DANCING SCULPTURES
Contractions of an Intercorporeal Aesthetic

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Signature: Stefania Mylona

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Abstract

Contraction dances have been seen as ‘unnatural’ since the contemporary dance focus shifted – especially in Europe – towards release-based dance forms, of continuous rather than ‘free’ flow, based on somatic and anatomical knowledge. In the modern dance period, however, contraction proved productive in creating radical shifts of form in the case of Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham.

In this research, the dancing contraction is redefined to characterize muscular tension and used to visually distort bodily forms. Disciplinary discourses may keep dance contraction separated from contemporary dance, but, I want to suggest that when contraction becomes a method of practice, it can draw together various disciplines and add an aesthetic intensification to choreography. In this way, contraction’s bound flow, effort, weight, tension and grotesque dynamics are often considered dance mis-performances.

This practice-based research examines the concept of contraction through contemporary dance practice. Based on bodily contractions, Dancing Sculptures proposes an aesthetic link between dance and sculpture by acknowledging corporeality as a meeting point. This interdisciplinary approach emerged through an emphasis on exploring visual methodologies in dance.

The main body of the thesis contains four chapters: The first chapter addresses the modern histories of contraction in dance. Chapter two focuses on the contractile processes of Dancing Sculptures as a new hybrid genre which favors intercorporeality by emphasizing the importance of the visual in dance. The relationship between dance and visual art references is examined in chapter three. Moving beyond practice, the fourth chapter offers an evaluation of interdisciplinary approaches as primarily body-based and argues for intercorporeality within and beyond dance studies through Deleuzian theory.

In Deleuzian theory, the assemblage (spatial contraction) also creates deconstruction, and vice versa, and thus, they can happen simultaneously, meaning that they are contracted. Historicizing these concepts in terms of aesthetics allowed me to make clear that my proposition does not imply the negation of deconstruction but rather suggests that contraction deconstructs deconstruction. Contraction becomes more prominent, as in Deleuzian theory, after a long focus on deconstructionist processes and particularly, for tracing an analogy between disciplines and bodies. I will thus propose that the aesthetic of contraction may be of increasing significance within an intercorporeal, post-deconstruction dance practice.
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Introduction

a. Contraction

Contraction, according to the Oxford dictionary, is a Latin word coming from the verb *contrahere* which means to draw together. It is also a short form of a word using an apostrophe to connect two words. Its prefix ‘con’ is a variation of ‘com’ and means with or together, while ‘traction’ suggests the act of drawing or pulling, the state of being drawn or attracting power or influence. To contract means to “reduce to smaller compass as by drawing together,” as well as to condense, concentrate, limit, narrow, shrink. The Oxford dictionary also refers to the contraction of the body or limbs, which become shrunken as in paralysis. Contraction has also other uses such as referring to the tension of the muscles, especially of a woman’s womb when she is giving birth. In dance, bodily contraction usually refers to scattering movements which draw body parts together, although this dissertation also examines contraction as a dynamic quality, namely effort and its effects on body shape, space and time.

This dissertation is concerned with contraction as a concept in relation particularly to bodily aesthetic processes. It examines points of connectivity between contraction as a movement and as a concept by tracing it through different theoretical strands. Firstly, through Giordano Bruno’s medieval religious philosophy of spiritual contractions. Secondly, contraction is examined through Henri Bergson’s theory of duration which suggests that the present moves towards “what-will-come” in contraction. Finally, contraction is traced in Deleuzian theory, as an intense point of connection and becoming within the notion of assemblage which creates deterriorializations, for proposing a corporeal and incorporeal analogy which can be experienced simultaneously.

1 I am following André Lepecki in using “what-will-come” which refers to the “always unforeseen unfolding” in contrast to “to the programmatic regimentation of efficient chronometry” (2004a, note 14, p.104).
This dissertation advances therefore a practice-based argument based on four main principles: 1) to unfold the processes which enhance an intercorporeal aesthetic; 2) to write about physical experience and increase its theoretical validity; 3) to show contemporary practice as it is being tasked because it cannot be grasped through theoretical or historical approaches and 4) to understand interdisciplinarity in corporeal terms.

Estelle Barrett argues that practice-as-research has often been interdisciplinary due to its subjective, personal nature and its relationality but also states that the interdisciplinary nature of creative arts research needs further discussion (2007, p.7). Practice-as-research in dance becomes inter-personal because the corporeal, although personal, becomes subject to other bodies of theory and theories of the body. However, it is precisely because of its interpersonal character, generated through practice and theory relationships that practice-as-research stands in between personal and contextual frameworks. Since the live body is itself interdisciplinary, by means of the interweaving functions of the senses, it supports interdisciplinary theory by contracting or drawing together juxtaposed ideas from “disparate areas of knowledge” (ibid).

An emphasis on interdisciplinary methodologies in dance practices, defined as in-between disciplinary approaches, has the potential to change perceptions built on current disciplinary conditions. In this research, interdisciplinarity was suggested by looking at the visual qualities of the discontinuous movement of contraction. Contraction was thus a starting point for this project although, as Bergsonian and Deleuzian theories of contraction support, the contraction is not a beginning but rather a becoming that does not follow a beginning-middle-end narrative.

b. The practice

To undertake choreographic research based on investigating the contraction, I created five pieces which were presented in different venues and each explored different dimensions of the corporeal. The five performances listed in table 1 unfold –
and propose new folds – back to earlier solo bodily-based investigation in the studio, conducted in the first year of my research (2006).

**Monster** preview presented at The Courtyard Theatre as part of Cloud Dance Festival, 18 June 2008, performers: Danai Papazian, Xenia Papazian

**Monster 1,2,3** presented at The Place’s Robin Howard Dance Theatre as part of Resolution! 18 February 2009, performers: Stefania Mylona, Danai Papazian, Xenia Papazian, Sophie Scowen

**Dr Adder** presented at The Place’s Touch Wood Season, 24 September 2009, performers: Natalia Brownlie, Raquel Claudino, Christina Kalliafa, Anne Maarit Kinnunen, Zoe Troughton, Roberta Vaz, Jessy Wenzel

**Monster 5** presented at the Rag Factory part of the 15 minute factory, 26 September 2009, performers: Raquel Claudino, Danai Papazian, Xenia Papazian, Roberta Vaz, Jessy Wenzel

**Dancing Sculptures** was assessed as the final practical outcome at the Siobhan Davies Roof Studio, 3 October 2009, performers: Rebecca D’Andrea, Natalia Brownlie, Raquel Claudino, Anne Maarit Kinnunen.

### Table 1. Performance works

|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|

- Monster preview presented at The Courtyard Theatre as part of Cloud Dance Festival, 18 June 2008, performers: Danai Papazian, Xenia Papazian
- Monster 1,2,3 presented at The Place’s Robin Howard Dance Theatre as part of Resolution! 18 February 2009, performers: Stefania Mylona, Danai Papazian, Xenia Papazian, Sophie Scowen
- Dr Adder presented at The Place’s Touch Wood Season, 24 September 2009, performers: Natalia Brownlie, Raquel Claudino, Christina Kalliafa, Anne Maarit Kinnunen, Zoe Troughton, Roberta Vaz, Jessy Wenzel
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- Dancing Sculptures was assessed as the final practical outcome at the Siobhan Davies Roof Studio, 3 October 2009, performers: Rebecca D’Andrea, Natalia Brownlie, Raquel Claudino, Anne Maarit Kinnunen.
The final piece, *Dancing Sculptures*, was folded in the previous pieces. As early bodily assemblages (Appendix 11) grew in scale and complexity due to the increased number of performers but also, by focusing on the processes of getting in and out of earlier assemblages, new bodily folds emerged. For example, the bodily assemblage *Walkings* in image 1 (*Dr Adder*) was created by unfolding the process of an earlier combination seen in image 2 (*Monster*), called *Acephalous*, in which one performer had to step on the other. However, the fold of *Acephalous*, was also folded differently by adding two performers and became the *Phallus* seen in image 3 (*Dr Adder*).

The first piece *Monster* was a duet created experimentally with two dancers. The second piece *Monster 1,2,3* included the duet and explored this material by deconstructing it into a solo and also further folding it into a trio. After this, I gradually invited more dancers and when the material had expanded through seven performers, *Dr Adder* was presented as a work in progress. All three performances were presented on a theatrical stage, the first at the Courtyard Theatre's small stage and the other two at The Place's Robin Howard Dance Theatre. The bigger dance stage of The Place dictated that the work increase in scale by including more performers. As the dancing sculptures did not move a lot and because three performers formed one body, the space out-staged these early monsters, while *Dr Adder*, with seven performers, seemed to make the work more prominent.

*Monster 5* was also part of the process of making *Dancing Sculptures* and it was presented at the Rag Factory gallery space for the *15 minute factory* performance art event. The unfamiliarity of this ‘experimental’ audience with dance traditions, allowed them to observe the various images, created by the bodily sculptures, in the round, as there was no stage. Because the audience was laughing, the performers, dressed in pink leotards, while performing acrobatic movements, became excited and the work turned into a parody of dance images. In *Dancing Sculptures*, the performers focused more on task-based effort rather than being influenced by audience reactions and the result was more intense. Therefore, all previous practical experimentations were involved through contraction into the final piece, *Dancing Sculptures*.

Although the practical research of the thesis has focused on the uses of contraction as a choreographic methodology, in this written dissertation I also examine the philosophical extensions of this concept in order to develop a theory of
intercorporeal aesthetics. I aim to suggest, that contraction in dance, is a more differentiating aesthetic process than deconstruction, despite one enhancing the other. Dividing multiplies difference, but may be seen as more normative than contraction's 'repudiation' which not only rejects the normative, but transforms it by unfolding 'unnatural' or unpredictable elements and lineages. Deconstruction and contraction can both take part in an increasing dimensionality although, they may be considered to differ with regards to their degree of differentiation or intensity. I aim to propose that degrees of differentiation may be approached through an intercorporeal framework, which is always temporal, relational and unpredictable rather than defined.

Contraction can thus be seen as an aesthetic process generated through, yet contrary to, deconstructionist processes that span the 20th century. The term deconstruction was introduced by French philosopher Jacques Derrida in 1967 to refer to the unraveling of linguistic significations. He proposed that the complex genealogies of concepts reveal, produce and recontextualize 'limitless' difference. Despite deconstruction arising from literary theory and in relation to post-structuralist philosophical approaches of mid 20th century, it is possible to say that deconstruction began through the modern disciplines of early 20th century and their efforts to unfold the outdated aesthetic conventions of classicism. More specifically, in artistic dance deconstruction began when early modern dance pioneers, such as Martha Graham and others in Europe, deconstructed the aesthetic form and corporeal structures of classical dance.

Instead of relying upon either Martha Graham's specific formalization of torso movement or Mary Wigman's expressionist use of tension, contraction, according to this thesis, is defined as a dynamic effort quality which has the potential to distort shape design. It stands for the particular energy arising from the muscles' active use or tension, rather than relaxation, and the ability of muscular tension and energy to distort movement and bodily form. This form of effort is necessary for disrupting conventional dance movement and the aesthetic habitus.

2 Rachel Fensham suggests repudiation as a performative aesthetic process which is based on rejecting normalcy (2009c, p.133).
3 It could even be proposed that deconstruction began in the European Enlightenment period with the formation of disciplines of knowledge.
The term effort came from the French verb *esforcier*, which means to force and is always in-tension. I wish to argue that contraction as tension can bring about an aesthetic expansion in dance. In physics tension refers to extension. Judith B. Alter has suggested that "tension is a striving between forces and also a cause of extension, which is both a stretching and a release" (1991, p.81). When a muscle contracts, its antagonist releases or extends at the same time, but the contracted muscle itself also releases or extends after the contraction has taken place. I thus aim to argue that contraction extends both synchronically and diachronically. Alter, also noted "that tension is the root of intension, which phenomenologists define in terms of consciousness and human will" (ibid). Thus, tension is accompanied by an intention.

But how is tension to be measured? What is less or more effort in dance? It will be argued that effort can only acquire an ostensive definition and be measured through its relationship to shape design. Over shape and under shape effort, 'over-effort' and 'under-effort' respectively, refer to amounts of effort which are more or less than the one required by the shape design of the body in motion (without training and repetition). But these terms do not suggest any unreal effort. Corporeal effort is always real, no matter if it is more or less intense. I will thus argue that what differentiates the degree of effort as well as aesthetics is shape design.

Increased effort is a prerequisite for bodily distortions. The etymology of distortion comes from the latin *distortus*. The verb *Distorquere* suggests a twist out of shape and thus, the change of form. The Longman dictionary states that to distort means 'to twist out of a natural, usual, or original shape or condition.' Deleuze's explanation of the Leibnizian 'concetto' would suggest that there are no origins as origins are also distortions of something else (1993, p.48-49). Heidi Gilpin states that "Freud suggests in Moses and Monotheism, the world Entstellung, or distortion, signifies not only disfigurement, but also dislocation," (in Foster, 1996, p.108). What is worth noting here is Gilpin's choice of words. Disfigurement and dislocation imply

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4 "We might well lend the word ‘Entstellung’ (distortion) the double meaning to which it has a claim but of which today it makes no use. It should mean not only ‘to change the appearance of something’ but also ‘to put something in another place,’ there ‘s the displacement of a body.” Sigmund Freud cited, Standard edition 23 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1978, p.43).
negativity through the use of ‘dis’ which suggests the stepping out of figuration and out of a location respectively. However, corporeal distortions do not suggest disappearance. Distortion may be disfiguration but also re-figuration, and as Gilpin suggests, both dislocation and relocation.

Distortion is also a transgression, a violation of both terms in order to create a new one. So, it means neither ‘dis’ nor torquère, but ‘dis’ with torquère. In transgression “physical activity might be influenced by the conscious memory of an endless metamorphosis, whose various stages would still be possible” as George Bataille argues (1986, p.128). Bergson’s analysis provides insight into Bataille’s theory of transgression and helps to explain how distortion stems from a violating reason: images are “preserved in memory, reproduced in consciousness [and]...distort the practical character of life, mingling dream with reality” (1988, p.84). The concept of distortion is thus in flux. Perceptions of the concept of distortion constantly shift awareness to admit that distortion is intrinsic to movement and effort.

Like dis-tortion, discontinuity also entails continuity. Bodily contractions create aesthetic discontinuities which constantly change, in contrast to the alterity of repetition and continuity. Contraction can be seen therefore as a process of expanding movement possibilities.

Contraction intersects visual elements with dance because effort not only makes the body more visible due to movement discontinuity, but has also the potential to distort the appearance of the body visually and kinaesthetically. Unfolding the visual elements in dance practice suggests that the production of movement is an intrinsically interdisciplinary activity, in the sense of contraction or drawing together of disciplines that shape dance as an aesthetic effect. A more complicated conceptualization of effort is now related to aesthetic possibilities that exceed conventional notions of labour and catharsis.

I am suggesting that disciplinary contractions emerge in postmodern dance as a way of deconstructing modernism or deconstructing deconstruction. I wish to propose that the project of interdisciplinary performance, by favoring contraction, allows another interpretation of the past to emerge, instead of continuing or excluding its force from contemporary practice. However, are movement dualisms overcome? In particular, can the contraction and release dichotomy be negated through
interdisciplinarity and if so how? The contraction, as the Artaudian and Deleuzian 'Body without Organs,' "is contrary but not dichotomous" as Deleuzian theorist Erin Manning argues in her Politics of Touch (2007, p.138). It suggests a postmodern disruption which is discontinuous, in terms of modern dichotomies and continuous, in terms of modern dance's disruption of classicism.

c. Deleuzian Theory and Dance Studies

Gilles Deleuze's and Felix Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus (1988, ed. 2004) has been frequently used in dance studies and particularly in practice-as-research, primarily because its theory is founded on matter. It offers a corporeal view of many theoretical concepts and it has provided a tool for subjectivity studies, which, in my view, have been overrated in the field of dance. Phenomenological studies of dance subjectivity have utilized corporeality but obscured objectivity which can also be found in matter. The body has become the subject of knowledge in feminist and phenomenological studies of corporeality. However, the body is also, still the object of knowledge. I aim to argue for an intercorporeal aesthetic which brings together these bodies of knowledge and consequently, examines the body both as object and as subject.

This trajectory of subject and object has been obscured in dance studies which borrowed Deleuzian concepts for supporting distinct ideologies such as the phenomenology of feminist movement. Then, formal inconsistencies arise, because Deleuzian theory got rid of ideological constraints, through its focus on applicability. 'Borrowing' concepts from Deleuzian theory becomes acceptable within an interdisciplinary framework. Deleuzian theorist, Brian Massumi states that "Deleuze and Guattari delight in stealing from other disciplines, and they are more than happy to return the favor" (1992, p.8). However, when disciplinary research involves Deleuzian concepts it becomes interdisciplinary.

I want to propose, that Deleuzian theory, becomes useful in dance or corporeal studies, for breaking away from conceptualizations of subjectivity as separate from the object. It allows for a post-deconstructionist project of connection, in which, the
body, works as a trajectory for subjectivity and objectivity in dance. Situating Deleuzian theory historically, suggests a new subjectivity that is bound by objectivity and a new objectivity that is bound by subjectivity.

The emphasis, in Deleuzian theory, on points of intensity as points of connectivity, develops the Bergsonian concept of time-contraction in space, and implies the primacy of contraction as a differentiating factor, particularly at a point in history, when “much of the post-structuralist program [has] been accomplished” (Schechner, 2002, p.149). The contraction is a point of intensity and connectivity in Deleuzian non-filial rhizomatic structures, termed as agencement (translated into assemblage by Paul Foss & Paul Patton in 1981 and retained in Brian Massumi’s translation 1988). “An assemblage is precisely this increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.9). Despite including deconstruction, the assemblage favours contraction as a point of transformation.

The English translation of the assemblage, places more emphasis on the contraction or drawing together, while the French term, refers more to putting or setting together, as spatial characteristics, in the arrangement or fitting of elements, to matter instead of energy. The French term agencement suggests that fittings, which may be unpredictable or ‘unnatural,’ are indeed spatial and thus, related to matter which is always moving. Thus, the agencement focuses on the spatial contraction (despite difference being produced as a result of it) as an effect of unifying movement. However, a spatial contraction cannot be separated from an intense dynamic, understood in terms of proximity between factors previously at a long distance from one another. Within an academic framework, assemblages can be a productive mode of knowledge and produce ‘planes of consistency’ (although they also may not, as in the case of surrealism) depending on the arrangement and intensity of the components.

In an assemblage, components may come from different disciplines, and may be arranged in various ways, when the body becomes the focus, as in dance studies. It is worth noting that I consider the body as the medium or focus of dance, rather than movement which would imply a modernist approach. Moreover, movement, cannot be perceived without a body, and thus, cannot exist without a body. Examining the
body in its capacity as both medium and mediator, allows movement to become interdisciplinary because physical movement also produces sounds and images. Thus, the body creates interdisciplinary assemblages, such as the one in-between dance and sculpture.

d. Why Dancing Sculptures?

The title, Dancing Sculptures, was born through the connection to Gilbert and George’s Living Sculptures, in order to address more specifically the tensions between dance and sculpture. Gilbert and George’s Living Sculptures, first created in 1970, were important to Dancing Sculptures because they saw living bodies as sculptures. However, their living sculptures turn sculptures into live bodies, while Dancing Sculptures turns live dancing bodies into sculptures. In the Living Sculptures of Gilbert and George, sculpture unfolds in space and time, while in Dancing Sculptures, dancing bodies fold into sculptural assemblages. The performance installation Dancing Sculptures, emerged through contraction processes which constantly transformed the elements.

I aim to propose, that the passage from dance to sculpture, contracts bodies in space and time, into a sculptural assemblage thus, seeing bodies as neither only subjective nor only objective. The body rather becomes both an objective subject, a sculptured dance and a subjective object, a ‘dancing’ sculpture. A verb is used for dance to connote the background, the action and subjectivity and a noun i.e. sculpture, to connote result or product, stasis and objectivity. Dance becomes sculptural, and thus also visual, through spatial contractions. Sculpture becomes a live object rather than a solo moving subject, in that the assemblage of a dancing sculpture is the result of many live bodies.

It is worth noting that sculpture entered performance through inanimate props, such Isamu Noguchi’s sculptural props in Martha Graham’s modern choreographies, and later animate ones, such as moving constructions in the operatic works of Robert Wilson. Historically, dance has followed the visual arts due to the longer creative processes of the medium (training bodies). Is therefore the relationship between dance
and sculpture antagonistic? Interdisciplinary approaches from sculpture to dance in the 1960s and 1970s opened the way to approaches from dance to sculpture and thus, together they create a shared aesthetic challenge that spans from modernism to postmodernism. However, there is a difference in corporeal terms. Sculptural experiments relating to performance were in essence deconstructionist in that they fragmented sculpture in space and time. They gradually became highly subjective and expressive developing into body or performance art. On the other hand, dance experiments relating to sculpture, such as Dancing Sculptures, contract bodies in space and time. Are these hybrids reductions of sculpture and dance respectively, or are they expansions? They may be conventionally seen as disciplinary reductions; however, I aim to argue that it is precisely interdisciplinary contractions that allow for a disciplinary expansion in dance aesthetics.

“The verb sculpo means “to work (material) into some form by carving or engraving” (Oxford Latin Dictionary cited in Salzman-Mitchell, 2008, p.294). Thus, to sculpt is the process of giving form by shaping materials. Similarly, dance carves bodies and transforms their shape and moving abilities through extensive training. Sculpture, however, as Patricia Salzman-Mitchell notes, can also be performed by drawing pieces of the material together such as in the case of Pygmalion’s ivory statue in Ovid’s poem Metamorphoses. Mitchell suggests that ivory comes in smaller pieces than the size of the statue and thus, the statue should have been made by joining smaller pieces together. In the poem, as Mitchell observes “the word artus ‘joint limb,’ indicates what happens to parts of the body in transformation” (p.306). Ars, (art) is etymologically connected to Latin words such as artus (limb). As Mitchell notes “both ars and artus appear to derive from a Proto-Indo-European root ar-preserved in Latin also in coarto, “to force,” meaning “to join” (p.305). She also notes that “there is a tradition in classical literature whereby to create the most perfect woman, the artist has to ‘put together’ the pieces of various models” (p.307). However, Pygmalion’s statue in Ovid’s Metamorphoses begins through fragmentation and takes shape through contraction or the drawing together of separate pieces as happens in the assemblages of Dancing Sculptures. The notion of assemblage sculpture can be related to the contemporary dancing body which holds together conceptually isolated or ‘independent’ parts.
In *Dancing Sculptures*, the body is seen as material which comes in certain and varied sizes. Similarly to Pygmalion, the human body can also create forms bigger than its natural size by contracting or drawing together two or more bodies as fragment-images of a bigger unity. “These processes of construction and reconstruction in turn alter the very nature of this intercorporeal exchange, and, in so doing, offer the possibility of expanding our social, political, and ethical horizons” as theorist of intercorporeality Gail Weiss supports (1999, p. 6). In this sense, *Dancing Sculptures* may accentuate the notion of intercorporeality.

Corporeality can be broadly defined as the study of, and of relating to, the body⁵. Weiss notes however, that the “body image is itself an expression of an ongoing exchange between bodies and body images” (1999, p.3). Thus, visual qualities are intrinsic to the processes of intercorporeality used in *Dancing Sculptures*. More specifically, in this research the body is examined as being in-between the moving body and the visual or sculptural body. Intercorporeality therefore considers the body as being in-between other bodies. Thus the term intercorporeality leads to the admittance of the fact that the experience and phenomenology of the moving body, which have concerned recent studies in corporeality⁶, cannot be seen as singular or merely subjective but rather in relation to other bodies and subsequently to other bodies of theory.

In this sense, and through intercorporeality, I want to suggest that *Dancing Sculptures* stands in-between dance deconstructions (through fragmentation, for example, body parts isolations or choreographic fragmentation and phrasing) and sculptural constructions (which draw parts together, for example, in dense bodily contact). As with many post-conceptual visual art works: the effort of process is included in the product. Effort is used both as an end-product and for reaching an end. Sculptural bodily assemblages distort shape design and disrupt time narratives. *Dancing Sculptures*, by considering the visual potential of the body, makes visible non-logocentric methods for distortion through time and reveals the contradictions of any given unity or stable meaning. Thus, through its intercorporeal approach, the work proposes an interdisciplinary shift to corporeality as a mediator of effort, its use and visuality in dance.

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⁵ For further reference look at Pasi Falk (1985)
⁶ For further reference look at Susan Foster (1996).
**e. Summary**

This thesis is positioned as an affirmation of a new way of theorizing the contraction and its intercorporeal potential in dance aesthetics. However, since this position stands in opposition to previous binaries, it also needs to be elaborated through a critique of the past. Critiquing the past necessitates recognition of the fixities and constraints of modern and postmodern dance because of their reliance on expression, continuous movement or as Laban named it, ‘free flow’ and a politics of release-based dance without contra(di)ction or constraint. These fixities however limit aesthetic innovation. Dance therefore becomes dependent, to a politically conservative sense, on a smoothing out of its past and its tensions. This research is thus situated in relation to this modern dance history by including others (its opposites) which stand outside the discipline.

Chapter A begins with a retrospective study of contraction in dance, based on section 1 of the DVD, *Dancing Sculptures*. It consists of an introductory solo danced by me on the diagonal, revisiting histories of contraction, while moving linearly through space. This dance is based on body images from modern dance techniques. Effort was increased in early modern dance both in Europe and in the USA. I will begin the chapter on European histories of effort with the work of Mary Wigman. From European expressionism, I move on to examine the particular formalization of torso contraction, in the modern dance vocabulary of Martha Graham, which combined expressionism with formalism, effort and visual design. From there, I move on to examine Merce Cunningham’s form of effort, which, by abandoning expression, further developed body part isolations and formalism. When bodily fragmentation continued in release-based techniques which focused on anatomical knowledge, it became exhausted and favored pedestrian continuous movement rather than distortion. These investigations aim to unfold the relationship between effort and shape design as well as between movement and image. This journey through time, by suggesting that expressionism and formalism should not be separated, will introduce another mode of interdisciplinary performance, which abandons the expressionistic logocentrism of dance theatre, for the visual dance approach of *Dancing Sculptures*.

