Digital Dialogism: dance at the edge of language.

by

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November 2002

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
Abstract

Digital and advanced biomedical technologies alter the ways in which human beings communicate and construct paradigms about how individuals function, singly (and biologically) and in social groups. Taking this broad statement to be applicable to dance practice it is to be (or may be) assumed that the use of technology alters the multiple processes of choreographing, performing and watching (experiencing) dance. The notion of 'change' here is called into question, as are the philosophical concepts of 'human beings', 'experience' and 'dance'.

The philosophy of Wittgenstein suggests strategies for laying foundations for understanding and removing the confusing and contentious issues that the marriage of dance and technology raises for those attempting to write about and express these practices.

The conceptual frameworks on which Western societies, cultures, philosophies and, most importantly, languages are built are long held and 'invisibly' ingrained in linguistic practices. Wittgenstein urges that human beings who use language in and across a wide range of contexts should interrogate their utterances for sense in order to divest them of nonsensical metaphysical and conceptual connections or connotations.

Drawing on Nietzsche, modern and postmodern philosophers, post-philosophy theorists, and using Wittgenstein as a constant commentator in the writing, this thesis prompts and allows the reader (dancer, writer, thinker) to re-examine the relationships between human beings, dance, language, communication, writing/reading and technology. It incorporates a range of writing styles and sources to collapse the distinctions between traditionally accepted and acceptable academic practices, foregrounding the reader and continuing to challenge ideas of 'self', the 'author' and the singular creative entity known as the 'artist'.

The thesis is constructed as a meta-theoretical (hyper)text using metaphor and mythology to analyse the processes of writing a thesis, while also investigating the possible concerns of practitioners and theorists of the new dance forms that technology could bring about.
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What about emotions and feelings?

To demonstrate quickly a form of deconstruction

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Digital Dialogism: dance at the edge of language.
(The Prolegomenon to a Thesis on 21st Century Dance Writing.)

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Acknowledgements

Words of Thanks (seems so small a word) to: My mum for being my mum—an ineffable gratitude. My brother Delon—still an inspiration, and always will be. My sister Ciaran and her sons, Blaine and Bayley, for untold strength. My brother Keren, a silent support. Grandad who died before I asked him all the questions I wanted to ask him. The rest of my family, especially my Aunty Jean for love and family history. Janet for the words and faith that made me start and not give up. Martin for being there at every stage and chats over coffee about facial hair, the correct height at which to wear jogging trousers, the banning of the mediocre and other things, category errors, the BDA and Darwin’s Beard, music, flatulence, freaks and all of the stuff that boys usually talk about. My other housemates, Richard and Dominic, for the books, equipment, shared leisure time and other chats both serious and silly. Sacha and Usha and Nona and Litza for being constant friends. Sean and Keith and Philip and Caro for being constant friends despite my lack of ability to keep in touch at times. Mark for being the funniest lump of lard I know. Sheila for knowing what I’m talking about, even when I don’t. Fiona and the other PhD students I have encountered. My other friends who should be mentioned, but would take up reams to thank. Lizzie for encouragement. Les for helping me find the hope at the bottom of Pandora’s urn. My ‘nuova famiglia’: Antonino, Cheryl, Marianna, Carmine, Luca, Antonino, Jr. and Alessandro. Special thanks to Marianna for looking after me in Italy. Charlotte for sanity in the studio. Emily for her honesty and temperament. Kate for Medici and the odd chat. Craig and Dave for technical support and reality. Mary, Pauline and the administrative staff of the University of Surrey School of Performing Arts. The students of the University of Surrey Dance Department who helped me with various things. Cindy and Anna—you taught me loads while I was supposed to be tutoring you. Marilyn and Maynard for the anger and meanings in your music. The other musicians who gave me sounds to work, play, cry, eat and relax to. The countless writers, performers, philosophers and artists of all sorts for things to draw ideas from. Ludwig for showing me that anything I say is valuable, and that nothing I say is worth anything, and that everything I say is questionable.
To Future Readers and Dancers

Für Tänzer
Glattes Eis
Ein Paradies
Für den, der gut zu tanzen weiß.

For Dancers
Smoothest ice,
A paradise
To him who is a dancer nice.

Nietzsche
*Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (§13)

Wittgenstein
*Philosophische Untersuchungen* (§107)

The desire to escape our human condition does come to each of us at times. It is a real desire, but not a desire for something real. It is a vain desire.

Pitkin
*Wittgenstein and Justice* (1972: 339)
Introduction

The methodological framework, the system of methods and principles, upon which this thesis is constructed takes its form from a number of disciplines. This opening chapter describes the range of influences on the writing of the thesis, the rationale behind its form and the problems which the approaches taken prompt in writer and reader of such a thesis. The main ‘method’ or approach is derived from reading the work of philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose influence is outlined below. Other key influences and areas of relevance are contextualized, such as the critical theories related to various aspects of new and digital technologies, and how these affect the way the (dancing) body, ‘consciousness’ and ‘creativity’ are conceptualized and discussed. In addition, the background of the writer and the positioning of the thesis are described to highlight the role of the personal in both ‘writing’ and ‘reading’, when an approach akin to that involved in intertextuality is used. It has been deemed necessary to use the first person in certain parts of this introduction, but ‘the writer (of this thesis)’, for example, is used when the act of writing is under scrutiny. With regards to ‘the reader’, I assumed that, predominantly, he or she could be anyone from a broad range of performance-related disciplines. Readers might be theoreticians, writers, critics, and practitioners, primarily dancers (as the opening quotation by Nietzsche implies), with an interest not necessarily in ‘philosophy’ but in challenging their own conceptions of their art and the language they use in connection with it.
By early to mid-1999, research was leading me into areas of a disquieting nature. I had started off with the intention of looking at the relatively new practice of using biomedical technology in performance. I was interested in machines that work directly on, or in, or with, the body, either giving or receiving information or energy to and from the body, to be converted into action, information and most importantly for me, which constructed meaning in the people involved in the performance (as participants or spectators). I spoke with the artist Stelarc about his experiences and thoughts on the principles and practices of using, principally, electrical nerve stimulation devices to produce movement in his body. I experienced the use of such machines on my arm in a demonstration by Stelarc, and it was this moment that began the shift of my attention away from the practice to some of the theoretical concerns that, in my view, lay behind the way I was to describe the experience. The disquiet that I mentioned above came in the form of how to refer to myself in this context (and ultimately other situations). Similarly theories of a dancer's movement and its (their) meaning(s) came to the fore. In conversation with Stelarc it became clear that his rhetoric (talking of himself in performance as 'The Body'; reference to the body as obsolete; placing the technologically modified body 'between zombie and cyborg') was chosen carefully to be contentious and inflammatory, and not to describe a complete philosophy of a techno-body. The issue of the 'self' in relation to the body as affected by the technology of the last few decades (for example, advances in digital and communication technologies, non-intrusive biomedical imaging techniques, prosthetic devices and other medical procedures to enhance and improve life) became mixed with the problem of how to discuss dance in this shifting 'technoscape'. But the problem did not end there. It seemed to have implications for how I was able to conceive of dance and its relation to 'language'. In particular, experiential language (the language of description, the language of phenomenology) became problematic for me in the light of certain theories of language and cultural difference. The idea that dance is a language also presented itself as a contentious notion, one which prompted a shift in my own thinking about how and what dance 'communicates', if anything at all. The idea of dance being (like) a language began to open up the other issues in ways to which I had hitherto been 'blind'. I felt that many
other dance students also had a lack of awareness of these issues, and were satisfied to use a range of terms unquestioningly. This shows the need for research such as this which prompts questions into the discursive aspects of the discipline of dance studies.

