

Proposition for the Eventual Might of Teaching Choreography: Choreography Pedagogy in the Context of MA Choreography Studies

Jana Unmüßig

ABSTRACT

This artistic research article discusses choreography pedagogy in the context of MA choreography studies in respect to expanded choreography and artistic research pedagogy. Both frameworks are means to carve out ponderings on eventual tools for teaching choreography as a research practice. The three potential tools that are explicitly discussed in the article are embodied speaking, intra-active dialogue, and listening. In addition, the article draws connections between experimental dance and choreography pedagogy emerging at the beginning of the 20th century in the USA and the pedagogical considerations of early-2000s Europe at the time of the Bologna Process.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tässä taiteellisessa tutkimusartikkelissa käsitellään koreografiapedagogiikkaa koreografian maisteriopintojen yhteydessä suhteessa laajennettuun koreografiaan ja taiteelliseen tutkimuspedagogiikkaan. Molemmat viitekehykset ovat keinoja raivata pohdintoja mahdollisista välineistä koreografian opettamiseen tutkimuskäytäntönä. Kolme potentiaalista työkalua, joita artikkelissa käsitellään eksplisiittisesti, ovat ruumiillistettu puhuminen, intra-aktiivinen dialogi ja kuunteleminen. Lisäksi artikkelissa luodaan yhteyksiä Yhdysvalloissa 1900-luvun alussa syntyneen kokeellisen tanssin ja koreografian pedagogiikan ja Euroopassa 2000-luvun alussa, Bolognan prosessin aikaan, esiintyneiden pedagogisten pohdintojen välille.

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This artistic research into choreography pedagogy in the context of MA choreography programmes appears to as an indeterminate plane of thought. Indeterminate research speculates that the ontological concern is an “unending dynamism” (Barad 2012a, 9) that produces a dynamized and non-linear epistemological path. The writing commits to differently structured ways of knowledge production and its articulation towards a knowledge horizon(tality) that allow differences in sensing, understanding, and knowing. The research here is nurtured by my pedagogical activities as a permanent part-time lecturer at the MA Choreography programme at University of the Arts Helsinki, where I teach, supervise, and mentor MA students.

The article describes potentially relevant teaching technologies for expanded choreography pedagogy in MA choreography studies, with an extensive account of embodied speaking followed by intra-active dialogue and listening. In addition, it invites the reader to a historical hiatus of pedagogies that foster choreographic expansion and expose the reader to research on choreography pedagogy in the higher education context. Theoretical frameworks are sourced from artistic research pedagogy, more-than-human/posthuman educations studies, dance education research, dance studies, and sound studies.

The research is closely related to post-qualitative research’s grappling with the critical limits of research data (St. Pierre 2013, Koro-Ljungberg, Löytönen, and Tesar 2017) in that it proposes artistic research stance concerning data collection and its interpretation. Central in artistic research, as it is understood and practised in the Nordic countries, is the notion of

exposition, in which an artist’s practice turns into a medium of research (Kirkkopelto 2015) through a simultaneous interleasing of an aesthetic proposition and the showing of its performativity. In artistic research expositions, data and their interpretation are so tightly interlinked that one could speak of an “undoing of data through artistic research” (Rouhiainen 2017, 67).

In this article, the “undoing of data” (Rouhiainen 2017, 67) is activated few times through the performative gestures of a fictitious choreography class. When writing strikes a more performative tone, the reader is addressed as a fictitious choreography student. In most other places of the text, the reader is invited to remain on a plane of present tense and to wonder, wander, and co-meander with the author while reading. The reader is thus encouraged to constantly change positions when adapting to the changing horizons present in the different sections of the text. This is shown in the 2000s and the establishment of the Bologna Process: “Since its beginnings, the Bologna Process was placed in the context of European and international cooperation, and in particular it was intended to strengthen the competitiveness and attractiveness of the European Higher Education by fostering the students’ mobility and creating the framework for the international dimension of higher education.” (de Wit, Deca, and Hunter 2015, 3). This intention was effectuated by first establishing a European Higher Education Area, and within this area, educational frameworks, master of arts (MA) programmes, including MAs in choreography, were adopted at the Ministerial Conference in Bergen in

2007. These new MA programmes substituted older programmes with longer cycles, leading to changes in the national diplomas.