Chapter B, by locating dance and sculpture analogies which made *Dancing Sculptures* possible will discuss the performance. Stillnes, efforts, bodies-as-subjects,
bodies-as-objects, body-parts, proximity and intensification will be examined as aesthetic processes, in relation to the end product, the filmed performance installation *Dancing Sculptures*. *Dancing Sculptures* consisted of monstrous sculptural configurations through the contraction or effortful contact between bodies. The body parts of one performer were fitted together with body parts of one or more performers to create sculptural bodily assemblages and visual distortions. For becoming parts, bodies moved with increased effort even when they paused. Bodies then became bodies-parts, fragments of the sculptural assemblages and disturbed subject and object conventions. Assembling bodies-as-parts enhanced a close bodily proximity between them. The proximity of bodies in *Dancing Sculptures* created a multiplicity of representations since spectators could watch the sculpture move as a whole and see individual bodies and parts at once. This intensification of form also enhanced aesthetic contractions in *Dancing Sculptures*.

*Dancing Sculptures* is seen, in chapter C, as a form of visual dance. For tracing the relationship between dance and visual art references, I begin with a choreological appreciation of Juan Miró’s *Head of a Woman* (1938). This example demonstrates how extrinsic visual elements to the body’s performativity, become intrinsic. Since images can be perceived kinaesthetically, by means of looking at colour as effort, shape design is also involved in revealing the movement qualities of a visual work. Then, forms of sculpture can also be perceived kinaesthetically. I will look at Hans Bellmer’s mid 1930s dolls, to suggest that dance and sculpture share a three-dimensional intercorporeality, in which, seeing images, becomes a kinaesthetic watching. The effects of merging choreological with visual methodologies will be demonstrated through a performance art example, La Ribot’s *Distinguished Pieces* (or *Panoramix*). However, this merging of visual art and dance happens primarily through the body. What *Dancing Sculptures* proposes is that objective seeing and subjective watching can happen simultaneously when moving bodies create visual illusions.

In chapter D, I will start by looking at contraction as an aesthetic, which is generated in-between effort and form, and is intercorporeal and interdisciplinary. It will be concluded that interdisciplinary performance can be instigated from within the dance discipline and through the bodily distortions of modernism. Given that interdisciplinarity was in this project instigated by bodily multiplicity, it will be
explained through intercorporeality. I aim to show, based on practice, that dance is primarily interdisciplinary because the moving body itself is an object of interdisciplinary concern in terms of the interweaving functions of the senses. I will thus draw an analogy between interdisciplinarity and intercorporeality.

I will propose that intercorporeality may be of increasing significance in understanding interdisciplinarity. The moving body creates visual forms and thus its examination required merging dance with visual art. Through this close proximity of subject and object, proposed by Dancing Sculptures, perhaps corporeality is moving towards a kind of abjection which may not be as horrific as Julia Kristeva suggested (1982). That is to say, that the negation through interdisciplinarity of the subject/object dichotomy, does not negate either subjectivity or objectivity because interdisciplinarity proposes another way of thinking about disciplines, rather than their negation, through the body.

"In order to avoid reducing a performance to no more than a reflection of its social and political context, it is necessary to find a balance between interdisciplinary and medium specific approaches" Ramsay Burt suggests (2009, p.41). However, since interdisciplinary approaches have always been intrinsic to dance, a 'plane of consistency' emerges particularly through the focus on the live body. That is to say, interdisciplinary approaches become generated within medium-specific disciplines as avant-garde anti-forms. Thus, discipline-specific methodologies in dance become generated as interdisciplinary, firstly through writing dancing since "an investigation into the way dancing bodies mediate ideologies is interdisciplinary" (ibid); and secondly, through movement practice which was supported through seeing, as well as filming and photographing my solo improvisations and the choreographic work in process. Shifting the dance focus to an interdisciplinary approach can lead to avant-garde anti-forms such as that of Dancing Sculptures.
A. Dance Histories of Contraction

In this chapter, I will demonstrate how a practical examination of the modern dance histories of contraction instigated the Dancing Sculptures. I will support my analysis with reference to the research methodologies made evident in the Appendices. My primary investigations resulted in a solo danced by me on the diagonal which revisited in a linear manner, body images from Western dance techniques. This solo dance also distorted these images. While analyzing these images through this introductory section of Dancing Sculptures, I will revisit the preliminary practical research on effort I undertook in the studio (Appendix 1), while embodying these histories.

Embodiment refers to the process of bringing something in the body, by giving it physical form, and thus, making the incorporeal corporeal. Embodying history allows for interpreting history through the body and thus, for relating the past to the present. Rachel Fensham, theorist in critical and cultural studies, states that "when the concept of embodiment is admitted to history, then dancing provides ample evidence of how subjective, collective and participatory experience becomes a supplement which alters knowledge" (2008, p.34). Practical investigations of historical sources and forms suggest a synchronic approach. Embodiment, Fensham continues, has "emerged as the supplement to models of analysis that have been predicated on writing as a limited (juridical) form of knowledge and authority" (p.35). However, appreciation of the written resources of these histories also informed my embodiment. These solo practical explorations and experimentations with Martha Graham's movement system supported critical reflections upon other dance histories and instigated further directions of the study towards visuality in dance.
The Solo dance shown in section 3 of the DVD begins in stillness, thus, with an image. Dance techniques, even the most conceptual ones, are recognized through body images. For example, Deborah Jowitt in her article titled *Form as the Image of Human Perfectability and Natural Order* (1996, Dance Research Journal) demonstrates the role of body images in dance, even in fluid practices such as those of Doris Humphrey. Particular body images are being promoted through dance training by creating and selecting different body types, despite different movement techniques. Even a specific dance technique is intercorporeal as bodies learn to develop it together, by constantly improving it and through looking at various embodiments of different body types. In dance it is often body images which serve intercorporeal exchange as Weiss proposed. She supports:

That the plasticity and stability of the body image can serve to maintain an oppressive 'status quo' and that a greater awareness of the 'body power' we have at our disposal through this very plasticity and stability can result in new, perhaps subversive, body images that can be used to fight oppression on a corporeal front.

Gail Weiss, 1999, p.10

Images serve as movement stabilizers, but as concrete references, they also allow destabilization and promote an intercorporeal dialogue. The creation of new imagined body images further develops intercorporeal dialogue also through kinaesthetic distortion. “The very notion of distortion seems to presuppose a kind of norm against which the distortion can be measured” as Weiss states (1999, p.4). In the first image, I am sitting on another performer's waist while facing opposing directions. The opposite facing of the upper and the lower body image suggests a 'wrong' or distorted human body.

My dance thus begins from the sculptural formation. It is worth noting here, that particularly Greek sculpture was an inspiration for many international dancers in the beginning of the 20th century. It was an inspiration for Madge Atkinson’s and Ruby Ginner’s dance in the UK but also for Isadora Duncan’s dance in the USA and
for many German dancers. This is testified by Nelly’s, a famous Greek dance photographer’s images (1923-1929) which captured various international dancers at the Parthenon’s sculptures (1997, Euthimiou-Tsekoura, Vounelaki, Boudouri). Inspired by the emblem of Greek civilization at the time, these dances were later revived by the Imperial Society of Dance Teachers (ISTD) which termed them ‘Greek Dance’. However, strictly speaking there was no ‘Greek Dance,’ as Greek dance was more Dionysian and Greek art overall more formalist than these international dance genres represented. These international manifestations of ‘Greek Dance’ inspired by Greek sculpture were perceived as producing ‘natural’ movement (often associated with continuous flow as for example in the case of Duncan) despite the shapes of movement being ‘unnatural.’ Thus, ‘natural’ movement continuity was based on ‘unnatural’ images borrowed from sculpture.

I would like to point out that in order to make any evaluation, especially with regards to how ‘natural’ a technique is, it must also, necessarily, be perceived as an image, despite many considering the image insufficient to describe kinaesthetic qualities. In my view, critical approaches, such as visuality in dance, allow us to look at the pragmatics of kinaesthetic possibilities in the macro scale, beyond historically specific moments of dance history rather than look at dance in a specific historical point and from a specific point of view or a specific historical and personal position. However, historical images were in this research perceived in the micro scale, in relation to my practice, as related to specific historical moments but also departing from fixed concepts of what an image represents.

In section 3 of the DVD, I fall off the dancer’s back to the floor. My body contracts in a position reminiscent to that of Graham’s contraction. My dance began with Graham’s contraction in order to suggest that other histories of effort could be appreciated in relation to Graham’s perspective. Graham’s perspective was favored over others because it combined formalist with expressionist movement. However, formalism was an after-effect of expressionism which is itself an after-effect of effort as it will be argued.

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7 This is how her name became known (with an apostrophe). Her real name was Elli Sougioultzoglou-Seraidari.
8 Greek modern dance was developed by Greek pioneer dancers of the time, Eva Palmer-Sikelianou (1874-1952) and later Koula Pratsika (1899-1984) and contained traces of archaic Delphic dances, which were in turn inspired by choric dances.
When I move through space in large steps with parallel feet, head down, while the arms reach forward with my palms bent, my contraction becomes theatrical. My effortful gesture is reminiscent of Mary Wigman’s tension expressed through mundane movement. Wigman was not concerned with form and thus, European tension was reduced to a mere expression of resistance. “Wigman’s dance did not involve an active body moving through a passive space, but rather a dynamic interaction of forces in body and space, a projection and reception of ‘tension’ and ‘release’” (Reynolds, 2007, p.67). That is to say that Wigman’s use of tension included also the conditions it attempted to resist; instead of altering the form of gestures and by reproducing them, it overemphasized dominant forms of conflict. Foucauldian theory insists that extrinsic resistance to systems of power is ineffective. Effort would only become resisting when it could alter forms. Thus, although there was considerable tension in Wigman’s work, there was no distortion as in Graham’s, due to German Expressionism’s attention to ‘inner’ nature. However, an ‘inner’ self is deeply linked to the ‘outer’ body and thus, also as an expression of it. The Ausdruckstanz lineage has been engaged in expressing the personal without acknowledging the deep social foundations of the personal. Effort was thus corporeally related to its after-effect, expression.

In contemporary developments between neuroscience and dance Alexander Dale J., Janyce Hyatt and Jeff Hollerman (2007) explore the relation between neuroscience and dance and argue that there is a “link between emotion and musculature” (p.104). The muscular contraction is seen as indicating the reality of emotions and confirming ‘true’ expression. Their paradigm implies that the more numerous the contractions, the truer the facial expression. These authors state that a constructed smile does not involve contraction of the ‘lateral orbicularis oculi’ (p.103) which contracts when the smile expresses ‘true’ emotion. Since every expression even a constructed or imagined one can be materialized, there is no true or fake expression, no naturalness or artificiality, just varying amounts of intensity. Perhaps what can be retained from this is that the more the intensity of the body increases, the more its communicative potential develops. Bodily expression becomes greater when effort increases.

The study of effort in dance was increased in early 20th century both in Europe and in the USA: in Wigman’s case, it was used to express the sociopolitical tensions
felt through gestural specificities and, in Graham’s practice, for altering shape design. Thus, it could be argued that in Wigman’s case, the experience of shape design altered effort while in Graham’s case, effort altered shape design. Postmodern dance in the West has ignored shape design for the sake of effort while at the same time, it promotes effortlessness. One of the paradoxa of postmodern dance lies in that it reduces its potential for change by being anti-modern.

Through this European expressionist background, Graham’s technique has been considered formalist by many theorists (Appendix 2). Graham’s form evolved in contrast to expression. John Martin in one of his New York Times reviews (1933) stated that Graham "has turned her back equally on the impertinences of 'self-expression' and on the indulgences of that theory which seeks in dance a release from reality" (in Armitage, 1966, p.15). However, I want to argue that Graham’s practice is important precisely because it was in-between expressionism and formalism. Given that formalism was an after-effect of expressionism, the latter was included if not exaggerated in her form. American modern dance is important to my argument due to its formal challenges and the movement distortions that give an emphasis on body shape. Weiss states: “given that the term ‘morphe’ itself is most frequently translated as ‘shape’ or ‘form’ (in a material sense), it would seem that morphology should offer us a discourse about shaping – how shapes are formed” (1999, p.72). Examining shape constructions allowed me to trace the role of effort in the radical shifts of form which Graham produced.

Graham’s dance technique was founded on the principle of torso contraction, which she regarded an initiator of movement, capable of transforming the moving body. Agnes De Mille, Alice Helpern, Merle Armitage, Marian Horosko, Marcia Siegel, Donald McDonagh, and Henrietta Bannerman acknowledge that the contraction of the torso extended the spine since it could be executed without losing height. As Bessie Schonberg9 recalls “in the 1930s, the contraction was executed as a lifting up, and the release as a pressing down” (cited in Marian Horosko, 1991, p.26). Thus, both formalizations of contraction and release used increased effort.

Ruth St. Denis’s “yoga classes may have provided inspiration for Graham’s floor work, and her interest in breathing may have led to Graham’s development of

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9 Member of the Martha Graham Dance Company from 1930-1931.
the contraction/release principle” as many of her dancers have suggested (Helpern, 1991, p.7). In Graham’s technique both contraction and release activated and contracted the muscles through the use of breathing. It is noteworthy, that in Graham’s technique, inhalation took place during release and exhalation during contraction. This hyper-real notion of breathing and shape design allowed the torso to extend while it contracted. In contrast, contemporary release dance practices invert the natural movement of breathing by placing exhalation in release or extension movements and inhalation in contracting or gathering movements.

In performing the Graham contraction, contradictory emotions, such as pain and laughter, were fundamental. As one of her dancers, Lepczyk suggests “frequently the attack of contraction is violent, the dynamics of a punch” (in Bannerman, 1998, p.263) while Bonnie Bird states in the documentary film Not Just a Somersault: Insights on Aspects on Martha Graham Technique 1938-1991, that Graham was interested in an ‘exaggerated laugh.’

The spasm of the diaphragm, the muscles used in coughing and laughing, were used to spark gesture. There was a shutting and downward movement and an opening and lifting of both the diaphragm and the pelvis. These spasms she called contractions, and they were visible – and this was the point – not just in the resulting effect but in what they caused the rest of the body to do.

Agnes De Mille, 1956, p.97 (my emphasis)

Thus, the point was to visualize effort for seeing how it would influence the rest of the body. The aim was to trace a point of reference, an image, in order to better understand its movement potential.

Stark Young stated about Graham that she looked “as though she were about to give birth to a cube” (De Mille, 1956, p.122). This kind of awkward effort was related to bodily objectification in the early days, although by the 1970s Graham’s performers had become more lyrical. Bannerman states that “according to the context in which it appears, the contraction signifies inner turmoil and despair, sexual desire and passion” (1998, p.263). However, today Graham’s torso formalization does not
convey the emotional intensity described by Young and Bannerman due to the different contexts and diverse training of today’s dancers.

Structural analysis, the analysis of social structures that shape the subjects, by being generated through rationalism which does not account for experience but instead only reason as the foundation of knowledge, does not recognize human agency or the fact that subjects are also shaping structures. Moreover, the emphasis on structures focuses analysis on the object’s design or ‘skeleton’ rather than functions. Structural analysis could be said to have began in the European Enlightenment era, before the phenomenological turn of the mid 20th century. Structural analysis in dance emphasizes the objectiveness of dance structures rather than its objectives. However, it became popular to describe formalist dance. For instance, it provided useful information about Graham’s practice but did not suffice for exploring contraction’s potentiality particularly because it was synchronous to the practice.

When, in the grand narratives of modernity, the nature of the object being described (the emergence of pure form) comes to converge with the critical framework through which it is approached (formalism), the results can be both highly persuasive and at the same time severe in the limitations imposed upon criticism.

Norman Bryson in Desmond, 1997, p.70

We cannot experience the emotional content that Graham’s contraction carried in its time. In this sense, contraction cannot be reconstructed. The difficulty lies again in effort and shape relationships. New formalizations would be required to embody this kind of tension. In order to reproduce Graham’s maximum effort, my own shape design had to become further exaggerated, with the whole body crouching in a twisted position in the solo dance.

What is evident is that the early work of Graham altered the aesthetic reality of dance so much, that it was characterized by John Martin in The Times (1929) and other critics of the time as ‘morbid’ (in Armitage, 1966, p.8). Graham’s contraction caused the body to twist, thus starting to break the frontal orientation of classical choreography which was still prominent in the Italian stage. In Graham’s
choreography, contraction created fragmented narratives through discontinuous flow, instigating body part isolations, which actually rejected the grand narratives of modernity. Graham’s unconscious bodily fragmentation is in line with dance theorist, Susan Leigh Foster’s appreciation of Graham’s “dual identity of the body” in *Reading Dancing* (1986). She states that in Graham’s work “the body serves the whole self, but it also assumes the identity of one part of the self” (p.50).

Graham thus envisions the choreographic process as integrating by the act of dancing several dualities – the spontaneous and the crafted, the psychological and the physical, the personal and the universal, the rational and the passionate, and the unconscious and the conscious – into a fragile but supreme moment.

Susan Foster, 1986, p.31

It is this integrating mode in Graham’s choreographic and aesthetic operations which aligns itself with Bergsonian and Deleuzian conceptualizations of contraction and the assemblage respectively, and that I wish to explore more extensively in practice and theory.

Massumi argues that “a synchronous structure is by definition a closed system of permutations, and is therefore logically inconsistent with the open-ended progress of diachrony” (1992, p.42). By synchronic approaches, I refer to analysis of present practices and aesthetics, to an approach that happens at the same time as the object of study, while diachrony refers to historical approaches in which analysis happens in a different time from the time of the object of study. To avoid the diachronic limitations of any synchronic approach, further historical studies were necessary, through which I propose a combination of diachronic and synchronic approaches, particularly in practice-based research. As Fensham observed following Phillip Auslander, the post-structuralist approach may have been very productive for understanding modernism, as in Foster’s *Reading Dancing* (1986), but it could not always analyze postmodern performance (2009b, p.49).
Besides Foster's, other recent theorisations by Mark Franko, Ramsay Burt, Susan Leigh Foster, and Dee Reynolds of Graham's aesthetic processes\textsuperscript{10} have proved useful in this research. Franko suggests that "Graham's experimental work in the late twenties and early thirties attempted to redefine human presence in purely bodily terms" (1995, p.50) while Burt looks at the historical and socio-political framework which turned Graham's dancers into 'alien bodies' (1998). He states: "by calling modern dancing bodies 'alien bodies' I am drawing attention to the fact that...modernity...created needs for new definitions of origin that, during the 1920s and 1930s, were partially satisfied through the appreciation of primitivism in the arts" (1998, p.17). In Graham's practice, bare feet, a weighted quality and the contractions are considered primitive elements in relation to classical dance. I want to propose that the better technology which today's extensive and diversely trained body has acquired, can allow for a tenser distortion that can represent a more profound experience of the primitive.

In my solo dance, the exaggerated contraction, twisted the torso with all the effort available and body parts started to move in isolation; the head, the shoulder, and then the leg and the arm. These body part isolations were created due to the effort needed for moving through space in particular formalizations of contraction. My practice suggested that body part isolations had been instigated by torso contractions in Graham's practice.

This appreciation of Graham's early use of effort was supported by my analysis of a dance performed by Bonnie Bird in the documentary film \textit{A Dancer's World} (1957). In the 1930s, the contraction created, in Laban's terms, 'bound' or discontinuous flow. Even though Bird's dance is quite abstract, reminiscent of a sequence of exercises, there is a strong dramatic quality inherent in the weighted movement. As Foster notes, in Graham's technique "the action begins in the pelvis, and the rest of the body follows segmentally and almost unwillingly" (1986, p.81). In carrying the weight in the pelvis, Bird's body looked fragmented and her body parts even more so, almost isolated, as they took on different shapes and their movement went in different directions. Some body parts were left behind while others moved forward through space. In Bird's dance, fragmentation connoted the body's resistance

\textsuperscript{10} Susan Manning has written about the politics of culture and ethnicities in the work of Graham, although I am more interested in movement politics in terms of choreology and aesthetics.
to the difficulty of the form, perhaps even the subject’s resistance to change. A primitive ‘raw energy’, confirmed by Thea Barnes (in Not Just a Somersault: Insights on Aspects on Martha Graham Technique 1938-1991), was juxtaposed with the visible intention of reaching full embodiment and gave the movement a quality of forwardness. The movement being new and not yet fully explored or embodied added to its alien style and effect.

The ‘bound’ flow of Bird’s movement maintained a tension between presence and absence, as well as image and movement, which strengthened performative presence. The small pauses inherent in Bird’s movement also allowed for a greater visibility of the body. Franko argues that “bound flow is motivated by design rather than by emotional complexes” (1995, p.47). Thus, Bird’s bound flow intensified presence due to the tensions between movement and image. Franko also notes Edwin Denby’s interpretation of Graham’s practice as expressing the desire “to keep a dance constantly at the tension of a picture. She seems to be, especially in her solo dances, clinging to visual definition” (cited in Franko, 1995, p.45). Graham’s attention to visuality had also been suggested by Jane Dudley which stated that she “had a way of working from images” (in De Mille, 1956, p.117). However, an attention to images developed partly because of the lack of any transitional movements in the synthesis of shapes. This effect also created a quality of absence in movement terms. As Young observed “there was also too great an absence of movement: the dancer’s technique involved steps and positions, but the transition, which is the living element, was close to nil” (in Armitage, 1966, p.50). Therefore, the tension between image and movement created a strong representation of a gaping modernity.

Graham’s early period of work with the contraction executed with violent dynamics evidenced effort’s possibility to distort not only movement but also visual forms. Franko states that “the ‘tableau-vivant’ style of Graham used in her early group works illustrates how expressive moments were consistently displaced by a formalist choreographic practice” (1995, p.47). This tension between expressionism and formalism will be further investigated in this dissertation through the attention to visual approaches in dance.

Current visual-movement approaches to analysis suggest that the contraction of the front of the torso was also a release of the back in Graham’s practice. Inversely,
in my solo dance the contraction of the back was also a release of the front of the torso. Structural analysis based on a linguistic appreciation of movement structures and narrative, i.e. the sequences of contraction and release, obscured their functions and did not address the movement paradox of contraction. The fact that the spine lengthens when it contracts remained unexplored. Thus, Graham's contraction both disrupted and continued the classical lineage. Neglecting the lengthening of the spine in Graham's contraction obscured the fact that a torso contraction was also a release of the back and the release was also a contraction of the lower back. When one muscle contracts its antagonist releases, thus, contraction and release are not actually separate as in Graham's technique. Due to a frontal orientation, this muscular relationship has not been seen this way. A structural perspective missed the fact that in contraction the torso also expands horizontally, however my practical investigation suggested and produced the twist. Despite the emphasis given to verticality in Graham's practice, there was also the potential for greater distortion in the body parts under contraction.

For re-examining the coordination of the upper with the lower body, I created a movement phrase from Graham's movement vocabulary and performed it in various ways. In the process, during the act of doing the physical exercise, this physical movement was deconstructed. Bergson states that "the confused movement which copies the image is, then, already its virtual decomposition; it bears within itself, so to speak, its own analysis" (1988, p.111). Deconstructing Graham's material also contracted or drew together her vocabulary with my contemporary movement syntax and thus, reordered its bodily coordination. Different relationships between the movement of the torso and the hips emerged and were then more consciously examined. I focused mainly on body design and not on the time factor which was dealt with according to the effort experienced. Three variations were traced:

1. The feet turned in when the torso contracted and turned out when the torso released. This experiment produced greater spatial asymmetries and directional shifts, yet less distortion of the torso.
2. The feet turned in when the torso released and turned out when the torso contracted. This shifted the body parts’ directions and instigated fragmentation of the torso.

3. The feet both turned in when the torso contracted and when released. Both shape and spatial asymmetries were greater.

Observing that the torso did not move in unity suggested further division. A vertical division of the torso had already been introduced by Graham. In her practice the lower back could be contracting while the upper torso performed a high arch. The high arch in Graham’s vocabulary was generated as an extension of the torso release although in this case it appeared contracted as the energy was not really released due to the juxtaposition of dynamics. In my solo dance, the feet turn in to further support the fragmentation of the torso. Theorist of choreology, Valerie Preston-Dunlop, defines fragmentation as the presentation of the body parts’ moving independence (1996, p.259). Fragmenting the torso’s contraction expanded the body parts’
independence. By displacing contractions from the torso to other body parts\textsuperscript{11}, movement could be initiated by any body part and not just the torso.

Graham's corporeal transformations were continued by one of her company members, Merce Cunningham. By abandoning Graham's emotion, he wrote off expression in dance and further reduced contraction to formalization. What effort offered his dance technique was precisely the opportunity to transform not only the dancing body but also through it, to distort the use of dynamic qualities and dominant dance aesthetics. By contracting some muscles and body parts while extending others, the dancing body changes. Once bodily form and muscles are, however, unevenly transformed according to the requirements of each technique, effort is abandoned in favor of effortless, virtuosic, dance lyricism as happened in Graham's practice from the 1970s onwards. Thus, dance virtuosity is often founded on performing effortlessly. Contraction however, is the basis of all movement, even of effort-less release-based techniques, because the body cannot really 'move from the bone,' regardless of how minimal a muscular effort is exerted.