While seeking to find a working solution to a growing unease with the use of a number of words and terms in the 'usual' vocabulary of dance-related practices (rehearsals, classes, writing and criticism, discussions of dance and meaning), I read a number of sources from a range of disciplines. I was led by these initial writings to new sources, often tangential, creating a sprawling mass of materials and ideas, with me as the developer of the nexus. The idea of a dialogic and nonlinear approach began to develop: a complex 'system' using the materials in their own form, connected to the writings that they informed and inspired. The concept that any writing (the act and the product) is a combination of references and quotations, and for want of a better word, subjective responses to those texts, began to influence the strands of the thesis. Drawing on a range of antiphilosophical and literary texts led to a 'poeticizing' of the material. This and the rejection of certain academic norms and values combined to produce the idea that any writing is in effect both a series of fictions, of mythologies, of hypotheses to which concepts of truth/falsity or proof/disproof are not applicable, and a set of personal conjectures, which are given credence or authority according to the language and context in which they are written and framed.
Section One: A Shifting Intellectual Landscape, or Mille Plateaux

This thesis is the product of, and a dialogue with, a series of shifts in philosophy and art that have taken place over the last one hundred and twenty years or so. At the end of the nineteenth century the seeds of postmodernism were sown by the German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche, whose work sought to critique and make sense of 'modern existence' and the crises that this brought, not only for Nietzsche but "for everyone and no one" (Nietzsche 1969: from subtitle). His writings also suggest an intense loathing for the stagnant ideas which permeated his society and culture. His later work, written on the edge of madness, is a challenge to convention and categorization, mixing as it does biography, fiction, history and mythology with philosophy, theology and crude sociological analysis (for example, see Nietzsche 1990). The influence of Nietzsche's writings on subsequent thought and creativity is particularly noticeable in the work of the modernist movements of the early twentieth century. The Futurists and the Expressionists took Nietzsche's work seriously and it directly influenced their attacks on the complacency of pre-World War One art audiences and consumers (see Tisdall and Bozzolla 1993 and Furness 1973). Other major modernist movements had different precursors, such as the Surrealists who used the work of Sigmund Freud and Pierre Janet to unsettle the notions of art and life (see Brandon 1999). Freud's influence on the cultural and intellectual climate of the late twentieth century should be acknowledged as significant. These European art movements, and related and later groups such as the Bauhaus, rejected and reflected their socio-political and cultural context in various ways (polemical, theoretical, artistic).

In the First World War the modernists fought different battles according to their ethos, some pro-war, some anti-war, some driven to fight despite conflicting attitudes to war or due to personal compulsions to push themselves to the limit of human experience by facing death on a daily basis. The First World War, the Great War, could be seen as the pivotal event in modernism and the beginning of the end of the modernist era. The First World War led into another series of artistic and philosophical shifts, and brought about the rise of modern totalitarianism (which, in the case of Nazism and Fascism, was to distort to its own ends the writings of
Nietzsche). Alongside this, modernist philosophy, in the areas of logic and linguistics, developing from the work of Frege, Russell, de Saussure and others (for example, see Baghramian (ed) 1999 and Tait (ed) 1997, for introductions to this work), was beginning to place an emphasis on the structures and systems of language. It is in this vein that Wittgenstein wrote his wartime text *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1961), which prompted the Vienna Circle of Logical Positivists to apply scientific analysis techniques to philosophical problems. However, this was a serious misreading of the *Tractatus* and of Wittgenstein's method, borne out by the author's own responses to the Circle's approach. It was apparent to the Circle that Wittgenstein was more like an 'artist', a 'poet', than the kind of analytical yet metaphysical philosopher they considered him to be (for example, see Monk 1990).

By 1922 the peak of modernism in the literary arts, it is said, had arrived, with the publication of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Rilke's *Sonnets to Orpheus* and Joyce's *Ulysses* (and coincidentally the same year that the *Tractatus* was published in English; also, see Josipovici (ed) 1976). Reading these works required a scholarly knowledge of previous works, and arguably they paved the way for theories of intertextuality and, paradoxically, the death of the author. Alongside these literary challenges to form (and meaning) came the dramatic developments that would lead to the existential theatre of Sartre and Beckett. But it was also the Second World War which provoked questions of received notions of existence and what it 'means' to be human. The experiences of thinkers and writers during the war underlie their subsequent works, if often in an obscure way. Particularly in the works of Beckett, as Perloff (1996) suggests, it is possible to see the unravelling of language as a coherent means of communication. In Beckett's theatre pieces (and novels), philosophical concerns are both hinted at and, in a sense, ignored in the 'un-dramatic' dialogues and scenarios. In parallel with these works after World War Two, which can be seen as marking the shift from modernism to postmodernism (although not clearly defined and usually not considered in these terms), the later work of Wittgenstein (begun before the war and equally obscure at times) puts these linguistic and philosophical concerns into other terms based on a critique of traditional philosophical methods.
Other developments in philosophy and linguistics were taking place in the United States of America – the work of Dewey on culture and pragmatism (1958), the work of Whorf on language (1956) – and elsewhere – the work of Bakhtin’s circle (in particular that of Vološinov (1986)) and Vygotsky (1986) in the Soviet Union – which can be said to share similar theoretical and philosophical concerns to the works of Wittgenstein. When read alongside a work such as the Philosophical Investigations (1953), these writers’ works offer alternative yet comparable suggestions on the functioning of language (and culture) in the occidental world of the middle of the twentieth century. For example, Whorf’s work on cross-cultural language differences suggested the effects that these differences have on speakers’ descriptions and notions of ‘reality’. His writings, which have been variously read and misread (for example, see Halliday and Martin 1993, and Pinker 1994), provide links between linguistics and quantum physics and ideas of relativity. Like Wittgenstein and Whorf, the post-Einsteinian physicists are aware that grammar and terminology can affect our world as much as the world affects our grammar and terminology. From the 1930s, quantum physicists such as Bohr, Heisenberg and Bohm, debated whether or not atoms actually exist as ‘things’ or whether they are only useful as words and ways to describe observations and the resulting algorithms (see Davies and Gribbin 1992).

Twentieth century science has been influenced by and influenced philosophy and the changing attitudes of late modernist and postmodernist theorists in a number of areas. The rapid mechanization of warfare (and genocide), the atomic bomb, the development of genetics and medical procedures such as transplants and in vitro fertilization have prompted scientists to address questions of ethics (see Sperry 1983). In the 1990s a number of science and ethics organisations were set up around the globe, for example, the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies was set up in December 1997 by the European Commission to succeed the Group of Advisers on the Ethical Implications of Biotechnologies (1991-1997). The exploration of space and the universe have given rise to a vast number of suppositions about our origins and ‘destiny’, or theories of spacetime and absoluteness. The aforementioned field of quantum physics has provided new
paradigms for describing the universe in terms of chaos and nonlinearity, randomness and anti-everythings. It is tempting for many to apply these terms to human activities and behaviour, both in the study and the practice of them. The language of science has also come under increasing investigation, prompting reevaluations of scientific practice, techniques, results and their dissemination. The rise of popular science texts and the selling of science as directly 'meaningful' to people's everyday lives can be seen from a number of viewpoints, ranging from the reduction of science's authority to its embracing of new modes of discourse. Related areas in which this is particularly marked and relevant are the cognitive and neurosciences (see below). Linked to these human-based sciences are the burgeoning fields of computing, artificial intelligence and robotics. The developments in these areas pose questions about 'consciousness' and 'intelligence' (human and machine), 'emotion', 'communication' and 'mind'. Debates continue as to the nature (form, existence) of the human 'mind' and they evolve from each of these different disciplines to provide different 'solutions'. Each of them can be granted a philosophical tag, and each can be taken as it stands and applied to any theoretical or practical (or practical-theoretical) investigation.

As the sciences were developing according to theories of the quantum universe and the role of DNA in life formation, the philosophy of language was turning its attention to the subject of 'mind'. For example, Ryle made a pointed criticism of Cartesian philosophy in 1949, and four years later (as Watson and Crick were publishing their discoveries of the double helix of DNA), Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* was published posthumously. His works on psychology were not to be published for many years, and they cannot be said to have had a great influence on the philosophy and sciences of 'mind', but his published and word-of-mouth work on language caused some debate in philosophical circles, prompting a shift in ideas of 'meaning' (not universally accepted it must be noted) towards anti-realist and meaning-as-use theories. The shift brings to the fore the relationship of words and language to the world and (self-)knowledge. The various paradigm shifts in the sciences (as theorized by Kuhn in 1962) point to the ways in which languages (natural and specialized, expert or scientific, in particular) change, therefore causing
change in how humans perceive, conceive and describe 'the (physical) world': simply stated, Newton's world was different, in a sense, to Einstein's. The same, yet different.