Through the Bologna Process, MA studies have not been formally defined as research-level studies but conceived as means to deepen and apply undergraduate studies. However, there has been increasing discussion, e.g. at the art university where I permanently teach, that teaching should not only be research-based but that BA and MA students should gain research skills through their studies. This researchification of undergraduate and graduate studies challenges the formal outset of MA studies, as referred to above. The increased demand to provide research skills in MA studies calls for pedagogues in MA programmes to invent new methods of teaching. The article suggests that these methods may be informed by artistic research pedagogy. Hence, this artistic research article is targeted at artist-researchers inquiring into current pedagogical practices in higher art education, researchers exploring choreography pedagogy at the MA level, and choreography teachers working in MA choreography programmes.

I choose to particularly focus on expanded choreography, a choreographic paradigm from Western theatre dance, because it is the context I have researched through my doctorate (Unmüßig 2018) and that I now embody as an artist-researcher. Stressing the embodied implication to the aforementioned context of Western theatre dance, is chosen to signal the commitment to the practice-based nature of the research and this text. Embodiment also plays an important role in the pedagogy I activate within MA choreography programmes. I will outline my interest in embodiment in greater detail in this article. At this point, it should be noted that I have been engaged in somatic practices (Perceptual Breathing of Ilse Middendorf since 2003, the bodywork of Marion Rosen since 2019), and I hold a MA in choreography focused on somatic movement and body practices in the study module of movement

research. Hence, even though I do not teach physical practices, physicality is incorporated into and through my teaching by my constant attentiveness to my corporeality and embodiment. It would be relevant to enquire at large into somatic bodywork-informed pedagogy in MA choreography studies because of Doran George's poignant question: "How do teachers and students use the idea of authenticity and its undergirding conception of the natural, where the aim is clearly not to resist dance establishments, but to achieve success with them?" (George 2020, 143). However, such enquiry is not the topic of this article and must be picked up another time. The present article first and foremost aims to speculate on choreography pedagogy within the paradigm of expanded choreography for MA choreography programmes.

Let us continue from here. Imagine1 that this is a choreography class, that you are an MA choreography student at a higher art education institution, and that I am the choreography teacher. Learning/teaching choreography begins with curiosity.

My standpoint is that of a permanent part-time lecturer in choreography working predominantly in the Nordic country of Finland, with recent teaching experiences at the MA Choreography programme of University of the Arts Stockholm. I activate my pedagogical activities through my knowledge in choreography, which I gained via education (an MA in choreography and a doctor of arts in dance), freelance work as choreographer (2008–2015), and my perspective as artist researcher (Unmüßig 2018, 2021). As a lecturer in choreography, I enmesh myself in an attempted simultaneity, constantly shape shifting and engaging with orienting (Ahmed 2006) while speaking within a politics of location (Braidotti 2018) to bring forth the question of the subject of teacher: "What is a teacher, what is the teacher relationship, what are the pupils, what is the position of the researcher?" (Braidotti 2018, 210) As a lecturer in choreography, I do not work with pupils but with students—I like

to name the people coming into the MA for two years to expand on their existing practice artist-students. What is a choreography lecturer? Does a choreography lecturer teach choreography? Can one even teach choreography? How can I position myself as a lecturer in choreography and an artist-researcher from a new-materialist perspective? How can choreography be taught in the paradigm of choreographic expansion? Questions entangled with other questions, strings crossing other strings while aspiring to “show the pedagogy ‘(re) (con) figuring’ the lecturer in process of ‘ongoing (re) pattering’” (O’Malley 2019, 60).

Have a look. Have a broad look. Use a peripheral view. Don’t focus, or focus and then undo the focus. Zoom in and then go back to the peripheral view. Let your perception roam towards a sense of (dis) orientation. Close your eyes, open them again, and look at what you see/perceive in terms of choreography.

