My own dance experience has spanned most of my life, with dance classes and performances throughout childhood and into adulthood. As a student and teacher of dance, I have found myself asking questions of my dance experience that are only partly answered by historical analysis or dance criticism. Much of what I experience in dance is only revealed in the act of dancing, as non-verbal knowledge that escapes verbal articulation. On embarking on the exploration of the grounded theory, I searched for a theoretical perspective that would give full expression to the dancing body.

Eager not to diminish the realm of experience, with academic exposition alluding to the shadow of an absent body: Phenomenology is the theoretical perspective that I have chosen, as a base from which to investigate the grounded theory. Phenomenology offers a way of appreciating how the dancing body experiences the world. It acknowledges that existence in a vacuum is impossible for the dancing body. The dancing body lives in time and space, and is bound to place. That the dancing body makes sense of place is a consequence of the phenomenal body and its being-in-the-world.

1.2 Phenomenology

Founded by the philosopher Edmund Husserl, the basic axiom of phenomenology is “how do we know what we know”? This question is fundamental to all phenomenological inquiry, it brings attention to the processes that make things come-into-being. It is a theory of being-in-the-world, and understanding ourselves in the world, as we experience it. Michael Crotty describes phenomenology in the following way,

“Phenomenology suggests that, if we lay aside, as best we can, the prevailing understandings of...phenomena and revisit our immediate experience of them, possibilities for new meaning emerge for us or we witness at least an authentication and enhancement of former meaning” (1998, p78).
Phenomenology offers an understanding of the world that emerges from bodily experience. In the Phenomenology of Perception, Maurice Merleau-Ponty describes a world which comes into being through the body:

"Whether a system of motor or perceptual powers, our body is not an object for an 'I think', it is a grouping of lived-through meanings which moves towards its equilibrium. Sometimes a new cluster of meanings is formed; our former movements are integrated into a fresh motor entity, the first visual data into a fresh sensory entity, our natural powers suddenly come together in a richer meaning, which hitherto had been merely foreshadowed in our perceptual or practical field" (1962, p153).

Phenomenology does not exclude cognitive or perceptual processes; they are considered and appreciated as processes of the body. This idea is articulated by Merleau-Ponty in the following way,

"... every perceptual habit is still a motor habit and here equally the process of grasping a meaning is performed by the body" (1962, p153).

Put another way by Maturana and Varela,

"... all doing is knowing and all knowing is doing" (1987, p27).

### 1.2.1 Intentionality

Instrumental to phenomenology is ‘intentionality’, a concept first conceived by Franz Brentano, Husserl’s teacher. The term ‘intentionality’ is not derived from the word ‘intentional’ and does not refer to deliberate or purposeful acts. The concept of intentionality provides a way of understanding how the body makes meaning and interacts with its environment. Intentionality posits that there is an intimate and active interaction between the body and its environment. As described by Crotty,
"... when the mind becomes conscious of something, when it 'knows' something, it reaches out to and into that object" (1998, p44).

Crotty also offers intentionality as a way of viewing mind and body interaction, which contrasts with Descartes’ dualism that splits the mind and body. He suggests that the Cartesian view of the world supports a world where reality and meaning are objective and separate from the body of the subject; whereas, intentionality emphasizes the interdependence of the subject and world, where objectivity and subjectivity are concurrent and inextricably linked. However, it should be noted that, intentionality does not give free rein to unbridled subjectivity - it is always anchored by the interplay between subject and object. The nature of this interplay is described vividly by Crotty in the following statement,

"The image evoked is that of humans engaging in their human world. It is in and out of this interplay that meaning is born (1998, p45)."

1.2.2 Constructivism

Constructivism is the epistemology chosen to inform the theoretical perspective of phenomenology. Constructivism posits that meaning is generated in the interface of subject and object; it is not the subjective creation of meanings imposed upon reality, nor is it a positivist objective truth. Although 'constructivism' and 'construction' are often used interchangeably, it is important to make a distinction between the two. Crotty, suggests that some postmodernist theory is misleading in describing meaning as the 'construction of reality' when the 'subjectification' of reality may be closer to the intended meaning. Crotty summarises 'constructivism' in the following way;

"...all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context...meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting". (1998, pp.42,43).
As a sentient being, the dancing body is a subject that is of an environment. Pivotal to the explication of the grounded theory is the description of the interplay of the dancing body and its place of action. Intentionality and constructivism permit the conception of an exchange that represents the body as a subject, engaged in the making of meaning, rather than a mute conduit of pre-given understandings.

1.3 Space, Location, Site, Place

Before describing the concept of sense of place, it is necessary to distinguish between the concepts of space, place, site and locality. The following definitions outline the scope of each term:

*Space*

The term ‘space’ refers to a quality that is experienced by a subjective body. All space is experienced by a lived body - therefore no space is neutral.

*Location*

The term ‘location’ refers to a geographical determination that emphasises the trajectory of objects or subjects - it suggests a past and a future - a ‘going to’ and a ‘moving away’ from.

*Site*

The term ‘site’ refers to a geographical determination that emphasises the demarcation of space as territory and object. A ‘site’ is a stagnation of space.

*Place*

The term ‘place’ emphasises the presence of subjects and their patterns of movement in space. ‘Place’ refers to particular spaces that cohere via the presence of lived bodies.
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Edward Casey, in *Senses of Place*, describes the relationship between place and space in the following way,

"... by 'space' is meant a neutral, pre-given, a tabula rasa onto which the particularities of culture and history come to be inscribed, with place as the presumed result... " (Basso & Feld, 1996, p. 14).

Casey’s description encapsulates ‘space’ as a quality, an interval of time, an amount with dimensions and coordinates, or a qualified region; it does not however, invoke the possibility of ‘space’ being subjective prior to it ‘becoming’ place.

Merleau-Ponty suggests that space is not a tabula rasa ether within which things float or are arranged, but the means whereby the position of things becomes possible (1962, p.243). Lived space is subjective space. Different bodies interpret spatiality in different ways, and different cultures encode space according to their own practices. Childhood memories of home illustrate the subjectivity of lived space. Spaces of the home that are seemingly enormous as a child are comparatively regular in size, to the same child, who returns to the home as a grown adult. The subjectivity of lived time and space is also apparent when a journey returning home feels shorter than the same journey away from home (Buttimer, 1980). The lived body actively assumes time and space in lived spatiality (Tuan 1977, p.34).

Objective time and space is only objective by degrees, which are determined by the extent that the qualities and dimensions may be agreed upon and shared. Space may be qualified in terms of coordinates and regions, and it is in this way that we mostly describe the basic qualities of locations and sites. Eves, in Fox, suggests that locations and sites anchor space to the ‘where’, however it is the lived body that transforms space into place, and in place we are talking about the ‘what’ (Fox 1997, p.175). Objective space, lived spatiality, location and place are not autonomous delimitations, there is no ‘pure’ place that overlay space; these are experienced by the body as concurrent phenomena. Place is a plural phenomena, a generatrix of multiple events - it integrates with the body as much as the body animates it (Basso, & Feld 1996 p.22).
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THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Then how do localities and sites become regarded as places? The answer is that they become “time thickened” through our experience of them (Crang 1998, p.102). In essence, places depend on the presence of subjects engaging in ‘events’. Merleau-Ponty regards ‘events’ as,

“... shapes cut out by a finite observer from the spatiotemporal totality of the objective world” (1962, p.411).

An event can be regarded as a personal demarcation of space, and it is the pattern of events as experienced by people ‘being-in-the-world’, that constitutes place.

1.3.1 Sense of Place

If ‘place’ is a ‘site’ or ‘location’ as experienced by a living body, then what is ‘sense of place’? Brinckhoff-Jackson sites ‘sense of place’ as being an ambiguous translation of the Latin term ‘genius loci’ - meaning not so much the place itself, but the quality of the place as derived from the presence of a supernatural spirit (1994, p.157). Lacking the language to describe the quality of place, we look to explanations that bypass the body, such as supernatural spirits or nostalgic impressions. The allocation of supernatural spirits to place is a means of describing the experience of sense of place. I propose that, whilst ineffable and deserving of reverence, the experience of sense of place is a phenomenon that is grounded in the lived body. ‘Sense of place’ is the sensation and perception of place as felt by a living body. The term ‘sense of place’ evokes the notion of a ‘someone’ who is ‘somewhere’.

Although I have argued that both ‘place’ and ‘sense of place’ are dependent on bodily experience, I use the phrase ‘sense of place’ to emphasise the presence of a body in action. The concept of ‘place’ implies patterns of experience anchored by location, with a connotative emphasis on ‘location’. The concept of ‘sense of place’ also connects experience to location - however, the emphasis here is on the presence of a sensing body (Burgin, Ch. 1, 1996), (Layton, 1999).

1.4 THE SELF-SYSTEM AND EMBODIED SCHEMATA

The phenomenon that is the body’s potential to make sense of place, is common to all bodies. However, the incorporation of sense of place is personal and unique to the self. There
are many theoretical perspectives for the concepts of 'self' and 'identity'; these have mostly emerged from sociological and behavioural research. However, two of these concepts regard the experience of the body as integral in the formulation of self - these are the concepts of 'self-system' and 'embodied schemata'. The term self-system describes what is more commonly referred to as the 'identity' or 'personality' of an individual. However, the concept of self-system supports the processes of exchange and influence, and the possibility of a dynamic self: Whereas, the terms 'self-image' or 'self-identity' imply static entities (Conway 1990, p.102). The self-system is dependent not just on experience but on memory of experience. Bodies engage their environment based on previous experience and learning. Tuan describes this dynamism,

"...Human feeling is not a succession of discrete sensations; rather memory and anticipation are able to wield sensory impacts into a shifting stream of experience..." (1997, p.10).

Conway proposes that in exploring the self-system it is useful to think of it as constituted multiple types of self knowledge. The types of self-knowledge that are relevant to the dancing body are the 'ecological self' and the 'extended self'. The ecological self refers to a 'self' derived from the body's immediate experience of its environment. The extended self refers to the impact of memory and past experience on 'self'. The self-system mediates the dancing body's experience of place (Conway 1990, p.102).

Sense of place is derived from multiple experiences and is associated with multiple places. No finite point in time can be identified as the point where experience of a place has accrued to suddenly amount to a sense of place. Also, there is no single locality where sense of place is activated. The body experiences sense of place as a dynamic and organic process, it is not a static segment of experience (Eyles 1985, p.3).

Just as sense of place is not constrained to discrete points in time and space, nor is it a psychic appendage with definable emotional boundaries. Sense of place needs to be considered in relation to the totality of an individual's life. Eyles expresses this idea in the following way,
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"While strictly speaking 'sense of place' is concerned with feelings about place and places, it seems to be related to 'place-in-the-world'... not merely a phenomena that exists in the minds of individuals but one that develops from and becomes part of everyday life and experience" (1985, p.3).

Aligned with the idea of the lived body being-in-the-world, is the notion that embodiment is a holistic process. Embodiment is not a process where the body merely gives form to static abstractions: It describes how the body incorporates perception into patterns of meaning - a dynamic embodiment. Timson suggests that dynamic embodiment is made possible by 'embodied schemata', which he defines as,

"... various embodied patterns of meaningfully organized experience (such as structures of bodily movements and perceptual interactions)" (1987, p.19).

Embodied schemata are pathways that are of-the-body, that evolve from the complex interactions of the body and its environment. (Johnson, 1987)

1.5 SENSE OF PLACE AND BELONGING

The phrase sense of place conjures more than just the milieu of a particular location. Sense of place alludes to the presence of living bodies, sensing and interacting with their surroundings, in a way that is fundamental to their sense of self. Sense of place expresses place as an experience that imports belonging.

In conversation, but mostly in travel literature, places are described as possessing a sense of place. This prompts the following question: Is sense of place a quality of people or places? I propose that both people and places may possess a sense of place. In both instances it is the being-in-the-world of the body that is central to the appreciation of sense of place. The consequence of lived patterns of experience bound to place - sense of place is a sense of belonging in time and space. It coheres and dialogues with the past and present, and anticipates the future.
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1.5.1 The Dancing Body and Sense of Place

Sondra Horton Fraleigh, in Garner, describes dance as “an enactment of our embodiment” (Garner 1994, p.207). The dancing body embodies sense of place, without thought or motivation. In the following statement, Garner reminds us of the dancing body’s potential to express non-conscious processes,

“...focusing attention on the body and animating it with movement, dance allows that body to be reclaimed; ‘ellipsing’ the abstraction of thought and the physicality of sensation, it enables the body’s self-experience -its lived embodiedness- to enter consciousness not as burden or object, but as expressive capability and opportunity for self possession” (Garner 1994 p.208).

The environment of the dancing body is not merely ‘background noise’. Patterns and structures, present in the immediate environment of the dancing body, influence how the dancing body embodies that place. Examples of these patterns and structures include socio-cultural patterns, interpersonal relationships, objects and the built and natural environment.
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2.1 INTRODUCTION

Whilst, phenomenology provides a theoretical perspective from which to consider the concept of a dancing body that makes sense of place: Hermeneutic interpretation and critical inquiry are methodological perspectives, which provide a platform for research processes, complimentary to phenomenology. To gain insight into how place and sense of place may have impacted on my own experiences as a dancing body, I have asked myself the following question; ‘how do I experience the act of dancing’? In my initial investigations, it became clear that my dancing body is more than a body of consciousness - it is a body that imports non-conscious experience into form. Because the cornerstone of experience is memory of previous experience - I have looked to studies of memory storage and retrieval, to inform the methods used in the praxis of this dissertation.

2.2 METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Hermeneutic interpretation provides a framework for the researcher to return to the basic phenomena that underlie inquiry. Instead of taking phenomena as given processes, the researcher is encouraged to appreciate phenomena in new ways. Critical inquiry positions hermeneutic interpretation in the realm of praxis. The grounded theory of this dissertation, that the dancing body makes sense of place, is investigated through hermeneutic interpretation and critical inquiry of my own dance praxis.

2.2.1 Hermeneutic Interpretation

The process of hermeneutic interpretation is grounded in Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology. Crotty describes the essence of this as:

"... a return to our being, which presents itself to us initially in a nebulous and undeveloped fashion, and then seeks to unfold that pre-understanding, make explicit what is implicit, and grasp the meaning of Being itself" (1998, p.97).

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The process of hermeneutic inquiry is illustrated with the analogy of a 'hermeneutic circle', which Heidegger encourages us to,

"... leap into...primordially" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p.363).

The trajectory of the circle represents a journey that manifests as a renewed and developed understanding of what is -in some way- already known (Gardner, 1994). The 'circle' is not traversed in one direction, with one beginning and one end: The hermeneutic journey is one of 'back and forth' relatedness within the circle (Krell 1967, p.49). Crotty describes this as,

"...returning to illuminate and enlarge one's starting point... understanding the whole through grasping its parts, and comprehending the meaning of parts through divining the whole" (1998, p.92).

Chamberlin, in Denton, describes Husserl's thoughts on the circular nature of hermeneutic interpretation in the following way,

"Husserl contended that he was always starting over, that in a sense the method requires one to commence repeatedly" (Denton, 1974 p.126).

2.2.2 Critical Inquiry

The type of critical inquiry employed in the research of the grounded theory, is that as influenced by the Brazilian educationalist Paulo Freire. Freire describes critical inquiry as,

"... thinking which does not separate itself from action" (Crotty 1998, p.149).

Freire suggests that intentionality of consciousness is not a reflection on reality, but a reflection upon reality - where action and reflection unite in praxis. He describes 'praxis' as
self-insertion into the reality of one's own situation with critical reflection. Although critical inquiry values the experience of the individual, it is not solipsistic research - action for action's sake negates true praxis - which is only realised in action and reflection (Freire 1972, Ch.2).