Cunningham's movement system served as a pilot for further developing body part isolations. His system moved away from Graham's emotional content by focusing solely on design. Cunningham divided the upper from the lower body so that the torso moved independently from the pelvis and the hips. Turning the feet in, when working with Graham's material, instigated an additional horizontal division of the torso which was further enhanced by the use of limbs. Thus, by encompassing both vertical and horizontal divisions, the torso was divided into six parts which could perform contractions simultaneously and independently in various directions. This division of the torso, shown in table 2, suggested a variety of possible shape designs which expanded the spectrum of movement.

\textsuperscript{11} Graham's practice entails contractions of other body parts such as the flexed feet and the cupped hands.
Table 2. Indicates possible combinations of contractions according to six torso parts

This further division of the torso created a greater span of pelvic and shoulder movements as shown in images 6 and 7.

Image 6. Early solo Improvisation

Image 7. Early solo Improvisation

The possibility to turn hips in and out resulted in nine feet positions which can be seen in table 3. Since one foot can be turned out while the other is turned in as in image 7, there are three parallel positions. Also, since one foot may be turned in or out while the other is in parallel (defined by its relation to the hip) there are four more positions.
Then there is also the classical first position with both feet turned out and its inversion with both feet turned in.

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Table 3. Feet positions

This more severe isolation overall, resulted in grotesque representations of the dancing body which did not display the linear clarity of Cunningham-esque forms. Reynolds states that “innovative dance rhythms are grounded in changes in energy expenditure through new ‘economies’ of energy, which can manifest the subject’s resistance to constraints and transform the ‘self’” (2007, p.1). Through an approach to shape design, the possible dynamic qualities could then be explored and produce more variation. Body part isolations were developed through visual methods, in other words through images which allowed to clarify the division in contrast to the body’s tendency for movement continuity.

Reynolds provides a useful discussion of form and energy, the modern rhythm of Graham and its development through the practice of Cunningham. Her argument for greater complexity of rhythm is also founded on effort/shape relationships. Reynolds supports an entropic formalism by stating that “even dance that is considered ‘formalist’ can have altering effects and therefore, develop rhythm (p.9). I would like to argue that it is precisely formalist dance which focuses on shape that has stronger effects on energy and consequently rhythm. In formalist dance, such as Graham’s and Cunningham’s, body part isolation is visibly distinct while in release-based dance it becomes practically invisible. What is more, when body parts undertake various degrees of effort their isolation becomes even more visible.
“Bodily contours and morphology are not merely implicated in an irreducible tension between the psychic and the material but are that tension” as Feminist theorist, Judith Butler suggested (1993, p.66). Through Butler’s suggestion it is possible to argue that the tension between the morphology of the body and the internally experienced body, allows for merging the phenomenology of intense effort experienced with the visual design it produced. Performing effort in Dancing Sculptures was (per)formed, that is to say, effort was experienced per form, for creating form. Intensifying effort thus, allowed asymmetric designs.

Asymmetry is measured by looking at its distance from established symmetries in contemporary body images. Preston-Dunlop comments on the asymmetrical use of the body by stating that “when one side of the body is unequal to the other, usually a state which promotes motion, while symmetry in the body tends to make the movement come to a stop” (1996, p.312). In my personal dance language, asymmetry of shape design was achieved by reaching balance limitations, by trying to achieve the impossible balancing of weight through more severe bodily isolations. For example, in image 8, a single inversion of a body part’s contraction could cause the body to fall. If the right foot was not turned in the left knee would no longer hold the bodily weight. The body shape was also generated by reaching an extreme balance also in image 9, where for example, the upper right front contraction of the torso was necessary for balancing the whole shape.

Image 8. Solo Improvisation

Image 9. Solo Improvisation
Trying to balance off weight rendered the diagonal as a necessary bodily angle. The diagonal was created by adding the horizontal division of the body to the pre-existing vertical division by Graham and Cunningham. Exaggerating Graham’s principles of contraction and distortion suggested an excess of these principles, a Baroque multiplication, which distorted their functions. “The Baroque solution is the following: we shall multiply principles…and in this way we will change their use” (Deleuze, 1993, p.76). Multiplication of principles increased the degree of asymmetry along with providing the possibility of a higher level of symmetry. Contraction now produced ‘labile’ movements. Preston-Dunlop defines as labile “those moments in movement which tend to take the body off-balance and continuously change the balance through the use of oblique directions rather than the vertical” (1996, p.241). For example, when the right side of the torso contracts, while the left releases, the torso tends to twist and tilt by those simultaneous forces creating an asymmetrical body design which renders the body off balance.

The more one part was released the more another intensified its effort. The more distinct the body parts the more connected they could become. The greater the distinction between body parts and the more intense the fragmentation (the more distant body parts were), the closer they could become. For example, there was less isolation in the middle of the torso than at its edges, shoulders and pelvis, and the contraction was more intense in these parts because there was a greater distance to be covered in order to draw them together.

Body parts may have been moving independently but they can never be independent as long as they are parts of a live body. In earlier solo improvisations, movement tended to support bodily wholeness while the still image of a body enhanced the possibility of fragmentation. An imagistic conception of bodily fragmentation through stillness became a necessary first step before exploring a body part’s moving independence. But a body part’s moving independence became possible by choreographing each of six body parts (torso, head, arm 1, arm 2, leg 1, leg 2) separately and gradually adding body part phrases through the use of counts until I could performing them all simultaneously. The simultaneous performance of the separate body part choreographies distorted their movement and shape design. The torso was affected the most as it could no longer move in unison.
The fragmentation of the torso also allowed for a greater asymmetry due to the greater complexity created by severe fragmentation. In earlier solo improvisations, the fragmentation of the torso led other body parts, limbs and head, to move simultaneously in different directions, but the task was then reversed. In my solo dance, other body parts could initiate movement since the torso was not the initiator of all movement as in Graham’s practice. However, the structures remained fragmented. In contrast, when I turn my torso to the left gradually from the waist to the head, the movement expands from one part of the torso to the other sequentially and becomes continuous, thus reminiscent of release-based techniques which, by favoring continuous movement, invert the concept of body part isolation.

These histories of effort have been analyzed through the use of Rudolf Von Laban’s choreological model. The term choreology was introduced by Laban in 1926 and is broadly defined as the scholarly study of dance. Choreology comes from joining the Greek words ‘chorus’ and ‘logos.’ ‘Choros’ which translates into dance comes from the Greek chorus which in Greek tragedy was formed by a singing group of women which also danced. However, particularly through the use of gestures, the Greek chorus would often act as a commentator adding something to the tragedy that the narrative could not state. Therefore, dance analysis also evolved within theatrical traditions. On the other hand, the literal translation of logos is speech, but in ancient Greece the term had a broader meaning. The ability to speak was synonymous with the ability to express thought. Logos became synonymous to reasoning and also the origin of the word logic. For the Greeks logos also suggested commitment. Similarly, choreology suggests a practical commitment as Preston-Dunlop and Sanchez-Colberg emphasize in Dance and the Performative (2002). Besides looking at choreology as a practical theory of dance they also locate it within a performative field, despite Laban’s pragmatist approach.

In Laban’s theory of Eukinetics, dyskinesis, which refers to hard or difficult kinesis, became devalued despite Laban having encountered both ‘free’ and ‘bound’ flow. In Laban’s choreological model, effort was appreciated as a defining aesthetic element through its relation to shape, but more specifically through flow as confirmed in his Mastery of Movement (1959, ed. 1971, p.83-84). Laban, by linking ‘free’ flow with extending movements and subsequently, freedom with movement continuity, as well as ‘bound’ flow with scattering movements and subsequently restriction with
movement discontinuity, appeared to favor continuous flow despite his theory being much more complex. However, continuity is not free of restrictions and discontinuity may also have positive effects in choreographic development. There is nothing prohibiting the body from performing scattering movements with continuous flow, and extending movements with discontinuous flow, besides obedience to so-called ‘natural’ laws of movement always closely related to the socio-cultural political frame that surrounds them. Human anatomy always adapts to the socio-cultural needs of the body but this adaptability also testifies to its potentiality.

These ‘organic’ effort and shape definitions have been supported by modern essentialism. According to Laban “the basic property of movement [is] namely, its natural flux” (1971, p.83). Founded on the separation of dance from other disciplines, modern dance created an obsession for continuity in movement since flow was identified as movement’s essence. Laban appreciated effort in relation to flow’s “degree of liberation in movement no matter whether this is considered from the point of view of its subjective-objective opposites or the contrasts of being ‘free in’ or ‘free from’ the flow of movement” (p.83).

Stemming from this understanding of movement continuity, Laban considered movement transitions as carrying ‘incomplete effort,’ by favoring some movement factors over others that were neglected (p.85-86). Laban’s concept of ‘incomplete effort’ suggests that effort becomes insufficient when movement factors are not balanced. Thus, for him increased effort suggested a lack in the ability to coordinate all factors in the most efficient way for continuing movement. In contrast, I would like to suggest, that it is precisely this incompleteness, or insufficiency, expressed through increased effort which enhances the open nature of a dance work that presents an aesthetic challenge.

Ease and lack of effort, should perhaps be considered as concepts, which do not refer only to dance. They create a suspension which subverts political meaning, by implying openness, although it is actually fixity, a suspension without fall, without momentum or movement; rather, an efficient ‘poise’ based on the economy of energy (Card, 2009, Moving Naturally conference proceedings). Duncan’s effortless control developed an interest in continuous flow shared by Humphrey’s movement succession principles (Main, 2009, Moving Naturally conference proceedings). Within modern
dance’s expressionist foundations, effortless continuous movement had an appeal not only during the German Ausdruckstanz, but also in more recent European dance theatre practices.

From Wigman to Bausch, effort became deconstructed, through a focus on the theatrical qualities of the gesture. Practitioner scholar Emelyn Claid notes a disappearing corporeality by stating that “theoretically, absence as presence is intriguing, but on our dancing bodies dancing came close to disappearance within the conventions of theatrical performance” (2006, p.116). Foster also suggested that “the burgeoning tradition of expressionist dances arose from an increased sense of the body’s weight while moving, a preference for continuous movement through adjacent parts of the body suggesting a sinuous totality” (1986, p.165). Laban had defined effort as the “inner impulses from which movement originates” (1959, ed. 1971, p.10) and noted the ‘outward’ streaming of movement continuity (p.84) which partially explains why release-based techniques were adopted by dance theatre. However, the replacement of effort as tension, with effort as expression of flow, has led to a reduction in the capacity of form to create shapes.

According to Foster the shaping of the body in artistic dance is expressive rather than transgressive since it results from more or less standardized training.

Any standardized regimen of bodily training...embodies, in the very organization of its exercises, the metaphors used to instruct the body, and in the criteria specified for physical competence, a coherent (or not so coherent) set of principles that govern the action of that regimen.

Susan Leigh Foster, 1995, p.8

The inevitable training required for artistic dance and its intrinsic expressivity constitute its commercial value in a politically oriented world. Foster states that “the new, multitalented body resulting from this training melds together features from all the techniques...It does not display its skills as a collage of discrete styles but, rather, homogenizes all styles and vocabularies beneath a sleek, impenetrable surface” (1995, p.3). Dance’s irony, is that most current training subverts dance’s intrinsic aesthetic value, which is movement, in a continuous flow, which displays no dynamic change.
And yet, my investigations suggest that excessive continuous movement inverts the concept of movement and may lead to aesthetic stagnancy.

Through their insistence on ‘free’ flow, current release-based techniques support organicist views of movement, particularly through the use of somatic and anatomical knowledges. These somatic approaches have made possible, a better bodily awareness and a more subjective embodiment of dance forms. Kinetics theorist, Mabel E. Todd (1937) argued for instance, for a greater sense of awareness through an unusual or ‘unnatural’ positioning of the body as images 10 and 11 demonstrate.

Image 10. Shape design distortion  Image 11. Shape design distortion

Todd suggested “to develop kinesthesia by placing your body in unused and unusual positions and noting changes made quietly but persistently by your inner mechanisms is one way to find a better balance for your own bodily forces” (p.244). With respect to Todd, I want to draw attention to the body’s, even the skeleton’s, great adaptability and argue that contraction can prove more productive in changing the form of the body, than a use of Somatics which focuses only on balance. Since there is no single ‘correct’ or proper form of the moving body, current somatic practices can seem Aristotelian, because they make the body move towards its own form or anatomy.
In section 3 of the DVD, my dance moved on to a full body extension, using contractions reminiscent of classical ballet. In aesthetic terms, extension by contraction becomes reminiscent of classicism’s interdisciplinary shapes. However, exaggerating this full extension caused my torso to release energy and drop into a deep crouching position.

In this chapter, I have condensed a complex history of dance efforts, in order to show that the manipulation of effort is a primary material of dance. The contraction of effort has, from this perspective, a greater potential to develop dance forms than release. However, most expressionist approaches have privileged flow over effort. The capacity to demonstrate the importance of effort through distortions of form and changes in shape design requires a more formalist approach. It allows effort to be visibly contracted instead of becoming obscured by flow or progression.

This chapter has suggested that European expressionism and American formalism in dance interweave. It argues that a linear historicity of these dances is limiting. While Europe focused on effort in order to deconstruct classical dance, American dance was based on classical appreciations of effort for distorting the body. Similarly, while the theatrical effort of gesture created dance theatre, American dance favored visuality in its interdisciplinary approach to dance form. In contrast, the experiments of Judson Dance Theatre became implicated in effortlessness, once release-based techniques surfaced. My ‘pedestrian’ running in the end of the solo dance (section 3 of the DVD) allowed my passage from being a performer to becoming a spectator. *Dancing Sculptures*, proposes that American visuality does not have to sit separately from the theatrical European traditions of dance. Both European and American dance histories suggest that corporeal contractions, or put more simply effort, generated the interdisciplinary contractions of *Dancing Sculptures*. 
B. *Dancing Sculptures*

We always see more, and always see less, than what is there to be seen.

Maaike Bleeker, 2008b, p.7

The reader may identify more in the DVD accompanying the text than my text suggests. In the written component, I have chosen to favour the textual mode over practice, because if the text were to follow the practice, it would enhance practical extensions of the text, but render impossible extensions of the practice. Therefore, in order to allow the text to move through and beyond the practice, as participants could do in the performance installation, I will allow the text to transform the practice. *Dancing Sculptures* has been broken into 25 fragments—moving images, which allow for reordering them according to the needs of the text. It is worth mentioning, that such a fragmentation, is in line with the rapid transitions in the narrative of the performance, from one image to another. The reader may be directed to see for example, fragment 12 and then fragment 7, in order to allow a textual narrative to develop. Thus, text and practice coexist by transforming each other, or can exist separately in their own space and time. The film can be seen in its original order, separately from the text, and the text can be read on its own. In this chapter, text and practice are drawn together to support the argument on the transformative potentiality of interdisciplinary contractions.

The practical examples from *Dancing Sculptures* were selected and structured according to a preparatory diagrammatic process (Appendix 17). Two columns served for identifying the correlation between the film fragments or moving images of the DVD and the aesthetic processes identified during the research process. Some moving
images had a greater intensity because they combined more aesthetic processes than others. Similarly, some aesthetic processes were identified as more vital since they appeared in most practical examples. This process, of correlating practical fragments or moving images with processes, unfolded the qualitative details of each aesthetic process, beyond the demonstration of obvious characteristics, but also suggested quantitatively, the various degrees of tension that moving images carried.

Analyzing the moving images of Dancing Sculptures, suggested also a textual variation in a reader's proximity.Zooming in and out of bodily forms to the research material is similar to the various degrees of proximity to the performers in the event of Dancing Sculptures. Looking from a distance, proposes a new bodily image, an illusionary aesthetic crystallization within the temporality of the event of Dancing Sculptures. Looking closer, unfolds optical, theatrical dance, and conceptual illusions, and suggests the importance of the detail to interdisciplinary hybrids such as that of Dancing Sculptures and their analysis. In-between these two edges, the intermediary states, also reveal important subtleties, which suggest more fragile balances between illusion and its revelation. These wider ranges of proximity, among performers, as well as between performers and partakers, in the Dancing Sculptures (also evident in the text), suggest various degrees of aesthetic tension.

1. Stillness

Karmen Mackendrick has argued that "dance creates not some unmoving, cosmic, transcendent unity but an extraordinary stillness-in-motion (and vice versa), immanent in the dance itself, shifting the limits of our senses of time and space" (ed. Lepecki, 2004, p.141). This philosophical appreciation of dance as stillness-in-motion will be traced through an examination of the physical impossibility of live bodies to reach absolute stillness. In order to reach a state of stillness, in Dancing Sculptures, bodies needed to use effort. Todd had much earlier suggested that "the attempt to stand still is not 'natural' and must be directed consciously. This is more fatiguing than any movement that follows an unlearned pattern" (1937, p.37). Therefore, the
effort required to produce stillness further accentuated the strangeness of Dancing Sculptures.

In a practice of strange body shapes and an absence of repetition, stillness became necessary in the process of embodiment. "Holding still is more than stopping. It is continuing the state just arrived at" (Preston-Dunlop, 1998, p.98). In this sense, stillness became a transition, a becoming rather than a point. Claid argues that "in stillness, our bodies never stay in one place; they are forever running away, in excess, doing too much, too little, overemphasizing, over-compensating" (2006, p.199). Thus, the becoming of bodies into Dancing Sculptures was enhanced by the excess of effort founded in stillness.

Stillness also allows the dynamic potentiality of bodies to evolve. It makes live bodies visible and thus, visual in a similar way that Graham's discontinuous flow made dancing bodies more visible. Performance theorist André Lepecki argues against movement for movement's sake in his Exhausting Dance (2006) and states that "the perception of the stilling of movement as a threat to dance's tomorrow indicates that any disrupting of dance's flow – any choreographic questioning of dance's identity as being-in-flow – represents not just a localized disturbance...but, more relevantly, it performs a critical act of deep ontological impact" (p.1). To allow time for the spectators to observe the bodily sculptures and be introduced to the in-betweeness of the genre, Dancing Sculptures began with stillness. Stilling the live body created images which became the intersecting point between dance and sculpture. The analysis of Dancing Sculptures also began in stillness suggesting that visual approaches to dance, such as the paradigm of the moving image, generated a connection with sculpture.

Dancing Sculptures first offered an image of bodily sculptures and bodily displacements. By stilling movement at frequent intervals, they acted as chronophotographs which capture movement in successive still images (e.g. Eadweard J. Muybridge, 1830-1904). They became moving images supporting the visual qualities of movement. In section 1 of the DVD, the Horse duet assemblage where one performer sits on another's lower back, suggested from one perspective, an image of the human body composed of the front of one's torso and the back of another's legs. This bodily assemblage, seen in image 12, performed by Danai and
Xenia Papazian, is reminiscent of Sasha Waltz's manipulation of the anatomical structures of the body in her *Korper* (2000). In *Korper*, the supporting dancer's torso was hidden under a skirt, in order to intensify the illusion of a sleeker image, rather than expose the whole monster-like sculpture. In *Dancing Sculptures*, the absence of the skirt, in this particular configuration, exposed more perspectives such as the image of a body with two torsos shown in image 13.

![Image 12. Horse in Monster](image12.jpg) ![Image 13. Horse in Monster](image13.jpg)

Later in the piece, this particular configuration, the Horse assemblage, unfolded more perspectives. This was achieved by allowing the performers to improvise their movement while maintaining their point of contact, the waist of one performer between the legs of the other while facing opposite directions. This configuration resulted in multiple images, through movement variation, which can be seen in image 14. Movement variation increased the distortion of the human body, as for example in image 15, where the supporting performer moved on all fours and her hands became the legs of the other. In this way, through distortion, *Dancing Sculptures* created moving images.

The moving images of *Dancing Sculptures* combined stillness and movement. Besides pausing the whole bodily sculpture, other images entailed the stilling of particular bodies, body parts or joints while others moved. This created a tension...
between movement and image. For example, in section 24 of the DVD the Horse assemblage moved through space, as one performer moved while the other stood almost still, given that actual stillness of the live body is impossible. Due to the performers' interdependence, the one on top would move, often awkwardly, as a result of the supporting performer's movement. Thus, the limited movement of the performer on top became passive, creating a moving image of a disjointed walking.

Besides these moving images, stillness also generated the *moving postures*, evident in section 8 and 11 of the DVD where performers were trying to maintain their posture while moving through space. Moving through space without changing body shape is impossible. However, stilling the body in movement further increased the effort of stillness and subsequently, of movement. In section 8, the dance phrase is performed in unison suggesting solidity, while in section 11, the flat back position is maintained but the dance phrase is performed in a canon for demonstrating the choreographic possibilities of the *moving postures*. In these phrases, the combination of movement and stillness distorted a natural coordination of bodily movement in space and time. This showed the choreographic possibilities of these sculptures, since *moving postures* could be looked at as moving statues. Looking at bodies in stillness as statues, also suggested that the forms of bodies in contact can be looked at as
assemblage. More specifically, stillness demonstrated the choreographic possibilities of moving body-objects in an a-rhythmic, intercorporeal composition.

2. Bodily Efforts

In Dancing Sculptures, the contracting body became simultaneously an intense dancing body, a violent live body, a distorted visual body, a sculptural assemblage body, and a (per)forming body which created new bodily forms. Thus, the contracting body, by drawing together these bodies-as-parts, became an object of interdisciplinary study. As Lepecki argues, “given that no living system is energetically autonomous, the very idea of an autonomously kinetic subjectivity, of a self-contained and self-mobilizing subjectivity, emerges as the manifestation of a deep ideological blindness” (2006, p.58). By unfolding these multiple visual qualities of dance in Dancing Sculptures, I aimed to re-examine how a moving subjectivity might be closely connected with objectivity.

The Dancing Sculptures were born from early experimentations with two dancers Hee Jung Park and Seok Jin Han\(^\text{12}\) shown in image 16.

![Image 16. Wrapping processes](image)

\(^{12}\) The first choreographic attempt was the duet Monster (2008) with Danai and Xenia Papazian.
In this image, the right leg of one performer is bound with the left leg of the other and their left arms are bound together. I performed various experiments of binding some of their body parts together, by wrapping them up with a bandage, in order to achieve a more intense mobility and independence of their body parts. I would then ask them to perform preconceived movement phrases in the best possible approximation to the originals. They described the dance as ‘disconnecting,’ ‘painful at the back’ and ‘tense.’ Thus, the creation of Dancing Sculptures consisted of both an extreme exaggeration of a traditional strictness in dance training, for attaining an idealized image, but also of a performance art method reminiscent of Frank Moore’s Wrapping/Rocking (Berkeley, 1990). In this work, Moore bound herself as well as other participants with a tape to express the pressures imposed on the subject. Although my work differs from Moore’s, in these early experiments, there was a parallel between common performance art processes of wrapping and dance isolations.

I then removed the tapes to see how bodies could maintain a close proximity. I worked with two other dancers who were more technically advanced in Western techniques, Danai and Xenia Papazian (Appendices 4 & 5). These professional dancers enjoyed the challenge, although Dancing Sculptures later proved more comfortable for non-professionally trained performers. Dancers often felt discomfort as their perception of their bodies and their moving canons changed constantly. They had to break from fixed principles inscribed on their bodies through training, for the sake of an intensification of form. For instance, Xenia could use her legs, but she could not move her upper body, and also had to balance her bent torso with Danai on her back. At another instance, Xenia could move her arms, but not move her legs, while her torso and balance depended on Danai. This way of moving was reminiscent of Graham’s contraction and its disturbing effects expressing ‘despair’ and pain, in her time. But the disturbance was greater in Dancing Sculptures due to constant changes in the principles that followed contraction, because each time, I was adding to a bodily and conceptual intensification.

Danai was complaining “I cannot get it right, if Xenia changes her position” I answered: “there is no right way except the one agreed between you. If she changes her positioning, you have to change yours as well.” Interdependency became accentuated in tense bodily contact and thus rendered fragile the very notion of doing
something right. Danai had to reposition herself although it seemed as if she had to comply with Xenia. Xenia’s undefined positioning was a necessary obstacle for Danai’s repositioning. The process of drawing together bodies in close proximity required a degree of corporeal synchronicity between the dancers. The contraction of bodies in space required their contraction in time. Synchronicity became corporeal in that bodies had to coordinate in space rather than just in time as in classical ensemble work.

This reconfiguring of synchronicity in corporeal terms, suggested that interdependency does not require identical bodies. Dancers could be restrained in mutual space-time conditions without however always being in the same positions. In contrast to contemporary devising approaches in choreography, the grotesque performance makers Liz Aggiss and Billy Cowie “have always maintained that the tighter the choreographic structures are, the greater are the performers’ opportunities to express their own personalities and individualities” (2006, p.166). In Dancing Sculptures dancers often felt discomfort due to physical interdependency and restraints and yet personal expression was achieved through physical inventiveness. As more performers were added (Appendix 6), the process of expression became problem solving, both for realizing various bodily fittings and for moving the sculptural assemblages through space.

For example, the making of Walkings, where one performer walked by standing on two other performers’ backs, as seen in image 17, involved a two-fold process: getting the sculptural position right so that the construction could be sustained, mainly through architectural design, and getting the sculptural construction to move through space. The performers would adjust the design to their specific physical needs. Moreover, they had to explore together the mechanics of the sculpture’s movement. For example, when I asked the two feet-performers to jump, so that the performer on top would look as if she were climbing, they thought that it was impossible at the beginning. Later, they found out, that if the performer on top shifted her weight to one performer’s back, the other could perform the jump, as can be seen in section 7 of the DVD.
If a particular assemblage could not move, we would have to invent new fittings that would allow movement. However, generally speaking, the workshop process indicated that every bodily assemblage which could be constructed could also move through space. This happened because visual design was part of a corporeal experience.