In the 1960s and 1970s the links between the philosophies of mind and language became more pronounced, with writers such as Davidson (for example, see Davidson 1984) and Searle (1969) beginning to publish their works on both subjects. In 1967 a publication edited by Rorty (1967) explored 'the linguistic turn' in philosophy, the same year as Davidson's 'Truth and Meaning' (in Davidson 1984) and, incidentally, Derrida's *L'Ecriture et la différence*. By the late 1970s and early 1980s writings such as those by Dennett (see below), Churchland (1988; first published in 1984) and Rorty offered a range of (frequently conflicting) ideas as to the importance of philosophy in answering questions of 'mind', 'conscious intelligence', 'meaning' and 'truth'. The ideas of Rorty's *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1980; first published in 1979) and some later writings suggest that philosophy has reached the end of its usefulness in these matters. However, his proclamations ironically kept philosophical discussions fuelled, making his 'end of philosophy' rhetorical rather than actual. In parallel with these debates in philosophy the work of the poststructuralists, such as Derrida, was aimed at challenging similar concerns in textual (literary, anthropological, semiotic) analysis. Both Rorty and Derrida (1976, for example) can be said to be highlighting the paradoxes inherent in and created by their work.

In a different sphere of theoretical debate, the links between human beings and technology were explored from the points of view of scientists, cultural historians and philosophers. With the rapid development of the computer in the 1940s and 1950s, and in the work of Alan Turing and Norbert Wiener, there came a shift in how machines were perceived. The suggestion that machines might develop a form of intelligence or consciousness led to notions that they could either, positively, enhance human beings, and assist us in understanding our own thought processes, or negatively, in the extreme, threaten humanity's existence. Into the 1960s the relationships between humans, as physical and socio-cultural beings, and machines
were theorized in light of the space race and Cold War. The seminal writing on the ‘cybernetic organism’ by Manfred Clynes and Nathan Kline (originally published in 1960; see Gray (ed) 1995) provides a hypothetical basis for extraterrestrial survival by augmenting human beings with drugs and machines. At the same time, Marshall McLuhan, coming from a literary studies background, was developing his ideas on global media and technology as an extension of human beings’ abilities and capabilities. McLuhan continued to write until his death, removing the distinction between so-called ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture in a postmodernist vein (see Grosswiler 1998), and laying the foundations, on the ground prepared by writers such as Teilhard de Chardin and Walter Benjamin (1973), for the addressing of issues stemming from technologically-mediated culture. This work has been taken up by, among others, Jean Baudrillard (1983), Donna Haraway (1991), Arthur Kroker (Kroker and Kroker 1996) and Pierre Lévy (1997), and can be detected in many writings on multimedia and information technologies.

In the last fifty years, alongside the cultural analysts and philosophers concerned with new technology, an increasing number of neurologists and psychologists using technology (analogously and practically) as a means to describe the brain and behaviour (a trend which took off in the 1950s following Wiener and Turing) have emerged. Many of the early theories were dualistic and based on adapted versions of popular Western models of self and mental processes, using machine metaphors to describe the ‘mind’ (as they had been previously used to describe the ‘body’, for example, in the post-Descartes work *Man a Machine* by Julien Offray de La Mettrie (1912; first published as *L'homme machine* in 1748)). More recently, cognitive scientists and neuroscientists such as Antonio Damasio (1995) and Daniel Dennett have challenged the Cartesian conception of the ‘mind’. Dennett’s work, in particular, stretches the imagination when he writes about artificial life, conscious robots and the concept of a technologically-dissociated ‘self’. There have also been moves towards ‘software models of mind’, creating what Dennett characterizes as ‘virtual machines’ (for example, see Dennett 1998), and connectionist models of memory and cognition. Another new area of psychology, called cyberpsychology, was born out of the “tense relationships between classic and alternative cybernetics,
and between the histories of art, science and technology” (Gordo-López and Parker 1999: 5). It characterizes well the merging of disciplines, drawing on, and seeing no differentiation between, a range of sources in an attempt “to reinstate accounts of bodies, politics and technologies in the discipline of psychology” (Gordo-López and Parker 1999: back cover).

One final area of influence comes from a range of performance-related theorists and practitioners, who in their own ways could be seen as the ‘theatrical’ equivalent to Rorty’s edifying revolutionary philosophers. Late-modernist and early-postmodernist performance activities helped to re-shape the fields of theatre, dance and performance art. In the last thirty years or so, postmodern performance has become an alternative to traditional theatre. Many of the more recent examples (see the collection of influences and precursors below) include and use in their works the notions of paradox, contradiction, ambiguity, self-referencing and irony, which are frequently cited as postmodern strategies. Performance theory has become an academic discipline in its own right (due, in part, to writers such as Richard Schechner, for example, see Schechner 1985 and Schechner and Appel (eds) 1990; see Carlson 1996 and Auslander 1997, for overviews), seeing ‘performance’ as distinct from ‘theatre’, and leaking into everyday activities (and vice versa). It should be noted that the term ‘performance’ also causes many debates, and it would be inappropriate to enter into them now (see States 1996 for an overview).

The ways in which postmodern performance makers treat their source materials are perhaps related to the earlier Dadaist notions of equality and destruction and creation, ‘cutting and pasting’ a range of texts to generate new texts (see Melzer 1994). Deconstructionist techniques break apart existing texts and emphasize their socio-political aspects, often in a disturbing way using parody and pastiche which comes close to enforcing the doctrines being challenged. The tools of what could be called ‘intertextuality’ (for example, the referencing, citing and including pastiches of other works) are also deliberately utilised to draw comparisons and direct the audience to certain connections, or allowing the audience to generate their own. As in poststructuralist literary criticism, the distinctions between performer/director
('author') and audience ('reader') shift in postmodern performance, and notions of 'expression', 'meaning' and 'communication' are destabilized. Even the term 'performance' is unsettled in postmodern performances, with 'performers' playing themselves, or not performing at all. Technology, of one sort or another, has become increasingly integral to postmodern performance, from video screens and microphones to more advanced digital projections, intelligent stages with performer controlled effects, or live webstreaming of sound and video and telematic technologies linking performers and audiences across time and space. (On the use of technology in performance, and related theories, see, for example, Birringer 1991 and 1998.) With the increasing use of digital technologies the performer is sometimes even removed from the performance, except perhaps as a trace, a code, an algorithm, an avatar.

The historical development of performance in the latter half of the twentieth century would require a considerable exposition. There are many different areas and lines of development, with many crossovers. What follows here is an account of a selected collection of individuals and groups who have all, to a greater or lesser extent, informed the practical and theoretical development that has led to this thesis. It is not all-inclusive, but represents a personal selection of seminal and influential artists as perceived by the researcher. There are of course many omissions, but the following account suggests the range of performance 'styles' and modes that would need to be referenced if a more thorough overview of antecedents was constructed.

It begins and ends with two seemingly very different individuals, who are related in certain ways (I argue), even if their approaches appear unconnected. The list lacks explanation and expansion, because to describe the work of these artists and why they are influential would be an unnecessary exposition. The set of influences includes: theatre writers Antonin Artaud and Samuel Beckett, and contemporary playwright Martin Crimp; theatre directors Bertolt Brecht, Peter Brook, Jerzy Grotowski, Robert Wilson, Jan Fabre, Robert Lepage; groups such as the Judson Church Dance Group, Pina Bausch's Tanztheater Wuppertal, Wooster Group, Forced Entertainment, DV8, Saburo Teshigawara's Karas, Charleroi Danses/Plan K;
video artists Bill Viola and Gary Hill; and performers Tatsumi Hijikata, Spalding Gray and Stelarc. The notable omission from the collection comes in the areas of digital and virtual performance, with the exception of Stelarc. It is perhaps a little too early to ascertain the 'importance' of many of the artists creating this kind of work, and no one besides Stelarc has markedly transformed my thinking or inspired me through their work. However, it should be noted that there are a number of dance companies whose use of technology is remarkable: Merce Cunningham's company and its use of LifeForms animation software; William Forsythe's Frankfurt Ballet's use of Michael Saup's *Binary Ballistic Ballet* (1994-5), an interactive choreography system in which audio-signals are transformed into abstract shapes (by a computer) which are then constructed into a dance pattern on stage by a dancer (*Eidos: Telos*, 1995); companies such as Palindrome, Troika Ranch and Electronic Dance Theatre which use these technologies in their performances, mainly as a means of triggering MIDI signals for sound or lighting.
Section Two: How this Thesis Proceeds and Why, or 'Push the envelope, watch it bend'