2.3 Back to the Thing Themselves

The grounded theory of this research - that the dancing body makes sense of place - is investigated through hermeneutic inquiry of my own dance praxis. The procedural description of the research methods, applied in this research, implies absolute predetermination of procedure. However, as a necessary characteristic of the hermeneutic process, the research methods evolved from experimenting with a range of techniques. A pre-research stage, which I have coined ‘body storming’, determined the selection of research methods. Body storming describes the process of returning to the experience-of-the-body in order to find new ideas. Body storming resists the idea of ‘brain storming’ and suggests that the whole body be employed in the nascent stages of research or praxis.

In order to return back to the things themselves I have made inquiries of my own dance praxis. The motivating question is; how does my dancing body make sense of place? During the process of body storming it became apparent that the dancing body experiences place from the perspective of both the ecological self and the extended self. Whilst the ecological self relates to the body’s immediate environment, the extended self is an expression of how the body experiences that environment, based on past experience (Butterworth, in Bermudez 1995, p.87). Paulo Freire suggests that new ways of knowing develop from the stimulation of previous perceptions and knowledge of previous knowledge’s (1970, p.108). To develop a new knowledge of how the ecological self and extended self relate to the dancing body, I first examined memories of the experience of dance, then the experience of dance itself.
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2.4 MEMORY

Memory, as a field of research, provides clues to the process and meaning of recollection. From these studies, I discovered various approaches to memory retrieval that I have applied in this research. Although a fictional account of memory retrieval, the following paragraph from Marcel Proust's 'Remembrance of Things Past', recreates the trajectory of memory in a way that reminds us of our own remembering.

"I clear an empty space in front of it; I place in position before my mind's eye the still recent taste of that first mouthful, and I feel something start within me, something that leaves its resting-place and attempts to rise, something that has been embedded like an anchor at a great depth; I do not know yet what it is, but I can feel it mounting slowly; I can measure the resistance, I can hear the echo of great spaces traversed. Undoubtedly what is thus palpitating in the depths of my being must be the image, the visual memory which, being linked to that taste, is trying to follow into my conscious mind. ...And suddenly the memory revealed itself. The taste was that of the little piece of madeleine which...my Aunt Léonie used to give me, dipping it first in her cup of tea..." (1981, pp.49-50)

A madeleine, dipped in tea and tasted, disturbs a dormant memory. An awakening, at first unformed, emerges as a childhood memory of an Aunt. The perception of the madeleine of the 'present' is the impetus for, a remembering of a past experience of a madeleine - which presents as a memory embodied within a net of associated memories. The nature of our being is that we live through our senses. What we remember is associated with the way the recollection, was first experienced as sense and perception.

2.4.1 Types of Memory

Memory is engaged in different tasks in different ways. It is part of understanding and performing skills in everyday life. Memory is also the platform by which we learn and
develop, over time. Conway attributes different functions of memory to different types. He describes these as; procedural memory, semantic memory and episodic memory (1990, Ch.1).

**Procedural Memories**
Procedural Memories facilitate the operation of behaviours, which are mostly automatic in that we do not need to consciously “remember” to carry out the operation, riding a bicycle for example. The memory of the action of riding a bicycle is accessible to the consciousness during the learning of the behaviour, however once learnt the memory of ‘how to’ does not need to be consulted. This is exemplified with the common phrase “it’s like riding a bike - you never forget how”.

**Semantic Memories**
Semantic Memories contain information pertaining to meaning and understanding in the world, for example; ‘bicycles have wheels’, ‘bicycles are a means of transportation’. If asked the question “do bicycles have wheels?” the answer is something we already know about bicycles. We do not need to recall the last time that we were riding our bicycle to determine if a bicycle has wheels. The similarity between both semantic and procedural memory is that the experience of remembering is not present in either. For example, we do not consciously need to ‘remember’ how to ride a bicycle, each time we attempt to, nor do we need to ‘remember’ that it has two wheels. If time or place does not bind semantic memories, then in a sense, they are context free. For example, we know that “bicycles have wheels” independent of context.

**Episodic Memories**
Episodic Memories are context bound by time and place, and unlike procedural and semantic memory, are closely associated with the experience of remembering. Conway describes Tulving’s use of the term episodic memory as a way to “… refer to situations in which a person remembers an experienced event which contains spatiotemporal knowledge” (Conway 1990, p.3). An example of a context dependent episodic memory is remembering would be to remember ‘who won the green jersey in the last Tour de France’.
2.5 Autobiographical Memory

An autobiographical memory is a type of episodic memory, however not all episodic memories are autobiographical. Reciting bicycle types from an arbitrary list in a memory exercise is an example of episodic memory. It is episodic because it refers to a particular list of bicycles in a particular time and place, but the memory is not autobiographical. An autobiographical episodic memory is personalised by context - for example; "when I was eight years old, on the way to school, I fell off my bike onto the kerb and broke my wrist". Episodic memory and autobiographical memory are context bound and the experience of remembering is present in both. However, the content of autobiographical memories (in contrast to episodic memories) pertains to information integral to the concept of self.

Procedural, semantic and episodic memories have partial reference to the individual person who experiences the memory, however they do not relate to the 'self' as 'ego'. For example, the ego-self is not pivotal to the following types of memories; how to ride a bicycle, that a bicycle has two wheels, or to recall a list of bicycle types. These types of memories are not dependent on reference to the ego-self. Episodic memories entail less ego-self involvement than autobiographical memories. The types of memory described are not autonomous entities, but inter-related sub-systems. Generally, autobiographical memories are characterised by; a high degree of self-reference, the experience of remembering, personal interpretation, the duration of the memory being for years, context specific sensory and perceptual attributes, and the veridicality is always variable (1990 Conway, p.14). Conway describes Brewer's description of the self as,

"... composed of an experiencing ego, a self-schema, and an associated set of personal memories and autobiographical facts" (1990, p.5).
Brewer defines autobiographical memory into the following types,

**Personal Memory**
A personal memory is an image based representation of a single event that is context dependent.

**Autobiographical Fact**
An autobiographical fact is identical to a personal memory, however it does not need to be recalled via an image, for example you can recall what you did during the day without having to retrieve images.

**Generic personal memory**
A Generic personal memory is similar to a personal memory, however the memory is a more abstract representation of personal knowledge based on a series of repeated similar events, for example, the memory of ‘learning to ride a bicycle’. Generic memories are primarily non-image based (1990, p.6).

### 2.5.1 Veridicality and Autobiographical Memory

Autobiographical memories are not direct translations of events as they actually occurred. However, they are not completely fictitious or fantastically. An important feature of autobiographical memory is that it is never true in the sense of objective factual interpretation. In addition to containing sensory and perceptual features, autobiographical memories may also incorporate an interpretation of events that includes current thoughts, wishes and motivations. Conway describes the relationship between fact and fiction in the following statement;

"... autobiographical memories may be accurate without being literal and may represent the personal meaning of an event at the expense of accuracy...and in this respect it makes little sense to ask whether an autobiographical memory is true or false"..." (1990, p.9)
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2.5.2 Retrieval of Autobiographical Memories

The nature and content of retrieved autobiographical memories is influenced by many variables. These include; how the memory was first acquired, the mood and situation of the subject during the recall, the significance of the particular memory and the emotional intensity of the memory. The structure of autobiographical memories is organised in a nested hierarchy of knowledge structures. Conway describes the hierarchy in the following way:

"... At the top of the hierarchy are abstract representations of lifetime periods containing knowledge about personally relevant goals and life themes. At the bottom level are autobiographical memories of specific events"... Autobiographical memories themselves, however, may be relatively unstructured fragmentary records of experienced events..." (Conway 1990, p.129).

Conway's definition of memories as 'nested' rings true for any one who has uncovered a trail of memories when searching for just one. This is experienced as the "oh yeah...and then" kind of memory. For example, given the task of remembering your first party dress, the trail of memories may unfold like this:

'It was purple and white gingham... and it had a big frill on the bottom... I put it on early in the afternoon... oh yeah... and then Rosa from across the road came over... and she had a ricotta tart that her mum had made... that's right... her mum was a really good cook... we would sit in her kitchen and watch her and she would make us cups of tea... she was teaching us how to drink tea like ladies'.

The above recollection reveals that the memory of the first party dress is 'nested' within memories related to another subject - that is, a friend and her mum's cooking. Conway also suggests that autobiographical memories relate to specific events and are less abstract than other memories. For example, the memory trail of the 'party dress' is nested within a
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generalised, more abstract memory that is; "I remember my mother would make me a new
dress, if I had a party to go to".
3.1 INTRODUCTION

To understand how the dancing body makes sense of place, I have returned *back to the things themselves* to explore ways in which my own dancing body experiences sense of place. I developed a framework for praxis through ‘brain storming’ and ‘body storming’ activities and engaged hermeneutic inquiry as a way of returning to, and refining the framework. The praxis consists of two parts: The first is the Narrative Recall Method, and the second is the Image Recall Method. The Narrative Recall Method consists of eighteen praxis sessions and the Image Recall Method consists of six praxis sessions. The Narrative Recall Method involves more sessions, than the Image Recall Method, because it provides a foundation for the Image Recall Method. Both methods are considered to be of equal value in the research praxis.

3.2 BRAIN STORMING VS BODY STORMING

In the initial *body storming* sessions, I experimented with different ways of recalling autobiographical memories. What I experienced is that different recall processes influenced the nature of the recollection. It emerged that memories were unfolding in two main ways. The first appeared as narrative that referenced generalised themes and life periods. The second presented images of events that were less abstract and more specific than the narrative memories.

Narrative memories occurred mostly by reflection on chronologies of experience. This process is the closest to the common understanding of the term ‘autobiographical’. That is, memories are revealed in a mostly chronological structure, intimating thematic periods and significant events. Although the narrative of *narrative recall* is unspoken, it remains a verbal process in that the ‘thinking’ is predominantly in words rather than images. In reference to its nature, I have chosen to term this process ‘narrative recall’. *Narrative recall* is a reflective experience that I consider a ‘brain storming’ activity. *Brain storming* is associated more closely to the sensation of ‘thinking’, than to the sensation of ‘feeling’. Although *Brain storming* is mostly experienced as ‘thinking’, it is worthwhile noting that all cognitive activity is of the body (Connerton, 1989).
The second, image-based, way of remembering I have termed ‘image recall’. *Image recall* produces images of specific events. The experience of *image recall* is mostly non-verbal and therefore not easily translated to written text. A memory produced by *image recall* presents as an image that may be navigated through with your ‘mind’s eye’. Bringing awareness to particular sensory experiences that may be incorporated in a recalled image, such as smell, sound or touch, may reveal additional detail within the recalled image and may also prompt the recall of associated memories. The experience of *image recall* is meditative. I consider *image recall* to be a *body storming* activity. *Body storming* is experienced as a sensation of ‘feeling and experience’, more than a sensation of ‘thinking’.

3.3 PRAXIS

From my initial experiences of *narrative recall* and *image recall*, I developed a research framework based on both processes. I employed the framework with the aim of gaining insight into how the extended self and ecological self, of the dancing body, interplay with sense of place. Although *narrative recall* and *image recall* are distinctive processes, they are neither discrete nor linear and are mutually interdependent. I have outlined the methods used in praxis, in a way that will enable others to reproduce the procedure.

3.3.1 Narrative Recall Method

*Background*

The process of autobiographical *narrative recall* involves the retrieval, and documentation of, autobiographical memories associated with experiences of dance. As memories are recalled, they are written in the form of narrative text. The purpose of the *narrative recall* is to reveal general themes that appear in autobiographical memories. For this reason, a chronological structure is imposed on the exercise so that specific events do not override the narrative. The ‘writing as you go’ approach encourages a passage through ‘remembered time’, rather than pausing in too great a detail on particular events. The *narrative recall* process is designed to outline a succession of impressions and significant responses. In contrast, the *image recall* process is meditative in nature and designed to bring as much awareness and depth to a memory as possible.
Aim and Objectives

The aim of the narrative recall exercise is to recall a range of narrative memories that relate to your experiences as a dancing body. The focus is your participation in dance rather than you as a spectator of dance.

During the exercise you will engage in intensive periods of ‘remembering’. In the course of remembering you will take notes and produce a written narrative that is your Personal Dance History.

The scope of your Personal Dance History includes your earliest experiences of dancing to the present day, and includes both formal and informal experiences. The purpose is not to produce a precise chronology but to outline thematic periods and significant events.

Procedure

Time Frame

1. The suggested frequency of this exercise is three, approximately one-hour sessions per week, over a period of six weeks (eighteen session’s altogether).

II. Engaging in personal recollection can be an intense and emotionally demanding process. Imposing daily sessions of narrative recall may be counterproductive. For this reason, the sessions span six weeks, with no constraints on the duration between sessions. Determine the duration between sessions on a see-how-you-go basis.
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Preparation

I. For each session, choose a quiet space where you will not be disturbed.

II. The focus of these sessions is YOU - so it helps if you can reduce input that is not YOU - so turn off mobile and landline telephones, televisions and stereos.

III. Clear the space of objects that may distract you.

IV. Have plenty of blank, paper and a pen in front of you: (I suggest that handwriting may be the least intrusive way to record autobiographical memories - you can transcribe notes at a later date if you need to).

V. At the beginning of the session, set an alarm clock to alert you in an hour - this is when the session will end. Do not have this clock within your field of vision during the session - once the alarm is set, place the clock out of sight.

Session's One to Four: Memory Cues

I. Select four sheets of paper and write each of the following four headings on a separate sheet of paper; Who, What, Where, When.

II. Now look at Table 1. (Memory Cues for Personal Dance History) on page 25. You will see that there are four sections that correspond with your four sheets of paper; Who, What, Where, When. Under each section is a list of cues that will assist you to remember past dance experiences. These cues are terms and phrases that you can use to ask yourself questions of your past dance experiences. You can preface each of the
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cues with the question - "do you remember?" - so the cues are read like this "do you remember dance studios?"

III. As you read each of the cues, write down any responses on your corresponding sheet's of paper. For example; on your Who sheet write down your responses to the list of Who cues from Table 1. Continue to do this for the remaining What, When, Where sheet's. You may also make lists of your own cues if you wish - your previous experiences of dance will determine the type of cues you create. For example, the cue 'dance competitions' may not be applicable to your experience of dance if you have never danced in competitions. The purpose of the 'memory cues' is to help you to recall a range of memories. There are no right answers to the cues; they only serve to assist in the process of remembering. Take note to consider the cues in light of your extended Personal Dance History, that is - from the earliest memories to the present day.

IV. Complete the Who, What, Where, When exercise over sessions one, two, three and four. You will revisit each Who, What, Where, When sheet a few times and may discover new memories each time.

Session's Five to Eighteen: Personal Dance History

I. With the memories you have noted on your Who, What, Where, When sheet's, you are now ready to write a chronological Personal Dance History. Do not be intimidated by the use of the word chronological - it indicates that the aim of the Personal Dance History is to document experiences in a thematic way that is loosely chronological. Do not be too concerned with the accuracy of the Personal Dance History in terms of the times and dates of the chronology. Also, focus on the content of the writing and do not be overly concerned with grammar.

II. You will write the Personal Dance History as if writing for an audience. However, keep in mind that the Personal Dance History is for your benefit.
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The purpose of writing - as if for an audience - is a tool to assist you to move through the chronology of your Personal Dance History, without dwelling on details for too long.

III. Use the memories noted on your Who, What, Where, When sheet's to assist your writing. The When sheet is the main reference from which to garner the chronological structure of your Personal Dance History. Your chronology may be based on a range of When periods including; your age in years (for example; two years old), your age in terms of developmental period (for example; toddler), your period of education (for example; kindergarten), a period of employment (for example; dance teacher at local recreation centre), or a life period (for example; a period of sickness or a period of living in a particular house).