Bodies were choreographed through visual instructions which included images and movement instructions for realizing them. Practitioner scholar, Martin Welton in his Seeing Nothing: Now hear this... proposes that “the realm of imagination is as much one of immediate experience as it is of the distanced contemplation suggested by a picture-in-the-head model” (eds. Banes and Lepecki, 2007, p.151). In Dancing Sculptures, the accumulation of images was simultaneously immediate and distanced. A picture-in-the-head model did not negate experience; rather, imagination became immediate during the solving of physical problems emerging from a picture-in-the-head. Thus, I would like to propose that in choreographing images, both models of imagination were necessary. The picture-in-the-head supported my choreographic vision while a more immediate imagination of the dancers supported its
implementation. *Dancing Sculptures* relied particularly on the becoming of their combination. Choreographing images also allowed performers to move with their own volition without me having to always instruct the movement. In this way, movement became an effect and not a cause.

A picture-in-the-head model suggests an intense passage from virtuality to actuality which increases effort. Elaine Scarry states that "the full process of ‘making’ in civilization entails the two conceptually distinct steps of ‘making-up’ and ‘making-real’" (1985, p.146). I would like to propose that the greater the distance between the virtual or imagined dance from the actual, the more intense the actual dance becomes. The increase of effort is generated in the act of imagining. Scarry also suggests that "imagining provides an extra and extraordinary ground of objects beyond the naturally occurring ground; it actively ‘intends,’ ‘authors,’ or ‘sponsors’ objects when they are not passively available as an already existing ‘given’" (p.167). Imagining thus is an effortful act.

*Dancing Sculptures*, by contracting a picture-in-the-head with the immediacy of movement also contracted process and product. It became aligned with post-conceptual visual art works which include creative processes. In this way, *Dancing Sculptures* became reminiscent of the ‘Pollockian performative’ which refers to Jackson Pollock’s performative processes, whereby painting was created by spilling paint onto the canvas through intense effort. Feminist performance theorist Amelia Jones proposed that the performance of muscular effort highlighted the artist-as-worker and favoured masculinist performance, which was then subverted by later performance artists (1998, p.72). Through the use of effort in *Dancing Sculptures*, I would like to argue for the artist-as-worker, beyond gender concerns. I would like to propose that the artist becomes a worker through the production of works, which become an active part of the artistic economy.

If the ‘Pollockian performative,’ directly relates painting to effort, in *Dancing Sculptures* effort worked similarly in the intensity of colour of the costumes. The intense blues, reds, yellows and greens of the leotards and caps were reminiscent of Orphism, as Guillaume Apollinaire named, in 1912, the visual art movement which deviated from Cubism by using the bright colours of Fauvism in abstraction. The basic colours were intensified and made extraordinary. In *Dancing Sculptures*, the
ordinary effort pattern of carrying objects was transformed through the extraordinary amount of effort required when performers were carrying bodies. Similarly to the use of effort in dance, the effects of colour become significant through shape. The performers wore ballet leotards which juxtaposed with the brutal physical action, and these were paired with colorful swimming caps which were juxtaposed with the absence of water's fluidity. Thus, expression was not based in flow, but rather in effort and shape relationships intensified by colour.

Effort, in *Dancing Sculptures*, broke away from German Expressionism's attention to 'inner' nature and looked at outer space as part of the inner body. In Expressionism, in-tension was directed outwards and inner tension became spaced through effort. However, when the body becomes a shape in space, space also becomes bodied. The spacing of effort in *Dancing Sculptures* became an extension in that it demonstrated a twofold tension between 'inner' and 'outer' forces. In a sense, the body shapes became reminiscent of the Rabelaisian grotesque which disturbed the relationship between 'inner' and 'outer' body by folding them into one another.

This grotesque use of the fantastic to describe the human body and all its processes is well illustrated in the portrayal of Pantagruel's illness, whose cure involves lowering into his stomach workers with spades, peasants with pick-shovels and seven men with baskets to clean the filth out of his stomach.


Similarly, in *Dancing Sculptures*, effort was directed both from inside towards outside and from outside towards inside. As a carrier of effort, a dancing sculpture or a moving image could be considered a choreographic displacement of dance expression. Like Rabelaisian bodies, *Dancing Sculptures* disturbed inner and outer boundaries by implicating bodies in sculptural assemblages.
For example, in image 18, the displacement of the performers’ hand in the mouth of other performers, blurred the boundaries of ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ body. This grotesque image disturbed dance expression and created a disciplinary opening. This moving image can be seen in section 23 of the DVD.

This dual dance tension, of ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ body, was also disturbed through multiple directionalities as moving bodies became parts of sculptural bodies. As dance moved towards sculpture, expressive or outward bodily effort blended with a contracting or inward sculptural effort. Through the construction of sculptures, effort was performed in reality rather than being represented as in theatrical dance. That is to say that when dance merged with sculpture, effort became more realist, particularly because it was not staged as theatrical. The focus on visual qualities in Dancing Sculptures shifted the focus of representation from theatricality to physicality. Dancers did not have to act movement but rather ‘just do it.’ Thus, effort, by becoming task-based, moved further away from a subjective theatrical expression towards an objective sculptural physicality. This study of effort supported an understanding of moving subjects as also moving objects as it will be argued.
3. Bodies-as-Subjects

Bergson states in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1973, ed. 2007) that there are two different ways of knowing: “the first implies that we move round the object; the second that we enter into it” (p.1). I want to argue, that in order for corporeal studies to develop, there is a need to enter the object of study, the live body-as-object which is also, always and necessarily a moving subject.

However, in this research bodies were favored over movement, as movement cannot exist without material form, or at least cannot be perceived as such. However, the intercorporeal aesthetic could refer to any body, be it any other live or dead body. By this, I mean that dead bodies, or visual objects, can also become part of intercorporeality, because they are always appreciated from and in relation to, live bodies. Scarry in her *The Body in Pain: The making and unmaking of the world* (1985) suggests that the contracted body can be perceived also as an object.

To have no body is to have no limits on one’s extension out into the world; conversely, to have a body, a body made emphatic by being continually altered through various forms of creation, instruction, and wounding, is to have one’s sphere of extension contracted down to the small circle of one’s immediate physical presence. Consequently, to be intensely embodied is the equivalent of being unrepresented and is almost always the condition of those without power.

Elaine Scarry, 1985, p.207

The physical body is thus, always, already contracted. To intensify bodily contraction, however, inverts the weak position of the body, because as Scarry argues, the live body in pain has the potential to change the world but also to be reduced to mere materiality as an object of power. An ordinary materiality however can become extraordinary by contraction.

For the construction of sculptural assemblages ordinary body positionings were used, but they became extraordinary through bodily contact.
For example, walking on all fours became ‘unnatural’ when performers formed the Tail shown in image 19 (DVD section 5). Performers formed a moving line, by walking on all fours, while resting their head on another performer’s tail or bum. The first performer walked by standing on her feet, allowing the line to be perceived as a long tail of some monstrous formation. The Tail moved through space without changing the relationship between the dancers’ bodies and thus, it became a moving sculpture which seemed like a moving image. The moving image became enhanced by the strong visual connotations of bodies in contact. The assemblages were formed by firstly constructing the visual image, like the one shown in image 19, and then began to move through space as moving sculptures, like the one shown in image 20. However, this method of practice was inverted for the viewer who would firstly perceive the sculpture and then look at it as a moving image.

However, ordinary movement also became extraordinary especially when performers formed vertical assemblages. For example, the Tail became acrobatic when performers were on all fours, one on top of each other, while forming the Blocks shown in image 21.
Peta Tait in her *Circus Bodies: Cultural identity in aerial performance* (2005) has written about the transformative qualities of physicality in circus movements. She noted the “contact of bodies in awkward places” (e.g. arms reaching for legs) during aerial trapeze tricks (p.22). Similarly, in *Dancing Sculptures*, there was unexpected bodily contact between body parts which do not normally come in contact with each other. For example, in the Blocks the strange fitting of the knees on the back of another performer along with the dexterity required from the performers to stand on top of each other, made the sculpture spectacular.

Thus, the work entailed spectacular acrobatic movement, although the spectacular qualities of acrobatics were juxtaposed with visible effort for achieving bodily contact in strange places. In early 19th century circus performances “there was an increasing gap between a visual association of ethereal flight that implied involuntary action, and a performer’s strenuous exertion that could still be seen in the execution of many aerial acts” (Tait, 2005, p.61). Similarly, in *Dancing Sculptures*, visual associations created the spectacle, while movement exposed it. These conflicting dynamics, both spectacular and against spectacle, were reminiscent of Guillermo Gomez Pena’s ‘extreme spectacularization’ of identity’ in his *La Pocha*
Nostra performances (Heathfield, 2004, p.163), which subverted the spectacle of identity through excess. Similarly, in *Dancing Sculptures*, extreme spectacularization of effort subverted the dance spectacle through an excess of effort.

However, the female performance of muscular contractions also creates another kind of spectacle, that of sexuality. Tait states that “the potential for identity reconfiguration is most explicit when a performing body is physically bent in aerial or ground-based contortion acts” referring to gender (p. 131). She notes the transformative potentiality of contracted bodily forms. In *Dancing Sculptures*, heightened physical action generated sexual connotations. Sexuality lies both in the images of tense bodily contact and in movement. For example, in Blocks, shown in image 21, the position on all fours becomes sexual, particularly when the body is in close contact to others. However, the bodily contact in awkward places also made the position and the movement asexual. Tait also suggests that “a contorted hybrid body may also create an impression of asexuality” (ibid). I would like to propose that this happens because asexual movement includes sexual connotations, in the absence of normative desire.

Asexual connotations may also have comic effects. For example, image 23 can be seen as sexual due to bodily contact positions, although the struggling dynamic qualities of the performers doing a roll created a comic effect, which can be seen in section 4 of the DVD. Tait argues that “when a female displays brute force towards others, this can imply a parody of masculine aggressiveness or feminine gentleness but both upset conventional ideas of identity” (p.137). In the Rolls, parody could be located in the feminist act of females performing force together, while trying to roll, without brutality between them. Brutality was directed outwards to parody feminist ideality as distinct from others. However, the comic element of a-sexuality was also counteracted by the extreme exertion of the tragic as yet unfulfilled sexual force in bodily proximity. In the act of physical eroticism the “violation of the very being of its practitioners” becomes compulsory as Bataille suggested (1986, p.17). However, asexual connotations overshadowed eroticism in *Dancing Sculptures*. 

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Tait observes that “a perception of unease might also arise if visible muscul arity short-circuits conventional female objectification” (p.80). Through complex combinations of bodily positions, contact, image and force, Dancing Sculptures refused both conventional female objectification and feminist subjectivity. Its refusal lies in the ideological separation and contraction of multiple signs, since the work proposed that male and female, object and subject become folded into one another, in corporeal terms.

I would like to stress that intercorporeality allows for looking at bodies as being both different and indifferent, beyond gender. The choreographic material of Dancing Sculptures looked at bodies as specific, for example, in terms of size in the process of constructing creatures but did not examine specifically feminine subjectivity despite all the bodies being female. The choreography looked at various possibilities of human bodily form unconcerned with gender. In a sense, it also looked at bodies as indifferent because their parts, active and passive, were interchangeable. For example, a small performer lifted a big one, although size difference was considered. Not only was Dancing Sculptures unconcerned with feminism (although this could well be another version) it was also not concerned with corporeal
subjectivity from a feminist point of view. "The paradox of subjectification is precisely that the subject who would resist such norms is itself enabled, if not produced, by such norms" as Butler has argues (ed. Desmond, 2001, p.290). Thus, Dancing Sculptures recognized subjectivity as bounded by corporeality. Through corporeal objectivities, I have argued that it incorporated expressionism in terms of how a form was experienced and formalism in terms of what bodily forms can do. But, as a choreographic method, it could be performed by any-bodies, female and male, professional and amateur dancers, young and older, able and disabled, thus further enhancing its inclusiveness.

Dancing Sculptures may be seen as a feminist action, precisely because these assemblages did not consider feminism as a distinct ideology. By discussing male dominance, dominance can become reproduced instead of offering alternatives, whereas Dancing Sculptures can be seen as feminist, precisely because its non-feminist, human content was performed by female performers. Although I agree with the 'demise of the individual' supported by Jones (1998), I will argue for an alternative proximity of bodies which, rather than through an expressive demonstration of subjectivity, manifests the end of individual physically.

4. Bodies-as-Objects

The tendency in contemporary sculpture to make human bodies out of objects, such as in the work of contemporary sculptor Antony Gormley13, became here inverted, by making sculptural objects out of live bodies. Inspired by how visual artists use their materials, I was however, able to see the body as the medium. The primacy of bodies as material for creating the forms of Dancing Sculptures is reminiscent of Anish Kapoor's sculptures which are heavily based on their materials. His works differ in terms of form and aesthetic because they are made of different materials (one in each work) from which the work is made. For example, in Kapoor's When I Am Pregnant (1992), a round sculptural form seems to emerge out of the wall due to the materials used. Thus, visual distortion was created through the materials

13 For example, his Bodies in Space V, 2001 and Domain Field, 2003 were created by drawing together forged balls and stainless steel bars respectively allowing space within the figure.
which allowed the installation to look as if it was moving and growing out of the wall. The wall then also became part of the work. Similarly, Dancing Sculptures makes spectators part of the work because it emerged from the same materials, human bodies. The performing body, by becoming a material, also became an object rather than just a subject.

If the human body is regarded as the prime medium of dance and choreography, we indeed have to include both the capacity to move and its complementary negation. In a word, the body-as-medium is a paradoxical affair: it is the unity of the difference between possible movements and possible non-movements.

Rudi Laermans, 2008, p.7

The body-as-medium allowed me to work outside the highly referential subjectification of the dancing body. Since the body became the medium instead of movement, the dancing body became objectified.

The body-as-medium necessitated and enhanced the effects of visuality in dance since it stood in-between movement and image, subject and object. According to Julia Kristeva’s theory of abjection (1982) this could be an abject body, neither object nor subject. It became objectified, a living prop for a dance without dance, there, ready to be transformed and also a subject which dismantled the object, the sculpture, the still image. Thus, the body-as-medium suggested a multiplicity of bodies. In doing so, bodies became abject because they disturbed “identity, system, order” (p.4) and disciplinary constraints.

Abjection, Kristeva states “is an alchemy that transforms death drive into a start of life, of a new significance” (1982, p.15). Practice as research needs to involve objectivities in order to move them. Bodies in Dancing Sculptures became objects for redefining their subjectivity; a subjectivity which is always a ‘boundary-subjectivity’ according to Kristeva. She continues, that “the abject is perverse because it neither gives up nor assumes a prohibition” (ibid). In Dancing Sculptures, dancing bodies became materials which neither gave up nor assumed their objectivity but rather explored the space in-between. Subjectivity in dance has already established itself as
an objective knowledge. Thus, without denying subjectivity in movement, *Dancing Sculptures* explored subjects as objects.

Like Lego bricks, these bodies, created forms that appeared organic, yet distended, rather than working from anatomical form. They were redefined through rehearsal processes which explored the possibilities of the body as material beyond expression. Massumi states about the human body that “from the point of view of the social forces that seize it, it is as much a raw material to be modeled as is the wood from another perspective” (1992, p.11). When the body becomes an object, form is favored over expression. On the other hand, a live body can never be an absolute object and thus, the objectification of bodies, as worked materiality, established them as in-between object and subject. Therefore, when dancing bodies become objects, the project of expression meets form.

This change from bodies-subjects into bodies-objects inevitably caused a change in the aesthetic nature of the work “for, when narrated identity is unbearable, when the boundary between subject and object is shaken, and when even the limit between inside and outside becomes uncertain, the narrative is what is challenged first” (Kristeva, 1982, p.141). Through the workshop processes, a number of sudden shifts from one Dancing Sculpture to real bodies broke conventional choreographic fluidity. This simple bracketing effect demonstrates how the contraction of the two or more bodies led to (an)other choreographic form while their release forced the return to a pre-existing or known reality. The structure of *Dancing Sculptures* did not always work in this way, since the shift happened directly from one sculptural configuration to another without bodies being separated. Overall, the *Dancing Sculptures*, through their constructions and deconstructions, created contrasting effort elements (e.g. in the Walkings the light quality of the top performer was juxtaposed with the weighted quality of the feet-performers) which condensed choreographic energy as a whole. Increased effort was thus seen as a spatial contraction which required the objectification of moving bodies.

In this sense, the objectification of human bodies happened as bodies became contracted in space, into a bodily assemblage, a sculptural formation.
We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body.

Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.284 (my emphasis)

The contracting body as a multiplicity thus, became a (per)forming body. Bodies contracted or were drawn together in order to create more powerful bodily forms. To be more specific, contraction by intensifying energy distorted form. As bodily forms suggested not only ways of moving, but also the form of the performance, it became possible to propose an intercorporeal aesthetic which reflected not only movement or dance, but also non-movement or visual art. This aesthetic was based on materiality rather than concepts, referring to an inter-corpo-reality: a reality produced in-between bodies for bodies.

Since spectators became active participants in the work, the landscape of Dancing Sculptures partially inverted subject and object relationships. At the Sculpture and Performance conference organized by the Henry Moore Institute and Tate Liverpool (24-26 March 2010) Aura Satz of the London Consortium identified various categories of close sculptural fits between object and body in performances of musical instruments, puppets and relics, which can also be seen in La Ribot’s Distinguished Pieces as she performs with objects in close proximity. In most of these cases, the body moves with the object, while in Tadeusz Kantor’s ‘Theatre of Death,’ the close fit between body and object or sculptural prop resulted in the death of the subject. Actors became imprisoned as ‘bio-objects,’ in order to bring objects to life.

In Dancing Sculptures, this close fit between object and subject was performed solely by bodies to underline through interdependence that a moving objectivity is intrinsic to them, while also suggesting that the process of approximating subject and object is part of live processes. Thus, drawing together subject and object led to new forms of subjectivity and did not result in death as in Kantor’s theatre (and Schopenhauer’s philosophy). Art theorist Karen Lang, states that “the polarity of objectivity and subjectivity presents a circuit of false alternatives in the history of art” (in Jones, 1999, p.19) and argues that an aesthetic trope of
knowing “underlines the attraction of subject and object” (p.21). This argument is demonstrated through Jones’ essay Art history/Art Criticism: Performing meaning (1999). Her phenomenological, subjective approach to the minimalist object of art shows a close relationship between objectivity and subjectivity.

Transforming the body subject happened by transforming the body as an object. Considering the body as an object allowed transforming its anatomy through the proximity of many bodies. This effect suggested Bakhtin’s notion of the grotesque, where the human body is not singular, nor individual. Bakhtin, referring to Rabelaisian body images, also stated that “none of these anatomical analyses appear as static descriptions; they are drawn into the living dynamics of action” (1981, p.173). Changing the anatomy of a body image suggested a moving body.

The anatomical structure of the human body is revealed in action, and it becomes, as it were, a character in the novel in its own right. But it is not the individual body, trapped in an irreversible life sequence, that becomes a character – rather it is the impersonal body, the body of the human race as a whole, being born, living, dying the most varied deaths, being born again, an impersonal body that is manifested in its structure, and in all the processes of its life.

Mikhail Bakhtin, 1981, p.173

Rather than any other identity, bodies became signifiers of the human, according to the Bakhtinian grotesque, which focuses on the non-individual character of the human.

Contracting two or more bodies for constructing Dancing Sculptures is reminiscent of earlier bodily crouches, such as the ones in the introductory solo dance. In the body language of Dancing Sculptures the whole became a fragment and the fragment another whole. “The impossibly split subject is at once un corps morcelé, a fragment of a greater body and an individuated whole” (Cohen, 1999, p.83). However, what was material in the solo improvisations, the body as whole, became conceptual, in monstrous assemblages. Also, bodily fragmentation which had been conceptual became now material, as bodies-parts were physically separated. Thus, questions of wholeness should be answered in-between bodies and parts.
5. Parts

*Dancing Sculptures* were constructed through body part isolations. Isolation comes from the Latin *insula* meaning island. In choreography, body part isolations result in accumulation, as for example in Trisha Brown's 'accumulation' dances which began with her solo *Accumulation* (1971)\(^{14}\). In this dance, Brown begins with a gestural movement, which is repeated while other parts of the body gradually begin to move and become added to the choreography, resulting in an accumulation of effort. However, body part isolations have greater effects in the choreography when more than one body is involved. In *Dancing Sculptures*, this would produce a double displacement which affected the image of the body and its moving abilities more radically than displacements within a single body. The fact that bodies were in reality separated even when they were in close contact, on top of the conceptual separation of each set of body parts, multiplied the choreographic possibilities. I no longer had to choreograph dancing bodies, which could move in unison or not, but rather multiple body parts: arms, legs, torsos, heads etc. These bodies-parts, in *Dancing Sculptures*, could be seen as extensions of a personal body language which focused on body part isolations.

It is because of isolation that contraction became significant in *Dancing Sculptures*. The fact that these bodies had already been 'fragmented' in the earlier body language enhanced their contraction or drawing together into various fittings. The contraction or drawing together of multiple body parts intensified the contraction or drawing together of multiple bodies. For example, when individual bodies were drawn together as parts, some had to bear the weight of others making their movement effortful.

On the other hand, the choreographic process of contracting many bodies into one, allowed for greater bodily isolation, both extensive and intensive, to emerge. It was the intensity of bodily isolations that led to their extension and it was this intensity that shifted the moving and choreographic abilities. A choreographic

contraction of two bodies into one led to a more intense bodily isolation, as now, some body parts or joints were in contact with another body’s parts or joints or the floor while others were not. For example, in the V shape shown in images 24 and 25 the backs and heads of both performers are in touch while their legs are not.

Moreover, the legs of one performer are free flowing while her torso is effortful. The other performer’s legs are even heavier on the ground, because she is carrying the weight of the top performer on her back. This complexity created an intensification that altered the body’s moving functions, in ways greater than moving alone. This intensification of bodily isolation also resulted in a further fragmentation of the body, into smaller parts, since detail became important for supporting the dancer in this difficult task. For example, when the performers tried to keep their backs in contact while moving through space, they became aware of every little muscle of their backs. The back was thus fragmented into smaller parts which would contract and expand simultaneously.

Image 24. V shape from Dr Adder

Image 25. V shape from Monster 1,2,3
Consequently, the dancer became more aware of smaller bodily fragments. For example, when dancers were back to back both the dancers’ torsos contracted in multiple opposing directions in order to balance the weight. Moreover, the hand was isolated from the forearm and the arm, and the foot from the shin and the thigh. This smaller division of the body could lead to a kind of absolute fragmentation which would reverse its outcome and move the body fluidly as a whole. But in this case it did not, precisely because of the visual approach undertaken. Rather, a level of body part isolations was maintained, which emphasized the visual qualities of fragmentation, the concept behind body parts’ moving independence.

Therefore, my body part isolations differ from Cunningham’s and William Forsythe’s repertoires, because instead of the single body developing the ‘independence’ of its parts, they became forced through the contact with other bodies. Body part isolation became an involuntary project intensified through the pressures of other bodies. Bodies attained different movement qualities in various body parts, according to their fitting with other bodies. Some of the performers’ body parts moved independently of the bodily contact, while others could not. For example, in the V shape shown in image 24, the carrier’s shoulders became effortful due to the other’s weight, her arms almost shaking due to the other pulling them in order to balance, while her forearms and hands could move with a light quality. Thus, moving independence became intensified, particularly in terms of quality, because body parts in contact with other bodies’ parts increased effort, while intact body parts became even more released. This can be seen in section 16 of the DVD.

This particular revelation of the body’s anatomy in the V shape is reminiscent of Hans Bellmer’s dolls. It is worth mentioning here that Bellmer developed this form of a body with four legs in 1938, but the foundations of it can be traced to 1935, when he initially created the doll’s torso which consisted of two pelvises (Semff and Spira, 2006). In his corporeal collage, fragmentation is more intense towards the torso’s edges rather than at its centre. This testifies to the fact that bodily edges have more flexibility. In my practice, this happened because the more distant body parts are from the core, the bigger mass of the body, the more independent they became and the more they can move. In contrast, the core of the body is less flexible and thus uses more effort in order to move.
In theoretical terms, the anatomic structures of *Dancing Sculptures*, as well as their choreographic structures, were reminiscent of Deleuze’s and Guattari’s complex fragmentary structures of the rhizome which resists filiations and allows hybrid variation. *Dancing Sculptures* created multiplication: when the ‘body’ had five heads instead of one, abstraction: when the whole ‘body’ consisted of only four legs, reversions: when the legs were reversed against torso and inversions: when two legs stood opposite two others. In a sense, *Dancing Sculptures* took on a life of its own and moved through space, unfolding the variation of design. For example, in DVD section 24, the Horse, takes various forms as the performers improvised with this bodily assemblage, creating three-dimensional moving images.

In *Dancing Sculptures*, there was a blending of mythological figures found in sculptural formations and individual real bodies constructing them. *Dancing Sculptures* became reminiscent of monsters from Greek mythology which had awkward anatomies often combining human with animal body parts. For example, the multiplication of Heads (image 33, p.78) was reminiscent of the mythic monster Lernaean Hydra, a serpentine beast which had nine heads and if one was cut off two more would grow. Heads was also reminiscent of Hecatoncheires, giants who had a hundred arms and fifty heads each. The Walking trios (image 17, p.50) were reminiscent of Cyclops, the giants with one eye. The Tail (images 19 & 20, p.59) was reminiscent of Echidna, a half woman half snake monster who devoured passers by. The Horse (images 12 & 13, p.46) was reminiscent of a Centaur or the Minotaur, a monster with a head of a bull and the body of man. The V shape (images 24 & 25, p.65) was reminiscent of Actorion, a monster of two conjoined twins sharing one torso in Homer’s epic *Odyssey*.