In the light of all these possible influences the question 'Why Wittgenstein?' may be asked. Wittingly on his part and due to the posthumous collation and publication of his notes and in the light of postmodern approaches to the 'nature' and forms of philosophical writing, Wittgenstein's work expresses well and epitomizes notions of the 21st century cultural world. In this fragmented cultural environment, the formation of the 'person' is a complex process involving (if not centred around) language use. It is the use(s) of language in different human environments that to some extent shapes and defines the (human) world. It is Wittgenstein's focus on language (grammars, logics), and the problems that stem from the contradictory ways in which words function when used by different people in different contexts, that prompts the attempts in this thesis to examine words by presenting them in different modes: as poetry (printed and if read aloud, aural), as stories, as philosophizing, as 'academic' writing, as reported speech, as notes for speeches, as 'unreadable' (either being non-English or overlapping, often to the point of total illegibility). The different writing styles (including fonts, character sizes, layouts) contained in the one binding, as the metaphor is described in the thesis, represent (as it were) the person writing, the person dancing, the person in the world. Wittgenstein uses the word 'Mensch' (translated as 'person' or 'human being') in his writings to refer to that particular thing that can be referred to using different categories of grammar and language in different contexts.

In this formulation, the human being, the person, is not a composite of mind and body (two 'substances'), but something to which mental and physical terms can be applied for different purposes in different circumstances. This is the strategy used in the thesis, and one of the key adjustments urged on the thinking of dance students and practitioners as they use language in their daily and (so-called) extra-daily business. The reasons for this are not to prevent people from using certain words and terms, but to be aware of the place, and the far from neutral, 'nature' of language. The choice of words is important and problematic when the people with whom you are conversing share your natural language but have different conceptions of humanity. (This is related to the problems of 'understanding' outlined below.) The ways in
which we talk about something affect our so-called 'views' of the world: if someone says they *are* a body, this implies something different to someone who says they *have* a body, or any other such sentence on a similar theme. The ways in which we 'view' the world are affected by the ways in which language has developed to describe our experiences: we can imagine a 'form of life' (culture, group, context) that uses terms which may seem counterintuitive or alien to us (take, for example, Rorty's Antipodeans; see Rorty 1980), and they might view the world or 'themselves' as totally different to how we do. It is also possible to imagine a different set (or sets) of academic conventions, an evolution of writing that is different to that which exists now.

A related example (linked also to the notion of paradigm shifts referred to above) is highlighted by the allusions running through the thesis to the philosopher Descartes being outmoded. A reason for saying this is because I don't 'understand' him. I don't 'understand' him because my linguistic-cultural-theological context is different to Descartes's and his constructs are not apparently useful to me. For example, his insistence on and inclusion of God's place in the workings of human beings is not something I can subscribe to at a fundamental level. His division of the human being into parts (substances, one of which is immaterial) is another unacceptable and unnecessary standpoint, unconvincing from an agnostic or atheistic point of view. Neither is his method of philosophizing convincing to me: he introspects and I would rather 'extrospect', that is, consider how problematic issues are created by and related to human activities and actions that can be observed or heard or otherwise sensed by another person, and placed in relation to wider cultural activities—a form of externalism, it might be said.

The problems of philosophizing (the methods) that Wittgenstein identifies in his work are allied to the problems of Philosophy (the traditions), and his attempts at removing the traditional defining aspects of philosophy was and still is quite radical, in that it demands an ambivalent way of dealing with the questions and issues of human experience. On the one hand it requires that these questions are asked in such a way that they do not confound the philosopher further, and on the other it suggests that
the answers to these questions are not answers at all, they are merely more questions waiting to be asked. The problem with philosophy is that it seeks to answer (all of the) questions, but cannot do so because the questions are not answerable. What Wittgenstein proposes is that we should ask questions only in order to clear away problems, not to generate more. Furthermore, Wittgenstein’s philosophy is at first glance ‘philosophical’ in a more traditional sense, despite his later refusal to construct arguments, favouring a piecemeal approach using short sections examining a point, perhaps linked but not always, to the sections connected in space and time to them—the relationships to hypertextuality start at this observation. Yet it prevents traditional reading. This was of relevance to the writing of the thesis in that it suggests one sort of reading, yet requires another (or others). Theories lead to more theories or counter-theories; examinations and explorations read as someone’s statement of fact can lead to a misguided debate, in Wittgenstein’s writings and in this thesis, and what may seem like a theory, a hypothesis, is rather an examination of a problem. In Wittgensteinian forms of philosophizing what may seem like an assertion, or a statement of rigid opinion, should not necessarily be thought of as such. As is the case in this thesis, to say something is a particular type of thing (a poem, a dance) or to say that a particular type of thing is such-and-such (giving a definition of ‘poetry’ or ‘dance’) follows Rorty’s observation of Wittgenstein and Heidegger’s position of “decrying the notion of having a view, while avoiding having a view about having views” (1980: 371). When something is presented from this standpoint, the person “might just be saying something—participating in a conversation rather than contributing to an inquiry” (Rorty 1980: 371; italics in original).

What transpires is that there is a problem with asking questions without giving answers and anticipating that the reader will pick up on the way that the thesis is intended to be read, particularly when the issue of author’s (artist’s, dancer’s) intention is under scrutiny and being proffered as merely one factor in the interpretation of a text. The emphasis is on the range of elements that go into making the meaning(s) of a work (there are potentially some different notions implied in using the word ‘work’ instead of ‘text’, here the two are used interchangeably), with the suggestion that regardless of what the author thinks their work means and what
references they deliberately place in the work (either overtly or concealed), another person, the reader, will only be able to identify in the work what they are aware of. This thesis suggests, more than anything else, a ‘story’, a ‘myth’ (the word ‘theory’ is inappropriate in this instance) of ‘meaning-making’, with a stress on the rule that ‘there is no meaning except that which is made’. It could be argued that a text is meaningless until it comes into contact with a reader, a person. The more ‘experiences’ a person has, the more meanings they are able to make, that is, the wider range of possible connections (links in a network (neural?)) available to them. The reader as meaning-maker (interpretations) is at least on a par with the author as meaning-maker (intentions), but the two of them are necessary for anything to have meaning.

Other main influences on my perspective are sceptical meta-philosophers such as Nietzsche and Rorty, who dissuade us from accepting without question the results of foundationalist philosophy. Certain viewpoints of these writers are apposite to expressing my own experience of a secular world: chaotic, technological, supersaturated with information and theories, and fractured in terms of ‘self’, yet somehow bound together in the conception of ‘myself’. Additionally, these writers were chosen as a justification for subverting some of the conventions of academic thought and writing in particular. The fabric of diverse ‘styles’ within the thesis is an attempt to represent the world and experience of the researcher. The use of different registers and conventions, often slipping into the colloquial, is contrived so that the academic register is shown as one of many ways of describing experience, and not always the most appropriate.

The metaphor of the ‘voice’ in the thesis is played with to the extreme of it being ‘more’ than multi-vocal and in a sense voiceless. The reasoning behind this was to demonstrate the range of influences and how these are reworked in works of art and theory. The ‘voices’ are not clearly defined and are more akin to the use of fragments of text and parodies of other texts in late-twentieth century performance and poetry. It allows me to combine the ideas with the form of expression in a conterminous manner. The use of different sources is allied to the notion of ‘form of life’, and more
particularly, the 'language games' (instead of 'voice') of these different 'forms of life'. So, the constantly shifting 'voice' in the thesis, the collision and compression of these 'voices' within a single yet multifaceted work 'represents' the nonhierarchical interplay of 'language games' as they cross from one 'form of life' to another.

The 'failure' of the thesis to stay within the rigidities of academic writing is a statement of the writer's dissatisfaction with academic prose conventions. It is also an assertion that these other ways of writing also have a place within the discourses of academia, just as practice-based research in the arts have a relevance and importance in the processes of advanced research and its final presentation and dissemination.