IV. Throughout sessions five to eighteen continue to write your Personal Dance History, spanning your earliest memory of dancing to your most recent. Do not attempt to document as many dance experiences as possible. The aim is to sketch out thematic periods and significant events.
### Table 1. Memory Cues for Personal Dance History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO?</th>
<th>WHAT?</th>
<th>WHERE?</th>
<th>WHEN?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dance friends</td>
<td>dance teachers</td>
<td>dance in sacred spaces</td>
<td>toddler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance peers</td>
<td>long term dance teachers</td>
<td>dance in community</td>
<td>adolescent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social dance group</td>
<td>master class teachers</td>
<td>dance at home</td>
<td>frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family involvement in</td>
<td>audiences</td>
<td>dance at social venues</td>
<td>life period/significant times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>season/climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance role models</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mentors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assessors/adjudicators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance partners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance styles</td>
<td>choreography</td>
<td>site specific dance</td>
<td>toddler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance ritual/ceremony</td>
<td>dance in groups</td>
<td>local dance</td>
<td>adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance &amp; social occasions</td>
<td>solos/duets</td>
<td>dance in the community</td>
<td>frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spontaneous dance</td>
<td>dances phrases</td>
<td>dance at home</td>
<td>life period/significant times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formal dance</td>
<td>dance improvisation</td>
<td>dance in sacred spaces</td>
<td>season/climate</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3.3.2 Image Recall Method

Background

You may find the process of image recall more demanding than that of narrative recall. This may be accounted for by the way these processes are usually employed in everyday life: When we engage in conscious reflection, we are most likely to reflect via narrative recall and hence, are not accustomed to consciously employing image recall as a reflective strategy. As words are the dominant medium of narrative recall, the memories it produces are readily available for everyday literal communication. The memories produced by image recall however, require some effort to communicate literally, as they must be translated from images to written text.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of the image recall exercise is to explore image-based memories, with the purpose of gaining some insight into how these memories were first embodied. Image-based memories are memories that are recalled as images or pictures that you see in your ‘mind’s eye’. Image-based memories are non-verbal when recalled, however for the purpose of this exercise, once recalled they are translated to written text.

In this exercise, you will select five image-based memories from your Personal Dance History. Each image is then explored through meditative reflection. The purpose of this reflection is to bring your awareness to the sensations associated with these images. In the first session you will select five memories and, in preparation for sessions two to six, outline the Who, What, Where, When content of each of these memories. In session’s two to six, you will ask yourself questions of the images that concern the senses, emotions and environments, connected to each image.
Procedure

Time Frame

I. The suggested frequency of this exercise is one, approximately one-hour session, once a week over a six-week period (six session's altogether).

II. The *image recall* exercises are likely to prompt the recollection of many images relating to a range of experiences. The sensation that accompanies the experience of these memories can be overwhelming. This may be because a memory produced by *image recall* appears as an almost ‘realistic’ representation of the content of the memory, as first experienced. For this reason, the frequency of the *image recall sessions* is less than the frequency of the *narrative recall sessions*.

III. In order to give each session your undivided attention, it is desirable to separate each session by a week. The period between sessions will give you time to assimilate any images recalled during sessions, and begin afresh at each new session.

Preparation

I. For each session, choose a quiet space where you will not be disturbed. Make sure that the temperature of the space is comfortable. Wear loose and comfortable clothing.

II. The focus of these sessions is YOU, so it helps if you reduce input that is not YOU - so turn off mobile and landline telephones, televisions and stereos.
III. Make a space on the floor that gives you plenty of room to lie down and clear any objects that may distract you. If the floor is cold, place a rug or towel underneath you.

IV. Have plenty of blank paper and a pen, and your Personal Dance History from the narrative recall within reach.

V. At the beginning of the session, set an alarm clock to alert you in forty-five minutes time - this is when you will begin the second part of the session, which is fifteen minutes in duration. Do not have the clock within your field of vision during the session - once the alarm is set, place the clock out of sight. (n.b. there is no second part for session one).

Session One: Image Capture

I. The purpose of session one is to 'capture' image-based memories for further exploration in session's two to six. For this reason, it is not necessary to document this session in too much detail. Brief descriptions of memories will set the parameters of the image-based memories and provide cues for session's two to six.

II. Read your Personal Dance History and select five significant image-based memories recalled during the writing or reading of your Personal Dance History.

III. Make a brief note of each of the five image-based memories, labelled (1a) to (5a), in the left column of Table 2. (Image-Based Memory Map) on p. 31. Next to each image-based memory, from [(1b) to (1e) i.e. left to right], make a brief list of the Who, What, When, Where content of each image.
IV. Now consider each image-based memory and the lists of *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where* components. For each image-based memory, highlight which of the *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where* components is the most significant, as experienced during the recollection. For example, some images are dominated by the presence of other people; these images have a more significant *Who* component than images dominated by location, which have a more significant *Where* component.

Session's Two to Six: Image Development

I. In session's two to six, you will dedicate a whole session to each of the five image-based memories, outlined in the previous image capture exercise.

II. List each image-based memory, 1a to 5a from Table 2., in the left column of Table 3. (Developed Image-Based Memory Map) on p. 32. Across the top of the Table 3. are the following headings Senses, Emotions, Environment. Before commencing each session, select one of the five [[1a] to (5a)] - image-based memories from Table 3. Make a mental note of the image. The entire session will explore this image-based memory.

III. Lie supine on the floor with no pillow or obstructions. To focus your attention, begin each session with this simple exercise:

- Close your eyes.
- Feel the weight of your body on the floor.
- From your toes to your head, notice where your skin meets the floor.
- Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Count down slowly (on the exhalation) from the number twenty, down to zero.
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IV. When you reach zero, bring the image-based memory (that you have selected for this session) to mind. Remain supine, with your eyes closed look at the image-based memory with your ‘mind’s eye’ and, taking your time, ask yourself the following three questions:

- What do I sense in this image? (Consider each of the five senses - smell, touch, taste, see, hear).
- What emotions are involved in this image? (Consider how you may have been feeling at the time of the events depicted in the image).
- What is the environment of this image? (Consider; people, the location, objects and the built and natural environment).

V. In the last fifteen minutes of the session, return to your pen and paper and Table 3. Next to the image-based memory (that you have just reflected on), labelled (1a), make a list -from (1b) to (1d) of the Senses, Emotions and Environments - that you discovered during the reflection, in response to the three questions in iv.

VI. Now describe the image-based memory again in (1e) of Table 3. (labelled ‘Developed Image-Based Memory’). Include brief notes of any details garnered from the information in (1b) to (1d).

VII. Now in Table 4. (Description of Developed Image-Based Memory) on p. 33., in (1a) make a note of the Developed Image-Based Memory from (1e) in Table 3. Now described the experience of the recollection in (1b) of Table 4.

VIII. Repeat the steps (iii to vii) for each of the five image-based memories. Focus on one image-based memory per session.
### Table 2. Image-Based Memory Map

[Enter notes from left to right; for example (1-a) to (1-e)]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMAGE-BASED MEMORY</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1-a)</td>
<td>(1-b)</td>
<td>(1-c)</td>
<td>(1-d)</td>
<td>(1-e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2-a)</td>
<td>(2-b)</td>
<td>(2-c)</td>
<td>(2-d)</td>
<td>(2-e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3-a)</td>
<td>(3-b)</td>
<td>(3-c)</td>
<td>(3-d)</td>
<td>(3-e)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4-a)</td>
<td>(4-b)</td>
<td>(4-c)</td>
<td>(4-d)</td>
<td>(4-e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5-a)</td>
<td>(5-b)</td>
<td>(5-c)</td>
<td>(5-d)</td>
<td>(5-e)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Developed Image-Based Memory Map

[Enter notes from left to right, for example (1-a) to (1-e)]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMAGE-BASED MEMORY</th>
<th>SENSES</th>
<th>EMOTIONS</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENTS</th>
<th>DEVELOPED IMAGE-BASED MEMORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1-a)</td>
<td>(1-b)</td>
<td>(1-c)</td>
<td>(1-d)</td>
<td>(1-e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2-a)</td>
<td>(2-b)</td>
<td>(2-c)</td>
<td>(2-d)</td>
<td>(2-e)</td>
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<td>(3-a)</td>
<td>(3-b)</td>
<td>(3-c)</td>
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<td>(4-a)</td>
<td>(4-b)</td>
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<td>(4-d)</td>
<td>(4-e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5-a)</td>
<td>(5-b)</td>
<td>(5-c)</td>
<td>(5-d)</td>
<td>(5-e)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. Description of the Developed Image-Based Memory

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-a</td>
<td>The developed image-based memory (description)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-b</td>
<td>The experience of the developed image-based memory (description)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-a</td>
<td>The developed image-based memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-b</td>
<td>The experience of the developed image-based memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-a</td>
<td>The developed image-based memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-b</td>
<td>The experience of the developed image-based memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-a</td>
<td>The developed image-based memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-b</td>
<td>The experience of the developed image-based memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-a</td>
<td>The developed image-based memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-b</td>
<td>The experience of the developed image-based memory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter IV
PRAXIS OUTCOMES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the outcomes of the Narrative Recall and Image Recall Methods described in the previous chapter. A consequence of returning back to the things themselves is that the outcomes from praxis are necessarily personalised. However, the motivation is not to individualise praxis: The motivation is to recognise the processes and themes which develop through praxis. This is not to deny the value of personalised content - but to, also value patterns and themes which emerge, so that they may be reflected upon and garnered for future praxis.

4.2 NARRATIVE RECALL OUTCOME: PERSONAL DANCE HISTORY

The following text is the transcribed Personal Dance History, which is the outcome of the Narrative Recall Method described on page 19. The text has not been edited and although it is structured as a narrative and includes autobiographical memories, it is not intended to be an autobiography in the traditional sense of the term. As the Personal Dance History was completed over fourteen sessions, there are passages where the narrative is necessarily disjointed. In appreciation of the privacy of others, where appropriate, names of people and organisations are withheld or changed.

Early memories of dance, prior to formal classes are of being at home, dancing in front of the radiogram to my parent’s records. The most memorable record being an African drumming record called “Drums of the Mountain People”. The cover depicted some kind of outdoor festival with many dancers in elaborate costumes with tall headdresses and grass skirts. The reason this stood as the favourite record is probably more to do with the possible alternatives, of Harry Secombe ballads or Winifred Atwell organ playing - the style of which did not invite dancing. The type of dance is remembered as jumping to the beat, then spinning round ‘n’ round, before falling on the floor to watch the room spin. If I try, I can still feel that brown bubbly carpet, on that floor, under my body spinning, with drums vibrating through the floorboards underneath. Outside of home, at around the same age, I have a vague memory of being taught a Mexican Hat Dance in Kindergarten - but I have no memory of the dance - all I remember is the hat with the wide brim and standing around the hat.
During the first year of Primary School, at age five, our local doctor detected a heart murmur and suggested to my Mother that I undertake some form of regular activity. I can not remember the actuality of this event myself, but it is a story relayed to me by my Mother, at a later stage. Initially I was sent to gymnastics. After a few months and one competition, the gymnastics coach thought that I had potential and suggested that I attend classes four or five times a week. When I was older my mother told me that, it was at this stage, she decided gymnastics was too aggressive and competitive. I was then taken to dancing lessons.

My first dancing lessons were with Julie Shore (‘Miss Julie’, as the children called her). Miss Julie taught in a Church hall in my hometown, Fremantle, Western Australia. Miss Julie taught ballet, tap, modern, acrobats and Irish Dancing. I remember that in my first month there, they had begun rehearsing for their end of year recital. I was put in the front line of the opening number. I was quite pleased with myself at the time, however I now realise that it was the cute five year ‘oldness’ that was sought, not my technical prowess. The dance in question was; hands on knees, bending and stretching in time to the tune - “If they could see me now...those little friends of mine, I’m eating fancy chow and drinking fancy wine”. The ‘little ones’ were front stage and the ‘Big Girls’ (the teenagers of the dance school) behind us, did a showgirl type routine - big kicks, smiles and lots of sequins on their costumes. I set myself to the task of bending and stretching in time and made a very conscientious effort to perform this right on the night of the performance. On the night, the audience started clapping as we bent and stretched - at first I was pleased that they obviously realised how difficult the skill was - but then I realised that they were laughing at us (the little ones) - I have seen this at many dance concerts and in retrospect I now know they were laughing at the ‘cuteness’ of it all, however at the time I was confused and embarrassed.

My first dancing exam with the Julie Shore Dance Academy was ‘tiny tots A’. It entailed demonstrating various dance exercises that personified hopping bunnies, tin soldiers and fairies, in addition to clapping and counting. A short solo dance was also performed in front of the examiner. I can remember most of the dance: It was
my first dance with props - a watering can and a plastic flower - I walked gently upstage, ball of the foot first - then lower the heel, placed the flower down - walked gently backward, still facing front stage - skipped eight skips in a circle one way, eight skips the other way - then took hold of my watering can, walked towards the flower and gently watered it - walked backward and curtsied. I was wearing a red and white polka dot tutu. The previous night’s preparation involved my mother putting my hair in ringlets, which I then slept in and my Mother and brother painting my watering can and ballet shoes white so that they matched. I watched the painting of the shoes attentively and picked up a couple of tips - firstly, that the shoes must be firmly stuffed with newspaper and secondly, that if the shoes were first rubbed with metho (methylated spirits), the paint would apply and dry with a very even finish. A little make-up was worn for the exam, which was applied by my Mother reluctantly. On arriving at the exam hall, which was in Palmyra (a suburb only 5 minutes from home), we saw the ten or so ‘tiny tots’ waiting outside. Everyone seemed to have more-of-everything than I did; more make up, sequins, tutu fluffs, and ringlets that just did not spring, but stuck to their heads like those of Shirley Temple, seen by their Mothers in the Sunday afternoon television movies. I was happy with my ringlets as you could pull them down and watch them spring back up. Mum told me that the secret to Shirley Temple ringlets was to wet the hair with sugar and water, to set it, before it was wound in the rag - she thought the sugar and water was excessive, so we stuck to just the rags. I thought I had just enough of everything - and it was a brilliant day anyway because I got to skip school and Mum bought me a hamburger and thick shake for lunch after the exam. I ate them in our backyard, under a tree, by myself and stuck that plastic flower prop in our garden trellis with the Sweat Peas. My brother then took funny photos of me being an jokingly assuming the poses of the iconic ballerina and watering the fake flower in the midst of the Sweat Peas – we thought this was hilarious.

Dancing lessons in early primary school were only once a week, on Saturday mornings from 9am until about 1pm. Some Mothers stayed for the entire time, others stayed only part of the time. My Mother stayed to watch some of the dancing and then did her weekly shopping and returned towards the end of class. I remember my Mother telling me that she thought it was bad for the parents of
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students to stay and watch the entire day, because it encouraged competition and
gossip. Classes operated on a haphazard schedule within this time period. Students
were called up to dance by the teacher, and the order was based on your exam level.
As a student you socialised mostly with your exam grade group and if you were not
dancing with the teacher, you were practising your dances by yourself or with your
group. Students from higher grades were often called upon to teach younger
students the dances that they had learned for previous grades. As a student, in this
type of situation, by the age of about eight years, you are already teaching younger
students - usually passing on your dances, from previous exams, to younger
students. Students within grades spent much time informally practising together,
trying to piece together newly learnt dances by sharing their comparative
knowledge of them.

Dances were often learnt over a period of weeks and Miss Julie was never pleased if
new dance phrases were not remembered from lesson to lesson. It was expected
that you would practise your new phrases at home between classes, so that you
would be ready to learn more of the dance at your next lesson. It did not take long
to learn that, if you did not revise your new movements within a day or so of the
class where you learnt them, you would probably forget part if not all of the new
dance phrase.