### 6. Proximity

I am suggesting that the body language of opposing elements such as the tragic and the comic, the sexual and asexual, the gendered and non-gendered, the gigantic and the miniature might become reconciled in *Dancing Sculptures*, through a close bodily proximity of bodies and parts. By breaking away from the fragmented structures of modern dance lineages (Graham, Cunningham et al) Steve Paxton’s,
Contact Improvisation (CI) created a radical shift which brought bodies together in space and time for the first time in dance history. However, due to his use of continuous flow, the form returned, in terms of effort, to the classical aesthetic of weightless continuity.

By also breaking away from expressionism, Paxton’s CI enhanced the touching of bodies with tact, as Erin Manning notes “tact embodies this injunction that challenges me in advance to have known how and when I should or should not touch” (2007, p.134). The risk of touch became minimized in CI. Paxton has stated that “each party of the duet freely improvises with an aim to working along the easiest pathways available to their mutually moving masses” (1975, p.40, my emphasis). Points of disruption between bodies were obscured in Paxton’s CI. The pragmatic effort of trying to move in close contact with other bodies became invisible.

In CI “taking weight [of another body] is slowly developed...usually with matched partners” (Paxton, 1975, p.42), while in Dancing Sculptures different bodies would often come into contact. It was bodily difference which allowed a variation of effort, as I argued earlier, in the discussion of bodies. Paxton states: “the physical spectrum is pretty broad, and—considering the differences in types of skeleton...and the differences in mass, it is unwise to match a 100-pound woman with a 180-pound man and expect a one-to-one situation. However, there are compensating factors, and such dances have been done by developed dancers” (ibid). I would like to propose that bringing into contact different bodies could also result in movement discontinuities and increased effort. In this sense, I would like to suggest that a bigger body can bear the weight of a smaller one, and a disabled body carry the weight of an able dancer.

In contrast to Paxton’s CI, Dancing Sculptures used bodily contact to increase effort. Bodies-parts and body parts were contracted or drawn together in space so as to create monstrous sculptural formations. The attention to visuality enhanced effort in contrast to movement’s tendency for continuity. Corporeal proximity allowed for a physical excess to be heightened through a physical intensification of space. In this spatial contraction or assemblage, it appears that distance became necessary for closeness and closeness necessary for distance. I intend to expand this discussion on spatial distortions through the concept of proximity. Manning states the paradox that
“when I reach out to you, I extend the space I have created between me and you” (2007, p.xxiii). The more the distant becomes close, the more the close appears distant, and vice versa; the more the close becomes distant, the more the distant appears close.

This disturbance of conventional notions of proximity was achieved through large sculptural monsters, such as the Arse monster, shown in image 26 (Appendix 8). Drawing bodies together allowed for making sculptures which were bigger than the human body size, if not gigantic. Bleeker, following Krauss, notes that gigantic sculpture was the beginning of installation art because people had to move around it or through it, in order to see it.

This kind of sculptural design deconstructs seeing in dance but according to Bleeker’s study on perspective, does not negate perspective rather it amplifies its possibilities.
Diderot’s observations on point of view and what convinces as truthful (re)presentation link up remarkably well with the postmodern, feminist and postcolonial critique of the unified and supposedly universal point of view implied by the grand narratives. Such critiques have taught us that the deconstruction of this unitary point of view does not result in the absence of perspective per se, but rather in a multiplication of viewpoints.

Maaike Bleeker, 2008b, p.37

In Latin dividere which means to divide comes from joining di which means two and videre which means to see. Thus, in Latin, to divide suggests breaking the unity of sight. Breaking the unity of sight creates a visual multiplicity which, as Bleeker suggests, is a new perspective rather than the negating of perspective. In the smaller, yet not small, scale of the Arse monster people had to move around it in order to see the various images it created from different perspectives.

The expansive function of contraction was evident through the giant-like bodily forms of Dancing Sculptures. ‘Gigantes,’ giants of the Greek mythology, were created through the contraction or drawing together of many bodies into one. Here, it is worth mentioning that gigas is synonymous to the Greek teras which signifies terror. The gigantic design becomes grotesque because it amplifies ‘ugly’ bodily details and inefficiencies. However, the contraction of bodies-parts increased the assemblage’s flexibility and extended its movement vocabulary. The movement of the sculpture, which can be seen in section 12 of the DVD, miniaturizes this frightening and tragic image as well as its monstrous bodily extensions by suggesting its organic entity (image 27). Theorist of medievalism, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen states that “comedy arises as the giant’s body is transformed from a fragmentary and dangerous physicality into a ‘miniaturized’ system, a harmonious microcosm, a ‘successful’ individual” (1999, p.178). The miniature allows for greater visual precision and sleekness through an economy of space. In the same logic, the movement language made extensions terrifying through the complexity of the design, but also bizarre designs beautiful, through bodily scattering. Thus, Dancing Sculptures disturbed a conventional perception of distances.
In section 19 of the DVD, the Pile of bodies (image 28) contracts bodies in space with maximum proximity. In this assemblage, bodily closeness created an effect of ‘distanciation’ (to use the Brechtian term) to the spectators, supported by the fact that performers occupied less space, and thus, they were distanced from the spectators. Moreover, such a close proximity between the performers, differentiated the social range of proximity the spectators had between them and thus, further distanced spectators from performers. However, this distanciation, proposed by the visual qualities of the sculptural assemblage, also enhanced a ‘contractile’ (to use Lepecki’s term, 2006) witnessing through movement. When the Pile of Bodies attempted to move, its small yet effortful movements drew the attention of the spectators into the image.

Image 28. Pile of Bodies

Thus, spectators willingly or unwillingly became witnesses. “The true witness is one who does not want to witness” as Jacques Rancière argued (2009, p.91). In this respect, while the image distanced spectators its moving qualities drew them in.
On the other hand, when the assemblage was abandoned, performers dispersed in space and thus, appeared closer to the spectators both in terms of space and similitude. Foster in her *Where are you now? Locating the body in contemporary performance* (ed. Bleeker, 2008) argues that digital technologies have further increased the distance between bodies and extended notions of performance in space. Since mobile technologies surfaced, performance no longer requires audiences to share a performative space with performers, as Foster argues based on the case study of *Call Cutta* (2005) by Rimini Protokoll. She states that cell phone technology “discourages an awareness of other bodies in the space” (p.175) which was vital in the Renaissance. “Courtiers continually deciphered the proximity between bodies, how close someone was sitting or standing to someone else, as a sign of their relative status” (p.174). Social relationships are no longer defined by bodily proximity since it has gradually become obsolete in the contemporary world. Foster also adds that not only has performative space become obsolete, but time too, as it can also be indefinitely extended through mobile phones. “No longer required to judge their whereabouts relationally or to continually reassess the relative motions of all relevant bodies, today’s bodies are perpetually in touch with those they need to connect with” (p.176).

To propose that the physical need for bodily proximity actually increases in these conditions, *Dancing Sculptures* used close bodily proximity between dancers. Thus, it also broke the choreological order of the conventional distance (approximately one meter) between ballet bodies which still survives in many contemporary dances. Also, instead of increasing the distance between performers and spectators to go with the natural flow, it examined ways for bringing them closer. Thus, as in the previous example of the Pile of Bodies, it suggests that proximity is interdisciplinary, but above all corporeal. By contesting social distances, *Dancing Sculptures*, aimed to comment on a contemporary exaggeration and distortion of political notions such as ‘individuality’ and ‘independence’. Individuality does not secure independence. Bodies are interdependent despite being individual. One cannot move without affecting the others. Thus, the possibility of unity was enhanced by movement multiplicities.
In *Dancing Sculptures*, a variation of performative proximity was founded on the choreographic variation of bodily proximity. The participants could look at *Dancing Sculptures* in various proximities whether they moved or not. Multiple proximities were created within the same sculptural assemblage. The multiple images within a single sculptural bodily assemblage enhanced a multiplicity of perspectives even within a sole perspective. For example, the Walking monster in image 29 enfolded others within it to materialize multiple perspectives of the gaze in terms of distance. The spectator could simultaneously see from a distance, when looking at the whole sculpture, and also watch closer, at the sub-monster on the left, in which the bent torso of one performer combined with the other side of another's legs. However, the closer appeared more distant since this sub-monster was more contracted than the one containing it, and thus also more unified. The work therefore proposed simultaneity of proximity and distance.

![Image 29. Walking](image)

As dancers kept still, in the tense bodily contact of a sculptural formation, the participants were given the time to move closer or move away from it, thus further multiplying perspectives. As sculptural assemblages moved through space, or when
performers deconstructed them to enter others, they reoriented space and altered the participants’ proximity. Thus, intense bodily proximity does not suggest that various degrees of tension cannot co-exist within it. This can also be seen in the various degrees of proximity in the different sculptural assemblages. For example, the Blocks have a lesser degree of bodily proximity than the Pile of bodies.

In this analysis of bodily proximity, not only among the performers but also between participants and performers, Preston-Dunlop’s choreological terms ‘spatial projection’ and ‘spatial tension’ become useful. Dunlop defines ‘spatial projection’ as the virtual lines created through space by the performer’s movement (2002, p.86). In Dancing Sculptures, the spatial contraction of the performers reduced spatial projection. However, reducing the performers’ spatial projection increased that of the participants. The reduced spatial projections of the performers interwove with the increased spatial projections of the moving participants or ‘partakers’ (to use Schechner’s term, 2002) in the work, and thus, overall spatial projections were increased. Spatial projection was complicated by the multiplicity of contractions and distorted by altering not only the proximity of performers and participants but also by interchanging the spaces they occupied.

On the other hand, the reduced spatial projection of the performers, due to their proximity, increased the effect of spatial tensions making it easier for the viewer to associate parts in space. Dunlop’s term ‘spatial tension’ refers to “an imagined line between two parts of the body or two dancers or between the floor and a part” (1998, p.135). In the interactive viewing of Dancing Sculptures, the spatial tensions of the performers created spatial tensions between performers and partakers. The spatial tensions of the assemblages distorted spatial projections and enhanced the participants’ movement. As a change in the distance between performers and participants could be initiated by both, big shifts in their proximity increased spatial tension.

An increased proximity of bodies and parts, subjects and objects, intensifies bodily violation as Manning argues. Even, gentle touch becomes violent. She asks: “must the discursive body, the body in movement that reaches out to touch, always also be a violent body, and if so, can we recognize violence not only as the harbinger
of guilt but also of experience?” (2007, p.50). I thus want to propose, that increased proximity intensifies experience.

Scarry’s book on the body in pain mentioned earlier, argued that disintegration and contraction, that is, the unmaking and the making of the world, happen simultaneously as in the prisoner’s consciousness (1985, p.38).

The title of the book, *The Body in Pain*, designates as the book’s subject the most contracted of spaces, the small circle of living matter; and the subtitle designates as its subject the most expansive territory, *The Making and Unmaking of the World*. But the two go together, for what is quite literally at stake in the body in pain is the making and unmaking of the world.

Elaine Scarry, 1985, p.22-23

Thus, Scarry has argued for the expansive function of contraction, through pain which can be seen as localized, the smallest, although the most intense contraction. Similarly, I would like to argue for the expansive function of contraction in dance, by suggesting that dance changes form through contractions, as happened in the case of Graham, and again, in my project, by becoming interdisciplinary.

Scarry states that “for the person whose pain it is, it is ‘effortlessly’ grasped (that is, even with the most heroic effort it cannot not be grasped); while for the person outside the sufferer’s body, what is ‘effortless’ is not grasping it” even with the most heroic effort again (p.4). On the other hand, Bleeker’s discussion (2008b, p.172-174) of John Martin’s (1939) writings on the perception of weight suggests that we perceive weight by seeing it and associating it with previous experiences of weight lifting.

Inner mimicry does not refer to conscious or unconscious attempts to relate to the outside world but is a consequence of the way proprioception and exteroception are necessarily intertwined in which what we see and what we hear is always translated in our own present and active experience.

Spectators then became witnesses who experience bodily assemblages. *Dancing Sculptures* challenged the impossibility of sharing pain, by communicating it through weight and its visualization through sculptural constructions. Moreover, pain became shared through tense bodily contact: if one body suffered, the whole bodily construction suffered as for example, in the Walkings where if one foot-performer suffered the balance of the whole sculptural body was at risk. Scarry proposed that “the body in its most intense presence becomes the substantiation of the most disembodied reality” (p.194). Thus, the proximity between the virtual and the actual is increased by the body’s extreme physicality. However, this intense physicality, instead of transcendence, suggested the material transgressions of pain.

Violating dance bodies in *Dancing Sculptures* made their beauty convulsive: ‘unnatural,’ sudden, and violent. For example, when dancers put each others hands in their mouths, a feeling of simultaneous visual beauty and kinaesthetic disgust was created. Breton suggested that “there can be beauty – convulsive beauty – only at the price of the affirmation of the reciprocal relationship that joins an object in movement to the same object in repose” (ed. 1978, p.162). The moving images of *Dancing Sculptures* further enhanced the feeling of movement ambiguity. “A beauty without an immediate end, without an end known to herself” supported by Breton (p.73), suggested an opposition to “every attempt aesthetically or morally to base formal beauty on any voluntary process of perfection” (p.162) and yet produced exactly that: a highly stylized visual aesthetic. For Bataille, “the search after beauty entails an effort to escape from continuity” (1986, p.144) which can be traced in his *Story of the Eye* that enhanced literal discontinuities between shapes: of the eye, egg, testicle and qualities: of tears, yolk, and sperm as Krauss notes (2010, p.166). Thus, for Bataille, beauty becomes convulsive when it disrupts spatiotemporal continuities as bodies did in *Dancing Sculptures*.

Antonin Artaud stated that “to know that a passion is material, that it is subject to the plastic fluctuations of material, makes accessible an empire of passions that extends our sovereignty” (1958, p.135). Corporeality becomes accentuated through effort and accentuates transgressions. In *Dancing Sculptures*, effort resulted in real pain due to an ‘affective athleticism’ that the performers carried out. In performing a
physical activity, “the result is successful in proportion to our power of interpretation and amount of experience, but most of all perhaps to the desire to do” as Todd has argued (1937, p.33). Effort thus, demonstrates what bodies can do, superseding the superficial ethics that grant it, politically incorrectly, as mere suffering.

Manning states that “bodies are connected through intensities of composition that in turn produce new bodies” (p.xvi). She suggests that the politics of touch are different from those of tact-ility, in that they always entail the risks of violation and becoming, instead of the conformity of tact. “To touch is to acknowledge that I must also be touched by you in order to touch you” (p.15). The becoming can only be mutual, involving both the bodies that are in touch. Staying in touch thus allowed a continuous development in Dancing Sculptures. The practical exploration focused on touch and tense bodily proximity enhanced the interdisciplinary possibilities of this corporeal becoming. For example, Grabbing parasites or Walkings, caused a choreographic violation of the normal distance between dancers and finally, a disciplinary transgression from dance into Dancing Sculptures.

7. Intensification

Violating the space and time of bodies increased bodily effort and intensified form. Effort was founded on the often asymmetric sculptural designs, reminiscent of earlier asymmetries in body shape design. Making asymmetrical constructions created moving images, in that the constructions were moving, even when they were attempting to stand still. This was achieved through the use of the diagonal, as sculptures were not only vertical but also labile.

For example, in image 30, the Heads became an asymmetric construction due to an excess of bodies. The arm was isolated from the head and torso so that the performers could sustain bodily contact. The last performer in each assemblage would push the arms of the next one, besides resting her weight on the other’s head. Each performer would do the same and thus, the last performer on the row had to push with her arms harder, while the first performer had to oppose this summative inward force.
of arms, in order to keep hers open and moving. Moreover, she had to balance her torso in opposition to the weight of others leaning on her head.

**Image 30. Heads in Dancing Sculptures**

Thus, despite the similar position of the performers, the labile design created a variety of forces which were combined to sustain this assemblage. A single inversion of a contraction and the whole would have to be reassembled. Asymmetry was thus, supported by attaining a fragile point of bodily balance where effort was maximized.

The construction of Heads despite keeping torsos in close proximity was sustained through tension between heads and arms. Labile movement takes the sculpture and the body off-centre as it enhanced a variety of dynamics which pushed the sculpture in various directions. Performers had to move the torso in juxtaposing directions.

In *Dancing Sculptures*, effort was intensified as it involved not only bodily but also choreographic transformations of pre-existing stylizations. Effort was intensified
due to sculptural shape design. Bodily effort revealed the constructedness of dance itself, by showing the weight of form which is often obscured through extensive training. Adrian Heathfield, in a lecture called *The Imperfect Body: challenging the culture of beauty* stated, that “testing of the limits of the body in performance art coincides with dance” (Siobhan Davies Dance Studios, May, 2007). Effort in *Dancing Sculptures* however, was different from the minimalist choreography of performance art, or conceptual dance, which would feature a performer jumping until distortion happened. In contrast to repetition, the distorting of effort patterns was here determined through change.

I would like to argue, that increased effort, works, essentially, in opposition to repetition. The choreography was constantly ‘involving’ so that the performers would continually keep trying rather than perform the tasks with ease. To avoid the reduction of effort through repeated rehearsals, the tasks constantly changed. Performers were constantly on the verge as the tasks were continually developing, so that the required effort for performing them slightly exceeded their capabilities. This continuous development, allowed the performers to reach their limits, without spilling their energy. They could not lose control of effort, as so often happens in performance art, since they had to perform the tasks within a specific space and time of the choreographic frame. This was further supported by the risky sculptural formations which depended heavily on the performers’ interdependence. The risk was more specifically situated in the relationship between the sculptural forms and their making material, bodies.

This disproportionate use of material and design can also be found in Kapoor’s, *Greyman Cries, Shaman Dies, Billowing Smoke, Beauty Evoked* (2008-9). This work consists of cement forms, which not only distort the mundane use of cement through flexible cylindrical forms but also, through this flexibility, reveal the importance of materials in the process of construction. The cement forms became flexible because the material was not sufficient to support the design. Thus, the cement overflowed creating the feeling of flexibility in a conventionally non-flexible material. This overflow was situated in the incapacity of the material to construct the design, the incapacity of the content to create a ‘proper’ form, and created an excess of content over form. This excess of content over form thus suggests and demonstrates interdependency.
The aim was to reveal the live potential of effort’s discontinuous flow which condensed many references into surreal images such as that of the torso-less body. Intensification was also a result of these effort displacements. The variety of sculptural constructions differentiated the degree of effort usually required by particular body parts. For example, in image 31, the body became torso-less by the close proximity of the two performers.

Image 31. Torso-less body from Dr Adder

The bouncing pelvis of one performer would rebound on the other’s torso, causing it to perform the movement quality of the pelvis. However, this heavy bouncing of her torso caused her arms to flow with a light quality. That is how the contrast between the degrees of effort increased and further intensified effort-shape as a whole.

Effort was in these ways intensified through variation. Reynolds states that “unlike the concepts of movement rhythm...which were based on ‘natural’, continuous, unbroken flow that implicitly privileged time over space, Cunningham’s rhythms effect a form of difference, introducing effects of difference and deferral into rhythm itself” (2007, p.192). Similarly, in Dancing Sculptures, effort’s discontinuous structures in-between movement and stillness also broke rhythmic continuity. Since the narrative was created by effort, discontinuity became intrinsic to the work. That is
to say that the use and rethinking of effort became the main theme and any subtheme of the form was generated by effort’s discontinuous flow as in Graham’s practice.

Scholar in dance and philosophy, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, has proposed that Graham’s *Lamentation* shows a ‘dynamic congruity’ between human feeling and aesthetic form (2009, p.300). Graham’s physical forms visualized the emotion of grief; so, in a sense, emotion became form. Similarly, Forsythe’s ‘choreographic object’ *The Fact of Matter* (2009), which premiered at the 23rd Venice Biennale, gave form to the feeling of movement by proposing a close-fit between object and subject. He created a close fit between the sculpture, comprising a textile web with hanging plastic rings, and the partaker who was invited to move through and by the sculpture. Thus, partakers became activated by the sculpture and experienced the feeling of simultaneous elevation and struggle in dance.

*Dancing Sculptures*, proposes that dance is an interdisciplinary activity, since both listening to and seeing moving bodies are co-activities of movement. It suggests that the feeling of movement is essentially unifying despite body part isolations. Dance was seen as a sharing process with other bodies, suggesting that the object is folded within the body. A performing body, such as a Dancing Sculpture, draws from other bodies and thus, in a sense draws other bodies in. The dancer’s body was seen as a sharing and shared body. *Dancing Sculptures* expanded the feeling of dance by contracting the physical, the sensual and the spiritual body.

I would like to propose that *Dancing Sculptures* expands the notion of dance instead of limiting it; similarly to sculpture’s expansion through performance art. For example, the act of cutting in Paul McCarthy’s sculptural performance may be seen as an exaggeration of carving or sculpting and its performance becomes an excess of sculpture.

Multiplicity in representation was instigated by intercorporeality. *Dancing Sculptures* enhanced body-gestures, that is to say body postures which bent dance towards sculpture. The body-gestures of *Dancing Sculptures* could be seen as Deleuzian assemblages of the subjective experience of the senses and of the objectified body without organs, lacking organization. The body-gesture increased the rhythmic complexity and spatiotemporal distortions created by extreme effort and visual distortion. These effects were amplified by the fact that sculptural monsters
moved (with a rather integrated coordination) parallel to the movements of two or more real bodies (with a coordination based on isolations). Therefore, the multiplicity of bodies-parts intensified bodily contractions.

Bodily contractions of bodies-parts also enhanced aesthetic contractions. Allen Weiss (eds. Banes and Lepecki, 2007) writes about “the weight of totality and the pain of fragmentation” in Artaud’s theatre of cruelty (p.204). She notes Artaud’s “incompatible network of stylistic oppositions – aesthetic double-binds” (p.203) which favor the combinatory mode rather than dividing. For this reason Artaud’s ‘theatre of cruelty’ sits well within post-deconstruction’s integratory theory, prominent in current studies of postmodern aesthetics. Weiss states that “for Artaud force and form are never to be dissociated, such that the body is always a body in pain” (p.204). Thus, aesthetic contractions of opposite styles can be related to the contracting body.

The aesthetic contractions favored by Artaud, were enhanced in Dancing Sculptures, by merging various disciplines. Sculptural formalism became expressive and dance expressionism became formalistic through bodily practice. Expression and form are interdependent. When form changes, expression changes. Aesthetic contractions are also more intense the greater the distance between each aesthetic and its disciplinary style. Formalism and expressionism can be considered to be diametrically opposed movements, representing respectively American and European modern dance. In Dancing Sculptures, these styles however appeared in close proximity, no longer separable, but deterritorialized into a neo-expressionist hybrid. On one level, it could be argued that formalism came through sculpture and expressionism through dance. However, their contraction was more complicated in rehearsal, since the process of assembling bodies also involved formalism and expressionism from the visual arts. Thus, the paradigm of Dancing Sculptures suggests that intercorporeality can be transformative, not only in terms of spectatorship, but also because it suggests multiple and complex aesthetic transformations, beyond the reconciliation of opposites.

Cohen supports this simultaneous experience of opposing forces which lies “in a psychoanalytically precise understanding of the nature of enjoyment (in Lacanian terms, jouissance), which can as easily be sadistic, masochistic, and obscene as
wholesome and delightful; and in the relation of the monster’s simultaneous presence both within and outside human identity” (1999, p.xiii). Various grotesque monstrous sculptural formations, which reconfigured the image of the human body through multiple bodies-parts, were in their turn founded on body parts isolation. Looking at bodies as parts was enhanced through play with human anatomy. Ralf Remshradt also proposed that “the grotesque is clearly not satisfactorily explained as a mere coincidentia oppositorum but must be regarded as a transformation in which the elements of the opposition themselves become so problematic as not to respond to their previous appellations” (2004, p. 114-115). The procedures of aesthetic transformation in Dancing Sculptures that I have explained in this chapter, allow for a more layered understanding of contraction as itself an aesthetic.
C. Visual Dance

Visual methodologies refer to the scholarly study of visual elements in the field of visual art. However, with the advent of performance art, visual studies have become utilized for analyzing performance and thus, also movement. Since visual images became moving bodies and moving bodies perceive visual images, choreology may be utilized for analyzing visual art. Thus, the moving image becomes the point of intersection between dance and visual art. Then, through the visual dance approach, an interdisciplinary rather than aesthetic appreciation of body images could also begin to happen. What a visual analysis of the moving body made possible was visual dance and Dancing Sculptures.

Dancing Sculptures is a form of visual dance. Despite perceiving all artistic dances visually, this term is used to acknowledge the merging of artistic processes from dance and visual art which have been brought to light through performance art in the 1960s and 1970s and more recently, through live art, but also to brake from the more frequent alignment between dance and theatre. By visual dance, I mean that the dance can stand both as dance and as visual art. Visual dance suggests the merging of choreology with visual methodologies, from the perspective of dance, rather than from visual art to performance. As in performance art, where performance was unfolded from the making processes of visual art, visual methodologies have been unfolded from within my dance practice rather than added to it.

The recent trends show that the body calls forth, as a promise or oath, the transformation of the disciplines that previously contained it. This performativity also involves, in a manner both intrinsic and extrinsic to it, the visual.

Mark Franko and Katherine Soussloff (2002, p.38)
In this research, visual methodologies emerged in contraction-based dance through a focus on design and effort. In this chapter, I will argue for the importance of visual methodologies to dance research and will revisit their relationship through modern histories which suggest that visuality is intrinsic to bodily movement. Moreover, I will look at the effects of this relationship and argue that visual dance is sculptural. I will thus, aim to suggest that the relationship between dance and sculpture is grounded on relationships between the corporeal and the visual.

