Kaila 2018 - translation by Anni Kaila, 2019

Look

look

look, I will bring you this snake skin
and a memory, hard and dim
a dirty world map
a murky marble that heats up when squeezed

in it, you become a windscreen wiper
and I a clear glass that constantly shines itself

I become beautiful, like the national economy
growing, growing, in every direction, growing
I become strong, like a whale's tooth
split on the inside, smooth in every sense
I become crazy, like a witch being drowned
light, like a lifted heel

The house never liked us, remember,
we never went in the sauna, we broke the handrails and the rain water drain
and once a month the lights would go off, mold creeping up onto the window frames in the dark
and the smell
the blowflies came already in april, and the wasps inside the wall
the mice in the attic, the bed bugs in our beds

we sat inside the house like in the bowels of a great, angry animal
feeling blindly the moist walls, looking for an escape
listening to the low growl
sniffing and weeping

The garden started to sprout goutweed, it sprung up from inside the sandbox
and through the thick leaves of lovage
the rootstocks burst the ground in blisters,
and the garden split from end to end, the lawnmower cutting through its own cord.
My hair grew into my mouth
as I stood in the high grass
in which a very low dog lay and was poisoned
the worry crumpled onto my face like a mask
and I held it in my hands

at night, I mowed the garden with craft scissors instead of a scythe
and buried glitter in the flowerbed
I spread myself across the compost, carefully inside your outlines like in a colouring book
I still fit inside them

Look, I will bring you a world map
I will bring you a game in which I am bound like a witch being drowned
thumb fastened to the opposite toe
and at last, the waters come, before death and dream, always

Father has the voice of a train announcement, it shuffles in the empty ear canal, calls me from sleep-
Brother keeps the bones of small animals in his room,
I find them on my pillow in the morning when I have been too good.
Shaking a frog's bottom, Brother shouts: "which bone? which bone?"
I do not know, stone throne scone,
I wake up with a mouse skull under my cheek, so in love that I forget to cry.

We play resuscitation
lying in the first sun spot of the spring
my back is completely bare as it presses against the carpet.
You place your hand on top of your other hand
they lift up and lower like two smooth mating animals
and later the same hands locate the neck
children switch places in the dark
the game becomes another game
the right hand is a sweaty ice cream, the fingers run down it as we lick
a cold sets inside the wrist, it is stiff ever since.

Brother tenses the achilles tendon in his mouth,
my ankle bends and points, gets stuck in the door,
you become a windscreen wiper, I, a lawnmower
that cuts through its own cord
I become a plant that grows on other plants, an epiphyte,
I grow over the garden

I wake up with a mouse skull under my cheek
it calls me from sleep
I am a whale's tooth, split on the inside, smooth in every sense
a snake skin, the hole of the tongue, of the eyes, the small strange mask of the face,
the skin that slips like the mind,

how it curls itself around the finger
as if a part of the snake were attached to it still

(The Fantasy)

Look

we return

father puts on a diving mask and a raincoat

goes inside the wall

poisons the wasps

calls me from sleep,

brother buries the animals in the garden and disappears in the flower bed, goutweeds quickly growing
over his head, and in through the eyes

you spread yourself across the compost

and I no longer fit inside your outlines.

I begin with the door

taking down every board, one by one,

the floors the roof the walls the stairs

and at last, the waters come,

I climb into the bathtub

fold my neck back and come apart, limbs drifting away from each other,
surfaces sliding off, water and skin drinking each other.

It is lovely to finally slide off of bones, tissues swelling and pumping, everything a part of the
pulmonary circulation, warm muscles splashing, tendons slipping, eyes swirling in the soft
vortex

open and asleep

the teeth are coral, the tongue a small animal that flits in their midst,
ploughing the seabed

and at last, the water quickly fills the hallways,

wood swells and bends

plaster dissolves

metal rusts through

all structures fail at the same time

and the neighbour watches down their nose as books and paintings and skin and hair and bones
sail through the streets
and the quivering foundation sinks into stone.