Although dances rehearsed for exams were performed with your grade peers, the
exam performance was a solo event. This meant that although you were dancing
alongside your peers in class, in essence it was a performance of concurrent solos.
These dances were not choreographed to cohere as a group dance. My chief
concerns regarding the dancing with the group, were - if I had enough space
between the other dancers to perform the moves required of the dance - and, if I
was standing fairly central within the group dancing: This was considered the prime
position, as you could remind yourself of the dance moves by watching the dancers
in front of you (the trick with standing in the middle was that you could avoid
'becoming the front' when the group turned, during the dance, to face backstage).
Over the years this habit enhanced my peripheral vision and did little to increase
my recall ability.
Learning dances that were dependent on a group happened during November, after exams were finished, in preparation for the end of year dancing school concert. The choreography learnt during these periods was very different and incorporated dances with the whole school, encompassing all age groups. The dances were choreographed with the aim of visual impact and made use of formations of the Busby Berkley type. Costumes were always sequined, and more then once Christmas decorations were converted into elaborate headpieces.

Miss Julie demanded that costumes for a particular dance were always uniform in style and decoration. After Mothers had completed the costume there would be a fitting. Wearing the costumes, the students were lined up together for inspection. Hemlines were measured and number of skirt gathers counted. There was always someone with twice as many sequins and gathers than anybody else and always one girl with a few disinterested lack lustre gathers, a long hemline and some sad sequins hanging on for grim life. I always assumed that this girl was the one with the least interested mother. She would typically have 'jiffy slipper pumps' instead of proper ballet pumps. I always felt that my Mother had done a job 'just right' and if my costume did happen to be different in any way, I was sure that it was probably the best way to have it anyway.

During these early years, the only real activity at the dance school that was dependent on working with a partner was acrobats. Tricks were often performed with the 'big girls', where we would stand on their shoulders with 'no hands', or 'bend back whilst standing on their bent thighs. Team work was also needed among peers to perform such things as 'teddy bear rolls' where two dancers held each other's ankles, forming a circle with their bodies and tumbled, traversing the stage, whilst staying connected. My acrobatic partner was Suzy, and we were teamed in dances and acrobats for the entire time that I was at the dance school.

At the age of about eight years, the frequency of classes to be attended each week, was increased to two, with the addition of a night class, that began at about 4pm and finished at 8pm. Saturday attendance had moved to another Church Hall in
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White Gum Valley (10 minutes, by car, from home) and classes were extended to a finishing time of about 3pm. At this stage, the dance school had moved premises to the Palmyra RSL (Returned Servicemen’s League) Hall. Formal ballet classes were introduced at this stage and ballet exam exercises were rehearsed. The backs of wooden school chairs were used to balance for the ballet exercises, as there was no ballet barré. The ballet exams seemed to have the most exercises to learn - there were exercises at the barré, followed by exercises in the centre, away from the barré. I'm sure there was a ballet dance learnt for each ballet grade, along with a character dance - however, the only dances that I remember are the character dances, like the Tarantella and the Mazurka - and I can remember many of the steps.

Exams were taken within two different dance codes or syllabi: B.B.O - The British Ballet Organisation and C.S.T.D - Commonwealth Society of Teachers of Dance. One set of exams were taken mid year and the other towards October/November. Within the two codes, there were exams for tap dance, modern ballet, classical ballet, and theatrical dance. This usually meant up to seven exams a year, because ballet exams, for example, were completed in both codes. Exams were nervous affairs - nervous teachers, nervous dancers and nervous parents. Whilst regulation leotards were worn, they were worn in a way that transcended the functionality of the classroom leotard. Miss Julie demanded impeccable grooming. Remembering the exam exercises and the dance was of serious concern to everyone involved. Mothers who had watched many hours of classes, often had a version of their daughter’s dance 'rehearsed in their minds' (in the way that you sub-vocalise words when reading, they had 'sub-moved' - with twitching feet and tilting heads) so that they could prompt -what comes next- during eleventh hour rehearsals on the concrete pavement outside the exam hall. Although the dance exercises were performed in a group and solo, the Dance was always performed solo. There was some camaraderie between the group during the exam, however it was always surprising to see how much your peers could transform mere exercises into a performance genre - 'ooing and aahing' at the examiner. We were taught the stage technique of 'ooing' and 'aahing'. 'Ooing' is making a face with pursed lips and wide open eyes; 'aahing' is smiling with your mouth open - you could 'oo' and 'aah' separately but they were usually performed in succession, with the 'oo' always first.
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Results for exams were graded highest to lowest, starting from - pass, pass plus, commended, highly commended and honours. There was no formal announcement of results. When the exam reports arrived, Miss Julie would talk to each parent and give them the exam results separately. There was usually an undercurrent of tension at this stage - with parents sporting reports of highly commended and above, freely disclosing the results, whilst those with commended and under, disclosing results with vague descriptions like; “she did very well, we’re quite pleased”. I remember my Mother, if asked, mostly told people that I ‘went well’, regardless of the grade and would never boast - she told me that ‘boasting’ was something for ‘stage mothers’ who were reliving their past - As a young girl, this was quite a big idea to get a grasp of. Although comments were written on your report, it was not always easy to differentiate or make sense of the value of the level of pass given: For example, I wondered why I was sometimes a ‘commended’ child and at other times an ‘honoured’ one.

Irish dancing was the only style of dance that I learnt from Miss Julie that did not involve exams, but it did involve regular competitions, which I began competing in at age seven. I can remember my first Irish dance, the ‘beginners reel’, followed by a ‘soft shoe jig’. Irish dancing was rhythmically much more complicated than any other style of dancing I had learnt, even tap dancing. More than ever, practise was required at home in order to master the rhythms. Irish dancing also demanded articulation of the feet and legs, to a degree that I had not experienced. I was keen, I loved the music and I loved the elevation. I had experienced jumping in Classical Ballet, but I had not ever come across the kind of successive jumping required of Irish Dance - whilst other dance forms seemed to be grounded and only airborne with the odd jump, Irish Dance seemed to start in the air and only make contact with the floor to articulate the beat of the music. I spent long hours at home, in the kitchen practising - using the reflection of the glass front of the wall oven to check my elevation. Fortunately the kitchen was a long room; the only objects to accommodate were the table and sink, when moving across the width. When ‘hard shoes’ (with nails in the toes and heels) were introduced, there was a problem with the kitchen linoleum being torn by the odd nail that had not been properly
embedded in the shoe. Hard shoe practice was relegated to the sloping wooden floor of the back verandah.

By the age of about eight years, I was competing with dance friends, in two handed and eight handed reels, in Irish dancing competitions. Irish competitions were about once every eight weeks. Although you were given a starting time for your age category, the competitions were always running late and usually became all day affairs. Everyone curled their hair for Irish dancing competitions. By this stage, rags for ringlets had been replaced by curlers - the marvellous invention of ‘self fastening foam curlers’ was a hit with all of the Mothers and daughters - being foam, rather than plastic, you could sleep in them over night. Competition was divided into age groups and although girls outnumbered boys, both competed together. Irish dancing competitions was my first time where I remember boys participating and enjoying dance.

The Julie Shore Dance Academy was an all girl school - If a boy character was required for partnering, in the end of year concert, girls would play the parts, tying their hair back and swapping ‘pretty’ make-up for five o’clock shadows. As the index finger of Miss Julie scanned over the dancers, picking out who would play the boy parts, eyes were lowered to divert her attention from you, as getting to stay the girl ‘that you were’ was the premium role.

By age nine, technique classes had become more demanding and dance teachers were providing much more focussed attention and feedback. Movement milestones (tricks!) became a focus, that is, doing; the ‘splits’, executing a ‘wing’ - a tricky tap step where the ball of the foot is brushed out and in, concurrent with a small jump, ‘bend back walk overs’ - successive ‘bend backs’ initiated by the legs kicking over the head starting from the bend back position, ‘Irish hard shoe heel clicks’ - clicking the heels to make a noise, whilst jumping behind or in front of the body. Most of the movements learned in Classical Ballet, so far, demanded endurance, with few ‘tricks’ being performed.
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By the age of ten, I had made much progress in Irish Dancing and Miss Julie suggested that I take extra private lessons, with one of the ‘big girls’. The ‘big girl’ was Louise Lawrence, she had won many competitions herself. Louise was a mentor, she; gave me pep talks before competition, taught me the art of arriving at competitions with poise, showed me a ‘secret’ pre-competition warm-up, made me suck on glucose energy lozenge’s before it was my turn on stage, advised on hair, make-up and costume, she also suggested techniques for attracting the judge’s attention when on stage (you would usually dance with two or three other competitors).

Louise introduced me to training techniques - her teaching was more like coaching – like the art of Irish Dancing as a sport. At the age of ten, I won the 12 years and under, Irish State Championships - although I had worked hard, I did not expect to win and I was in tears, and Louise was in tears, as I walked up to receive my trophy. At a competition after the championships, Louise was not able to coach me as her Father had passed away. She usually arranged and choreographed my dances, where needed. I was short a phrase for a competition and embarked on my first piece of Irish Dancing choreography. I did not win the competition - but I enjoyed doing my own, new steps - someone said that the steps were ‘right off’ the Irish Dance scale - I can remember part of the phrase and I think that they probably were off the scale. Louise had heard of my effort and visited me at home to tell me how proud she was.

When I was eleven, Miss Julie announced that she was selling the dance school to Jenny O’Brien (a ‘big girl’). Prior to Jenny taking on the school, my Mother had considered that I change schools, and this event provided an opportunity to make the change without it reflecting on Miss Julie. I was keen to go to a dance school that had a greater emphasis on Classical Ballet. Whilst Miss Julie knew how to put on a show, she did not provide the input I required to develop my technical abilities. This was especially true for Classical Ballet - in my six years at the school; I never saw a ballet barré, we continued to use the backs of chairs. I changed to a school, in Fremantle, not far from home, that had a ballet barré. The school was suggested by Miss Julie’s former pianist, Mrs. Ford, who had changed allegiance.
and was very pleased with the way they were treating her - cups of tea and biscuits always bought to her piano - she felt appreciated. I think it was mostly through Mrs. Ford and my Mother that I got the idea that Classical Ballet was not so good at Miss Julie's - because I had nothing else to go on really. Sad to leave behind my friends at Miss Julie’s, I asked Jenny if I could do one of her Jazz Ballet classes, once a week - just to keep dancing with them and keep in touch - she suggested that it was not a good idea - that it was ‘all or nothing’. So I walked out of class and that was that.

Anna Brown’s school was more challenging - she was a taskmaster. Dance teachers would ‘acquire’ dance students from other schools as a kind of prize. Anna Brown did not teach Irish Dancing, she taught Highland Dancing - however, Anna encouraged me to become one of her pupils by agreeing to get an Irish Dancing teacher in to teach me. At this stage, Louise had left for Japan on a showgirl tour (no Irish Dancing involved) and I did not have many options. So I commenced Irish dancing with the new teacher. At Anna’s I continued with the B.B.O and C.S.T.D syllabi of Tap dancing, Classical Ballet, and Modern Dance, with the addition of Highland Dance. I lost touch with Louise when she went to Japan - a few years ago I heard that she was making a living from choreographing jazz dance in New York.

Class attendance at Anna Brown’s was two evenings a week, from 4pm to 8pm and Saturdays from 8.30am to 2pm. And if extra rehearsals were needed before exams or competition, Anna would not hesitate to keep you there all night. I made good friends at Anna’s school and did most of my socialising with dance friends. When my Mother’s friends complained about having to ‘pay out’ for their children’s hobbies - for example, football boots or a musical instrument, my Mother implored - that they should just be thankful that they were not involved with the expensive world of dance. It was always an expensive hobby, with bills amounting from; regular classes, up to six examinations per year and up to eight different pairs of shoes (jazz shoes, ballet pumps, demi pointe shoe - a training shoe for ‘pointe shoes’, tap shoes, character shoes, Irish hard and soft shoes, highland hard shoes) usually replaced about every 18 months, end of year dancing school recital.
costumes, special workshops from visiting teachers, costumes for competitions and eisteddfods.

Anna Brown entered students she considered 'up to it' in city eisteddfods. This usually meant two a year, although you would enter the same categories and dance the same dances for both eisteddfods. Competition was organised around dance type and you would compete according to age group. Unlike the technical focus on exercises in dance exams, choreography and staging were the central concerns in the preparation for eisteddfods. Students were taught dances choreographed for them, and their particular dance would only be performed by them in a particular festival. When the student had 'grown out' of the dance, they would then pass it on to a younger student. Anna was aware that her strength was in exam preparation, so she hired younger professional dancers to choreograph for eisteddfods. The dances would be bought from the choreographers and remain within Anna's dance school, with an assurance that they would not be performed by anyone outside of the school. Anna was a very stern teacher, however we all loved her. If you stayed with Anna for long enough you would be on the receiving end of great affection - if you did the steps right - if not, you were usually called a 'duffer' for forgetting steps - or a 'Venus de Milo' if you had forgotten to 'use your arms' properly. Although rare, there were moments when you could see why she was a dance teacher - It would happen when she was 'lost' in watching one of her students dance - her head tilted to the side, a large pleasant smile across her face and her eyebrows mirroring each movement nuance, in kinaesthetic empathy.

With my new Irish dance teacher at Anna's I continued to enter competitions. I often won both hard shoe and soft shoe dances - however the competition was not of much interest - of interest was the 'kinaesthetic reward' of mastering the dances. It was candy for the body. I enjoyed Irish Dancing competitions because they; were an opportunity to socialise with dancers from other schools, encouraged camaraderie within my own dance school, were a concrete deadline for performance goals and skill acquisition and provided a large captive and attentive audience. I perceived the Irish Dancing competition audience to be different from the type of audience that you would perform for at a dancing eisteddfod. Although
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Irish Dancing competitions were not free of dancing school rivalry or 'stage mothers'; they were distinctive from other dance competitions in that, as a dancer, you always felt as though everyone was interested in what you were doing. The audience would often become silent when particular dancers, who were considered the best dancers, were dancing - no one would talk, people on the outer would stand up and all attention would be fixed on the dance in a kind of reverence. The form of the dance and the music were more uniform than in other dance competitions. The audience were familiar with the canon of Irish Dance and music - many of them had Irish ancestry and even those that didn't, took a solemn interest in the dance and music. Once, in the way home in the car after a dance lesson, my mother told me that my Great Great Grandmother was Mary Carol, who had arrived in Fremantle (my hometown), during the late 1800's, on the Hugenaught from County Westmeath in Ireland. This was the only time that this Irish heritage was revealed to me.

At age eleven I entered the Irish Dancing State Championships. I had prepared for months and trained hard. For some reason, that I can not recall, there was not much competition in my age group, this was disappointing - it had always been exciting to be a part of competition with dancers who were as keen as I was about Irish Dance. As the overall results for each age group were being announced, at the end of the day - there was a hubbub of angry whispers - the results were incredulous for many people and I watched a family of Children stand up in demonstration and tear up their certificates of participation. My age group results were announced, I came third - I did not really mind I was a bit disappointed because I had been working intensively for a long time. The next day, a dance teacher that we happened to pass on the street told my Mother that there was some question marks hanging over the results: Three interstate judges adjudicated the State Championships and apparently, one was a friend of a teacher from an Irish Dance School that was in the competition - they said she had consistently marked that school so high that the weighting of the other two judge's marks made only a small difference. I was disheartened by the whole palaver - I enjoyed competition, but I thought that the idea of competition was that everyone had a chance to get up and do their best and that you could watch and appreciate other dancers. Mostly it
was the spirit of the day that was disturbing; the anger, the demonstration and the overly serious undercurrent of conspiratorial whispers. After this competition I gave up Irish dance.

As a teenager, Classical Ballet became the focus at Anna Brown’s. Additional workshops with visiting teachers were attended and I went to three annual, live in ballet camps. Because Anna Brown taught a wide variety of dance forms, her school was considered a ‘theatrical school’, rather than a specialised ballet school. It took me some time to adjust to the new etiquette of the ‘ballet only school’ when attending open workshops conducted by them. The most outstanding difference was that students from theatrical schools always wore black leotards and often had their hair in ponytails, whilst the ballet school students always wore pale pink or blue leotards and without exception wore their hair in tightly wound, pinned and netted classical buns. The theatrical school students learnt quickly and tried their best to blend in, but there were always some hiccups - like the classical style hair bun, low on the head towards the nape of the neck, being interpreted as a top of the head chignon. At my dance school, it was a convention that the front of the ballet barre was ‘bad real estate’ as there was no one in front to remind you of the exercises - no one ever wanted this spot – before the teacher arrived, we would jokingly have fisticuffs fights at the barre, over where we would stand. At the classical school I was shocked to find students ‘reserving’ their barre places amongst their peers, with the front of the barre being the premium spot for the teacher’s attention.