In this class, choreography is practised and discussed along with the notion of expanded choreography that has been coined by different scholars (Lepecki 2005, Cvejic 2015, Joy 2014, Leon 2022) and artists alike (e.g. Xavier Le Roy, Jérôme Bel, Mette Ingvartsen, Boris Charmatz, Eszter Salomon) since the 1990s. This is, however, a slippery notion, as dance scholar Anne Leon reminds us: “There is no single, organised, expanded choreographic movement—no body of theorists or practitioners who claim a conceptual/artistic territory.” (Leon 2022, 22) Instead, Leon discusses expanded choreography in the following terms:

Contemporary “expanded choreography” appears as a non-centralised network of practices and ideas probing what “else” choreography may be, while choreographic history appears as a collection of interlinked—but not linearly, smoothly-connectible—paths. What choreography has been in Western dance history is therefore as variable and complex as contemporary (expanded) choreography; the two are at times in accord, at times in tension. (Leon 2022, 27)

Task: Write an essay on expanded choreography in a non-linear manner and ponder how your work contributes or not without ever using the notion of expansion.

One of the many “practices and ideas” (Leon 2022, 27) encapsulated in the debate on expanded choreography, as Leon discusses, is the wrestling with the status of the human body, human embodiment, and its relation to dance and movement, which shows how choreographic expansion in different historical phases, from seventeenth-century Ballet to contemporary performance-orientated choreographic objects, have questioned “(...) the equation of choreography with the teleological function of dance-making and corporeality as its primary medium (...)” (Leon 2022, 30). Wrestling from a theoretical vantage point with human embodiment as an eventual perpetuation of a human-centred understanding of dance and choreography, I actively embrace corporeality and human embodiment for my practice as a lecturer in choreography. The apparent friction between a discursive interest in challenging notions such as human embodiment and activating my lectureship through human embodiment signals the outset of the research where epistemological paving interlaces with ontological concerns by means of non-linear dynamism, including ambivalences.

As discussed in this article, I recognise the relevance of embodied listening and embodied speaking for teaching/mentoring/supervising MA choreography students to activate a learning process in which students begin shifting their perceptions of their existing bodies of work. This shifting seems to be crucial to exploring the “what else” (Leon 2022, 27) of choreography.

From Artistic Research Pedagogy to Choreography Pedagogy

To be able to engage in expanded choreography, students need a research mind that creates an appetite

for “probing what ‘else’ choreography may be” (Leon 2022, 27). This requires me as a teacher to introduce ways of engaging with choreography in an (artistic) research manner. Therefore, I tilt the focus to artistic research pedagogy: “Teaching artistic research is an extension of art-making practice that employs the language of research practice to encourage a perceptual shift.” (Gauthier/ Mazza 2020, 44) Gauthier’s and Mazza’s articulation of artistic research pedagogy clarifies that to teach artistic research is foremost a question of how to perceive an already existing practice by means of an altered perception. To teach artistic research entails the triggering of a perceptual shift to critically progress from where the artist-student was before in relation to their artistic work.

Engaging as a choreography lecturer in choreography with students in the educational frame of MA choreography studies entails a shift in perception that can take place through one-on-one mentoring or supervision but also when I, as lecturer, bring the conversation always back to the student’s work process if the cohort is small enough. I teach MA choreography cohorts with 3–5 students per cohort; this teacher-student ratio allows personalised conversations about each student’s work. Thus, the following reflections on language, dialogue and listening are applicable for small student cohorts.

For the context of choreography teaching at the MA level, I adapt and alter Gauthier/Mazza’s work: teaching choreographic research is an extension of a clearly identified practice that might entail any practice (e.g. computer engineering) that deploys the language of artistic research practice to encourage a perceptual shift. I have changed two crucial details: a widening of the realm of practice (from artistic practice to any practice) and a narrowing of the realm of language (from language of research to artistic research language). This opening broader spectrum of practices is straightforwardly linked to the expanded idea of choreography as a “non-centralised network of

practices and ideas” (Leon 2022, 27). The narrowing of language is driven by my language-based pedagogical practice with choreography students and by my artistic research interest in finding an artist’s language that reflects the intricacy of artistic practice and work processes.