Philosophical and academic writings take many forms, utilize many stylistic conventions and can confuse readers who are not au fait with the terms, history and approaches of the discipline and subject matter. This is arguably unavoidable in a world in which the currency of ideas has changed so many times, and in recent years the rate of change has accelerated making it increasingly difficult to stay on top of developments in any given area. The researcher is always playing 'catch up' and it is often difficult to remember or justify how and why certain sources and influences were found and used. This thesis reflects the problems of research in an area which branches off into a wide range of other areas: for example, dance and performance studies, technology, computer science, quantum physics, aesthetics, hermeneutics, philosophy of consciousness, psychoanalysis and phenomenology, epistemology, linguistics and linguistic philosophy, evolutionary theories, cognitive science, and critical theory.

This writer is interested in opening up the processes of writing, which is what, it could be said, a lot of so-called postmodern writing does, just as postmodern performance can be said to lay bare the devices of theatre (as its modernist predecessors did). It is like 'alienating' the reader to invite them to think about the reading more, and not just about what is being said. This thesis is about 'reading' - interpretation - and our relationship to dance, the dance-text, and in particular recent technologically-mediated forms of dance which challenge our concepts of 'body' and
'self'. But it is impossible to contain the dance-text in a book—an analogous method of 'representation' has been attempted: dance as words (or vice versa). The 'intention' of the writer of this thesis, the challenge I chose to accept, was to use words as a choreographer might use movements to evoke their ideas, in order to explore the oft-stated notion that 'dance is like language'. This thesis is an attempt to flag up the differences and similarities between words, language and the processes of choreography. It does this by using words in place of physical movements, showing that words 'function' in one set of ways, and movements 'work' in another set of ways (cf. Foster 1995 and Ulmer 1994). This, the most complicated, yet crucial, aspect of the thesis requires that the reader enter into the work as they might a multimedia performance space; the technologies of the page and the printed (and spoken) word standing in for computer screens, video monitors and sound system. The layers of text(s) highlight and mimic the multimodality of a contemporary performance, and the role of 'interaction' in the processes of performance.

The analyses that form the thesis could be said to be like a dance piece that is a reaction to a selection of ideas, transformed into a performance of references to these ideas which is then open to analysis (interpretation) itself; the analysis is in a sense obscured by the mode of presentation, but is also part and parcel, indissociable from the presentation itself. Reference is made to the McLuhanesque notion of medium and message (see McLuhan 1964), although it is put to the test and used merely as a tool to question the attempt to blur the distinctions, while reinforcing the binary. This is often why evocation and allusion are used in the thesis: it is not only what can be 'directly' said which is important, but the manner, the tone, the quality, the 'taste' of how it is said.

The simile 'dance is like language' is a particularly difficult statement to explain for some of the reasons that have been alluded to above and below, notably the problematical defining of 'language'. A Wittgensteinian would fall back on the idea that language is a rule governed activity just as, to use Wittgenstein's own analogy, a mathematical calculus is (an analogy which was only partly acceptable to Wittgenstein after he had reflected on it for a number of years; see Wittgenstein 1953
and Glock 1996). The roles of rules (in language usage and in dance practice), and the rules themselves, are often difficult to define. Some would say that these rules operate beneath or behind the user's conscious use of them, and that using, meaning and understanding an utterance (or movement) are based in the hidden processes.

This is not the position pursued in this thesis. The use and understanding of an 'utterance' (physical, vocal, written), and therefore the meaning of the so-called utterance, are dependent on the reaction (the response perhaps, but not always) of the person 'receiving' (watching, hearing, reading) the utterance, and the way in which it is used by the utterer. This de-emphasises the idea that language acts to 'express' any meaning or 'internal' thoughts and feelings, and places the emphasis on language as a meaning-making 'tool' (or set of tools). Wittgenstein uses this metaphor also to suggest the practical applications, the uses, to which language is put.

The question of the person in isolation and 'the private language argument' (as distinguished by Wittgenstein) comes into the frame at this point. If we suggest that a person acting in isolation cannot follow rules, as this is dependent on social interaction and consensus, does this also suggest that they cannot 'mean' anything in or by their utterances? Is meaning-making only to be regarded as a social group-dependent activity? This is clearly not the case, but the person making meanings and the language utterance or artwork are generally situated within a social or cultural environment of sorts—otherwise the concepts of 'language', 'meaning', 'art' and 'communication' would be lacking and irrelevant. Take, for example, the person dancing in a room on their own, in this case a choreographer devising a new piece. What does it matter if rules are followed or not, if no-one else is there to respond? Any movement is 'potential' material to the choreographer, regardless of what 'style', 'technique' or 'vocabulary' they may be trained in. However, the dancer, even though on his or her own at that moment may be thinking forward to when the dance is performed in front of an audience—he or she is working within a socio-cultural framework. The dancer may be wanting or trying to guide the audience into making a particular set of meanings (the artist's intention), by using a limited
number of movements that the audience might recognise and ‘understand’. He or she will attempt to work according to rules, but to the rules that the dance community decrees.

The choreographer may want to develop their own rules (their own vocabulary), but is this the same as inventing a verbal (or written) language? (This question is left hanging.) There are other questions and issues raised here, for example, if a person is dancing in a room on their own (as often happens), does their dancing not have ‘meaning’? It can be said to ‘mean’ something to them. It may mean to them a number of things, but here the word ‘mean’ has a range of definitions/interpretations. This is key. To say ‘I mean...’ is to play a language game, and it is related to the language game in which ‘she means...’ is a part, but they are not the same (see Wittgenstein PI 217e). This is the issue at stake: what does an ‘utterance’ mean if nobody, except the ‘utterer’, is there to ‘hear’ it? One answer rests on an idea of ‘essential’ meaning—an utterance means something inherently, by default almost, and this is what it means. Another answer is built on the idea that meaning comes from the further utterances given in response to the first utterance. (Note the use of metaphor which seems to elevate the latter above the former.)

As can be seen so far in the course of this introduction, writing in a way that acknowledges the diversity of languages and terminologies is fraught with problems. One method might be to ignore a group of related words and use one throughout (for example, ‘author’ to stand in the place of ‘writer’, ‘artist’, ‘choreographer’, ‘creator’, or ‘programmer’), but this is to suggest that words are easily synonymized (an assumption that they are grammatically equivalent) and that it doesn’t matter which word is used in a given situation. This is related to a recurring theme of the thesis: category mistakes or errors; notions of essentialism. The word ‘category’ itself has had a shifting usage in philosophy, beyond the scope of this chapter to address. When a term (an ‘everyday’ word) is used in another application (philosophy, for example) it can mislead—some people may exploit this. What Ryle and Wittgenstein urge is that the therapeutic application of philosophy should be to point out and undo the absurdities that arise from category mistakes. However, even the concept of category
mistakes implies the devising of these categories, the sorting of words into groups which can also cause problems. A key example of these issues is the use of the word ‘language’ in relation to ‘dance’. The phrase ‘dance language’ can be used to refer to the ‘style’ (the word is used in full awareness of its vagueness) of a movement genre or technique, or to the words spoken in the teaching or discussion of a particular form of dance or dance in general. The term ‘movement vocabulary’ is used to categorize the range of movements in a piece or (recognisably) similar pieces (with there being a number of evolving and overlapping ‘vocabularies’). The words ‘language’ and ‘vocabulary’ have been adopted to describe a range of activities, however, they do not ‘mean’ the same as when they are used in other contexts, yet the ‘utterers’ and ‘listeners’ can make the mistake of taking them to have the same essential meaning, and connecting dance with notions of communication and transmission, syntax and grammar, its functioning like verbal and written language or its (undeniable) resemblance to non-verbal gestures (which are related to language use).

Other examples of words which cause confusion in dance-related discussion are given or hinted at in the thesis, with such words as ‘energy’, ‘quality’, ‘impulse’, ‘presence’, ‘beautiful’ and ‘with emotion’ still being common in the discourses. The use of metaphor in dance-related discourse is often marred by confusion as to its role: as a tool to help dancers perform is one thing, but to assume it is a literal explanation of a process can be seen as a category mistake of sorts. In many dance discourses the vocabulary is sufficient to serve its purposes, but the traditional terms jar with the dance forms thrown up in the interactions with technology and an attempt to undefine [sic] the attitudes and dualities inherent in many languages. For example, the terms ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ present problems of usage and implication to the dancer in the field of new technologically-mediated performance: what does the distinction mean or really matter when the ‘source’ of the movement is exogenous to the person? Other questions arise: If boundaries are blurred, is it still appropriate to talk of ‘boundaries’? What sense can be made of referring to a ‘virtual body’? Dance is based in space and time, but what happens to dance if the space is collapsed into two dimensions? Is there any difference between ‘digital dance’, screen-based dance and
stop-motion or hand-drawn animation? If the body isn't human, but mechanical or a hybrid, is it 'dance'? If the 'meaning' of dance comes from the dancer, what happens when the dancer is removed from, or only a trace in, the work? These questions are not to be answered outright, and often it is not possible to answer them without resorting to a quasi-scientific or metaphysical set of terms.