It was at an open workshop, at one of the classical schools, that I came across my first male ballet teacher - his name was Antonio, from the (name of institution withheld) Ballet Academy. He seemed to be in his late fifties, he was tanned and he always wore a white linen shirt tucked into tailored white baggy trousers, with white lace-up teaching shoes that my friend’s mum said he could ‘put under her bed anytime’: The place for the debris of my lightening bedroom clean ups was under my bed, so I wasn’t sure why that would be such a great thing - but by the tone in her voice, I guessed it wasn’t anything to do with tidying up. I can remember Antonio being charismatic in a dashing European kind of a way - but I can not
remember what I did at any of the lessons - all I remember is how much all the dancing mums liked him. The second male ballet teacher I came across was at ballet camp. He was very concerned with how we performed the repertoire, so concerned that we spent the whole week repeating the first eight bars of the dance and not proceeding any further. According to him we were not performing at an adequate standard, and so had not earned the right to learn the rest of the dance. I remember this dance phrase and the formation that we (dance students) were required to perform it in.

Another memorable teacher at open workshops was Janet Doyle. I would have been Eleven years old at the time. She was probably in her sixties when I attended a week of her classes. She had a generous figure, but was poised and graceful in a down to earth way - she loved teaching. When she moved, she really grabbed the space wholeheartedly, as if it was hers to grab, unlike the 'straight out of the china cabinet' ballet dancer stereotype. When I attended her classes I was still feeling a little out of place in the 'classical school' environment - everyone seemed pretty, skinny and competent. She gave me a lot of input and commended my interpretations of the nuances she was trying to convey in her teaching. One day at the barré, during an exercise, she came up to me and put her arm around me whispering “don’t worry about all these others around you...just stick to your guns...you know what your doing”. After class one day, she showed a video of Aboriginal Dance. After the video, she asked us the following question; ‘what is Dance?’ She implored that we see dance from a much broader perspective than classical ballet and suggested that we appreciate all kinds of movement - even football, which she thought was full of fantastic dance steps. I had never thought of dance like this - I was thoroughly engaged in anything this woman had to say and was very affected by her attention.

At Anna’s dance school, Highland dancing competitions were a regular event - these did not seem as intense as the Irish competition - however, I do remember the Scottish Mother of one of the girls from our school, taking Valium every time her daughter danced the Swords at a competition. For the Sword Dance, two swords were placed to make a cross, with the large hilts lifting the middle cross
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section off the floor about six inches - the dancer then performs a succession of springing step, both around and over the swords, with the pace accelerating towards the end of the dance - fatigued, the dancer is in danger of tripping over the swords and sending them flying. The Valium taking Mother was concerned that the daughter would jeopardise her chance of winning if this happened. The other thing I remember about Highland Dancing competitions is the discomfort of being in full highland costume in the middle of hot, dry West Australian Summers - Full arm length velvet jacket, long thick wool socks and a heavy wool kilt.

Between the ages of about 14 and 16 years, myself and a friend were 'singled out' by Anna and the pressure was really put on us to 'come up with goods', particularly in Classical Ballet exams and eisteddfodfod. In retrospect, I think Anna may have been 'proving' something through us - she was out to prove that theatrical schools could produce quality Classical Ballet dancers. Dances were bought from choreographers, professional tutus were designed and made, extra classes were taken, and diets were embarked on. I can not remember if anyone in particular actually suggested dieting, but everyone seemed to be doing it - dancers and their mothers, talked about different diets in the way that you would talk about the pros and cons of particular ballet shoes. I'm not sure if I was keyed into the fact that the diets were about loosing weight, at that stage I think I just accepted that it was something that you did for your ballet exam. Outside of dancing I was never really concerned with the growing up milestone of my peers, that is; beginning to use adult deodorant, shaving leg and arm hair, and wearing make-up. Within dancing I had been wearing make-up from the age of six and applying my own from the age of about nine. I remember when I first shaved under my arms because I had just put on a shoestring strap leotard for a ballet exam. Trying it on at home, I lifted my arms in port de bras, and noticed my - previously undiscovered - hairy armpits in the mirror. The ballet exam was the next week and to complete the 'classical image' I had been peering at in the mirror - the armpit hair had to go.

At age sixteen, I was learning a Russian Slavonic character dance for a ballet eisteddfod. The dance was technically challenging, there were many travelling, full lunges on to the knee - where the right leg would lunge forward and without
pausing the left leg would push up from the ground, kick forward and repeat the
lunge beginning on the left leg. There were also many spinning turns that ended in
lunges and at the end of the dance - 32 stationary, spinning hops, on one leg with
the other leg in second (held at 90 degrees, to the side). One day during a lunge, as
I went to raise my body a kick forward, with the leg behind, I fell to the floor - I
was in much pain - I later found out that I had semi-dislocated my patella (knee
cap). The doctor explained all about how ‘God was not thinking when he made
knees’. He explained that the knees are poorly designed joints and the deep bends
involved in dance increased the load on them, much more than the stress of
everyday activity. I was referred to a sports physiotherapist - he was quite old and
not very friendly. He spent some time examining my knee and grunting, and then
he explained that dancing was obviously the problem He suggested that since
dancing was the ‘cause’ of the problem, it would be logical and preferable to, take
the ‘cause’ away by giving up dancing. He then wrote a prescription for Cortisone
and gave me instructions to get a knee brace, custom made at the hospital, which I
could wear if I did intend to dance.

I spent a month resting after the knee injury. I visited a sports physiotherapist
once a week who applied ultrasound. The sports physiotherapist suggested that my
patella, sub-located because my Vastus muscle, which usually supports the knee,
was weak. There was no explanation as to how this could happen. My other Vastus
muscle, on my other leg was fine. However, this seemed to be the extent of the
physical examination and an overall assessment of my skeletal and muscular
alignment was never performed. I continued to dance after the four weeks rest. The
‘wetsuit’ knee brace was worn off and on, for about two months; I eventually
discarded it because I was concerned that the muscle would never strengthen if it
was enclosed in a brace that was doing its job for it. I continued dance
examinations, and reached the highest levels of these exams at the ages of sixteen
and seventeen. At seventeen I had lost interest in competing in any dance
competitions and by eighteen I was tired of the whole dance school scene; the
gossipy environment, the tired dance curriculum, and spending many hours
teaching for the teacher without any payment.
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I did not resume dancing again until the age of nineteen. I tried various open classes that were available to advanced students; these did not require the social and time commitments demanded from aligning with only one dance school. One class was a regular ballet class taught by a ballet dancer who had been a professional dancer in the '(name of institution withheld) Ballet'. The classes were held in a long narrow studio at the rear of her Mother’s ballet and beauty shop the '(name of institution withheld)'. The classes were stimulating and challenging. They were more demanding technically and stylistically than anything I had experienced. At the age of nineteen I was studying a Communications Degree at university. An institution within the university was the (name of institution withheld) which I had known about, through ballet schools, since my early teens. (Name of institution withheld) offered the following courses; music, opera, jazz, musical theatre, theatre, and dance. One of the dance studios, colloquially known as the ‘fishbowl’, had a glass wall that faced the lawn court yard of the campus. In between my lectures I would have lunch on the lawn and watch the dancers inside. This lunchtime 'fishbowl' gazing, combined with my growing disenchantment with semiotics and communication studies, led me to find out about courses at (name of institution withheld).

I was interested in Contemporary Dance technique and performance, so I auditioned for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Dance. The audition commenced with every dancer being assigned a large netball bib, appliquéd with a number, which was pinned to the leotards. A panel of five dance lecturers judged the auditions.

The studio was crammed with about sixty dancers - it was difficult to find the space needed to do what you had to do. It commenced with a full ballet class, followed by a contemporary dance class. At this stage, the dancers were then culled to about twenty, via a roll call of which about forty dancers, called by bib number, were sent home. The remaining twenty each completed a solo audition that consisted of improvisations and short choreographic exercises. A written examination on kinesiology was then taken, and the audition was then completed with individual, half-hour interviews by the panel. To my relief, the ordeal was worthwhile and I was later notified by post that I was accepted into the course.
(Name of institution withheld) introduced me to an intensity and frequency of dance training that I had not previously experienced. In terms of practical classes, each week I attended five contemporary dance classes, four ballet classes, two composition classes, one improvisation class and an ethnic elective (alternating between Tap and Spanish dance) - all classes were an hour and a half in length. In addition to time spent in formal classes, time was also allocated for extra curricula performances and choreography for end of semester performances. Academic subjects included; kinesiology, dance history, dance notation, arts administration, teaching methods, body and mind, psychology and speech and drama. Practical classes averaged about 16 hours a week, and academic hours averaged about 14 hours per week. Each day we were expected to begin warming up (for morning practical classes) at 8.15am, for 9am class, and usually would not finish the day until 5pm - or later if we had to stay for elective units or rehearsals. I had an old car that I would drive to university; this would take an hour in peak traffic and about 45 mins at other times. Driving through peak hour traffic, in the mornings, was not the best preparation for class; however, it was really the only solution as public transport was inadequate. Time spent at university, combined with part-time employment, study, and assignments, resulted in a very hectic three years.

In the first year of the BA there were about nine students and this dwindled to about five by the end of the three years. Practical classes were taken with Diploma students of the same year. Diploma students attended (name of institution withheld) for three years and completed some academic subjects - but the focus for Diploma students was Classical Ballet. The focus in the BA was Contemporary Dance. I had never experienced anything like Contemporary Dance classes at (name of institution withheld). I had done styles of Modern Dance that were similar to Contemporary Dance in some ways, but they were never as intense. I was completely engaged in this new found dance style. All Contemporary Dance classes were done in bare feet - this was the first time I had attended a formal dance class in bare feet. The format of the class was usually similar to Classical Ballet, with stationery exercises, moving phrases, adagio, small jumps and large jumps. The most apparent difference in the
format of Contemporary Dance classes was that exercises usually done at the barre were performed in the centre.

There was always a musician present at Contemporary Dance classes, usually a Congo player and pianist or sometimes just one of these. Contemporary Dance was exhilarating - it seemed to both harness and release the momentum of the body, to an extent that I had not experienced before. Things newly found in Contemporary Dance included; finishing turns and balances 'off centre', using the weight of the head or pelvis as impetus for movement, falling from balances, making noise, falling on to the ground, rolling on the ground, dancing in musical phrases other than four or eight (i.e. dancing in phrases of 5 or 13), dancing without music - and generally 'eating-the-space' ('eat the space' was a term often shouted by a particular teacher who encouraged us to be wholly committed to, travelling through, and claiming space).

Tim McLeod, a Cunningham trained dance teacher at (name of institution withheld), from the United States, made the greatest impact on my view of the nature of dance, and the possibilities offered by dance. My idea of dance was fairly limited to dance school experiences and dance performances attended were usually Ballets, with the occasional Contemporary Dance show seen during a festival. In all of my time spent at dance schools, I had only choreographed on the odd occasion. The general feeling that I picked up from dance schools was that; dances were learnt from someone else - sometimes you would re-arranged steps and phrases, or changed the music - but the movement vocabulary remained basically the same. On rare occasions a dance was commissioned to be choreographed from scratch; however this was always a job for a professional. Students were exposed to scant insights into the process of choreography - the choreographic process was never fully explored.

Tim McLeod revealed that dance in itself, and by itself, is a substantial and powerful art form. Although this idea was contemplated throughout my three years at (name of institution withheld), there was a watershed gestalt in one particular composition lesson. In this lesson, Tim McLeod instructed us to choreograph a
dance without music and without using dance steps already known. Left sans music and sans steps, I experienced a panic that anticipated the void that I might find if; I looked inwards to create rhythm and steps, without the suggestion of external references, but by my own internal volition. The panic passed and I found movement from listening. Listening to; internal rhythms, the simple percussion of my body as it moved, the ebb and flow of emotions, and my own internal dialogue which transformed into a kind of corporeal narrative. The notion that I had all the ‘material’ I needed to make a dance, just by being curious about my own internal states and transforming these curiosities into movement, was a watershed in my experience of dance.

Contrasting with the ‘turning inwards’, encouraged in composition classes, was the ‘turning outwards’ that was embedded in dance culture. The ‘turning outwards’ was, a hyper-conscious image of the dancer’s body, experienced as a collage of suggestion and insinuation. This was in not a conspiracy against the dancer. The process was not directional in any way, it was a kind of behavioural osmosis; ideas about what the ‘dance body’ should be, were in a sense leaked - sometimes intentionally, but usually through careless speech - from teacher to student, or from student to student. In a closed environment, ideas may begin as single actions, but they extend in concentric ripples, accumulating momentum and forming an all consuming collage of an ideal and its consequences. The most prevalent idea regarding the dancer’s body, being; ‘if you do not have a dancer’s body you will never be a dancer’. In this context, ‘being a dancer’ refers to a point in time where you are employed by a professional dance company. The basic image of the ideal body for female dancers, being; lean, toned but not too muscular, small breasts, narrow hips, evenly proportioned torso, long legs and long arms.

During my time spent gaining my B.A. I discovered the length and breadth of my body image, in all its dimensions - not once, but every day of the week for three years, doing class in front of a mirrored wall reflecting without respite, my body image. It did not take long before my sense of myself was no longer a felt centre of my body but a projected centre, ‘out there’ somewhere in the mirror. I had been on diets before, but they were never very drastic. Being confronted on a daily basis
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with the mirror wall and a room of other body conscious dancers, body weight soon became an issue. Everyone in my year knew the 'Calorie Counter' (a small book listing the amount of calories in food) back to front. If we all sat down to lunch, each of us could add up, with ease, the amount of calories being digested by each person - and, this was not taboo behaviour, it was a casual conversation topic. Tips on how to cut calories where often passed around like secret gems of wisdom. Most of us were eating less than the recommended daily allowance of calories. This was justified by our conclusion that the recommended daily allowance was for 'regular pedestrians' and we were 'disciplined dancers'. There were some students that were bulimic or anorexic and most students were dieting.

What gives me the clearest indication of how my body image changed during this time is what I would wear to the beach. I never swam without a large t-shirt over my bathers. My body image consumed more than its fair share of my mental energy. Although I was never big on dieting, it took about three years after graduation to recover my regular food habits. I do swim at the beach in bathers now, and I don't know the calorie count for anything I eat. There are lurking remnants of hyper-body-consciousness; however I now contemplate how my body feels and works, more than how it looks.

(Name of institution withheld) introduced me to a variety of different dance vocabularies. In contemporary dance I studied both Cunningham and Graham techniques, and some Limon. In classical ballet I studied Vaganova, under Lesley Reid. These techniques were ‘grounded’ in a way that I had not previously experienced. I felt a symbiosis between being ‘earthed’, and connected to the floor, through the weight of my body - and being liberated to move through the space, in a holistic and integrated way. This was in contrast to previously learnt ballet and modern dance styles that mostly felt as if you were dancing ‘on top’ of the floor, without giving your weight to it, and moving through the space was a piecemeal kind of action - body part, by body part.