Love I-III
CHOREOGRAPHIC SCORE

1
[shadow spread slender] 3

2
[untold arms wind] 3 7

3
[particularities light undersides] 2

4
[longing lily vision] 5 1 5

5
[loosen tenderness white] 7

6
[pour half-silk skin] 4

7
[dreams tissue timeless] 1 6

with the syntax of piano keys
hair, crowns, soft hands, and
change, queen wolf, honey wolf,
the hands of the feet, if not
longing, to remember nothing

long threads of light and blossoming
nothing, you are the shaping of
a low tense summer sky, dear horse
fog, if not rain, if not
but see everything

long threads of light and blossoming
nothing, you are the shaping of
a low tense summer sky, dear horse
fog, if not rain, if not
but see everything

with the syntax of piano keys
hair, crowns, soft hands, and
change, queen wolf, honey wolf,
the hands of the feet, if not
longing, to remember nothing

folding
in the tense of the flower

folding
in the tense of the flower

time

folding
in the tense of the flower

makes

the trees
sing

makes

makes

LOVE I-III
PERFORMANCE NOTES

You understand love.

guess love into being

repeat

repeat

and repeat love.

You rub love

have

hold

hear love,

hope and harvest

You work love into existence

calculate, throw

know

love

bend and pinch

You come with love

copy copy

copy

correct

creep in love

You create love

lay love down

play, lead

live love

You borrow love

solve, redeem

lose love

measure the lost

You rework love

seek, exaggerate

watch, park, whistle and tend to

You try out love

try and try

you ride on love

ride and stir

You miss, put

serve and send

cut and comprehend

you tremble in love

You twist and hurry

throw and drop

you fine-tune love

stretch and stroke

You stand in love

answer love

are told, marvel, formulated anew

You sink into love

withdraw and hit

something other than love, for a moment brief

You need love,

penetrate love

explore, perform

perform again

You choose love

win and grow

twist and wish

rehearse,

rehearse

RETNINGSLINJER TIL DANSEREN

Praktiser partituret hver dag i minst fire uker.

Ikke jobb i lengre strekk enn det din entusiasme tillater deg.

Det er din jobb å mobilisere entusiasme for arbeidet.

Du og rommet deler tilstand.

Lær deg forskjellen på *å ligne en trekkfugl* og *å være trekkfuglhet*, og *å mime det å synge fremfor å synge med kroppen*. I denne prosessen er det alltid det sistnevnte som gjelder. Bruk din bevegelsesfantasi og kroppslig-mentale assosiasjonsevne.

Tvil har ingen plass i prosessen eller materialet. Bruk i stedet åpenhet.

Unngå en estetikk som viser frem "jeg utforsker". (Du kan likevel utforske). Vær spesifikk, også i det uavklarte.

Unngå selv-manipulasjon og selv-vold.

Unngå et søkende blikk mot publikum.

Unngå bevegelser som av publikum kan bli identifisert som symboler og mime.

Bruk teknikken din til å utforske nytt territorium.

Arbeid med en oppmerksomheten som er fordelt jevnt – forside, bakside, delene som har navn, delene som ikke har navn, hele veien igjennom kroppen og rommet.

Vit hvor du har vekten til enhver tid.

Det er ikke din jobb å få publikum til å skjønne hva som står i partituret.

Det er din jobb å transformere partituret til dans som fungerer på egenhånd.

Unngå å projisere følelsen av at du vet noe publikum ikke vet. Dine uidentifiserbare handlinger er der for å oppleves.

Det er plass til nysgjerrighet og utforskning, også i det ferdige materialet.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE DANCER

Do not work in the longer stretches than your enthusiasm allows you.

It is your job to mobilize enthusiasm for the work.

You are not in the space; rather, you are a part of the space.

Explore the difference between «resembling a migrant bird» and «being in migratory-birdness»; and the difference between conveying *the image of singing*, and *to sing with the body*. In this process, the latter in both examples apply. Use your movement imagination and physical-mental association capacity.

Hesitation has no place in the process or in the material. Instead, use openness.

Avoid an aesthetic that showcases "I explore". (You can still explore). Be specific, even in the unsettled or unresolved; not everything has to be resolved. Sometimes the specificity of the impossible makes the most sense.

Avoid self-manipulation and self-violence.

Avoid a seeking gaze at the audience that conveys «I am alone on stage in a contemporary performance situation».

Avoid movements that by the audience can be identified as symbols and mime (e.g. pointing at something with index finger). Gestures are welcome.

Use your technique and experience to explore new territory.

Work with an attention that is evenly distributed - front, back, parts of the body that have names, the parts that do not have names, all the way through the layers of body and space.

Know where your weight is at any time. No hanging or flopping around.

It's not your job to make the audience to understand what is written in the score.

It's your job to transform the score into a dance that can be experienced independently.

Avoid projecting the feeling that you know something the public does not know. Your unidentifiable actions are there to be experienced.

There is room for curiosity and exploration, also in the finished material.