What then is 'dance'? In the thesis it is a word that is used to 'describe' a range of activities that cannot be bounded (defined) by creating a list. The 'meaning' of a word is not fixed through time. Neither is the 'meaning' of a work of art, which is surely obvious given the ever increasing range of re-readings of artworks. Wittgenstein's 'family resemblance' concept (as referred to in the thesis) can be applied to any human practice that the reader thinks shares some sort of similarity to what they know of as 'dance', and is accepted in their circle as 'dance'. By this is meant that it is up to the reader to determine whether, according to their own experiences and uses of the word, a given activity can be called 'dance' or not. Of course, this decision will be put to test by the form of life in which the meaning-maker is using the word (this is the idea of consensus in language). It must be stated, though, that there is in the thesis an underlying concern with 'artistic' as opposed to 'social' dance, and in particular dance that increases the size of the 'dance family' through its use of technology. It is more about the language that is used in dance-related situations (rehearsal rooms, dance journals, dance studies classrooms, books about dance theory and practice) than it is about a specific product of dance practice.
Section Three: The Role of the Personal, or ‘I am Jack’s memory’

The role of the personal is complex in a thesis that challenges the notion of the dancer’s emotion while dancing (or the author’s intention while writing, or the painter’s desires while painting) as being the main source of meaning in the interpretation of their actions. It does this by suggesting that meanings come from a combination of the experiences and knowledge of those in dialogue with each other, as it were, mediated by and through the work. These dialogues can also be conceived of in terms of being contextually located (and in some cases, contextually separated), from the ‘point of view’ of all parties involved.

To assist in explaining this I refer to my experience of reading the Foreword to a book by the chef Robert Carrier (1999). I was reminded of a chapter I had written for a book on dance and intertextuality (Garraghan 1999) in which I employed a food metaphor to describe making and analysing a dance piece. Also, I used to think of creating my own performance pieces as if inventing a recipe by putting different ingredients together to see if the tastes and textures would complement each other, and combine in a satisfactory way. But, of course, not everybody likes all different kinds of food, and some recipes would be disliked by certain people and loved by others. However, as I read Carrier it became possible that he was perhaps also describing what happens to the meanings of words, and to the artists’ methods and the interpretations of works of art when he wrote that recipes change over time, reflecting current tastes and available ingredients. At the same time, mixed, ‘intertwined’ with these intellectual musings, I was reminded of our family visits to Hintlesham Hall, which as far as I could recall was once owned by Carrier (somehow we knew one of the chefs at the Hall but never ate in the restaurant, only in the staff quarters). I can still ‘see’ the place, and ‘taste’ the food. This also highlighted the importance of memories (of their past experiences) in meaning-making, and reinforced the idea of meanings being made, ‘existing’, in a multidimensional relationship. But often it is not easy to highlight these connections so clearly. Is it enough to say that because they are part of my experience (past and present, as it were), they are part of the network of meaning, and as such an important part of that network? In a word, yes. A failure to recognize the personal experiences of the
reader in the meaning-making processes is to restrict the idea of meaning to just the input (intention) of the author (or whoever is creating the text)—the quotation from Barthes which precedes the thesis is illuminating and illuminated in these ideas, its relevance made clear as the role of references, of citations, in the construing of meaning through ‘reading’ is highlighted.

However, this should not be read to imply that the meaning of a text is then just the private ‘experiences’ and processes of the person making that meaning (here used singularly to stand for the plural: ‘set of meanings, both made and potential’). It is only as part of a form of life, in a dialogue or multi-logue, that these meanings become ‘tested’, as it were. This places the text and the persons involved in the discourses (meaning-making) in a social context, but one which is made up of ‘forms of life’ and ‘language games’ which ‘co-exist’. Once again the Wittgensteinian ‘private language argument’ forces us to consider the person in isolation as a possible counterexample to this. The person in isolation is either assumed to be a language-user (aware of their language and its rules and the concept of meaning) or not a language-user in any shape or form, in which case they will lack the concept of meaning and any notion of the social use of language.

It is the notion of ‘(my)self in performance’ that is one of the key areas that the thesis addresses. This accounts for the pseudo-biographical and fictionalized real experiences that permeate the thesis. The idea that the ‘self’ (the person) can (or cannot) be separated from the acts of performing, writing, reading and making meaning is examined from a number of angles. However, it is not enough to say that there is always a ‘self’ involved in these processes, particularly when technologically-mediated art practices are considered (these include writing, painting and playing musical instruments). Dance as performed by human beings for other human beings, as a form of art and entertainment without any technology to enhance or alter the experience of dancing and watching dance, is an activity that seems to foster ideas of ‘true expression’, ‘open emotion’, ‘the real self on display’ and ‘universal language’. Whatever the philosophical debates surrounding these ideas, when dance is transformed in some way by technology (from photography, film and video, to digital
animation, live web-streaming and machine-generated movements in a human body) some different issues emerge. Furthermore, these forms of dance present a challenge to concepts of self, expression and dance itself. Philip Auslander’s chapter “Just be your self”: logocentrism and différence in performance theory’ (1997: 28-38), demonstrates an application of Derrida to the notion of ‘self’ as logos in certain theories of acting and performance, which could also be applied to these concepts in (technologically-mediated) dance discourse.
Section Four: My Own Performance History, or In Limbo, Dancing

In the thesis it was deemed necessary to shift the mode of writing, and it is necessary to do this again now, in order to describe my own history, as person, reader and performer. As suggested above, there are numerous influences on and experiences in what could be called my performance history. However, these do not have a straightforward separation from the rest of my life. It seems odd to me when I read about performance as ‘extra-daily activity’ (cf. Barba and Savarese (eds) 1991), because if you are a performer it may well be a daily, everyday, ordinary activity—it is just something that you do.

I have always been a voracious reader. I would arrive at my first school early and read. One of my early school pictures is of me sat at an open book. I was bored by reading the Janet and John stories so would supplement my reading diet with my mum’s nursing handbooks: descriptions of diseases, anatomical diagrams, pictures of deformity and abnormality, physiological processes. These were mixed with books on warfare, history and whatever was around (which was not always very much). My imagination was the biggest book on the shelf and this was where I would do most of my reading, writing my own stories for myself, sometimes with others in role play, or for my brother at night when we should have been asleep. The world was extended; reality was a fiction in which my stuffed toys had personalities and voices, and I wasn’t constrained by the usual constraints of gravity, atmosphere, society and myself. Reading and writing were natural for me, but they were more or less the same thing: as I read I was writing my own life alongside the wor(l)ds of others, trying to make sense of my place in relation to the thoughts of others, the experiences of others.

In junior school I outstripped the spelling tests and was put on to ‘encyclopedia work’, the exact processes and purposes of which are forgotten, but basically it involved finding definitions in a dictionary or encyclopedia. I enjoyed the quick pace with which I was able to jump from one word to another, one meaning to the next. I would do my own searching, allowing chance to find the words which would send me off to new undiscovered words and meanings. Travelling like this was good fun and
allowed me to expand my world in the space and silence of the classroom during spelling tests. Previously unrelated words became connected through me, through my journeys. Why wasn’t the world so easy to connect up?