In my final year at (name of institution withheld), I seemed to be very tired for most of the time and my muscles were constantly aching, never really recovering fully. This
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did not seem unusual - it was a heavy workload and everyone was complaining of the same symptoms. My symptoms developed into a bad flu, so I visited the university Doctor. The Doctor prescribed antibiotics, he then told me that someone had suggested that dancers should not be issued medical certificates too easily, as dancers should be more resilient than the general public and should ‘work through’ illness. Regardless of not being issued a medical certificate, I took a couple of days off. After graduation my condition worsened. I began a Masters in Human Movement at the (name of institution withheld) however, I did not have the energy to finish the year. My body became a lead-like wall flower, I could hardly raise a limb in the morning and I moved fairly slowly through the rest of the day. I visited many medical practitioners, had a smorgasbord of tests and underwent a variety of specialised pokes and prods. Eventually a blood test revealed that I had experienced Glandular Fever in the previous twelve months and the diagnosis was Myalgic Encephalitis. The Doctor suggested that being physically active during the Glandular Fever may have produced the Myalgic Encephalitis.

The months of inertia I experienced during the Myalgic Encephalitis were the catalyst for an abrupt post-recovery, the outcome of which was the opening of my own dance studio. I leased a heritage building from the council of my hometown, Fremantle, and began regular classes. The studio I named the Fremantle Dance and Movement Centre and I offered the following classes: Contemporary Dance for adult beginners, experienced dancers, and children; Movement and Music for toddlers; Rhythm and Coordination classes for absolute beginner adults; and Feldenkrais classes taken by a Feldenkrais Practitioner.

The studio provided the space and time to explore contemporary dance technique and to choreograph. After morning dance classes and having tended to any studio administration, I would have the afternoon to myself - until school children arrived for their after school class. Once I established a fairly stable structure for classes, I had plenty of time to choreograph. The process of revisiting core ideas, when teaching beginners to dance, illuminated the translucent elegance of the foundations of dance. This discovery transformed my own approach to choreography. Fremantle has a large arts community and this made it possible to
collaborate with a variety of different artists. I had the opportunity to work with musicians, visual artists, soundscape artists and writers. I formed a performance company called Chora Verandah. The company included myself, another graduate from (name of institution withheld) and a writer/actor. Our work was based on stories constructed from local and oral history. It was with Chora Verandah that I first choreographed a full-length work. The writer and I collaborated during all stages of the development of the work. We would alternate between joint ‘writing and moving sessions’ and ‘solo sessions’ by ourselves. The production process demanded a new level of; interpersonal skills, administration, and coordination. Producing and choreographing made for an intensive but rewarding experience.

Whilst still teaching and choreographing, I had become interested in new technologies and the possibilities they offered the arts community. I collaborated with some members and supporters of the local arts community and founded a non-profit organisation that provided access to the Internet and the World Wide Web for freelance artists and arts organisations. This was in the ‘olden days’ when few people had heard of the Internet and even less had access to it. During my time in this organisation I learnt how to use email and build web pages. I used this knowledge to contact dancers and dance institutions overseas and to find out more about different dance and movement forms. At about this time, I was involved in a simultaneous narrowcast of a tri-continental performance. The performance was facilitated with the latest technology. This was very exciting at the time; however now -only a few years later- it seems outdated.

After some time working with new technologies, I wanted to return my focus primarily to dance. In looking for more opportunities in dance, I moved from Perth to Sydney. On first moving to Sydney, I had the opportunity to live on a small island, an hour (by train) from the city. On the island (and at the mainland town, directly across from the island) I started children’s contemporary dance classes. I also incorporated some composition classes, where the students created dances based on ‘their island’. I stayed on the island for a year and then moved to the city. Access to classes was difficult for children on the island and they were sensitive to the flotsam and jetsam of teachers, coming and going with the transient population.
I did feel guilty for leaving the dance students ‘teacherless’. However, some of the students have continued dance classes and some still show me dances they remember from my classes, when I visit.

4.3 Image Recall: Outcomes

Table’s 5, 6 and 7 show the outcomes of the Image Recall Method described on page 25:

- Table 5. Image-Based Memory Map: Outcomes, on page 58, outlines the results of Session One (iii) on page 27.

- Table 6. Developed Image-Based Memory Map: Outcomes, on page 59, outlines the results of Session’s Two to Six (v and vi) on page 29.

- Table 7. Description of Developed Image-Based Memory: Outcomes, on pages 60 to 64, outlines the results of Session’s Two to Six (vii) on page 29.
Table 5  Image-Based Memory Map: Outcomes
[Read table from left to right, for example (1-a) to (1-e)]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMAGE-BASED MEMORY</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1-a) Louise making me dance a fast &quot;reel&quot;, 3 times in succession with no breaks, to prepare for competition.</td>
<td>(1-b) Louise, &quot;big girl&quot; from Julie Shores - private dance teacher.</td>
<td>(1-c) Irish Dance. A reel.</td>
<td>(1-d) Late Primary School. Classes, once a week.</td>
<td>(1-e) Louise's parent's enclosed patio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2-a) Given task of choreographing a dance, without music &amp; using movements not already known.</td>
<td>(2-b) Tim McLeod, Contemporary dance &amp; composition teacher.</td>
<td>(2-c) Contemporary dance composition.</td>
<td>(2-d) First Composition class, first week, semester one.</td>
<td>(2-e) (Name of institution withheld), dance studio 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3-a) Dancing in the opening number, trying to remember steps &amp; do them well. The audience laughing and clapping.</td>
<td>(3-b) Myself, other dances in the same dance - dance friends Mary-Anne, Melissa, Darylyn</td>
<td>(3-c) End of year dancing school concert. Opening number - &quot;If they could see me now&quot;.</td>
<td>(3-d) First year at Julie Shore's school</td>
<td>(3-e) Fremantle Town Hall, main stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4-a) Dancing in the lounge room to record. Spinning around and falling on the floor.</td>
<td>(4-b) Myself</td>
<td>(4-c) Spinning and dancing to radiogram.</td>
<td>(4-d) Pre-school, maybe 4 years of age.</td>
<td>(4-e) Family home, lounge room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5-a) Dancing in a large circle with a boy that had asked you to dance.</td>
<td>(5-b) Myself, friends at high school</td>
<td>(5-c) Ballroom dance lessons with students from boys school</td>
<td>(5-d) Year 10 high-school, Winter.</td>
<td>(5-e) High school Gym</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Table 6  Developed Image-Based Memory Map: Outcomes

[Read table from left to right, for example (1-a) to (1-e)]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMAGE-BASED MEMORY</th>
<th>SENSES</th>
<th>EMOTIONS</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>DEVELOPED IMAGE-BASED MEMORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1-a) Louise making me dance a fast “reel” dance, 3 times in succession with no breaks, to prepare for competition.</td>
<td>(1-b) heat/hot weather hard concrete floor fatigued body hyped sweaty/smelly</td>
<td>(1-c) anxiety motivation ambivalence purpose independent watched</td>
<td>(1-d) iron roof / patio Louise sitting-smoking tape recorder Irish reel music fliescreens 2 chairs, table pool table</td>
<td>(1-e) Louise smoking &amp; then eating an apple. Beginning kick and turn step of dance. Wearing leotards. Garage Layout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2-a) Given task of choreographing a dance, without music &amp; using movements not already known.</td>
<td>(2-b) natural light plastic/sticky -floor layers of dance - clothes still/ fairly quiet no music</td>
<td>(2-c) apprehension suspense curiosity uncomfortable focussed</td>
<td>(2-d) Tim - McLeod first year class - Jenny, Elaine, Marie, Lisa, Carrie, Tim, Jack, Studio with wall mirrors. Windows</td>
<td>(2-e) Turning around &amp; catching Tim’s eye - he says, “you don’t trust me”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3-a) Dancing in the opening number, trying to do steps &amp; the audience laughing &amp; clapping</td>
<td>(3-b) bright stage lights dark audience greasy fake tan smelly makeup sticky hairspray itchy costume</td>
<td>(3-c) excitement responsibility determination focussed embarrassed</td>
<td>(3-d) Miss Julie dance friends - Mary-Anne, Anita, “big girls” rickety stage floor backstage gaffer tape marking</td>
<td>(3-e) Standing on stage looking at Miss Julie in wings, trying to keep in time. Girl waving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4-a) Dancing in the lounge to favourite record. Spinning around and falling to floor.</td>
<td>(4-b) fuzzy, brown, - carpet face carpet spinning room dizzy, woozy calm</td>
<td>(4-c) whole calm happy excited secretive</td>
<td>(4-d) lounge room radiogram record cover lounge wallpaper curtains/orange</td>
<td>(4-e) Whirling sensation, gripping on to the lounge floor waiting for everything to stop spinning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5-a) Ballroom dance lessons with students from boys school</td>
<td>(5-b) smelly school jumpers. Echo of voices in the gym. vanished gym floor croaky boy voices</td>
<td>(5-c) half-interest apprehension boredom humour tension</td>
<td>(5-d) Vanessa, Erin, Jane, Tania, Renee. Lectern for teacher. Ballroom teacher School Gym</td>
<td>(5-e) Walking into the gym and seeing the flock of boys on the other side, huddling.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7. Description of Developed Image-Based Memory: Outcomes

(1-a) The developed image-based memory

(1-b) The experience of the developed image-based memory
In the image, I could mostly see and feel ‘myself’ and was drawn to the black leotards and tights that I was wearing - the smell and the feel of them. I could see the shape and layout of the garage/playroom that I was standing in. I could see the light coming through the flyscreen windows, it was the afternoon. The floor was concrete with come kind of lino over it. I could see Louise sitting on a chair, at my ‘stage front’ - it was a patio table with two chairs either side, pushed up against the wall so that there was more floor space for dancing. The tape recorder was on the table so that Louise could stop and start if from where she was sitting.

On visualising Louise I could see that she was holding an apple - and then I remembered that she had said to me that she was on a diet and that for lunch she had an apple, but that the afternoon apple was an extra apple - I said I loved green, granny smith apples and that I ate about five a day - she said not to eat too many because they are fattening. I remember parts of the dance - Irish Reel - we were working on. The reel began with stationary kick followed by a moving turn. Louise said that in the upcoming competition - my opportunity to grab the attention of the audience and judge, before any of the other dancers on stage, was in this first movement. I remember the directions of the dance in relation to the room - travelling first in a direction towards the backyard, then moving across the front of the room to the pool table and then along the back of the garage. Remembering this dance triggered another memory of a hard shoe jig and rehearsing this at home in the kitchen. Kitchen table pushed to the side - I can see the dance in relation to the room; dancing up toward the stove - turning around in the corner - then coming straight back down to turn to face the front again, just in front of the kitchenette.

I remember feeling heavy in my legs on the second run through the dance with Louise and nearly hyperventilating on the third. Louise was shouting - keep your legs up - pushing me, she did make me jump higher.
Table 7. Continued

(2-a) The developed image-based memory

Turning around and catching Tim’s eye, and he says; "you don’t trust me".

(2-b) The experience of the developed image-based memory

Standing in the studio trying to complete the given task - to choreograph a dance without music and without dance steps. I am facing the back of the studio, moving, trying to come up with something, but I've turned my upper torso around to face the front and I've caught Tim McLeod's eye - he says "you don’t trust me do you?" and I pull a kind of ‘why should I’ face.

The entire first year class sitting in the studio, on the floor, with Tim on a chair, behind us just in front of the mirror. Students take turns to perform their composition. No one progressed passed the first phrase of their composition. As each dancer starts dancing, Tim points out the dance steps; “that's a ballet step!” - “that's a jazz step!” - “and I've seen that before!”; “I don't want steps that you know - that you've been doing for years”, “I'll say it one more time - NO STEPS! - now go away and make some movement that I've never seen and you've never done”. We were all sent away to do the task again.

Having been sent away to try again - I can feel myself standing there fixed to the floor, not knowing how to start - how to move - in a ‘dance-step-less’ world. I swung my arms - I can see and feel them - I shuffle my legs a bit, trying to stop them from falling into dance steps that I was accustomed to. I feel silly, very self-conscious and exposed, without the ‘dressing’ of the dance steps that I had been learning and refining for years - but I am interested enough to keep going. Eventually the task isn’t as bad as I first predicted - I even like it a bit and after a while it seems to open up new possibilities. I realise that I may in fact be able to make new steps - steps of my own. It feels very new and awkward, like learning how to dance from scratch. My initial mistrust is transformed to respect and I feel light with new knowledge.
(3-a) The developed image-based memory

Standing on stage looking at Miss Julie in wings, trying to keep in time. Girl waving.

(3-b) The experience of the developed image-based memory

Standing on stage at the front, stage right, in the middle of the line of girls my own age (about 5 to 6 years-old). Bright up-lights in my eyes and staring out into the audience and seeing nothing but black and just making out the outline faces in the front few lines. I can see the dance; it was bending and stretching, in time, with hands on knees. I can remember how it felt. It was awkward bending and stretching, whilst keeping your hands on your knees - the arms do not feel long enough.

The costume, made out of glittery orange Lurex, was itchy. It was hot on stage under the lights. We had to wear fake tan cream all over, even on our stomachs. The cream was a brown/tan colour and thick - the smell pungent - sweet and perfumed, but also metallic. Smeared on wet, we had to stand with our arms and legs apart while we waited for it to dry.

The night before I had slept with my hair in curlers and now my hair was out, but was sticky with heavy-duty hairspray. My ballet shoes painted the night before - were only just dry and still a bit sticky. The shoe paint was still sticky and smelt like methylated spirits. I remember feeling heavy, with all this stuff on, which had been applied so carefully. I felt determined - as if I had a job to do - and responsible with all of this preparation going on around me.

I remember concentrating on keeping the step in time and turning my head to look into the wing to see Miss Julie prompting us by doing the step. A girl next me was stunned, standing still with stage fright. People were clapping - I thought it was because we were doing a good job - and then I noticed that they were clapping and laughing because one girl had moved forward, away from the line and was standing at the front of the stage waving. I was confused and embarrassed.
(4-a) The developed image-based memory

Whirling sensation, gripping on to the lounge room floor waiting for everything to stop spinning.

(4-b) The experience of the developed image-based memory

Lying on the carpet face down, just after spinning around and around. Probably three to four years of age. Gripping the floor with fingers as the room spun and toppled it's way around until it slowed down enough for you to stand. Pure exhilaration. Jump, shake, turn, spin, spin, spin, spin, spin, spin and fall on the floor - grip on to the carpet. I was by myself in the lounge room. It felt like I had discovered something that no one else knew - did everyone else realise that the floor could topple like this?

I remember the look and feel of the carpet. I can see the floor of the lounge, tilted and rocking from side to side, as I gripped and tried to recover from the spinning. I felt dizzy and overpowered but enjoyed these sensations. I felt as if it was the actual floor tilting and rocking. It was amazing that the room could move like this and then slowly recover to its normal position - just as if nothing had happened.

In between the spins I was jumping and shaking to the “drums of the mountains” record of my parents. I had learnt how to put the record on myself and knew how to drop the needle on to a track. I remember scratching the record a few times when I was clumsy with the needle.

This made me remember dancing to the Baby Elephant Walk a record by Henry Mancini. The Baby Elephant Walk record was a favourite. It is an instrumental tune and I can just about remember the whole tune. I would put it on and ‘elephant dance’. I can remember the dance it was walking around, swinging my arm like a trunk and moving my hips in a waddle, imitating the back of an elephant I had seen on television.
Table 7. Continued

(5-a) The developed image-based memory
Walking into the gym and seeing the flock of boys, huddling together in a grey mass.

(5-b) The experience of the developed image-based memory
Just entered the gym and have seen a flock of boys standing huddled together on the other side of the room. They make me nervous, all bunched up like that. I cannot see myself in this image, but I can see the image from the perspective of what would have been my original position. My friends and the rest of my school year (all girls), walk up the side of the hall and face opposite the boys. The boys had been caught in the rain; all I can smell is pungent, wet, school jumpers. I remember laughing and making jokes with my friends and shuffling to the very back. They walk towards us and start asking girls to dance. I feel numb, like potential road kill staring into headlights.

The next thing I recall is doing a waltz with one of the boys and feeling that he was pulling my jumper too much, in his awkward embrace. In response, I was trying to hang on to his jumper instead of having to touch him. I remember a small part of that dance. I don’t remember the music, but I do remember the toupee wearing, ballroom dance teacher calling out the steps with a microphone.