In my adaptation of Gauthier/Mazza’s work, artistic research language does not mean the usage of scientific research vocabulary (Henke et al. 2020, 11). However, I propose artistic research language to be a way of being-with-language where language by means of speech is sensed and embodied. Sensed and embodied speech partakes in the paradigm of non-transcendental knowledge (Thayor Bacon 2003): “For Thayor Bacon, (. . .), non-transcendental knowing is situated in the context of the world and in our everyday experiences.” (Koro-Ljungberg et al. 2009, 687).

Embodied Speaking

In my language-based teaching/supervising/mentoring, I activate artistic research language as a language that overcomes the body–mind separation and is instead embodied. The crucial aspect of activating embodied speaking in my work as a lecturer is listening to my embodied self-awareness; that is, sensing how my nervous system might be more aroused in one part of the pedagogical encounter than the other, such as when my hands become sweatier or my skin’s colour changes; that is noticing how different concepts and topics evoke different memories and emotions in me; that is noticing my breathing that goes unevenly, where audible exhalations give me the space I need to experience more spaciousness in my body.

The tracking of my process of embodiment anchors me as speaker more on the plane of the present tense. Embodied speaking through embodied self-awareness allows me to be present, which lets me to better listen and attune to the student’s present-at-hand questions, concerns, and wonders.

Since I ground myself in the present tense, the student is heard and seen in the very moment of the encounter, which implies that I leave projections aside and instead practise attending to the actuality of the meeting. In doing so, I aim to produce conditions in which the student begins to trust me as pedagogue and hence starts to unravel their thoughts about their making. These aims are set in place because of my observations of what happens if I do not ground myself in the present tense: students open up less about their artistic practice.

The attention to the now—the plane of the present tense—aims at inducing a trustful relationship between me and the student. This is crucial for instigating the student's perceptual shift: The student recognises how they perceive their artistic-conceptual-emotional situatedness when relaxing into a trustworthy encounter, and in a subsequent step, they disclose their considerations about their work. Dialogue is central to this process, and it is something I will return to later in the article. This situation is bound to ethics insofar as, due to my embodied self-awareness, I practise respecting my psycho-emotional limits, which in return allows me to sense and respect the students' psycho-emotional boundaries.

When dialoguing with a student within this process, I synthesise what the student has spoken about and articulate invitations with curiosity to stretch the student's boundaries. These invitations most often consist of differently structured questions (e.g. tentative, rhetorical, direct, open, etc.) to raise awareness of a "what else" (Leon 2022, 27) of unactualized potential. In the moments of asking questions, I actively practise curiosity as a practice of care (Ingold n.d.) so that poking the student's process from different angles through questions invites the student to look at their practice from different angles and perceive their practice and work anew while feeling safe. This process of poking needs to be established gradually. I would never ask a more direct question when the students

and I just get to know each other. Instead, at any moment of the conversation, I need to work actively with inhibition and weigh the right moment to ask a question—when the student and I have developed enough trust to ask more critical questions.

Another important and yet critical aspect of my research is that I move with intuition in these places of wording and asking questions. Moving with intuition, even when feeling grounded in the intuitive, entails the risk of not finding the right word—words that close the space of encounter. Language-based and body-bound teaching/mentoring/supervising to instigate a researchy process of asking what else choreography may become requires me as a lecturer to engage in a "process of 'ongoing (re) pattering'" (O'Malley 2019, 60): Constantly questioning my assumptions, adjusting my wording, tracking my embodied self-awareness, acknowledging mistakes, and engaging in mini-sequences of repair. All these instances constitute potential elements of the choreography pedagogy that I attempt to lay out in this article. At its horizon, questions such as the following arise: What is my intuition based on, really? How does this way of teaching relate to students situated with differently structured experiences (racialized, sexualized, and ableism-based discrimination)? How can one engage with moments of insecurity or even failure in the encounter with students? Such questions are important to address and hint at the necessity of future research in which they can be fully reflected. For the present article, however, my aim is to give insight into my process as a pedagogue and choreography lecturer when teaching/mentoring/lecturing. An important format for encounter between students and myself to happen is intra-active dialogue.