It is worth noting that dance scholar Barbara Mettler, had already traced the intrinsic relationship of dance and visual elements in 1947. She stated that dance “by awakening the sense of space and cultivating it in a visual-motor direction, it establishes a functional basis for the creation of visual forms” (p.203). Thus, Mettler situated the importance of visual elements in the process of dancing. These ideas have been extended in Dancing Sculptures through the use of the moving image. More specifically, in this research, visual forms have created new kinaesthetic functions. Visual methodologies, by visually distorting bodily forms, allowed for a better appreciation of effort beyond expressionist terms.

Despite the European neglect of the visual in dance practice and performance due to theatrical traditions, dance theory and particularly dance history have been systematically using visual approaches, as theorists often rely on filmed archives and performance photographs for their dance analysis, and as I did for examining the work of Graham. Researching the visual archives of Graham’s practice was vital for a better understanding of shape design. Similarly, photos and videos of my dance practice have been of central importance to analyzing and further developing it. More specifically, photos which accompany this dissertation play a dual role of supporting the analysis but also emphasizing the importance of shape design or figuration in the process of making dance.

Shape design, one of the four dance elements according to Laban, refers to the visual design of the moving body, and thus, to visual form. Documenting the shape designs of Dancing Sculptures in photos (Appendices 4 & 8) and drawings (Appendices 7, 9 & 12), was of increasing importance as the material was growing. These visual methodologies were involved in an extrinsic manner to the body practice since they were employed mostly for documenting and analyzing the dance. However,
drawings also allowed for experimenting with the structure of the narrative (Appendices 13, 14 & 15) and thus, also time. As Burt suggests, "rather than setting visuality against temporality, as Sheets-Johnstone and others have done, there is a need to find ways of recognizing and understanding complex interactions between the different levels of ‘discourse’ on which dance performance may draw" (2009, p.41). My performance also drew on visual methodologies which altered in time. These drawings also support a visual choreographic structuring instead of the primacy of movement and its organic continuous transitions. Drawings also inspired the creation of bodily assemblages (Appendix 3), such as the one shown in image 32, and other visual methodologies, such as the collage, assisted experimentation with various versions of spatial composition in image 33.

In this research, visual methodologies such as the use of photographs and drawings, suggest the extrinsic manner in which a body may transform dance studies.
Drawings as well as photographs entail a perspective. Bleeker, following Mitchell (1986), suggests that “the practice of perspective explicitly inscribes the point of view from which an observation was made and accordingly makes evident the need to recognize the difference a change in viewpoint makes” (2008b, p.46). Visual methodologies favor the construction of new bodily images which cause a change in theatrical views of the body. These images leave out the logocentric qualities of the gesture, by focusing on shape design. Therefore, showing bodies “from a particular point of view, an image shows more than what can actually be seen” (Bleeker, 2008b, p.47). Visual methodologies thus by obscuring visual fragments, they unfold others and in this process, they also unfold new perspectives of the dancing body.

Reynolds noted Wassily Kandinsky’s argument on the kinaesthetic possibilities of images and their importance for his move towards abstraction.

He affirmed that scientific discoveries that called the solidity of matter into question were a crucial factor in influencing this move. The concept of matter as energy promoted by atomic physics challenged notions of the solidity and indissolubility of objects and pointed to possible connections between matter and the dynamics of ‘inner’ consciousness.

Dee Reynolds, 2007, p.94

In this sense, what we perceived as stable could also be perceived as moving according to its material and form. Every form may be perceived as moving even the most static ones such as visual images. These early developments point to an intercorporeality in which every form is moving according to the concreteness of its form. Dancing Sculptures by becoming more or less concrete and by expressing the instability of condensed bodies suggested that a concrete sculpture and its multiple visual images are also moving. This happens primarily because we are always in movement and learn to perceive through movement.

In order to show that we also perceive images kinaesthetically, I will examine Joan Miró’s painting Head of a Woman (1938), shown in image 34. Miró’s revolt against cubism as a bourgeois movement instigated his personal surrealist style which
created raw fragile color designs. His painting is "the immediate expression of the movements of being, their capture at their source, their passing over the canvas which is less the location of metamorphosis than the receptacle of dreams" as Jacques Dupin stated (cited in Waldburg, 1965, p.36). His work combines non-referential, non-figurative shapes favoring space, color and movement but also more referential, disturbing, bizarre, and monstrous shapes which combine objects with human and animal elements. In this work, as in most Surreal paintings, there is an evident emphasis on doing rather than expressing through representation (the emphasis on doing was the work of the preceding art movement, Abstract Expressionism).

Image 34. Joan Miró's *Head of a Woman*, 1938, Minneapolis Institute of Art

Through a choreological approach, Miró's intense geometries of color, in-between Abstract Expressionism and Surrealism, can be seen as intense geometries of
effort. For example, in this painting the intensity of red signifies an increased effort in the erotic zones of the woman’s upper body, such as the mouth, the eye, the ear, the finger, the neck, the underarm and the breasts. The rest of the body is black and thus, the black and red woman is juxtaposed with the intense blue of the background making her figure intense as a whole.

The two-dimensional shape design of the woman’s upper body can be perceived kinaesthetically by imagining how this body would move in three dimensions. Movement abilities are shaped by anatomical design. The grotesquely enlarged head of the woman is connected to an equally enlarged torso, by an analogically very small and thin neck. The arms are also thin however one is bigger than the other. The left hand is also bigger than the right one. These distortions of the woman’s two-dimensional image can be kinaesthetically traced in a complicated distortion of distances which can be easily seen in the shape design of the breasts. The left looks flat and is reminiscent of a frightened eye while the other while the right one is a bit lower and projects outwards like an angry eye in profile, or even a small phallus. Thus, the two-dimensional shape design gives the aesthetic of a three-dimensional figure. This is further supported by small details in the shape design such as the teeth and hair which are juxtaposed to the larger areas. Moreover, the woman’s face looks like that of a bird, as does her left hand, while the rest of the head looks like the body of a fish. Thus, through multiple figurations, body part isolation becomes important in visualizing and constructing the woman’s body.

In painting, time is still, although in this image, time becomes moving by combining color as effort and shape design. The large black areas of the body seem heavy, hard to move, and thus, they suggest a very slow rhythm. In contrast the small red areas of the erotic zones of the body seem to represent a quicker and more intense rhythm which is further accentuated also by some small yellow, green and blue areas. The only white area in the painting, in the teeth and the eye, is also juxtaposed to the large black areas but also the smaller colored areas. Therefore, intense juxtapositions of shape designs and colors create a strong kinaesthetic effect. Analyzing Miró’s painting choreologically suggests that ‘seeing’ an image can also become a kinaesthetic ‘watching’.
Since images suggest movement, they imply the third dimension. Francis Bacon's grotesque bodies become disturbing through condensation of various dark colour paint flows. The violent juxtaposition of shape and disfiguration takes place within one human form. Bacon's images do not only violate human forms but also the very image. In a sense they become moving images through the violence of flowing paint upon shape design. Thus, through their intrinsic interdisciplinarity, Bacon's paintings produce visceral effects for the viewer. Thus, the intersection of image and movement, visual art and dance, becomes more specifically located in sculpture. Sculpture, due to mass is in essence a more interdisciplinary medium than painting and thus, similar to dance. Dance and sculpture's relationship can be traced in their three-dimensional form, which is their corporeality. Moreover, sculpture is traditionally perceived through moving images as spectators move around it and sometimes within the work in order to see it. That is why visual approaches in dance resulted in *Dancing Sculptures*.

Krauss identifies a close relationship between Miró and Bataille through their attention to body parts and particularly the big toe (2010, p.177). Bataille's support for grotesque transgressions was traced in Miró’s anti-painting. Similarly, Bellmer’s dolls can be seen as part of the same grotesque surrealist lineage which defied idealities in contrast to Breton's *First Surrealist Manifesto* of 1924 which focused on dreams.

Bellmer's dolls of the mid 1930s were sculptural formations created by drawing together body parts or body organs in unnatural fittings which dismantled the human organism. They are 'bodies without organs' according to Deleuze and Guattari. These impossible (in)human forms are also felt kinaesthetically. Like the forms of *Dancing Sculptures*, they can be seen as *mutata corpora*, bodies that mutate and change form by becoming assemblages. Weiss suggests that “assemblages are also fragmentary, contingent, and multiple, and...their incorporeal transformations are registered in a series of body images that are linked together through their own chiasmatic interchanges” (1999, p.127). Thus, bodies are also considered as fragments in intercorporeal assemblages.

These grotesque body-anagrams, rather than indulging in intense color, distort human anatomy and become intense through a corporeal design. These corporeal
designs are also corporeally experienced by viewers which identify kinaesthetically with static sculptures. In this sense, their shape design suggests an increased effort. This kind of grotesque, ‘convulsive’\textsuperscript{15}, almost pervasive sexuality is achieved by turning the body into an object. Breton stated that “there can be beauty – convulsive beauty – only at the price of the affirmation of the reciprocal relationship that joins an object in movement to the same object in repose” (p.162). The body becomes a sexual object and it is thus simultaneously a dead subject and an impossible live object. Thus, its kinaesthetic effects can be very intense. Therefore, seeing dance can happen through a visual artwork in which extrinsic visual elements to the body’s performativity become intrinsic.

Similarly, kinaesthesia can be activated by seeing. But what does ‘seeing’ mean for dance studies? Since spectators and the processes of viewing a dance began to concern dance studies, visual perception became prominent. My conception of the ‘visual’ however, extends that of ‘seeing’ because of its interaction with kinaesthesia. Kinaesthesia, the perception of movement, happens through all the bodily senses and cannot be separated from them. Current interdisciplinary research such as the AHRC collaborative project \textit{The Watching Dance Project} which uses audience research and neuroscience to examine dance perception (University of Manchester, University of Glasgow, York St John University and Imperial College London) with Reynolds as its principal investigator, favors a more holistic experiential ‘watching’ over ‘seeing’ dance in line with Fensham’s argument in her \textit{To Watch Theatre} (2009). ‘Watching’ dance however, suggests the primary importance of spectating or seeing dance over the other senses. However, within the intercorporeal framework I am proposing, watching cannot be set against seeing. They are rather complementary. A choreological perspective on Miro’s \textit{Head of a Woman} does not stand against medium specific approaches used in visual art theory and considering visuality as temporal does not exclude visual-specific approaches.

With the advent of performance art, which appreciated live moving bodies in visual terms, visual elements gained prominence within the wider context of performance. “Performance art of the early 1970s defined itself in opposition to the commodity based art market” of the visual arts as Peggy Phelan verifies (2004, p.

\textsuperscript{15}Breton’s term for describing strange surrealist beauty (1978, p.73).
although, as Jon Erickson argued, “such an ideal was assuredly abandoned by the eighties, and performance as a highly polished commodity is clearly prominent in the nineties” (1999, p. 94). However, performance art’s complication of visual art’s market laws can be seen positively for the dance market. Performance art can be seen as expanding the object in space and contracting it in time, as it becomes no longer diachronic, and vice versa: reducing the space the object occupies and expanding it in time, given that before it did not exist at all in the time dimension. Performance art of the 60s and 70s may have been an interdisciplinary expansion at the time, although, based on the second hypothesis and through the more formal prism of interdisciplinarity offered by Deleuzian theory, these works may be considered as reductions, because in aesthetic terms, they deconstructed the object of art.

However, performance art’s deconstruction of the object opened the way for contracting dance into visual art. By contracting dance into visual art, I refer to the expanding qualities of movement contraction which unfold the visual qualities of dance. As Deleuzian theory suggests, deconstruction and contraction constantly enhance each other (1988). Dancing Sculptures, may be seen on the one hand, through a dance perspective, to contract dance in space as now less space was used and in time as less time was used. On the other hand, through a visual perspective, Dancing Sculptures may be seen to expand dance in space as now space was emphasized through stasis and in time, through the duration of stasis. An interdisciplinary, visual dance approach includes both perspectives and thus a simultaneous contraction-expansion. More specifically, it is an expansion of the disciplines through their contraction. Based on this hypothesis, I argue that Dancing Sculptures proposes an interdisciplinary expansion of dance, enhanced through corporeal contractions, since bodies become contracted in space and time; since they construct an assemblage. I am thus, basing my interdisciplinary argument about contraction on corporeality and the concreteness of form.

Visual dance, offers a better understanding of corporeality within an interdisciplinary art framework. Thus, instead of performance art, which specifically relates to the historically situated particular movement of visual artists in the 1960s and 1970s turning to performance, the term of Live Art, suggests a wider framework of body practices, which distort conventional disciplines by contractile means.
The term Live Art is not a description of an art form or discipline, but a cultural strategy to include experimental processes and experiential practices that might otherwise be excluded from established curatorial, cultural and critical frameworks. Live Art is a framing device for a catalogue of approaches to the possibilities of liveness by artists who chose to work across, in between, and at the edges of more traditional artistic forms.

Live Art Development Agency Website

The focus on liveness rather than performance, emphasizes not only a temporal contraction as opposed to modernist deconstruction, but also stresses the interdisciplinarity of artists who work with processes that become manifested by the live body in-between disciplines. For example, the physical experience of bodily weight in Live art practices produces a critique of dance weightlessness and 'free' flow as La Ribot's *Distinguished Pieces* demonstrate.

Maria Ribot’s thirty-four *Distinguished Pieces* created over ten years consist of *Panoramix*, premiered at the Tate Modern in London in 2003 as part of ‘Live Culture’ organised by the Live Art Development Agency and the Tate Modern. Before experimenting with images, props and text, Ribot was trained in classical ballet. Her visual dance generated reflections on her dance background and disciplinary criticism. The *Distinguished Pieces* were “conceived about and from the body...partially inverting the assignment of mobility and immobility to performer and spectators” (José A. Sánchez, 2007) through visual approaches. I propose to develop an extended reading of Ribot’s work, because it supports my view, that interdisciplinary approaches, such as the merging of visual arts and dance, are instigated by the body and its senses.

Ribot disrupts dance patterns through their close connection to objects, costumes and sometimes text. Objects such as chair, book and wooden boards, and costumes such as the raincoat she used in her pieces, were closely attached to her body as a way of blurring the boundaries of subjectivity and objectivity. In piece #8 *Capricho Mio* (1994), she measured her body disproportionately as if to criticize the required symmetry of professional dance bodies, and she challenged naïve conceptions about the image of the body. Most importantly, she suggested that the body measures space and time since units of measurement were created by the body.
When she performed a gradual dilated fall from standing on the floor, while reopening a chair she was wearing around her pelvis, labelling herself “On Sale” in piece #14 N14 (1996), she marked her opposition to bodily commercialization. Bodily commercialization in dance generated the current trend of continuous flow as Foster argued (1995, p.3). In piece #29 Chair (2000), Ribot was attaching wooden frames with tape on her joints. By the end of the piece she could barely move, thus, her critique of bodily objectification extended, and was epitomized by, the destruction of flow.

In piece #26 N26, (1997) Ribot paints her body according to musical rhythm. Ribot’s attempt to make a painting on her body, in accordance to musical rhythm, causes her body to move outside the musical rhythm and distorts the visual presentation of the musical score.

In N26 the audience witnesses live a constant rhythmic displacement and transformation of the melodic line which disrupts disciplinary effort patterns. This
simultaneity of rhythmic lines, which disrupt each other, intensifies interdisciplinary rhythm. The complexity of synaesthetic rhythm contracts or draws together various disciplinary rhythmic lines, breaks them, distorts them and alters them. When the visual rhythmic line intertwines with that of movement or sound, all of them are transformed into a more distorted whole. In Dancing Sculptures, visual bodily patterns interweave with movement bodily patterns (as well as sound). Thus, interdisciplinary rhythms are generated through and within the body itself.

In piece #20 Manual de uso (1997), Ribot was reading manual instructions for constructing a cleaning device and performed as if she and her costume were the compartments. She gradually took off her plastic see-through costume and re-wore it according to the manual.

Image 36. Maria Ribot, #20, Manual de Uso, 1997

Her body also followed the instructions as if it were one compartment. She displaced her costume by wearing the trousers on her head according to the manual. This displacement led to others, as the work shifted back to reality, reminding the watchers of the fact that she could have asphyxiated by the time the narrative would end. The
manual instructed Ribot – one compartment – to wait until the unit would ‘extinct’ itself. By blending real and performative narratives, the rime of the piece extended. “In this combination of the too-short and the too-long, La Ribot signals to her spectators that they are in the grip of an impossible temporality – fleeting and enduring – a time that does not have its own time” as Heathfield suggests (2004, p.8).

Ribot states (2000) that she is “interested in proposing images, a series of things together, that act ‘impassively’, on my behalf, on the onlooker” (ed. Heathfield, 2004). In this way, her work creates synaesthesia, the sensory disorder in which the senses intertwine, and allow onlookers to approach objects choreologically and movement visually. Lepecki stated that transforming a “synaesthetic effect into an aesthetic operation...gave Panoramix an autonomous force that reached beyond the panoramic summation of a trajectory” (2004, p.97-98). The live close proximity between objects and Ribot’s body became active. This happened, not only because proximity of subject and object revealed the myths of subjectivity and expressiveness in dance, but also because it condensed disciplinary narratives. By condensing the subject and the object in space, Ribot’s processes expanded time. They thus became ‘contractile’ (Lepecki’s term, 2006). Bergson’s notion of duration, where the present moves in dilation towards the past and in contraction towards the future, becomes part of my argument on interdisciplinarity. Bergson stated that “memory, inseparable in practice from perception, imports the past into the present, contracts into a single intuition many moments of duration” (1988, p.73). When present time expands to include both the past and the future, the body becomes both a dancing body and a visual body.

The close proximity between Ribot’s subjectivity and objects, became, in Dancing Sculptures, a close proximity between bodies-subjects and body parts-objects, through the use of effort, as I have argued in chapter B. For example, when one performer carried another’s weight, the latter’s body became objectified, while the whole bodily assemblage was simultaneously subjectified and objectified. Thus, the contraction of subject and object unfolds a visuality, which is intrinsic to dance and suggests that visual elements, which are extrinsic to the body’s performativity, such as objects in Ribot’s practice, may also become intrinsic, such as body parts-objects in Dancing Sculptures. According to Bleeker, visuality suggests the negation of the subject/object binary. In her Visuality in the Theatre (2008), her study on
performance perspectivism, Bleeker proposes that “seeing appears to alter the thing seen and to transform the one seeing, showing them to be profoundly intertwined in the event that is visuality” (p.2). Thus, she sets visuality within a temporal framework by suggesting that the subject seeing changes the object seen in a similar manner that the object being seen changes the subject seeing it.

Subject and object proximity has also been increased in modern body part isolations which have objectified the dancing body. However, the term isolation cannot refer to parts of a live body, since they cannot actually become visually isolated. Visual methodologies become important for a better understanding of corporeality in the interdisciplinary framework. In her Anatomy Live: Performance and the operating theatre (2008) Bleeker states that “dissection turns the body into a mute corporeal object, separated from and opposed to the Cartesian disembodied I/eye as the site of subjectivity, thought and knowledge” (p.14). In line with Bleeker, I wish to object to continuing associations of the visual with Cartesian binary aesthetics as the visual is also part of the corporeal, as well as subjectivity. In contrast to Bleeker, however, I want to propose, that it is precisely the ‘dissected’ body of modern dance which folds the corporeal with the visual and unfolds the history of their relationship.

Visual methodologies in dance practice become particularly important because they allow what I call seeing-watching. On the one hand, vision can be ‘seeing’, since we can only see fragments, thus, always through a perspective. On the other hand, vision becomes ‘watching’ as it is framed by the other senses and by the unifying force of the interpreter’s intentionality in order to make meaning. Seeing and watching, however, do not exclude each other but rather, one involves the other. For example, in Dancing Sculptures, seeing what individual bodies were doing happened simultaneously with watching the illusion of many bodies as one, both in the making and in performance. Seeing-watching suggests that contractile practices do not negate deconstruction and subsequently, that interdisciplinarity does not negate previous disciplines but rather contains them under new organizations.

According to literary theorist, Ulrika Maude’s Modernist Bodies: Coming to our senses (2009), the focus on kinaesthesia, by separating knowledge from vision and watching from seeing, also continues to separate subjectivity from objectivity.
Maude proposes that quantitative seeing and qualitative watching overlap and that what they share is "an emphasis on wonder" (p.128), which, I would argue, becomes instigated by simultaneity, i.e. by both seeing separately and watching holistically at the same time. This corporeal simultaneity suggests that extrinsic visual elements to the body's performativity become intrinsic. Besides the fact that Miro's *Head of a Woman* and Bellmer's dolls can be perceived both visually and kinaesthetically, they are intrinsic to the body's performativity because they were created by it.

Both seeing and watching become also important in the process of making a dance. Seeing, allowed me to (choreo)graph a dance and watching, to imagine its visual result, through all the senses. In *Dancing Sculptures*, the visual focus emerged, despite the fact that, when visual methodologies become manifest in dance, the practical result is not so much one of emergence but one of visualization. Visualization refers to the process of making something visible or giving something visual form. Visualization implies both seeing what is in the process of taking visual form and watching with all the senses for assisting this process. It thus generated an expressive desire which delved deep into the imagination of bodies. Thus, visual imagining may realize new ways of moving which empower expression in contrast to collaborative practices in dance which depend heavily on the performers' input and thus, on their movement habits and established training systems. Through visualization then, what is expressed in the form of dance is not only the seen objective aesthetic reality but also the watched subjective experience of that reality.

Visualization did not negate the role of emergence through collaboration. Direction always restricts the performers somehow. In this sense, visual direction is no more restrictive than choreographic direction which may impose dynamic qualities without physical reasoning. In the case of *Dancing Sculptures*, extreme effort
transpired due to the nature of the tasks presented to the dancers rather than imposed through stylization. It was precisely the transition from my personal visualization to a shared physical actuality which enhanced emergence and opened up the work to the unpredictable. Visual methodologies stand in-between personal expression and the performers' interpretation. Therefore, in Dancing Sculptures, desire and emergence did not work antagonistically but rather together for creating the work.

Cross-disciplinary references emerged out of choreographic necessity in Dancing Sculptures. Visual dance supports a better understanding of interdisciplinarity beyond that of dance theatre. In Europe, the disciplines of dance and visual art have been separated or held in a fixed relation by dance's own practices. Bergson's idea, that the more the distance between the various references increases, the more distant they become from the subject, the greater the possibility for aesthetic distortion (1973, ed. 2007, p.7) becomes vital for exploring obscured territories. But the merging of visual art and dance, allows for examining what performance art and visual theatre (such as that of Robert Wilson) have kept apart: the relationship of corporeality to interdisciplinarity.

In Dancing Sculptures, visual illusions began with exploring relations between three-dimensional moving images. The moving image of the human body was supported by the multiple perspectives in which a Dancing Sculpture could be seen. In this way, and through simultaneous multiple moving images, Dancing Sculptures distorted perspective. Bleeker states that in painting, to "'get things in perspective' is used as a metaphor to describe seeing things in their true relative proportion, which is actually an odd metaphor since getting the 'right' size, is precisely what perspective falsifies" (2008b, p.14). Similarly, in Dancing Sculptures, perspective was falsified, through moving images, which mixed close with far and created illusions. For example, in image 37, the mix of the close and the far was founded on bodily proximity which allowed for mixing some body parts of one body with those of another. In this process, some body parts were obscured while others were visible, from every perspective. Thus, Dancing Sculptures allowed various degrees of illusion, sometimes the apparent unity of a monstrous whole, or at other times the awkward reality of conjunction.
Illusion operates as the simultaneity of multiple perspectives. For example, optics create the illusion of a moving image, whether inwards or outwards, by displaying the visual designs of contraction and expansion. The illusion becomes partially created through the viewers’ gaze or their perspective. Bleeker proposes that although an illusion becomes constructed independently of the viewer and waits to be seen, the viewer has to relate to the work from a particular perspective for experiencing it.

The power of an illusionistic picture is that it is convincing as an image of ‘how things are’ independent of any particular observer, rather than any particular way of seeing or depicting things, while at the same time this effect depends on the viewer taking up a very specific point of view that in its turn has to remain invisible in order to produce the desired effect.

Maaike Bleeker, 2008, p.48

Therefore, illusion and viewer work both independently but primarily together. It was simultaneity of the work’s vision and the viewer’s vision which actualized visual illusions in Dancing Sculptures. Reality appeared amplified through the effect of
greater physical visibility when viewed from a close distance. This effect could be further exaggerated according to the movement of the spectators. Through these corporeal illusionary proximities, the virtual and the real were drawn together or contracted in time and space.

Art historian Aby Warburg (1866-1929) had been interested in the image in motion he traced in early Renaissance painters and sculptors. Warburg, by tracing movement in painted figures of the Quattrocento, the artistic and cultural movement of Italy in the 15th century, argued for the Dionysian foundations of Renaissance art. He identified a composite entity of mythological figuration and real character “as the universal type of the figure in motion” in Sandro Botticelli’s Birth of Venus as Philippe-Alain Michaud verifies (2004, p.68).

Michaud states, that in Warburg’s analysis, “the movement is described as an active dissociation between the fluttering contours of the figure and its mass, which seems to dissolve at the extremities, like a dance introducing disorder to its symmetry, shuttering the measured equilibrium of the static apparition” (p.71). Thus, Warburg’s analysis of the image in motion was situated in between contour and mass, dance and sculpture. Parallels between Rabelaisian grotesque images of the body and the moving images of Renaissance painters in the theorizations of Bakhtin and Warburg respectively, suggest a close proximity between the classical grotesque and classicism.