I can see Tania across from me, on the other side of the large circle we are dancing in. She is wearing a brace that covers her whole torso - she has back problems - she dances a bit awkwardly because of this, but seems to be having a good time - she is dancing with a nice boy called Brian, who is her boyfriend - they are both having fun.
5.1 INTRODUCTION

As someone who has pursued dance professionally, I was surprised to find how much of my autobiographical dance history had been left unchartered. Previous reflections on experiences of dance were ad hoc, and mostly related to comparative experiences of dance styles and dance performances. During the praxis, of both the narrative recall method and the image recall method, I was not fully aware of the themes that were to later reveal themselves in the process of critical inquiry of the outcomes.

5.2 NARRATIVE RECALL METHOD: DISCUSSION

The personal dance history that is the outcome of the narrative recall method is not a comprehensive autobiographical account, however it does offer insights into how I have experienced dance in the past. If I was to repeat the narrative recall method in the future, the outcomes would be different to those already produced. Regardless of the chronological nature of the narrative recall, the content of the recollection is always influenced by emotional responses and environmental conditions, which are present at the time of the recollection. Much of the personal dance history is a reflection on my history of dance training and there are few references to my experiences as a choreographer and performer. This can probably be attributed to the fact that, one of the first reflections in the personal dance history referred to my first dance school and this, in turn, triggered a succession of memories related to dance training. Also, at the time, I had been thinking about the variety of styles that I have trained in. Many recurring themes emerged from analysis of the personal dance history text. The most significant of which include: physical well-being, corporeal territory, sharing dance and the value of dance. The personal dance history reveals that the dancing body makes (sense of place).

5.2.1 Physical Well-Being

I consider myself to be reasonably mindful of the physical well-being of my body in relation to dance; however, I was surprised at the scope of the presence of ‘physical well-being’ as a theme in the personal dance history. In the text of the personal dance history, I referred to ‘physical well-being’ in describing the following events: the commencement of dance lessons to
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overcome a heart murmur; the effect of a knee injury on my ability to dance; the pressure to
diet and loose weight; and the myalgic encephalitis illness that resulted from glandular fever.
In previous casual reflections on my history of ‘physical well-being’, I have not fully
appreciated how events may have been assimilated by my dancing body. So much of the dance
culture that I have experienced has been about ‘peak performance’, with sickness regarded as
an imperfect state that is an obstacle to ‘peak performance’. What if sickness were appreciated
as an alternate state, from where the body may assimilate new feedback?

5.2.2 Corporeal Territory

Throughout the text of the personal dance history, from early memories to later memories of
dance experiences, there is an undercurrent that negotiates ownership of the dancing body.
Dance is mostly considered to be an empowering activity that represents physical prowess
and competence. It is easy to assume that ownership of the dancing body is inherited by the
dancer. The text of the personal dance history suggests that this is not always the reality of dance.
Throughout the text there are references to a variety of interests that compete for ownership
of the dancing body. The dancer is always negotiating ownership of their dancing body. The types
of interests that compete for ownership include: cultural ideas of the body; cultural
expectations of the gendered body; cultural expectations of dance, and dance authorities (for
example - teachers, organisations, and syllabi).

As explored in the text, my negotiations for ownership are mostly apparent in two ways:
firstly, in the way that I relate to the image of the ideal female dancer; and secondly, in the
way that I relate to authorities of dance, such as schools and teachers. An example from the
text which illustrates resistance to the image of the ideal female dancer is; when I have
returned home from my first dancing exam, in curls - makeup - and tutu, and encouraged by
my brother, I knowingly strike ironic poses like a ‘ballerina’. An example from the text which
illustrates negotiations for corporeal territory with dance authorities is; performing my own
choice of steps, choreographed for an Irish Dancing competition, that were not considered to
fall within the code of Irish Dance.
5.2.3 Sharing Dance and the Value of Dance

The potential value of dance and the capacity to share dance experiences, were themes that recurred throughout the text of the personal dance history. Many of the events in the text reveal that I participated in dance performances, competitions and examinations, with a degree of ambivalence. There seemed to be a conflict between how I valued dance and how the structures and cultures, within which I existed, valued dance. For example, in the early memory of being a five-year-old on stage dancing: I was seriously engaged in performing a dance that I valued and considered to be of some importance; whereas the audience valued the ‘cuteness’ of little girls, dressed-up in curls and makeup, with stage fright. The text also alludes to the estranged experience of rehearsing dances as a ‘group’ - which were actually not group dances - but many solos performed simultaneously.

5.3 Image Recall Method: Discussion

The image recall method reveals more about how the ecological self experiences sense of place, than that of the narrative recall method which attends to the extended self. The outcomes of the image recall method are outlined in Tables 5, 6 and 7. Tables 5 and 6 (pp. 58, 59) provide brief notes that describe the content of memories recalled during the image recall. Whilst the image recall method is designed to induce memories in the form of images, which are predominantly non-verbal; for the purpose of communicating the process of image recall, the experience of recollection is noted in Table 7. (p. 60-64).

5.3.1 Image-Based Memory

During the course of completing the personal dance history, some memories were recalled in a form that was predominantly visual and non-verbal. I selected five of these image-based memories for further investigation. The content of the images is described in words; however the focus of this exercise was to ‘navigate’ the image with the ‘mind’s eye’. Although much of the navigation is guided by ‘feeling’ your way through the image - thinking in ‘words’, and guiding your attention with silent questions, is unavoidable.
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The recall of an image-based memory is usually dominated by one factor in the image. This is illustrated by the bold text of Table 5 (p. 58): In the Who, What, When, Where columns, for each image-based memory, there is one which is bold - this is the dominant factor that prompted the recall of the entire image. For example, for image-based memory (1a), the cue that induced the memory was the What cue - 'Irish Dance'. For the five image-based memories, in Table 5., the What and Where factors were each dominant for two of the memories and the When factor was dominant for the one remaining memory. It is interesting to note that, whilst the Who factor was not dominant in the image recall, it appeared to be dominant in the narrative recall. The dominant factor, that induces the recall of an image, may be determined by the way in which the memory was first experienced and stored.

5.3.2 Developed Image-Based Memory

Table 6. (p. 59) represents how the ecological self of the dancing body experiences place. Exploring the image-based memory by asking the three questions of the memory that relate to - the senses, emotions and the environment - provides a way of directing attention towards the non-verbal experience of the ecological self. The developed image-based memories of Table 6., are more layered, organic versions of the basic image-based memories from Table 5. Whilst Table 5. focuses on the ‘content’ of the memory, Table 6. focuses on the ‘experience’ of the memory.

5.3.3 Description of the Developed Image-Based Memory

Table 7. (pp. 60-64) includes descriptions of the experience of ‘remembering’ for each image-based memory from Table 5. The descriptions reveal the journey of the ‘remembering’, as it meanders through the senses, emotions, and the environment. In comparison to the memories described in the personal dance history, the descriptions of the developed image-based memories are more attentive to the detail and experience of events ‘as they happened’. The outcomes of the image recall method reveal that the dancing body makes sense of (place) through the sensorial apprehension of its environment.
5.4 The Dancing Body and Spheres of Place

The outcomes of both the narrative recall method and the image recall method provide examples of how the ecological self and the extended self experience place. A useful way of considering the dancing body's relationship to place is to refer to nested, concentric spheres of experience based on Husserl's concepts of 'near-sphere' and 'far-sphere' (Casey, 1998, p. 219), and Laban's concept of the kinesphere (Maletic, 1987, p.75).

Laban uses the term kinesphere to describe the reach space immediately around the body. Husserl's concept of near-sphere is used to indicate the space which surrounds the body, but is outside of the kinesphere. The near-sphere is the space which envelops the kinesphere - it includes all immediate sensory input, but is predominantly accessed through visual awareness. The term far-sphere refers to the horizon of the near-sphere. We are conscious of the horizon that is the far-sphere, which is always the 'background' of the near-sphere; however, we do not have access to the far-sphere via our immediate senses. I suggest that a forth sphere, which I have coined with the term propriosphere, be included in the spheres of the dancing body. The propriosphere encompasses all internal patterns of proprioception (Todd, 1972, Ch. 9).

The four spheres of the dancing body which are -propriosphere, kinesphere, near-sphere, and far-sphere - are all of-the-body; that is, the body is the base for the sense and perception of the spheres. The following example illustrates how the spheres interact:

The movement sequence [from (3-b) of Table 7, p.62] that is "bending and stretching, with hands on knees, to the song - if they could see me now"; is recalled and performed in the 'present'. The spheres access this action in different ways. The propriosphere has an internal representation of the movement that facilitates the performance of the movement sequence in the 'present'. The body performs the action of the movement sequence within the kinesphere. My living room is the near-sphere of the of the movement sequence of the 'present'. And, my far-sphere infers an
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Awareness of where I am 'presently', in time and space, in comparison to the original performance of the movement sequence described in (3-b).

If the proprio sphere, kinesphere, and near-sphere are mostly concerned with the ecological self; then the far-sphere is the realm of the extended self. Our sense of our far-sphere is not a laboured one; it is one that is the background to most activity, and continuously extrapolates our experience of location and place. For example, for an everyday action like sitting in my study reading, I have a background awareness of; other rooms in the house, the street that the house is on, the location of the suburb the house is in, and a resonance of past experience related to 'sitting and reading in the study'.

5.5 MEANING IN MOVEMENT

Nadia Lovell (1998, p. 1) describes the potential for territory to become intertwined with belonging through imagined and experienced space. To varying degrees, dance movements are encoded with meaning. Dance styles, or systems, that are acquired with meaning ascribed to discrete movements; are styles in which the kinesphere imports the far-sphere. For example, the positions of Hindu Classical Dance (Bharat Natyam) describe geometric angular relationships from the axis of the body's centre of gravity - these positions are attributed to various deities and are meant to convey their characteristic powers (Lawlor, 1982, p. 95).

Most Classical Ballet and Contemporary Dance techniques are highly codified in terms of the attributes that constitute the style of their movements; however (outside of performance) they rarely ascribe meaning to discrete movements. Because of the absence of discrete meanings for discrete movements; Classical Ballet and Contemporary Dance techniques are vulnerable to the incidental importation of meaning from both the near-sphere and the far-sphere: The kinesphere and proprio sphere of the Ballet or Contemporary dancing body is affected by the environment within which the technique is executed. When the far-sphere is not imported into encoded meanings, as in Hindu Classical Dance; then the far-sphere is dominated by meaning that is garnered from the personal history of the dancer.
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Although not encoded in discrete movements, some dance practitioners consciously intertwine the kinesphere and the far-sphere. For example, the following quote is an instruction for dancers from Deborah Hay’s - Excerpts from the Grand Dance - exercise;

“We cross and re-cross the performing area Stepping (sic) on the Earth and also, whenever you wish, Turning in Place (sic) as a Celestial Body, we attune ourselves to the whereabouts of everyone else” (Banes, 1987, p. 130).

In contrast, some dance practices focus on the interaction of the proprioosphere, kinesphere and near-sphere. For example, in a community dance project, Elizabeth Cameron Damon describes one way that she uses to assist her dancers in the making of movement;

“I take them into the bush or down to the lake and we play. I introduce games which encourage them to observe their surroundings...” (Poyner and Simmonds, 1997, p. 53).

Movement Vocabularies which do not ascribe discrete meanings to discrete movements may open the way for a kind of corporeal dialogue between the proprioosphere, kinesphere and near-sphere. This possibility is explored by Poyner and Simmonds in their Direction of site-specific performances which they describe in the following way;

“When working on the site with dancers it is not a question of performing prescribed dance forms in the environment, but rather of entering its world and soaking it up. The dancers explore the interaction between the physicality of the body and the physicality of the site...” (Poyner and Simmonds, 1999, p.52).
5.6 Corporeal Territories: Sharing vs Colonisation

The corporeal territory of the dancing body is a site of negotiation between the individual and the socio-cultural environment of the individual. Corporeal territories may be mapped as places of sharing, or places of colonisation. Whether the map of the dancing body represents a shared place or a colonised place is an outcome of the relationship between the dancer and their environment. The personal dance history illustrates pivotal moments, in the history of my dance technique acquisition, where corporeal territory was traversed and negotiated: Two examples which stand out are; the ‘push/pull’ composition class where my teacher pushes me to discover new movement, and the Irish Dance competition where I perform new steps which are considered to be outside of the code.

Catherine E. Foley describes the sharing of corporeal territory as a process whereby people associate with different cultural groups, which are associated with particular body groups that may be thought of as ‘body dialects’ (1997, p. 57). The concepts of sharing and colonisation can be compared, when applied to Foley’s description of: Traditional, regional Irish Step-dance in North Kerry as performed by both male and female, older, dancers; and modern competitive step-dancing, that is performed mostly by young females. The modern competitive dancing is the homogenous product of the nationalisation of step-dance by the Gaelic league; it leaves little room for creativity or individual variation. In comparison, the regional Step-dance of North Kerry supports both improvisation and creativity; particular variations on dances are associated with specific individuals and this affords the individual an implicit ownership. In a similar way, Matthews-DeNatale describes the negotiation of corporeal territory as a symptom of variation and tradition, in American Appalachian dancing;

“The... value of traditional mountain dance may be found in... a need for balance and the interplay between opposing forces of variation and tradition, order and freedom, and community responsibility and individualism” (1995 p. 133).
Banes also draws our attention to the opposing forces of variation and tradition, in the following quote from Karole Armitage - the choreographer who deconstructed classical ballet performance in her works of the eighties;

"... The work does not have a pioneering spirit. It is tied to four hundred years of steps and technique and style that have evolved in ballet, and it is trying to take that somewhere else" (Banes, 1994, p. 298).

Susan Leigh Foster, in Meaning and Motion, suggests that dance technique maps the corporeal territory of the dancing body in the following way;

"... each dance technique... constructs a specialized and specific body... training not only constructs a body but also helps to fashion an expressive self" (Desmond, 1997, p. 241).

5.7 The Dancing Body Belongs to Time and Space

The making of sense of place, by the dancing body, is an expression of belonging to time and space. The dancing body relates to place through the interplay of the propriosphere, kinesphere, nearsphere and far-sphere. The far-sphere is the plane of imagined time and place, where the memory of past experience is collapsed and imported into present experience. The propriosphere is comprised of patterns of movement experience that affect the way the dancing body appreciates sense of place. The idea that the propriosphere comes into being through the mapping of corporeal territory is parallel to Louppe's concept of the interior cartography of dance - which he refers to as the product of the gravitational forces of weight displacement;

"... displacement of weight organises an interior cartography..." (Louppe, 1994, p.36).

It is the kinaesthetic schemata of the propriosphere that determine the dancing body's experience of belonging. The encoding of the dancing body with meaning influences the way that
kinaesthetic schemata engage with place. A sense of belonging emerges through the return to, or activation of, ‘remembered’ kinaesthetic schemata.

5.8 CONCLUSION

If we revisit the image of Gladys Tybingoompa and Senator Harradine, we now see two dancing bodies, each negotiating their own corporeal territories in a shared near-sphere. Senator Harradine reinstates his position as an Independent Senator through resisting stereotypes of his own corporeal territory: He rolls up his sleeves, takes off his shoes, and shares the dance of Gladys Tybingoompa. The dancing body of Gladys Tybingoompa infers meaning from her far-sphere which incorporates her relationship to the land of her people. Tybingoompa and Harradine make sense of place.

The making of sense of place is a process which lies beneath the ‘skin’ of dance. Dancers sometimes consciously ‘stage place’ or explore the concepts of ‘place’ and ‘site’ through choreography; however the sense of place of the dancing body is an expression of the individual dancer’s experience of place. The expression of sense of place is dependent on the dancer’s past experiences and the relationship of these experiences to the ‘present’ environment. The praxis of this thesis revealed how the senses of the dancing body apprehend aspects of ‘place’ which then become embodied in kinaesthetic schemata.