Intra-Active Dialogue

I suggest that dialogue be understood in terms of intra-action (Barad 2012b). The new materialist philosopher-physicist Karen Barad develops intra-action from an agential realist perspective: "Intra-

actions enact ‘agential separability’—the condition of exteriority-within-phenomena. So, it is not that there are no separations or differentiations, but that they only exist within relations.” (Barad 2012b, 77) This intra-active dialogical form invites a differentiation between student and teacher by actively acknowledging their interconnectedness. Our differences (e.g. role and status within MA choreography studies) exist in relation to each other. We are co-dependent. We affect each other. Therefore, an intra-active dialogue implies dialogically speaking “through one another” (Barad 2007, 93). To dialogue interactively requires that I, as a teacher, am not an outside eye commenting from an external position on a student’s work or lecturing a class. Instead, I speak from within the dialogical situation. I remain available to be affected and critiqued by what students say and practice “criticality which is operating from an uncertain ground of actual embeddedness.” (Rogoff 2006, 2). Sourcing questions and comments from such a relational model of implicitness bring forth questions that matter because they directly intra-act with the students’ work process and artistic identity construction.

Listening

Intra-active dialogue is nurtured through a clear sense of positionality, respect for the other’s boundaries, and listening. There are long periods in which I actively listen to what students say but also to the silences of what they do not say.

Listening opens up a space of potentiality to what else and what next could be heard and addressed. Listening can also be understood as a technology of research—of researching the mights of choreography. Therefore, when I, as a teacher, listen, the student is implicitly exposed to a potential research tool. Listening opens up a creative space where that which is not yet fully articulated can begin to unfold because time slows down when one listens, which also creates a heightened sense of nowness—the plane of the present

tense—which emerges through my embodied self-awareness, as I have fleshed out above. “(…) listening immediately slows time, extending a space of concern, even of pleasure. Listening stretches us toward that which calls attention, stretching in return a given frame of address.” (LaBelle 2021, 8) The experience of slowed-down time when listening as a pedagogue is crucial for continuing to track my embodied awareness in the pedagogical setting. In addition, a deaccelerated time experience allows me to initially inhibit reactive answers or questions in dialogues with student.

The actions of speaking, listening, and speaking again describe a movement that is an apt gateway into teaching research skills for the context of expanded choreography in small cohorts of MA choreography students in different pedagogical formats (mentoring, supervising, teaching). Expanded choreography itself is also described as language by choreographer Jérôme Bel: “choreography is just a frame, a structure, a language where much more than dance is inscribed” (Bel in Bauer 2008, 42) Anchored in the expository nature of artistic research, by means of carefully deploying speaking and listening, choreography’s potential as a container that entails “much more than dance” (Bel in Bauer 2008, 42) may be conveyed.

Stretching Out into Choreography Pedagogy History and Research

To start, I would like to acknowledge that choreography practitioners and pedagogues whose work and labour, in formal and informal educational settings, are essential to the ponderings I articulate in this article, which would not have been possible without them. This account will be brief and by no means exhaustive. In addition, I recognise the Western and US-centric angles I propose. I’ll turn back to this critical point at a later moment, further down.

Margaret H’Doubler, inspired by John Dewey’s emphasis on process when making art—fleshed out in

Art as Experience (1980)—focused her conception of dance pedagogy on the immediacy of the experience while dancing when she established the first major in dance for dance teachers at the University of Wisconsin as early as 1926 (Koff 2021, 26). A former student of H'Doubler at Wisconsin University, San Francisco-based dancer, choreographer, and teacher Anna Halprin taught using various workshop formats outside of the higher education context in a similar way to her teacher and contributed to choreography in its expanded dimension. Halprin worked predominantly in her open-air studio through which she expanded choreography out from the studio. She attended to choreography's expansion by re-thinking and embracing the body–life nexus. Halprin was also one of the pioneers of teaching the making of choreographic scores in lieu of fixed steps (Morse 2015; Ross 2009). Many of the dancers participating in Halprin's workshop were later part of Robert Dunn's workshop at the Cunningham Studios in New York, which led to Judson Dance Theater, where indeterminacy-informed score-based procedures and tasks were experimented with (Morse 2015, Unmüßig 2018). Robert Dunn's wife, Judith Dunn, taught in similar ways to her husband but in the context of higher education at Bennington College, USA (Burt 2006).