Warburg, in his attempt to examine the image in motion, also became interested in how Botticelli made the Study for a Composition of Venus Emerging from the Waves, by copying a drawing of Antiquity, like other Renaissance artists, “including its deterioration, to express the phenomena of appearance and disappearance, seeking to reproduce not so much the figure depicted as the act of figuration itself, and the pulsing of presence and absence conditioning it” (Michaud, 2004, p.72). Thus, images were seen in motion, particularly by representing their duration through missing body parts. Similarly, Dancing Sculptures created various moving images, which obscured some body parts while making others visible, when seen from various perspectives.

Warburg’s image in motion was an illusion founded in-between the work’s perspective and the movements of the viewer’s gaze. The viewer’s active intervention
influenced the nature of the work. He stated that figures “move on a plane parallel to the spectator, so that the spectator can believe in forward movement only when he moves his eyes” (1890, cited in Michaud, 2004, p.82). Warburg’s image in motion was located in the movement between spectators and the work. In another note, he stated: “to attribute motion to a figure that is not moving, it is necessary to reawaken in oneself a series of experienced images following one from the other – not a single image: a loss of calm contemplation” (cited in Michaud, p.83). Thus, Warburg suggested an intrinsic tension in the images of Botticelli, which he attributed to a close connection between early Renaissance and Antiquity. The return to the past, as in grotesque art, enhanced “a rejection of idealizing aesthetic categories in favour of ecstatic expressive formulas” as Michaud argues (p.84).

In Dancing Sculptures, distortions of the human body image were founded in body part isolations, which enhanced visual illusions, some of which can be traced in section 20 of the DVD. For example, in image 38, it is possible to see, how the simple task of carrying other bodies through space, created many different visual illusions of the human form.

Image 38. Carrying bodies
In this image a visual continuity can be observed from the one performer’s arm into another’s. Thus, the arm of both performers seems hyper-extended. Moreover, the other arm of the standing performer consists of two legs, suggesting a hyper-enlarged shoulder.

Andreas Huyssen suggests that these growing body fragments construct the post-identity frame.

Such images of threatening body fragments, which take a life of their own...causes...anxieties of excess, of flowing over, of unstable bodily boundaries...Indeed, it is important to insist that these experiences of excess are not to be misread as positive expansions of the self ...Indeed, we face the paradox that these visions of bodily excess are simultaneously experiences of loss...it is a more totalizing loss, a wiping out of identity.

Andreas Huyssen, 1995, p.109

Despite Huyssen’s pessimist view, I would like to argue that human identity becomes more significant because these bodily excesses also involve losses. It is the combination of making some body parts absent while others become excessive that empowers identity. This effect is reminiscent of Louise Bourgeois’ elliptic sculptural forms which turned loss into identity, absence into presence. Bourgeois’ anatomical distortions were founded on an elliptic architecture of human forms. Missing or invisible body parts became present through their absence. This was achieved because the viewer could still perceive the human form on display. What is more, humanity was accentuated through these dehumanized forms.

In another example, in image 39, it is possible to trace (an)other body through a visual continuity between one performer’s torso and another’s legs despite facing opposite directions. Similarly, in the Grabbing parasite of image 40, one performer became a parasite, as she was hanging on someone else’s leg. By obscuring the parasite’s head and torso, the other performer’s leg appeared to be fragmented, yet thickened, consisting of multiple legs.
The visual illusion consists of a human body with a multiple leg, or even of a body disposing of another one in pieces. More visual illusions of Grabbing parasites can be seen in section 17 of the DVD. All these illusions were created by obscuring some body parts behind others. Making some body parts visually absent resulted in excessive bodily forms.

In visualizing dance as I have been describing, my aim was to reconfigure movement fragmentation. Like the futurists, instead of dividing singularities, I was looking for “a single form to replace these old conceptions of division with new concepts of continuity” (Umberto Boccioni, 1913, ed. Apollonio, 1973, p.89). Boccioni in a published lecture of 1913 titled Plastic Dynamism spoke about “dynamism as a general law of simultaneity” and argued that “power-form expresses the potential of the living form” (p. 94). Similarly, the intercorporeal aesthetic of Dancing Sculptures was located in the living dynamism of form, the illusions of a kinaesthetic and visual simultaneity.

Stanton B. Garner in his Sensing Realism: illusionism, actuality, and the theatrical sensorium (eds. Banes and Lepecki 2007) argues for the drawing together of opposing 20th century realist and anti-realist sensorial practices (futurism, dada,
avant-garde theatre) “to recognize that these concurrent and later movements are often in dialogue with realism” (p.122). Aesthetic contraction is suggested through the body, as the bearer of a real physicality and imaginary sensory perception. He states: “as its own paradoxical name suggests, illusionism carries within itself the means by which the real is constructed and an instability with which its fictional autonomy is continually threatened” (p.117). Illusion constructs reality and thus, it also becomes part of reality, suggesting that there is no stable meaning, no singular reality. Garner also suggests that “the more realist stage practice works to incorporate the world outside the theatre within the sphere of illusion, the more it risks theatricalising the actual in performance, bodying it forth in a kind of hyper-actuality” (p.119). In this way, the forms of Dancing Sculptures, and their visual illusions, became expressive of a hyper-actuality, constructed in real time and space.

Thus, my conception of the contraction, by combining effort and shape, movement and image, realism and illusion, formalism and expressionism, combines Bergson’s time contraction and Deleuze’s space contraction or assemblage in order to elaborate various spatio-temporal multiplicities. Multiplicity of form became “constituted by a multiplicity of presents, extending towards past and future in different modes, according to different vectors, intensities, affects” (Lepecki, 2006, p.130). Similarly, the multiplicity of time was constituted by a multiplicity of spaces, or perspectives, created by different fittings, or ways of putting bodies in contact. Thus, temporality did not oppose the metric form of time, but rather blended the virtual subjective experience of time, or duration, with the real objective space. Temporality, blended virtual and real times, while spatiality, blended virtual and real spaces.

This chapter, suggests that when dance intersects the visual, the result includes both watching and seeing, both dancing and sculptures. That is to say, medium-specific approaches are contained within those interdisciplinary practices, because they have already been intrinsic to the body’s performativity. When Franco and Sussloff argue for a merging of visual and performance studies, they place “the body and its practices, including its visualizations, at the center of a transformative actuality” (2002, p33). Thinking about a transformative actuality originates from the body. Points of connectivity between the visual and dance, seeing and watching, practice and theory, were traced through the practice of the body.
D. Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, I will look at contraction as an aesthetic which stands in-between effort and shape. Revisiting contraction as a methodology which draws together or folds various bodies of knowledge suggests that it works by analogies. By drawing an analogy between my practical findings and Deleuzian theory, contraction is situated post-deconstruction. As a post-deconstructive aesthetic, contraction is anti-deconstructive because it draws body parts and bodies together, and becomes intercorporeal. Contraction however, comes after dance deconstruction which once deconstructed, becomes interdisciplinary.

1. Contraction as an Aesthetic

In Dancing Sculptures, a bodily contraction, founded on choreographic contractions (bodies' contraction into sculptural forms), accentuated a visual contraction, which intensified the contraction, or drawing together, of performers and participants. Despite the complexities of viewing in the round, and the various degrees of interactivity and proximity folded within this structure, the overall visual design of the performance was contracting or moving inwards, towards the work rather than outwards as happens in many release-based performances. A contracting shape design drew participants into the work. Dancing Sculptures created a shape design that moved inwards, as did the body in earlier solo improvisations. This contractile shape design was based on contracting effort. An aesthetic contraction operates like bodily contraction: it becomes intensified by being in-between effort and shape, in-between dance and sculpture. Effort creates visual distortions which act as moving images and make the work move inwards. Therefore, it requires participants to be drawn into the
work rather than projecting outwards and onto them. In this way, the work at-tracts participants.

Image 41. Contraction design Image 42. Release design

As I mentioned earlier, in chapter C, in optics, contraction and release exist as possibilities within the same shape design, but the viewer can only see one at a time. This method has also been adopted by the Surrealists. For example, Marcel Duchamp’s 1920s ‘rotoreliefs’ such as the motorized sculptures *Rotary Glass Plates* (1920), *Rotary Demisphere* (1925) and *Anemic Cinema* (1926) created the illusion of images becoming three-dimensional through rotation. I argue that a contracting shape design, moving inwards, engages spectators more. Aesthetically, merging the designs of contraction and release, also suggests their contraction or drawing together, and thus, increases effort and intensifies experience. Simultaneity of contraction and release, within one image, may create either an inward or an outward movement, according to the spectator’s perspective. The spectator’s intentions then, create a multiplicity of experiences, out of this dual moving tension.

The fact that the designs of *Dancing Sculptures* were themselves moving, besides the actual movement which seemed static, disrupted conventional relationships between image and movement, as well as between effort and shape. Kristeva states that the existence of the sign is insured by condensation, by drawing together sound image and visual image and that “the logic of dreams testifies to it when it brings together elements from different perception registers or when it
engages in ellipses” (1982, p.52). In a similar manner, when a visual image contracts with movement, in a fragile equilibrium, the corporeal signification is increased. For example, when performers moved through space, in the Horse assemblage, the attention shifted from the visual displacement of rhythm, presenting a body with reversed legs, to a series of movement displacements of rhythm. Thus, new signs were produced in-between movement and image which disturbed conventional effort and shape relationships. These new signs were developed by drawing together bodies-parts which disturbed bodily effort through distortions of shape design.

In this dissertation, effort was measured by examining its relationship to shape (e.g. under-effort, over-effort). For example, Wigman’s effort was actually over-effort as it was more intense than the shape required, while Graham’s effort was realistic. Release-based systems could be seen as performing under-effort, by trying to perform ‘pedestrian’ shape designs with less effort than they actually require in real life. Realist effort enhances an appreciation of qualities in terms of forms and an appreciation of forms in terms of qualities. Intensification was related to an increase of effort, because of formal developments, rather than over-effort which leads to caricature. Intensification thus refers to form rather than effort. Effort does not actually increase diachronically. For example, we cannot argue that Dancing Sculptures required more effort than Graham’s practice. It was form which was intensified. However, it could be said that realist effort increased through changes in form. Moreover, Dancing Sculptures included over-effort and under-effort, but these also became realist, through the necessities of form, which rendered them as its effects. In this sense, intensification becomes inexhaustible, so long, as attention to changes in the effort-form relationship, is critical to dance practice.

Intensification was more specifically achieved due to the interdisciplinarity of the form. In Dancing Sculptures, choreographic interdisciplinarity emerged through corporeality as a result of the grotesque effort needed for achieving these bodily sculptures. For example, when performers could not look, touch became amplified as in the V shape, in section 16 of the DVD, and listening became intensified as in the Gigas arm gesture, in section 21. When they could not speak, looking became intensified as in the Hand-in-mouth learning dance phrase, in section 9. Interdisciplinarity was therefore, founded on the effort required by sensory disorders
or synaesthetic experiences built into the design of a shape. In this way, effort also increased interdisciplinarity.

Bodily intensification suggested a disciplinary intensification. Interdisciplinary manifestations were grounded in an increase of bodily effort. Bodily effort was both kinaesthetically and visually demonstrated. Kinaesthetically, effort created contortions or extreme stretching. Danai’s and Xenia’s assemblage of one bridge on top of the other created bodily contortion, which can be seen in image 43, but also became a spatial contraction, as in image 44. The closer the proximity of body parts and bodies, the more intense the effort of moving became.

![Image 43. Contortion](image43.png) ![Image 44. Contraction](image44.png)

Also, the more dimensions effort attained, the more it was intensified. In Dancing Sculptures, effort was increased horizontally by twisting body parts in a direction opposite to the moving body, as for example, when the left palm of Danai faced left while she moved to her right in the Speech duet of section II of the DVD. In this assemblage, effort was also increased vertically, when Xenia was on top of Danai and weight became heavier due to gravity. Also, effort increased diagonally, as for example, in image 44.
Therefore, intensification extended in various dimensions. The more these dimensions increased, the more images were created. Effort and images were intensified through the complex designs of the sculptures. Movement, image and sculpture were in constant tension as one enhanced the other. Through this striving between disciplinary forces, effort became intensified. It also became interdisciplinary. It was thus an increase in bodily effort which suggested an interdisciplinary intensification.

Effort thus became interdisciplinary because it suggested disciplinary distortions through various combinations disordering the senses. For example, an excess of bodily effort created moving sound in the Gigas gesture in images 45 and 46. When performers laid on the floor sound was seen as a result of the effort to keep still (Appendices 10 & 21).

The sound travelled in space through the sculptural form as performers shouted 'hey' in a canon. The last performer maintained shouting until she was out of breath. Immediately after she began to shout, the next one followed and so on, until sound reached the first performer. Sound, in this example, moved through space for demonstrating that sound also travels in the body and thus can be considered as moving. The female womb could be seen like a sound amplifier, allowing sound to
travel in space, through the performers’ bodies. When sound reached the last performer in line, she raised her arm and the whole sculpture was transformed into a dilated gesture of a gigantic arm. In this sense, the arm of the first performer could be seen as a hand. The actual hand’s enlargement in the shadow further enhanced this bodily displacement from the sculptural assemblage to a gigantic gesture.

Effort was intensified for altering disciplinary perspectives through contractions drawn from different disciplines. Most of all, sculptural effort enhanced a wider interdisciplinary spectrum by creating moving images. Thus, effort may have been increased as a cause, of distorting dance by distorting shape design, but more consciously, the intensification of effort became an effect; it became necessary, for supporting the embodiment of imagined, distorted, bodily images. By distorting visual form, the dancing form was also distorted in Dancing Sculptures and the spatiotemporal effects of effort, distorted the choreographic design. Distortion was founded on the constructions of sculptural three-dimensional body images, made out of many bodies.

Thus, Dancing Sculptures by drawing together bodies and body parts, turned effort and shape analogies into movement and image analogies. Corporeality became intercorporeality. Their post-modern interdisciplinarity contained its own deconstruction of modernist effort and shape. Dancing Sculptures, by drawing together contraction and release, contractive and deconstructive corporeal processes suggested an aesthetic contraction.

The merging of these aesthetic movements, in Dancing Sculptures, became part of an aesthetic intensification. An aesthetic intensification becomes realized through historical contractions that are also enhanced by interdisciplinary practices. A contemporary merging of formalism and expressionism, through sculpture and dance respectively, also involved modern dance contractions. In Dancing Sculptures, other aesthetic movements were reconsidered at various degrees, such as conceptualism, pop, surrealism and kitsch which could lead to an infinite discussion of other multiplicities. The more distant historically were the aesthetic styles that contracted the more intense, transformative and inclusive the aesthetic outcome became; that is to say, the more distant from pre-existing aesthetic crystallizations it became. These historical contractions were a result of disciplinary contractions.
A contraction of different disciplines, which up till modernism have worked independently or been purified, enhanced the historical contractions. For example, *Dancing Sculptures*, contracted grotesque medieval figures such as those of Rabelais or Hieronymous Bosch, modern dance contractions such as those of Graham and postmodern sculpture such as Kapoor's into complex rhizomes (postmodern dance was also drawn into the assemblage). According to Deleuzian theory, "these variable distances are not extensive quantities divisible by each other; rather, each is indivisible, or 'relatively indivisible,' in other words, they are not divisible below or above a certain threshold, they cannot increase or diminish without their elements changing in nature" (1988, p.34). In this sense, the more the multiplicity of resources increases in space (various disciplines) through interdisciplinary contractions, the more it also increases in time (various histories), adding to an aesthetic intensification.

Contraction therefore, can be defined as an aesthetic, which by drawing together, expands and intensifies form. The intensification of form is always related to a necessary condensation of effort. The condensation of effort cannot be seen separately from the intensification of form. Given that in the interdisciplinary perspective effort refers to dance, and form to sculpture, the aesthetic of contraction becomes interdisciplinary and in-between dance and the visual arts. Since this interdisciplinarity was founded on corporeality, the contraction also becomes an intercorporeal aesthetic. In *Dancing Sculptures*, bodies were defined through their in-betweeness, through their contraction. Therefore, the contraction aesthetic refers to a folding inwards of bodies, which also suggests the folding of disciplines, through and towards the body.

Contraction was useful in this transformative journey from dance to interdisciplinary performance because it suggested that interdisciplinarity is intradisciplinary; that is to say, folded within the discipline of dance. Investigating contraction's effort in dance history suggested distortions of shape design, which combined with a choreological element of strong visual qualities opened up the dance discipline to visual arts and specifically sculpture. It also allowed for an analogy between bodily and aesthetic contractions. However, in aesthetic terms, as argued earlier, contraction does not suggest any hierarchical primacy, but rather welcomes various degrees of effort as its transformative principle.
This dissertation began by tracing analogies between contraction as a concept and contraction as a bodily movement. Contraction was examined through the philosophies of Bruno, Bergson, Deleuze and Guattari in order to propose it as a post-deconstructionist aesthetic, different, yet related to modern deconstruction. In modern dance, the contraction suggested an increase in effort. In American modern dance, and particularly the technique of Graham, the contraction became a dance principle. The contraction of the torso enhanced body part isolations. It demonstrated the ability of increased effort to change the dancing form. Discontinuities of form became visually valuable. Thus, visual approaches in dance were valuable because they emphasized the significance of form as well as the interdependency of effort and form.

Image 47, a recently obtained archive by the Library of Congress, shows Graham, late in her career, and Benjamin Garber in a position reminiscent of Dancing Sculptures.

Image 48. Danai and Xenia Papazian rehearsing Monster at studio A of the University of Surrey

Image 47. Martha Graham and Benjamin Garber from the Benjamin Garber Collection

Music Division, Library of Congress
Their pose is reminiscent of Graham’s body part isolations, which disturbed a classical coordination of movement, as well as the visual presentation of the dancing body. They are sitting on a stool, facing the same direction. Graham is sitting in-between the legs of Garber, who bends his torso backwards, to obscure it from the photographer’s perspective. Graham rests her hands on his legs, as if they were hers, creating a visual discontinuity in her body but also a visual continuity between their body parts and bodies, similar to those of Dancing Sculptures in image 48.

Through these images, I want to emphasize a corporeal continuity between Graham’s modern dance practice and the intercorporeality of Dancing Sculptures. Intercorporeality suggests that various bodies contract or become drawn together. In the interdisciplinary context of Dancing Sculptures, corporeality became in-between the disciplines, in-between different bodies of knowledge. Dance and visual methodologies intersected in this form of visual dance. Visual dance unfolded the close relationship between form and movement and their interdependency. Movement suggests visual forms and visual forms suggest movement. Thus, forms of visual dance, such as Dancing Sculptures, include both a visual specific and a dance specific approach, but transform them into something more than their sum. They become contracted into an interdisciplinary perspective in performance.

2. Analogic Power

But how were these points of connectivity traced? They were identified by drawing analogies. Analogy comes from the Greek ἀναλογία which refers to proportional similarity in-between different parts. Initially it was mostly used for measuring bodily proportions through comparisons (e.g. the thigh is as long as two palms). Analogies became constructed through one or more similarities between different elements. For example, body parts were compared in Graham’s practice through movement continuity, and in Dancing Sculptures, bodies-parts were compared in the sculptural assemblages.

The fewer similarities exist between two elements, the more constructive becomes the analogy. For example, sculpture and dance have some similarity in terms
of three-dimensionality and mass but are traditionally very different qualitatively, as sculpture used to work with still matter and dance with live moving matter. "The subject, its concepts, and also the objects in the world to which the concepts are applied have a shared, internal essence: the self-resemblance at the basis of identity" (Massumi in Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.xi). What modern dance and Dancing Sculptures shared was distortion. Movement distortion was analogous to visual distortion. Their similarities allowed for deterritorialization but their differences strengthened it, further distancing Dancing Sculptures from normative dance or sculpture practices.

In Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the assemblage, difference becomes a prerequisite for the contraction. However, some degree of similarity also becomes necessary for drawing analogies between different entities, in order for them to contract. The contraction is a 'fold' in Deleuzian terms (1993). The analogue is "outside coming in" as Massumi states (p.135). Contraction is coming out of the analogue. For Breton and the surrealists analogy was important because it allowed them to make connections and find similarities between disparate objects and themes.

The analogical method, though held in honour in antiquity and the Middle Ages, was thereafter grossly supplanted by the 'logical' method which has led us to our well-known impasse. The first duty of poets and artists is to re-establish analogy in all its prerogatives, taking care to uproot all the rear-guard spiritualist thought, always carried along parasitically, which vitiates or paralyses its functioning.

André Breton, 1978, p. 282

Through a contextual expansion, analogies allow for a more rapid, unpredictable and intense transformation. Similarly, Dancing Sculptures, through their contraction, extended analogical thought between the different modes of body movement, choreography and aesthetics to suggest that contraction works with some degree of similarity. Therefore, the contraction in this dissertation became an inside coming out of the body which did not happen by addition of disparate elements but rather by identifying similarities through a grotesque excess of effort which reached and included its opposite.
Thus, the contraction proposed, stands in-between the Bergsonian contraction and the Deleuzian assemblage, in-between the contraction of time in the present and the spatial crystallization of putting together, respectively. The transformative potentiality of contraction is precisely situated in the simultaneity of the *inside coming out* and the *outside coming in*. Expression is not a simplistic outward movement of inner emotions but a complex process of internalizing and reshaping formalities. “The expressed is not fundamentally a signified caught in an interplay of signifiers. It is a function involving a real transformation” as Massumi states (1992, p.18). It is a representation.

Analogies were however enhanced through representational thinking. “Representational thought is analogical” as Massumi states (in Deleuze and Guattari, p.xi). Representation is analogous to presentation yet different from it even in realist aesthetics. “State philosophy’ is another word for the representational thinking that has characterized Western metaphysics since Plato, but has suffered an at least momentary setback during the last quarter century in the hands of Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and poststructuralist theory generally” (Massumi in Deleuze and Guattari, p.xi). Deconstructionist thought then, as after-structuralism, has moved further away from medieval analogical thinking, such as Bruno’s spiritual contractions, which enhance a union of separates, rather than an after-modern separation of unions.

Deleuze and Guattari state that similarity was replaced by difference in symbolic analogies.

Symbolic understanding replaces the analogy of proportion with an analogy of proportionality; the serialization of resemblances with a structuration of differences; the identification of terms with an equality of relations; the metamorphoses of the imagination with conceptual metaphors; the great continuity between nature and culture with a deep rift distributing correspondences without resemblance between the two; the imitation of a primal model with a mimesis which is itself primary and without a model.

Deleuze and Guattari, p.261
Given the corporeal nature of an analogy, the process of representation contracts or is simultaneous to uneven simultaneities, structured as differences. When the body contracts, by twisting and drawing together contracted body parts, a new effort becomes a necessity for simultaneity of difference and similarity, analogies of proportionality and proportion: bodies become deconstructed as body parts move in partial, conceptual, independence, yet they are materially contracted and interdependent. Thus, Dancing Sculptures allowed the simultaneity or contraction of analogies of proportion and proportionality. “Becoming produces nothing other than itself” (Deleuze and Guattari, p. 262) and effort becomes its constitutive element.

3. Deleuzian Contractions

My interest in going beyond the 20th century’s aesthetics of deconstruction was supported through Deleuzian theory. In the Deleuzian assemblage, contraction, as a point of intensity, can create greater deterritorialization than deconstruction. In the Deleuzian assemblage, the drawing together or contraction and the drawing apart or deconstruction happen simultaneously. The paradox lies in that contraction separates, while deconstruction joins. Massumi states that in Deleuzian theory, “paradoxes should nor be taken into as mere frivolities. They are serious attempts to pack meaning into the smallest possible space without betraying it with simplification” (1992, p.20-21). Paradoxa are generated through contractions. Thus, Deleuzian theory favours contraction, over deconstruction, by suggesting that contraction and deconstruction happen simultaneously and thus, in effect, contracting them. Contraction deconstructs deconstruction.

Deleuzian theory can thus offer to dance studies a passage from deconstructionist or Derridean aesthetics to post-deconstructionist, contraction-based aesthetics. In Deleuzian theory, difference is explained (and created), not through deconstruction, but rather through contractions that create greater difference through deterritorialization, than deconstruction does through reterritorialization. Nonetheless, neither contraction nor post-deconstruction is the opposite of deconstruction, exactly as the fold is not the opposite of the unfold (Deleuze, 1993).

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Thus, deconstruction and contraction may not have the same aesthetic effects. Their difference is defined by intensity. Fensham in her *Deterritorializing Dance: Tension and the Wire* (Discourses in Dance, 2002) used Deleuzian theory to examine Forsythe’s deterritorialization in *Eidos: Telos*’ (2001). She states that Deleuzian deterritorialization “requires the creation of connections...It can begin when two or more material agents excite one another and become dislodged from a mass formation” (2002, p.68). I propose that Deleuzian deterritorialization fits better with interdisciplinary approaches which contract or draw together materiality, in order to differentiate difference. Put more simply, the contraction thus produces greater difference. Through the different arrangement of the *agencement*, Deleuzian theory provides a way out of a pessimistic Foucauldian deconstruction, as reproduction of power knowledge relations. A way out of disciplinary control becomes possible, through the differentiation of difference from its own logic.

Performance theorist Simon Jones, in his study of *Fugacity*16 (in Heathfield, Templeton & Quick, 1997), argued for a new naturalism in contemporary performance, by drawing analogies with the sciences of complexity, in an analysis of the Wooster Group’s *Brace Up!* In this performance, “of cut-becoming-join and join-becoming-cut” he traced an attempt to break away from linear perspective in theatrical narrative, similar to perspectival painting in Renaissance naturalism. Jones stated that “we should not be fooled into taxonomies of discontinuity grounded upon the surface of these theatres’ developments” nor make “the history of continuity threatening to flatten the various experiences of these theatres.” However, he suggested that these naturalist practices ‘inflect’ theatre by changing signs. Their refusal to relate content to form, fails “to recognise the place of the centre as staged in their work.”17

Devising theatre became deconstructionist when performance structures refused to acknowledge difference from within unification, and thus, became expressive rather than transformative. I agree with Jones that these theatres are naturalist, although viewing devising practices in parallel with Deleuzian theory, fails

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16 “Fugacity” is derived from the Latin for “fleickness” which is often interpreted as a tendency to escape. In science, it is a chemical term with units of pressure that is intended to better describe a gas’ real world pressure than the ideal pressure.