When I was about ten my mother told me that my reality was not what I thought it was. Not in a philosophical sense, but in an actual sense. My sense of truth was shaken. When told that my father was not in fact my father, my world, my reality, my self was broken up, shattered, fragmented even more than I think I had experienced it before the revelation. What made this feeling of unreality worse was the ‘guilt’ and secrecy that seemed attached to the details of my conception. My brothers and sister didn’t know that I wasn’t who I was. And neither did most people around me. Those others outside my immediate family who did know the truth were miles away, adding to my sense of dissociation. Also the story wasn’t told completely to me, it had blank pages in it which I tried in vain to fill in with my own pieces of fiction. I had to create masks and evasive tactics for when questions about families, in particular fathers, came up. My quiet nature was reinforced, I had a reason to be silent; only in silence could I remain honest simply by not lying. I was performing all of the time. Unless, that is, we apply one of Schechner’s various definitions of performance as being ‘restored’ or ‘twice-behaved’ behaviour (see Schechner and Appel (eds) 1990), which at a basic level would discount many forms of improvised performance from being called ‘performance’.

I started performing as a child. (I think) I remember my role in a nativity play at primary school: the little drummer boy. We were allowed to wear our best clothes and my choice was for my thick, purple, scratchy woollen sweater. I had to walk around the principal characters in time to the music (“Come they told me, pa rum pum pum pum pum/A new born king to see, pa rum pum pum pum”), miming playing the drum. Other children had to join in behind me to form a snaking circle of little drummers in praise of the baby Jesus, or presumably, a doll representing him. I felt as though I was the most important role in the piece, as I had to lead the other children in a dance (of sorts)—my first choreography. The following year, perhaps, I was given the lead role in another play at Christmas time: father mouse. I stole the show
with my confident delivery and comic improvisations. From then on I felt as though I excelled on the stage, being able to connect with the audience and construct a character convincingly and completely. I was able to be myself on stage, as contradictory as that sounds. Ordinarily, and still, a quiet person, I hoped that by presenting all of the aspects of my personality on stage in the guise of other personae, I could make up for the normal me. Or rather I could make up the normal me.

As I grew up with my fractured sense of self and constant (re-)inventing of self through not knowing who or what I was supposed to be, I became isolated and lost. I didn't feel fully born. I wanted perhaps to go back and be born again into a life that made sense in toto. The best I could do was to hang on to those parts that did make sense, those that were relevant to me, and spin a yarn of them, from which I could weave a life. But as before, the woven me was loose, holey, superficial and lacking completeness. Performing on a full-time basis was tiring and removed the need to do it formally (for a theatre audience), to a certain extent. I was still interested in the workings of the theatre, the performer, the actor, the director, but it was never a choice when it came to finding a career path. I tried to convince myself that the sciences were my calling, or in an attempt to discover who I was, perhaps psychology was my vocation. Maybe medicine, nearly nursing, for a while forensic science; the indecision was incapacitating. Everything was of interest, but not fulfilling enough to make it worth chasing. As with the words in the dictionary a decade or so before, the range of options was disparate but inter-linked simply by being part of my thinking processes. It took me another decade after making a decision to chose the performing arts as my main subject of study to try to fill in the gaps in my life.

I like to make work that shatters and plays with the discrete (and perhaps discreet) preconceptions and expectations of an audience (or at least my preconceptions and expectations of who an audience might be). While researching and writing my thesis I made a few pieces of performance, to various levels of 'completion' and for a number of purposes and audiences. The pieces ranged from entirely video-based work to live multimedia performance to masked physical theatre. In my own work I favour
combining and layering texts and sources, and making use of a diverse range of references mixed with fictional and autobiographical stories. Due to this, the response from people who see my work is often characterized by uncertainty as to the 'truthfulness' of the work – does it refer to me? – and to how they are 'meant' to interpret it. In the works that use technology (for example, live and recorded video, recorded soundtracks) mixed with live performance (mostly improvised, and in response to the audience or other elements of the piece), the question 'how is the technology integrated into the piece?' is asked by me during the devising process.

The technology is sometimes integral to the piece, as in the case of the work-in-progress showing of FMS (1999) referred to in the thesis, and sometimes it is an adjunct to the live presence. One piece I performed in a gallery window (as part of a multimedia exhibition) on the campus of the University of Surrey, entitled MPD – Urban Tales for the Lost Generation (1999), although not described by me as an "integrated" performance and video installation", was criticised/credited in a local newspaper with the following comments:

"...it is lack of integration that is most apparent. The piece is fun, but unfocussed – there are many strands fighting for attention. Any synthesis between image, text and performance is virtually random and the performer himself seems – perhaps consciously – like a wounded soldier from his own private war with technology. There are precious few other hints of critique [...] [The whole exhibition's] fetishisation of multimedia creates an art of accident, in which meaning is ephemeral and largely random.

If there is any other depth concealed within its concern with process and surfaces, then perhaps it is only in the implicit commentary on the dislocated perceptions and reduced attention spans of the Playstation age. Clever, witty and very a la mode.

(Wicks 1999: 21)

If the remarks are critiqued in return it could be said that the commentator was unfocussed and not the piece. The strands mentioned were synthesized in time and space, by virtue of being presented together—they were not combative towards each other. Something is either random, or it is not. Is it a good or a bad point that is being made to say I was 'like a wounded soldier'? Or merely an interpretation? It is not clear what else could be done by a piece with many strands to give more hints for critique. Many of the points raised in the newspaper review highlight the difficulties in dealing with contemporary technological and multimedia work. This piece, for me, was about the use of chance, as my performance rested mostly on there being
someone outside of the window to react to, a situation beyond my control; it was about the 'competing' elements of multimedia performance; it was about integration and lack of integration at the same time, to replicate in microcosm the world around me; it was about the splitting of attention and focus, fragmenting experience and allowing the spectator-participant ('spect-actor' to appropriate Augusto Boal's term; see Boal 1992) to choose what they want to experience; it was about the irrelevance of surface and depth as concepts when talking about multimedia work; it was about dislocated perceptions and reduced attention spans, and had to be because I knew that most people would be on their way to somewhere else and just diverted by me for a short time; and it was about the problems of 'meaning', the issue of 'intention' and the de-fetishisation of technology. It was also about issues of interactivity (my interaction with the audience, and their interaction with me), and making the spectator a more active part of the performance, and conscious of their involvement. This last idea was brought about through the use of two 'concealed' video cameras in my costume, which I could direct towards the audience in order that their image might be shown on the video monitors behind me as they sequenced through a number of inputs; furthermore, I was mimicking the actions of the people outside so that they could 'see themselves' in my actions. I was there in place of a computer programmed and set up to capture motion of people and process the information so that it can be seen in the form of a virtual representation on a screen.
Section Five: Implications for Method, or Methods of Implication

In the preceding sections, I have outlined the background and approaches underlying this thesis. The Opening Statement provides details of the development of the subject for the thesis, and how it came about through conversations and experiences in a number of contexts. The 'style' of the thesis developed alongside these dialogues, and is situated in a lineage of previous artists and writers. The various theoretical antecedents were summarised in Section One, which charts a flow of ideas from the late-nineteenth century to the current day. Having given an idea as to the wider intellectual context, the influence of Wittgenstein is highlighted as being the major figure in the development of the thesis. In Section Two, his approach is examined and tied together with some other key thinkers. This section gives some clarification of the terms and concepts used in the thesis, and indicates the reasons why the particular approaches to presentation and writing style were taken. The use, in the thesis, of the term 'Dance' and related words is also summed up in this section. Section Three indicates the relevance to the thesis, and its subject matter, of what could be called 'the personal'. The concepts of 'self' and 'meaning' are also demonstrated to be linked to one another, but these terms are not strictly defined here. As a knowledge of the writer's performance interests and experience was required, Section Four incorporates an summary of recent work with background biographical information to show how the various aspects of my life are interrelated. One piece made during the course of the research was used to illustrate how my performance techniques draw on similar themes and apply approaches akin to those of the thesis.

This section suggests that the incorporation of a wide-range of thoughts and concepts into a thesis is possible using a method that veers towards the 'performative'. The reasons for the presentation of the thesis came from the desire to show how technology impacts on, and can alter, the form and content of the products any human activity. The further (stylistic and theoretic) influences on the thesis's form are given to show how it is located within a broad history of works and approaches to the handling and presentation of cultural texts.