This briefly laid out genealogy of the US approach to teaching choreography is relevant for the European choreography pedagogy context of the early 2000s in the aftermath of the Bologna Process. At the turn of the century in the late 1990s, there was growing re-interest by European choreographers to rearticulate and unpack the legacy of the Judson Dance Theater (Burt 2006). Some of these choreographers became prominent figures in the European dance and choreography field, such as Xavier Le Roy, Boris Charmatz, and *Mårten Spångberg*. These three individuals framed their works in terms of expanded choreography, solidified through the conference at Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Barcelona (MACBA)

in 2012, and were part of MODE05 (2005), an extended conference that “ (...) aimed at creating a critical platform to creatively question and rethink existing models of dance/choreography education.” (Melzweg, *Spångberg*, Thielicke 2007, 10). Later in the article, I will examine a contribution by Garrison, *Spångberg* and Le Roy to the publication of MODE05.

Innovations in dance education from around the 1930s resulted in new kinds of choreography in the USA in the 1960s, which crossed the Atlantic and influenced European choreographers in the late 1990s. This has sparked debate on how to teach choreography in higher education in the early 2000s. Linking the different historical phases and locations remains partially speculative and could be explored further in another article. This speculation, however, also taps into the potential of how “ (...) choreographic history appears as a collection of interlinked—but not linearly, smoothly-connectible—paths.” (Leon 2022, 27)

In early-2000s Europe, the Bologna Process and its introduction of MA Choreography programmes and composition classes, which had often been part of choreography studies prior to the Bologna Process, were largely revised by, for example, the introduction of theory-based courses on choreography and its history as well as research methodologies (Monni and Royo 2015). Dance pedagogy research on the teaching of choreography in higher education in the aftermath of the Bologna Process has been done in consideration of reflection in choreography classes (Leijen 2009), bodily knowledge in choreography teaching (Hämäläinen 2007), evaluation of choreography classes (Hämäläinen 2009, Lavender 1996), and mentorship in choreography training (Lavender 2009). These inquiries refer to choreography as a form of dance making—producing knowledge specific to dance (Hämäläinen 2007) rather than embracing the opening and multiplicity of expanded choreography. As previously mentioned, research on transversal knowledge has been conducted that combines theory

and practice in choreography training (Melzwig, *Spångberg* and Thielicke 2007), one of the founding pillars of the opening of the pilot phase of the Inter-University Centre for Dance, Berlin, in 2008. Furthermore, dance study scholar Constanze Schellow, who contributed to the abovementioned publication from 2007 on transversal knowledge, critically examined (2018–2022) the institutionalization of theory in higher education dance art at both the BA and MA levels.

Perspectives on Openness in the Field of Expanded Choreography and Its Teaching

There is little research literature that explicitly deals with how to teach expanded choreography in the context of higher art education. Dance scholar Larry Lavender and dancer Caitlin Spencer, who presented at the National Dance Education Organization (NEOD) Conference in 2011 and shared their joint paper *Choreography in the Expanded Field* over the course of the conference proceedings, attend to expanded choreography pedagogy in the context of art college education. The authors leave it open whether their scrutiny is targeted at the BA level or for the rare MA level studies in the college context. Their enquiry is poignant since the authors carefully dismantle and challenge the equation of how choreography and proscenium-based concert dance have been discussed as one and the same within modern dance and how this conception has formed choreography pedagogy mostly resulting in the teaching of modern dance composition (Lavender and Spencer 2011, 104). Instead, Lavender and Spencer

(..) wish to give choreography students the leeway to transgress modernist dance values, principles, devices, modes of production, etc. as readily as they might affirm and replicate them. The openness we seek entails commitment to the idea that no one kind of dance or dancing “owns” choreography

or controls its terminology, its means, its ends, its settings, its criteria of value, or anything else about it. Indeed, choreography need not even involve dancing. (Lavender and Spencer 2011, 103)

The suggested openness allows students to define choreography according to their chosen corporeal explorations, choreographic premisses, and methods, which corresponds to an understanding that “choreography is better to be conceptualised as choreographies—not reducible to a singular meaning or practice, but rather a network of historically-situated ones.” (Leon 2022, 26).