Regardless of the intention of the dancer, the environment of the dancing body will always be embodied in some way, for this reason, it may be worthwhile to be mindful of place. Similar to the way that Classical Ballet classes have an end of class ‘reverence’, which acknowledges the teacher and musician; a quiet ‘reverence for place’ can be enacted by the dancer, before dance performances or classes. A ‘reverence for place’ may: Firstly, be mindful that the dancing body will, in the act of dance, sense and embody its experience of place; and secondly, bring awareness to the dancing body’s ‘present’ sensation of its four spheres (i.e. propriosphere, kinesphere, near-sphere, and far-sphere).

The modern world is one which respects velocity. Place is more often something to be traversed, rather than something to be ‘felt’. In our everyday lives, as we drive in cars or sit in
trains, the space between our desired locations is regarded as an obstacle to be conquered by our trajectory. And, our visual culture of - film, video, television and the internet - is a panopticon of high speed experience that shifts and collapses time and space (Virilio, 1995, p.119). Dance is usually spoken of in terms of movement and trajectory; however the paradox of dance is that it is an extreme ‘real-time’ experience of place - in a sense, to dance is to pause in place - it escapes velocity. In the resistance of velocity, the dancing body makes sense of place.
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Glossary

**Body Storming**
Body Storming describes the process of returning to the ‘experience of the body’ in order to find new ideas. The sensation of body storming is of ‘feeling and experience’.

**Brain Storming**
Brain Storming describes the process of reflection on experience to find new ideas; it is associated more closely to the sensation of ‘thinking’, than to the sensation of ‘feeling’.

**Corporeal Territory**
The corporeal territory of the *dancing body* encompasses patterns of kinaesthetic schemata that are negotiated by the dancer and their environment. Corporeal territory is traversed through the experience of sharing and/or colonisation.

**Constructivism**
Constructivism posits that meaning is generated in the interface of subject and object; it is not the subjective creation of meanings imposed upon reality, nor is it a positivist objective truth.

**Critical Inquiry**
Critical Inquiry is reflection which does not separate itself from action - where action and reflection unite in praxis.

**Dance: Dancer**
The term ‘dancer’ encompasses all level of dance skill, to include dancers of; formal and informal dance, and professional and vernacular dance.

**Dance: Dancing Body**
The phrase ‘dancing body’ describes a body engaged in the action of dance. The focus of the phrase is on the action of dancing as it occurs in time and space. The ‘dancing body’ is a spatiotemporal body.
Glossary

Demarcation: Location
The term ‘location’ refers to a geographical determination that emphasises the trajectory of objects or subjects - it suggests a past and a future - a ‘going to’ and a ‘moving away’ from.

Demarcation: Place
The term ‘place’ emphasises the presence of subjects and their patterns of movement in space. ‘Place’ refers to particular spaces that cohere via the presence of lived bodies.

Demarcation: Sense of Place
A sense of belonging to time and space, that is bound by lived patterns of experience.

Demarcation: Site
The term ‘site’ refers to a geographical determination that emphasises the demarcation of space as territory and object. A ‘site’ is a stagnation of space.

Demarcation: Space
The term ‘space’ refers to a quality that is experienced by a subjective body. All space is experienced by a lived body - therefore no space is neutral.

Embodiment: Dynamic Embodiment
Describes how the body incorporates perception into patterns of meaning - made possible by ‘embodied schemata’.

Embodiment: Embodied Schemata
Embodied Schemata are patterns of meaningfully organised experience, evolving from complex interactions of the body and its environment.

Embodiment: Kinaesthetic Schemata
Kinaesthetic Schemata are embodied schemata which are based on the kinaesthetic Body.
GLOSSARY

Grounded Theory: Make
To ‘make’ is to give-impetus-to an unfolding of non-verbal processes, within the dancer. ‘Making’ is a non-conscious, organic process that affects a change within the dancing body, not motivated by goals or benchmarks.

Grounded Theory: The Dancing Body Makes (Sense of Place)
The dancing body that makes sense of place is one which demarcates and expresses the qualities of particular places as kinaesthetic schema, integral to a sense of belonging to time and space.

Grounded Theory: The Dancing Body Makes Sense of (Place)
The dancing body that makes sense of place, is a body engaged in the apprehension and understanding of non-verbal knowledge’s, sensed and perceived by the body.

Grounded Theory: The Dancing Body Makes Sense of Place
The dancing body both ‘makes sense of place’ and ‘makes sense of place’. In the first instance, the dancing body apprehends place through sense and perception. In the second instance, the dancing body incorporates knowledge garnered, from the apprehension of place, into kinaesthetic schema.

Hermeneutic Interpretation
Hermeneutic Interpretation provides a framework for the researcher to return to the basic phenomena that underlie inquiry - ‘back to the things themselves’.

Intentionality
Intentionality posits that there is an intimate and active interaction between the body and its environment. When the mind ‘knows’ something, it reaches out to and into that object.
Glossary

Memory: Autobiographical Fact
An autobiographical fact is identical to a personal memory, however it does not need to be recalled via an image, for example you can recall what you did during the day without having to retrieve images.

Memory: Autobiographical Memory
An autobiographical memory is an episodic memory that pertains to information integral to the concept of self.

Memory: Episodic Memories
Episodic Memories are context bound by time and place, and unlike procedural and semantic memory, are closely associated with the experience of remembering.

Memory: Generic Personal Memory
A Generic personal memory involves abstract representation of personal knowledge based on a series of repeated similar events, for example, the memory of ‘learning to ride a bicycle’.

Memory: Personal Memory
A personal memory is an image based representation of a single event that is context dependent.

Memory: Procedural Memories
Procedural Memories facilitate the operation of behaviours, which are mostly automatic in that we do not need to consciously “remember” to carry out the operation.

Memory: Semantic Memories
Semantic Memories contain information pertaining to meaning and understanding in the world, for example; ‘bicycles have wheels’, ‘bicycles are a means of transportation’.
Glossary

Phenomenology
Phenomenology describes a world which comes into being through the body; where the body is not an object for an ‘I think’, it is a grouping of lived-through meanings.

Recall: Image Recall
In contrast, the image recall process is meditative in nature and designed to bring as much awareness and depth to a memory as possible.

Recall: Narrative Recall
The purpose of the narrative recall is to reveal general themes that appear in autobiographical memories. The process of autobiographical narrative recall involves the retrieval, and documentation of, autobiographical memories

Recall: Personal Dance History
A personal dance history is a chronological text, that is the outcome of the narrative recall method, which offers insights into how past experiences of dance are embodied.

Spheres: Far-sphere
The far-sphere is the horizon of the near-sphere. We are conscious of the horizon that is the far-sphere, which is always the ‘background’ of the near-sphere; however, we do not have access to the far-sphere via our immediate senses.

Spheres: Kinesphere
The kinesphere is the reach space immediately around the body.

Spheres: Near-sphere
The Near-sphere is the space which surrounds the body, but is outside of the kinesphere. The near-sphere includes all immediate sensory input, but is predominantly accessed through visual awareness.

Spheres: Propriosphere
The propriosphere encompasses all internal patterns of proprioception.
The Dancing Body Makes Sense of Place

G.M. Shrubsall, B.A. Dance.

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the Degree of M.A. 
UWS Nepean, School of Contemporary Arts: Dance 
July 2002
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ABSTRACT

The grounded theory of this dissertation is that the dancing body makes sense of place. This theory is investigated through hermeneutic praxis based on the theoretical perspective of phenomenology. In exploring how the dancing body experiences place, it is the processes that underlie and give form to dance that capture my attention.

The dancing body makes sense of place is a phrase that liberates the description and consideration of the non-verbal processes that underlie the dance/place interface. The phrase offers the possibility of communicating coexisting processes. Interpreted as 'the dancing body makes (sense of place)', the phrase suggests that the development of a 'sense of place' is an outcome of the action of dance. Whilst interpreted as 'the dancing body makes sense of (place)', the phrase implies the understanding of 'place' through dance.

The hermeneutic praxis described in this dissertation, is comprised of memory retrieval sessions which allude to how the dancing body experiences space, place and sense of place. During praxis, it emerges that the dancing body infers sense of place through spheres of experience, that may be described as the; propriosphere, kinesphere, near-sphere, and far-sphere. Praxis also reveals that the dancing body's relationship to place is integral in the development of a sense of belonging.

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INTRODUCTION

“Eve of the Wik... debate. The Kimberley people stage a dance performance featuring their 8 by 10 metre painting of the land they are claiming. The performance was ahead of today’s native title debate in the Senate and tomorrow’s crucial High Court ruling on the Hindmarsh case, which is expected to determine the extent of Federal Government powers to pass laws affecting Aborigines.” Kingston, Margo (1998, March 31) Sydney Morning Herald.

The above quotation accompanies a colour photograph, spanning seven columns of the front page of the Sydney Morning Herald, depicting a young Aboriginal dancer. The next day, on page one again, the Sydney Morning Herald publishes a colour photograph spanning six columns. It depicts Gladys Tybingoompa, a female Australian Aboriginal dancer, dancing with Senator Harradine, a 63-year-old Caucasian male. Gladys Tybingoompa is in traditional dress and the Senator, who is wearing a shirt and tie with a telephone pager clipped on his belt, has spontaneously rolled up his sleeves, taken off his shoes and joined the dance. The title adjacent to the photograph is “Harradine dancing to the rhythm of the Wiks”. The text underneath the picture is as follows;

“A barefoot Senator Harradine joins Gladys Tybingoompa and the Wik people in a dance in front of Parliament House, where the bill’s fate is being decided” Kingston, Margo (1998, April 1) Sydney Morning Herald.

This was not the first time Gladys Tybingoompa danced at a site of the Australian Government to mark a decision that would affect her people. Gladys Tybingoompa danced on the steps of the High Court in 1996. The dance was a response to the court decision allowing the Wik people to proceed with their native title claim for their ancestral land at Cape York. For Senator Harradine however, the 1998 dance with Gladys Tybingoompa in the grounds of Parliament House was a first. At the time, Harradine was an independent Tasmanian Senator whose vote (due to the balance of power in the Senate) would determine the outcome of the Wik Bill.
INTRODUCTION

Appearing on the front page of Sydney’s major daily newspaper for two consecutive days, the photographs described above are visual testaments to the evocative power of dance. Visually, both photographs are colourful and striking. The images serve as news-stand eye catchers. But aside from aesthetics, why do these images have the potential to distract and engage? I suggest that these images engage us in a visceral dialogue, awakening - if only fleeting - a corporeal resonance that reminds us of our potential to be a dancing body and experience place through dance.

The image of Gladys Tybingoompa and Senator Harradine suggests difference. We imagine that they both bring very different histories to their different dances: Their own gender, racial and geopolitical histories. We can make assumptions about these histories based on prior knowledge and generalisations. But what personal histories do their bodies bring to the dance? What paths have they traversed and at what places have they settled? And most importantly, of all possible means of communication, why choose dance as their medium of expression, when they did?

Common to all of these questions is the phenomenon of how the dancer experiences the place where they are dancing. This has been the guiding impetus for my research. It has led me to ask the following question: How is ‘place’ experienced in dance? Practical and academic research has revealed -in some part- how I experience ‘place’ in my own dance practice. I have described these findings with the aim of being mindful of how ‘place’ is experienced in my own dance practice and to provide a framework for other dancers who wish to explore and cultivate their own experience of ‘place’.

GROUNDED THEORY

In exploring how the dancing body experiences place, it is the processes that underlie and give form to dance that capture my attention. The dancing body makes sense of place is a phrase that liberates the description and consideration of the non-verbal processes that underlie the dance/place interface. The phrase offers the possibility of communicating coexisting processes. Interpreted as ‘the dancing body makes (sense of place)’, the phrase suggests that the development of a ‘sense of place’ is an outcome of the action of dance. Whilst interpreted as
INTRODUCTION

‘the dancing body makes sense of (place)’, the phrase implies the understanding of ‘place’ through dance. I suggest that it is useful to accept both of these meanings and to employ them in the exploration of the following grounded theory, that is; “The dancing body makes sense of place”.

Explanation of Terms Used in the Grounded Theory
The terms of the ground theory are understood as follows;

Make
The term ‘make’ is employed to connote a process that gives-rise-to, rather than produces, sense of place. This view provides a means of focusing on the processes implied by the term ‘make’, rather than what the product of these processes may be. Thus, to ‘make’ is not to consciously contrive a product. To ‘make’ is to give-imperus-to an unfolding of non-verbal processes, within the dancer.

I have engaged the term ‘make’ in contradistinction to the term ‘choreograph’, which alludes to processes of which the outcome is a tangible product, readily available to an audience or to other dancers. ‘Making’ is a process not motivated by goals or benchmarks. This is not to deny choreographic processes the possibility of ‘making’, but to offer ‘making’ as a parallel process. ‘Making’ is a non-conscious, organic process that affects a change within the dancing body. The term ‘non-conscious’ is used in preference to the term ‘unconscious’: The common usage of the latter asserts an evaluation of consciousness, implying that knowledge arises from conscious effort, and that unconscious processes are incidental to knowledge. I suggest that the term ‘non-conscious’ suggests difference, rather than value, and it provides the possibility of describing a phenomenon that gives rise to knowledge’s, that are of equal value to those produced by conscious effort (Blom, 1989).

Dance, Dancers, Dancing, the Dancing Body

The term ‘dancer’, most commonly, refers to a person who has developed a level of dance skill for a particular dance form; and is often engaged in dance in a formal way, or at a professional level. I use the term more widely, encompassing all levels of dance
INTRODUCTION

skill, to include dancers of; formal and informal dance, and professional and vernacular
dance (Hanna, 1979, Ch. 2).

I use the phrase ‘dancing body’ to describe a body engaged in the action of dance. The
terms ‘dancer’ and ‘dance’ allude to the action of dancing, however they are often used
as nouns, dislocated from the actual activity of dance. The term ‘dance’ is both a noun
and a verb. For example, it is not necessary that a ‘dancer’ be engaged in the act of
dance when described as a ‘dancer’. Used in this way, the term assumes a history of
skill and imports an imagined future of skill application. In some contexts the term
‘dance’ describes action, however it also describes dance forms (for example; Jazz
Dance, Tap Dance, Modern Dance, Ballroom Dance) or dance
occasions/events/objects (such as; dance party, dance marathon, dance class, dance
competition, dance halls, dance shoes). In contradistinction to the terms ‘dance’,
dancer’ and ‘dancing’, the focus of the phrase ‘dancing body’ is on the action of
dancing as it occurs in time and space. The ‘dancing body’ is a spatiotemporal body.
(Thomas, 1995).

Place, (Sense of Place), Sense of (place)
The dancing body ‘makes sense of place’ by a kinaesthetic apprehension and incorporation
of place. The term ‘place’ describes the environment within which the body is dancing.
The phrase ‘makes sense of place’ may be interpreted as; ‘makes sense of place’ or ‘makes
sense of place’

Interpreted as the dancing body makes sense of place, the phrase implies, that in making
sense of place the dancing body is engaging in an act of understanding. This
understanding is not an achievement of self-conscious academic comprehension. The
‘understanding’ of the dancing body is a non-verbal knowledge, sensed and perceived
by the body. Thus, the making is an unfolding of non-verbal knowledge’s of the
dancing body, as they relate to particular moments in time and space (Houston, 1982).
INTRODUCTION

Interpreted as the *dancing body makes sense of place*, the phrase implies that, the dancing body demarcates and expresses the qualities of particular places. I propose that, the demarcation takes the form of kinaesthetic schemas that are an expression of the dancing body’s experience of place. These kinaesthetic schemas are integral to the dancing body’s sense of belonging to time and space.

I use the phrase ‘makes sense of place’ to encompass both interpretations described above. Therefore, the dancing body both ‘makes sense of place’ and ‘makes sense of place’. In the first instance, the dancing body apprehends place through sense and perception. In the second instance, the dancing body incorporates knowledge garnered, from the apprehension of place, into kinaesthetic schema.