17 Due to the design of the special edition *Shattered Anatomies* (1997) there were no page numbers given.
to demonstrate the latter’s historical importance and the aesthetic primacy of contraction. I would suggest that devising practices become aesthetically naturalist when they mimic a natural interconnection of contraction and deconstruction. Locating Deleuze in the historical context, as after post-structuralism, indicates more clearly the aesthetic prominence of contraction, over deconstruction, as a point of transformation, despite Deleuze’s theory acknowledging the scientific necessity of both ‘join’ and ‘cut.’ Lastly, contemporary performance works, might be understood as deconstructive, because they use aesthetic processes of devising (which comes from the Latin dividere, to divide) or ‘cut-becoming-join’ and have different effects from processes of ‘join-becoming-cut.’ Moreover, the contraction, in my view, does not produce the cut by joining or adding disparate elements, but rather unfolds through folding. Without implying that ‘join-becoming-cut,’ or what Lepecki (2006) names, ‘contractile’ practices cannot resonate with vital theories (and the natural sciences), I want to propose, that in aesthetics, these processes bring about transformation.

Massumi suggests that “meaning is the contraction of difference” and that “in the separation-connection of the act of meaning, the separation runs deeper than the connection” (1992, p.20). Separation runs deeper in the diachrony of the arts, due to institutionalization. It has also become more intense, due to the prominence of deconstruction in post-structuralist performance. Thus, contraction becomes more prominent after deconstruction. Then the intercorporeal aesthetic becomes about destabilization (and simultaneously, re-stabilization), in order to suggest other forms and methodologies stemming from the body, itself a differentiation of difference, a singular multiplicity.

Conflicting movement, bodily, disciplinary and aesthetic methodologies were integrated through practice and application. Bergson’s elan vital (vital force) stands beyond these juxtapositions and interruptions as a unifying force. In practice, and through bodily processes, inappropriate, conflicting methodologies can find a way to integrate, rather than deconstruct or be deconstructed. The moving body tends to integrate and unify, as argued earlier in the contextual section, through movement analysis. But the body maintains a transformative intensity, by constantly disrupting aesthetic habits, or fixities, through the work of interdisciplinarity.
4. Intercorporeality

Intercorporeality becomes prominent in the performance theory of post-deconstruction. Schechner situates post-deconstructionist performance in the sensorial exchanges between performers of Indian dances and partakers under the term Rasic performance.

Rasic performance has as its goal not separating winners from losers but extending pleasure...It accomplishes this in a way comparable to cooking: the combination/ transformation of distinct elements into something. That offers new and/or intense and/or favorite flavors or tastes. Rasic performance values immediacy over distance, savoring over judgment. Its paradigmatic activity is a sharing between performers and partakers.


He distinguishes rasic performance from the agon of Greek tragedy while I have proposed that these can co-exist, particularly corporeally, where effort meets taste. Thus, Lepecki’s aesthetic term of ‘contractile’ performances (2006) is preferred for describing post-deconstructionist practices because these include the sensorial without excluding other dimensions. Despite, Lepecki using this term in a context unrelated to the history of dance contractions, his book Exhausting Dance (2006) offered a powerful argument for the need for stillness to understand and brake from contemporary dance’s continuity. Bergson’s concept of duration as time expansion in Lepecki’s work made my argument on intercorporeality possible.

The intercorporeal aesthetic works as a Deleuzian intensity where “the coordinates are determined not by theoretical analyses implying universals but by a pragmatics composing multiplicities or aggregates of intensities” (1988, p.16). The corporeal aesthetic, as intensity, “starts working for itself...challenging the hegemony” of modern disciplines, through the body (ibid). An aesthetic hegemony persists in time, as continuous linearity, while intensity creates discontinuous flow, which accelerates aesthetic development.
Intercorporeality suggests an encounter. The notion of the ‘encounter’ becomes useful precisely because the encounter suggests a meeting which comes from the Latin contra (anti), suggesting difference as the prerequisite of a union. Heathfield in his essay *Facing the Other: The performance encounter and death* (1997) argues that a performance encounter brings alterity and states that “the distinction between the worlds of art and non-art is disturbed in this bringing together of antithetical significations” and thus, locates the encounter within a process of contraction. He continues by adding that “the repetition which repeats too effectively does not escape death because it returns to the same threatened situation, it does not re-establish the progress of time.” Repetition may be conceptually seen to strengthen alterity as it can never be fully effective, although corporeally, it comes to oppose alterity. Therefore, repetition cannot enhance aesthetic convulsions, as opposed to contraction, or drawing together, which operates with a higher degree of alterity.

Intercorporeality suggests that since the body is always caught in encounters with other bodies, so should bodies of knowledge. Intercorporeality is thus, not only the meeting point of disciplines, but also that of aesthetic genres. Fensham argued for the intense relationship between genre and corporeality in the theatre (2009). I would like to propose, that the power of corporeality to transform genres, lies in its in-betweeness, in the fact that corporeality is always inter-corporeality. It becomes particularly important, precisely because through its interdisciplinary contexts, it allows the meeting of diachrony with synchrony.

The encounters of intercorporeality suggest that it is inclusive. Inclusion is defined by the Oxford dictionary as the act of comprising or containing a part into the whole. It comes from the Latin includere which suggests a shutting in. “Inclusion or inherence has a condition of closure or envelopment” as Deleuze argues (1993, p.24). The intercorporeal aesthetic becomes inclusive through aesthetic contractions. *Dancing Sculptures*, for example, by merging visual approaches with dance, also merged formalism with expressionism. This aesthetic contraction becomes part of an aesthetic intensification. In this way, *Dancing Sculptures* may be synchronically seen as more intense than Graham’s practice, while diachronically they become continuous.

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18 Same as note 14, p.118.
Besides these historical encounters, intercorporeality also suggests aesthetic encounters. In intercorporeal terms, any opposing aesthetic actually lies in close proximity to its constitutive other. That is why Bakhtinan theory fits well within post-deconstructionist intercorporeality; because stemming from the body it suggested a deconstruction of classicism while it was inextricably bound up with it. Thus, intercorporeality may be seen as post-deconstructive because it neither stops difference through unification (rather keeps producing it), nor suggests absolute difference. Intercorporeality proposes a dynamic or moving differentiation. It proposes difference, as a prerequisite for unification and movement, for the elan vital, which keeps producing difference, by holding the world together. It also shows that contraction is an intercorporeal necessity, rather than an aesthetic ideal.

Through intercorporeality this dissertation, locates a synchronic necessity for a contraction of corporeal and incorporeal manifestations. “The body, sensor of change, is a transducter of the virtual” as Massumi supports (2002, p.135). The medium, the body, deterritorializes the aesthetic and the aesthetic reterritorializes the body but their becoming has been ‘indiscernible.’ Thus, the body, as material, may be seen separately from the aesthetic, although through intercorporeality, they become indivisible. Thus, the aesthetic is still separate, yet dependent on the body, as the body may still be separate, yet dependent on aesthetics. Body and aesthetic become, but their becoming appears both incomplete and inexhaustible.

What differentiates intercorporeality from pre-existing conceptions of corporeality is precisely its changing nature, its temporality. The intercorporeal aesthetic can only be temporal because the body, to which it refers, is also temporal. The body constantly moves and changes as it lives in the moment and never repeats itself, even when it attempts to do so. Thus, any performance of the body becomes unique in its aesthetic crystallizations due to bodily difference on the micro level of synchronic approaches, but also on the macro level of diachrony. Within temporality and through unworking, the body constantly reworks its corpo-reality, adding to an asymmetrical historical intensification. Stemming from the body, aesthetic condensation also suggests an intensification, which would not be possible, without a constant becoming. For example, the aesthetic condensation proposed by Dancing
Sculptures, creates an intensification, which opens new pathways for other aesthetic becomings.

I want however, to propose that intercorporeality becomes crystallized in aesthetic bodies and vice versa. Thus, the intercorporeal aesthetic, which depends on bodies, can be considered an assemblage of transformation. In Dancing Sculptures, the deterritorialization of the dance medium, from movement to the body, reterritorialized the medium into bodily movement, neither movement nor body. Thus, the practice became medium-specific, as it focused on the body (like dance), but also post-medium, as it distorted the diachronic discipline-medium relationship of the dance movement. Thus, it was neither, but rather in-between medium and post-medium specific. It was medium-specific because it focused on the body, but also post-medium since the body stands in-between disciplines. Thus, the intercorporeal aesthetic stands in-between medium specific and post-medium conditions.

Manning states that “to touch is to conceive of a simultaneity that requires the courage to face the in-between” (2007, p.13). The body is always in-between always an inter-body. Therefore, through intercorporeality, I want to argue that the risk of experience should be encountered within structural approaches; moreover, the materialization of becoming should be encountered in phenomenological approaches and these should happen simultaneously.

But how can this temporality of different approaches, experience and becomings become textually expressed? Fensham looks at embodiment ‘as a practice of deconstruction’ (2008, p.30) and notes that corporeality in dance studies has resulted in an acknowledgement of cultural difference. She states that “the work of embodiment, from Maurice Merleau-Ponty to Elizabeth Grosz, emphasizes the ontological and subjective dimensions of material existence” (p.27-28). Fensham argues that the emphasis on corporeality in dance studies (particularly through feminist and phenomenological approaches), has contributed to the recognition of cultural difference and further, to the ‘decolonizing of discourses’ (p.29). Corporeality allows for an inclusion and analysis of idealities, through processes of embodiment. My work, aimed to extend the use of corporeality in dance, beyond feminist and phenomenological approaches, by looking at it in relation to contractile aesthetics rather than deconstruction.
By revisiting Rosalind Krauss' work on sculpture\textsuperscript{19}, Bleeker in her *Passages in Post-modern Theory: Mapping the apparatus* (2008c), argues for a corporeal literacy that acknowledges the experience of corporeal ‘disappearance’ when one is not aware of one’s body, by means of Drew Leder’s concept of ‘dys-appearence’ (1990), which avoids a return to the Cartesian dichotomy between body and mind, often unconsciously implied when speaking of conceptual experiences, that take over the body. Replacing the Latin ‘dis’ which suggests separation, with the inseparable Greek prefix ‘dys,’ suggests that the body cannot actually disappear. Bleeker’s discussion develops this idea further, by coining the term ‘dys-embodiment,’ which describes incorporeal experience as a corporeal process. Her concept of ‘dys-embodiment’ “allows for an understanding of this different trajectory, in terms of a manner of installing the body, that shifts attention away from the body as site of feelings and sensations, and towards the body as an absent-present locus of incorporeal dimensions of cognitive perception, or perceptual cognition” (p.58). Her argument on corporeal literacy may be useful for extending the understanding of corporeality.

In line with Fensham’s and Bleeker’s discussions of notions of embodiment and ‘dys-embodiment’ respectively, I argue that intercorporeality, by including incorporeal experiences of the body and by allowing sensory disorder, becomes (dys)continuous. Similarly, contraction’s flow cannot be termed as either ‘bound’ or ‘discontinuous’ but rather, (dys)continuous as it does not actually stop movement. In this sense, I want to propose that a corporeal and incorporeal contraction, especially in cases of dance form and theory misfits, may bring to the surface new knowledge both in practice and in theory.

For example, this research underlined the necessity of visual literacy in dance, so as to achieve a better understanding of corporeality in dance studies, which should not neglect the visual. What is more, as Bleeker’s essay argues, it is through appreciations of visual concepts, such as disappearance, that dance concepts, such as disembodiment, may change (to ‘dys-embodiment’).

\textsuperscript{19} *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (1977).
Just as visual literacy not only involves a change in the object of the reading, but also what is involved in reading, who is the subject of this reading and what it means to be literate, so corporeal literacy does not simply mean the transposition of a language-related concept to the realm of the body, but rather a rethinking of the notion of literacy from a position beyond oppositions like language and the body.

Maaike Bleeker, 2008, p.66

A corporeal and incorporeal simultaneity, suggested by the notion of intercorporeality, proposes that neither language is favored over the body or the body over language. Rather, one transforms the other in a mutual becoming, as it happens in the interdisciplinary frameworks of Deleuzian theory. Then a Deleuzian creativity of concepts could be applied to intercorporeality.

Peter J. Arnold in his article ‘Somaesthetics, Education and the Art of Dance’, published in the Journal of Aesthetic Education, argues that the aesthetic “is a concept which refers to the possibility of perceiving things from a particular point of view” (2005, p.50). His conception of a somaesthetic, suggests the body as the founding element of aesthetic conception. However, it must be said that looking at things from an intercorporeal perspective, became preferable, because it allowed more holistic views of the body, to include the senses, emotions and intellect. His term, ‘movistruct’ (p.59) which refers to the know-how of movement, could perhaps be more generically be called ‘corpostruct’ for referring to the body and include both movement and the perception of non-movement. Similarly, his term ‘movicept’ referring to “an identifiable and consciously registered kinaesthetic flow pattern associated with a publicly recognizable action involving movement” (p.60), could be called ‘corpocept’ to suggest that concepts become created through the body and can be associated with various ways of and beyond movement.

Resituating dance within larger discourses, allows looking at it not only as “the thrill...of difficulty, of making what is unnatural even to such able bodies appear as natural” (Saunders, Maude and Macnaughton, 2009, p.3), but as the instigator of transformation. Postmodern dance, and particularly the Judson theatre, by inverting this traditional ontology and making natural movements unnatural, allowed for looking at the moving body’s interdisciplinary possibilities. Thus, an intercorporeal discourse, of ‘corpostructs’ and ‘corpocepts,’ could further develop interdisciplinary
possibilities through an ‘intercorpology.’ As new genres emerge through interdisciplinary methodologies, the possibilities of corporeal analysis increase. ‘Corpostructs’ and ‘corpocepts’ could become ‘interstructs’ and ‘intercepts’ which maintain their significance across various disciplines. The intercorporeal aesthetic could then have many applications beyond dance and performance studies, even beyond the arts and humanities.

The intercorporeal aesthetic suggests a neo-formalism which takes into account phenomenology. When we admit that the creation and understanding of form is closely related to sensory experience, intercorporeality is enhanced. What modernism taught us is that form and expression go together. Franko stated that “the fit between modern dance and phenomenology is almost too perfect” (ed. Foster, 1996, p.29), despite theorists favoring formalism over the experience of modernity. As argued in this dissertation, the fit between form and experience in post-structuralist or deconstructionist theory, produced the same theoretical limitations by favoring phenomenology over formalism. Intercorporeality suggests that neither formalism nor phenomenology can work separately.

The synchronic practical approach is intertwined with diachrony. Synchronic and diachronic simultaneity in this research was thus founded on interdisciplinary approaches similar to those of Deleuzian theory. Deleuzian philosophy suggested simultaneity of structural and post-structural approaches, disciplines and interdisciplines. Thus, through interdisciplinary contexts, a structuralist corporeal aesthetic became intercorporeal to suggest that bodies are always in between bodies, always inter-bodies.

5. Summary

The history of the dance discipline testifies that it had always been attached to other disciplines; ethnography, anthropology and now, cultural studies. Thus, in a way, dance has always been interdisciplinary. This research, by drawing an analogy between Deleuzian interdisciplinary theory and corporeality in dance, suggested that interdisciplinarity stems from the body. Since the body was the object of this study it
generated the need to research beyond the dance discipline. The dance contraction unfolded the visual qualities of the body. The dance body also became a visual body, leading to the discipline of visual art. This happened because the body is seeing while it moves. More generally, the body moves with all the senses and the senses function together. In a similar way, when the body is the object of study, disciplines interweave and corporeality becomes intercorporeal.

Beyond corporeal studies, research is always carried by bodies which also perceive by using all the senses. Interdisciplinarity can then be appreciated in terms of interpretation. In any case, we perceive all strands even when one is not being represented. For example, Welton argued that not seeing is perceived as seeing the dark (eds. Banes and Lepecki, 2007, p.152). Thus, even when a sense is restricted, it is still interweaving with others. It is different to perceive movement in the dark and different to perceive movement through vision. Even if strands are juxtaposed, as in Cunningham’s happenings where music, dance and costumes were combined by chance, they are still perceived together. All disciplinary research is carried by the body and as the body perceives with all the senses, it becomes interdisciplinary. This happens because methodologies become part of the argument and cannot be separated from it. In this sense, the contraction, as the post-deconstructionist aesthetic, is also in-between practice and theory, in a similar manner that the body contracts both.

Intercorporeality was primarily proposed, as a way of expanding conventional corporeality in dance. Could intercorporeality lead the way towards transdisciplinary methodologies and could transdisciplinarity be perceived out of the disciplinary context? Breton suggested that “the sole duty of... the artist is to oppose a firm NO to all disciplinary formulas” (ed. 1978, p.272) referring to Bruno. Is this ‘no’ possible? No, it is not possible, because by rejecting disciplinary formations, new ones are born. Thus, transdisciplinarity also becomes interdisciplinary as it joins up with a discipline, bodily processes that exist outside its conventions. Transdisciplinarity is a paradoxical post-deconstructionist term, which sets itself beyond disciplines, but cannot exist without them, as is the body, which moves in-between disciplines and can be understood as intercorporeal. What may be possible through an intercorporeal aesthetic, which opens the way to transdisciplinary methodologies, is a new body discourse, which stands beyond the disciplines, while it keeps recreating them.
Interdisciplinary methodologies work similarly to disciplinary approaches as they also form new disciplines. Moreover, interdisciplinary practices, methods and results are also perceived within a disciplinary framework. This dissertation proposes that intercorporeality offers a deeper understanding of interdisciplinarity. The intersection of movement and image was in Dancing Sculptures, generated by bodily contractions, which distorted shape design and emphasized visual forms. Interdisciplinarity, was thus seen as a result of modern effort and corporeal contractions. It can then be stated that interdisciplinarity was a result of modern dance distortions. Modern contractions distorted the shape design and unfolded the visual qualities of movement. This distortion of the dance form created an interdisciplinary opening, which was further developed in Dancing Sculptures. Thus, it could be more generally said that interdisciplinarity is a result of the distortions of modern disciplines.

I would like to propose that early 21st century interdisciplinary performance practices, particularly those in-between dance and visual arts, which focus on effortful experiences of the body, created through non-textual means, such as Dancing Sculptures, deconstruct deconstruction. In this sense, this movement, can be seen as positivistic, in a similar way that early 20th century dance deconstructed 19th century ideologies. However, the challenge now was to deconstruct modernism and thus, the contraction or drawing together of interdisciplinarity offered a useful tool for undoing deconstruction.

I have defined deconstruction in dance techniques as breaking (away from) classical dance. More specifically in American modern dance, deconstruction was based on the isolation of body parts (I also defined deconstruction as a modernist aesthetic expressed in the separation of dance from the other disciplines). Given that, the contraction or drawing together of body parts (or deconstructed ballet bodies) in space, becomes post-deconstruction, in that it draws together dance deconstructions 'involved' i.e. body part isolations. Combining deconstruction (i.e. body part isolations in dance) and contraction (effort and shape design i.e. spatial intensity, drawing together bodies-parts), favors the contraction, as an aesthetic, which draws together corporeally, deconstruction and contraction (intercorporeality), and also the disciplines of dance and visual art (interdisciplinarity).
The contraction (of deconstruction and contraction) is expressed both within the dance discipline (as body part isolations contract in space), and in the interdisciplinary context (as the dance contraction of body parts in space also creates a visual and sculptural intensity). The contraction is therefore also interdisciplinary as an aesthetic, because deconstruction in American dance generated the contraction of dance and visual art. Similarly, European modern dance's deconstruction of classical dance, led to the interdisciplinary approach of dance theatre. In this sense, dance theatre should not be considered only deconstructionist, as happened by post-structuralist theoretical approaches which favored the logocentrism of theatre, but rather also as 'contractile' since its basic aesthetic was defined by the contraction of dance and theatre. Interdisciplinarity was thus understood as a contractile aesthetic, through the contracting body.
1. Solo improvisations by me, at studio A of the University of Surrey, 2007
Anna Kisselgoff cited

"Angular, sharp and stunningly percussive, the Graham contraction always originates in what Graham calls 'the hinge of the pelvic truth.' While this often gives Graham's choreography an explicit sexual tension, the movement itself has broader metaphorical implications."

"Arms and legs accordingly...were driven in propulsion...The effect was of jerks and spasms, all transitional movement having been eliminated."

p.100

"In Graham's technique all falls are on the left side because, as she said, the weight of the heart is on the left side."

p.101

Graham cited

"I use the fall as a springboard, not as an objective, so there is a spring up to life."
"You attack dance as 'Now!' Not what it will develop into, not what I have done -- [but] what I am doing."

p.101-102

"All that is important is this one moment in movement. Make the moment important, vital, and worth living. Do not let it slip away unnoticed and unused."

p.117

Jane Dudley cite about Graham's teaching

"...she had a way of working from images."

Graham's movement was direct

p.122

Stark Young cited

"She looks as though she were about to give birth to a cube."

p.134

"The permeation of emotion through gesture, the 'going deep' into one's body, the projection into space beyond the reach of one's fingers -- this touches on the border of the psychic, and Martha codified this wild power, tamed it within the studio."

p.135

"Martha demanded 'divine distortion' -- her phrase to indicate exaggeration beyond realistic imitation of gestures, which added emphasis and power to the idea by bringing in cartoon caricature."

3. Early Drawings by me 2008
4. Danai and Xenia Papazian rehearsing *Monster* at studio A of the University of Surrey, 10th July 2008

5. Danai and Xenia Papazian rehearsing *Monster 1,2,3* at the Toynbee Studios, London, 14th January 2009
AUDITION 23rd MAY 09

1. **INTRODUCTION [10 - 15']**
   - MY BACKGROUND / THE PIECE

2. **WARM UP - EXPLAIN - DO [20']**
   - IF TIRED STILLNESS THEN DANCE

3. **ASSEMBLAGES OF 5, 3, 2**
   - ONCE YOU HAVE THE POSTURE TRY TO EITHER MOVE IT AS A WHOLE OR, MOVE (INDEPENDENTLY) WITHIN IT

4. **DECONSTRUCT ASSEMBLAGE TO SOLO**
   - RECALL YOUR POSITION AND MOVE IN IT THROUGH SPACE BY ALTERING THE POSTION AS LESS AS POSSIBLE [5'] (IF POSSIBLE)

5. **ADD SEXUAL CONNOTATIONS TO SOLO GESTURES [5']**
   - SEE HOW MOVEMENT / MEANING ARE TRANSFORMED

6. **SELECT A SOUND FROM EVERYDAY LIFE [16']**
   - SWIFT COUGH VOWEL
   - CHANGE ITS DYNAMICS
   - AND MAKE A RHYTHMIC PHRASE / IMPROVISE SHORT
   - NO ORDER - WHEN YOU THINK SOMEONE FINISHED - OR THAT THEY SHOULD FINISH - START

7. **TAKE SOME TIME AND PREPARE THROUGH IMPRO A PHRASE CREATED FROM MOVEMENT / SOUND SHORT [10 - 15']**
   - DIALOGUE
   - JUXTAPOSE STRAINS

8. **IF WE HAVE TIME**
   - ONE'S SOUND & ANOTHER'S MOVEMENT IMPRO DIALOGUE

6. Audition tasks, 23rd May, 2009
7. Sketches from working with 5 dancers, 22nd July 2009
8. Rehearsal at the Siobhan Davies Studios, 23rd July 2009
9. Sketches of Dancing Sculptures, 10th July 2009
10. Studio notes on interdisciplinary effort, 27th July 2009

Working from the 6 points of the back
- move more fierce dynamics
- being more off-balance
- all the axis
- crossing polytonic dynamics

More unpredictable, vibrant

Not seeing each other
- are makers sound
- dynamics through movement
- mostly upper body
- volume effect

Shape of movement plays a role in the shape of sound
Work with grotesque images – try to embody the feeling and not just the shape or pose.

No characterization [characters] – abject bodies – abstraction

Extremely small movements. Whole posture moving slightly. What happens? Pose and only one body part is moving in isolation. How does it change the posture as a whole?

Play with looking. Become aware of looking to various directions [move accordingly] with a mundane and ordinary rhythm and then go against this rhythm and try to see as you have never before, [use body language/warm up to accompany this kind of new looking.

Experiment with groups – one group performers, one group spectators for working with space interaction liveness and movement possibilities

Exaggerations – enlargements
Assemblages of body parts – ex one assemblage pair of eyes looking at the spectators as they move
One assemblage the phallus – intensifying
Assemblage as long arm in despair among the audience
Assemblage as big bud subtle
Assemblage as ear listening to audience and responding to sounds
Assemblage as teeth biting
Assemblage as heart beating
Assemblage of exaggerated hand/legs for fingers
Assemblage as head – face rolling through space as a cut off head who finds a clone and they become breasts – nipples appear
Hands like small wings

Very small movements

Creating forms in absence

- eyes looking at the audience
- eyes listening to the audience
- ears

Social dance

- head
- teeth
- sound

- super sound – absent
- super

11. Rehearsal notes, 5th August 2009
12. Rehearsal sketches from Dancing Sculptures, 25th August 2009
13. Structuring Dr Adder, 23rd September 2009
15. Structuring Dancing Sculptures, 28th September 2009
16. Rehearsal notes of *Dancing Sculptures*, 29th September 2010
17. Working diagrammatically for structuring the thesis, 11th May 2010
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**Conference Proceedings:**


**Panel Discussions:**