In their joint article *We facilitate therapeutic sessions for those who are still addicted to teaching.—Learners Anonymous* (2007), the artist Geoffrey Garrison and the choreographers Xavier le Roy and *Mårten Spångberg* challenge the idea that openness in educational frameworks offers more playful and non-violent forms of learning. They state that openness instead produces just another kind of violence. The authors compare educational frameworks to shopping malls in which students are offered “customised experiences” (Garrison, Le Roy, *Spångberg* 2007, 36.) and where “there is no possibility to leave” (Garrison, Le Roy, and *Spångberg* 2007, 37). Within this backdrop, students may be trapped within the openness of a pedagogical proposal. The ponderings of these three authors are peculiar for at least two reasons. First, they do not differentiate between various levels of studies in their educational framework: MA students who are generally more mature and older than BA students might be very capable of embracing openness as a way of learning. Second, Le Roy and *Spångberg* seem to distinguish between educational and pedagogical frames and the actual art field. They both were proponents of the notion of expanded choreography in the 1990s and advocated choreography as an open concept; however, within the educational context, they question the open. Discussing openness within the context of the intersection between education,

pedagogy, and art is complex and yet important. Openness is a condition that can only be embraced when ethically considered. It requires trust and dialogue among students, teachers, and art education institutions.

Attempting an Ending: Open, Open, Open

To teach choreography encapsulated in “contemporary choreographic field’s open-ness to re-definitions of choreography” (Leon, 2022, 23) requires that I as a teacher undergo self-reflection and constantly search into what the mights of choreography could be and how to teach them. This involves constant searching movements with no pre-set method. Instead, it requires considered (i.e. ethically limited) experimentation. I propose that students should sometimes attend to matters not directly related to choreography. Then again, what can be considered not related to choreography if expanded choreography may touch any material or any context?

What struck you most as you read the newspaper this morning? How do you feel about that? How does what you’ve read this morning dialogue with where you are right now in terms of your artistic identity construction in the field of choreography?

This text now comes to an end by proposing yet another set of questions. The eternal return (Birnbaum 2005) or the unending dynamism of Barad still carries the plane of thoughts—the constant re-patterning and re-figuring of the lecturer-in-process. Walking towards a very growing opening: open, open, open. Maybe this is what teaching choreographic expansion is about: inviting into a practice of availability. How to invite? By sensing-echoing-listening-stuttering-movingForward-movingBackwards-movingSideways, and then again something like that. Around the inarticulate and articulate, the articulable and the inarticulable: re-searching.

Endnote

1 The notion of imagination as it is used in the article is a reference to philosopher Marina Garcés’s work on imagination: “Imagination, as we have seen, is not a spontaneous force of an individual faculty of fabulation, but an art of relating to the limits of what we know, of what we recognize and do not recognize, of what there is and what there is not.” (Garcés 2022, 7).

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BIOGRAPHY

Jana Unmüßig is an artistic researcher with a background in choreography. She pursued theater studies at the Sorbonne, Paris, studied dance and choreography at SEAD (Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance), and obtained a MA in choreography from Inter-University Center of Berlin and a doctor of arts degree from Uniarts Helsinki. Jana held a postdoctoral position at the Center for Artistic Research (CfAR) at

Uniarts Helsinki from 2019–2020 and participated as a fellow in the Berlin Artistic Research Grant Program from 2020–2022. She works as a lecturer in choreography at the MA Choreography program at Uniarts Helsinki.

jana.unmussig@uniarts.fi