One of the key ideas for how to approach the range of subject matter was suggested
by the concept of hypertext: a computer-based network of what are called 'nodes' which are 'texts' (be they words, images, movies, sounds, code—all digital or digitized; there is a spelling variant to refer to this: 'techst') or fragments of text that can be linked in a variety of ways depending on who is doing the linking (for example, see Landow 1997; for related ideas see Bush 1945 and Nelson 1987). This system of connecting and navigating a large body of information is most commonly experienced when using the Internet and the World Wide Web. The appeal of this concept lay in the emphasis on the person doing the searching to construct a trail or pathway or series of pathways, even though the links are to a certain degree predefined by others (and even this can be disrupted by starting a new pathway that is related, but maybe not explicitly, to the previous pathway). The trail is linear only in the sense of 'time as it is experienced', and because generally one link comes after another, but texts overlap, can be returned to, their flow can be broken by following a new link to a new text. On a computer the user (to employ computer science parlance, the 'reader' to use the terminology of literary criticism, or the neologism 'wreader' to imply a reader who is also a 'writer' in hypertext-speak) could view (or listen to) more than one text at a time, allowing new connections and ideas to come from the combination of different materials. The notion of primacy of any one text is removed because the onus is on the user or reader to choose what they want to give most attention to at any given moment. Added to choices of text of the person doing the choosing are the other texts that impinge on the information they are most interested in: pop-up banners and adverts, background sounds, images that surround them, books open on their desk, the thought processes which present them with new ideas and references to things previously experienced. This leads back out into the 'real world' of the user of hypertext, not allowing the hypertext system to be the only point of interest but allowing the person(al) to have a bearing on the working of hypertext (again, see Landow 1997). Also, this principle resonated with what I thought I knew about reader-response theories, the concept(s) of intertextuality and critiques of psychoanalysis.

It may have been appropriate to construct and submit the thesis as a digital hypertext (a navigational collection of files, an expansive website or on a CD-ROM); however,
reverting to the print-on-paper form threw up a series of challenges and issues that are analogous to writing about dance, for example, 'how to recreate the live dance experience?' However, this question is 'answered' in the thesis through the use of the analogical writings, and the shifts required in the multilinear reading environment. Also, the backwards reconfiguring of the hypertext concept into print (book) form echoes and prompts the following questions: How does the use of (digital) technology affect the creation and perception of live dance? What happens to the technologically-altered body in performance? Landow (1997) argues that hypertext challenges notions of authorial property and uniqueness, and the disruption of the printed page in the thesis highlights this challenge and combines it with a challenge to the dancer as owner of the meaning of their movements, particularly in light of virtual reality, digital animation and other cyber-applications. The 'technologizing of the word' is used in place of the 'technologizing of the body', with the related issues of fragmentation, form and function, focus, intentionality and authority applying to both. These issues, and the concept of hypertext, generate (a need for) new modes and outcomes of expression—physical, verbal and written. For example, Marshall Soules (2002) in his summary of these ideas as they relate to hypertext, performance and critical theory, writes,

Lunenfeld notes the tendency in digital media towards strategies of compression, aphorism, and fragmentation, all within an 'aesthetic of unfinish' ([Lunenfeld 2000:] 124), and the mise-en-abyme is a 'sleight of structural hand' to generate 'an almost infinitely regressing series of mirror reflections' of the work's central concerns. The notion that digital art works are (transforming) mirrors is widespread; in many cases, the form of the work encapsulates the artist's vision of networked digital communication.

In trying to order and structure the material in a way that was an attempt to show my 'vision of networked digital communication', I examined a range of printed texts alongside their digital counterparts. Indeed, there are a number of (printed) publications which could be seen as precursors to this thesis. These other works seem to express or examine similar themes, or share similar approaches to the presentation of their material. With regards to the layout of the thesis, there are a number of printed texts which utilize a collage technique (see Wolfram 1975), or change the typographic styles for different reasons and effects. These texts include the work of
the Italian and Russian Futurists (see Lista 1977 and Compton 1978), and in particular Mayakovsky (1965); the Vorticist publication *Blast*, which was edited by Wyndham Lewis (see Lewis (ed) 1981 and Edwards 2000a and 2000b), who wrote, incidentally, in his "Wyndham Lewis Vortex No.1: Art Vortex. Be Thyself":

You must talk with two tongues, if you do not want to cause confusion.

You must also learn, like a Circassian horseman, to change tongues in mid-career without falling to Earth.

You must give the impression of two persuaders, standing each on a different hip - left hip, right hip - with four eyes vacillating concentrically at different angles upon the object chosen for subjugation.

There is nothing so impressive as the number TWO.

You must be a duet in everything.

For, the Individual, the single object, and the isolated, is, you will admit, an absurdity.

Why try and give the impression of a consistent and indivisible personality?  
(*Blast* No. 2, 1981: 91)

In direct relation to *Blast*, McLuhan's *Counterblast* (1970), also demonstrates the connections between typography and statement (political, aesthetic/artistic and the antitheses of the two). Avital Ronell's *The Telephone Book* (1989), was the key text in the development of the arrangement of the materials on the page, alongside a number of computer manuals and expert texts, most notably, Knuth (1979) and Goossens et al (1994). These deal with typesetting techniques and utilise a vast array of typefaces and layouts, with boxes, frames and tables breaking up the page, which is not always 'portrait' but 'landscape' too. This breaking up of the page (and the flow of the 'text') is now common place in newspapers (arguably the seminal form of the fragmented printed page), magazines and journals of popular culture and art (for example, see Lane 1995-2000), and countless other publications in many fields.

A number of analysts have pointed out the historical shifts in typography and printing techniques which have had a bearing on the 'look' of manuscripts and the way they are to be read (for example, see Ong 1982). In academic writing the current and dominant vogue has evolved to suit the linear development of an argument (this can
be seen in any of the number of academic writing guides, although it must be stated that there are always exceptions and experimental attempts at writing ‘academic’ texts in nonacademic modes), with the inclusion of most quotations being as inconspicuous as possible. All but longer quotations share the format of the new text, and if the writer sees fit, some quotations (the guiding conventions vary) are separated and maybe indented. However, this convention is played with in this thesis to give many of the quotations their own space, rather than being subsumed into the main text. This method was intended to present the quotations as being linked to, yet separate from, the other text, as satellites to the thesis, occupying a middle space between the thesis and their source. It was also designed to mimic the nodal structure of hypertext and the multiple windows which can be viewed at once on a computer screen. In a way, this was to explore the notion that when a new technology begins to supplant another, the old technology takes on the ‘form’ of the new, its users attempt to transform it into a semblance of the developing technology. The attempts are not always ‘successful’ because the old technology is not adaptable to the new ways of working, it does not fit. The contentious issues and concerns about writing abilities and proficiency are also put into the foreground when using the ‘new approaches’ in conjunction with the ‘old technologies’. These issues also relate to dance as it becomes increasingly created with and through technology; the risk here though is that dance suffers from lack of ‘success’ when ‘old approaches’ are used in conjunction with the ‘new technologies’.
Section Six: A Resolution of the Problems, or ‘If you don’t know where you are going all roads lead there’

Taking all of these influences and converting them into the thesis *Digital Dialogism: dance at the edge of language* was an intellectual journey, a performance devising process, and exercise in adaptation and invention. The result, the resolution, the rendering, the rendezvous of these influences, is a ‘map without a territory’ (taken from thesis, but based on a suggestion of Jean Baudrillard, see 1992). In hypertextuality, network outlines, diagrams and layouts act as maps for the hypertext designers, and occasionally the users. They show and assist in the design of the links between the nodes, the lexia, of text. Many writers have described the systems of links and nodes, link structures and meanings, and patterns (routes) that these links form (for example, see Trigg 1983 and Bernstein 1998). In *Digital Dialogism* it is possible to recognise some of the different patterns of links that Bernstein (1998) outlines, for example, Counterpoint and Montage, Mirrorworld and Tangle, Missing Link and Navigational Feint. *Digital Dialogism* can be started as a conventional text, on page “1” (as you will have done if you began with this Introduction), or at a number of suggested entry points (see Contents), or at any node (page) by opening the book at random (of course, this may take the reader to a page that seems like it is in the middle of a flow of text, and requires them to skip, backwards or forwards, to a more satisfactory ‘in-point’). This choice of how and where to begin is like the different ways in which hypertext networks can be encountered—that is, not always at the ‘start’, the table of contents, the directions for how the hypertext should be used, through trial-and-error and accident.

There are other printed texts which (implicitly and explicitly) ask for, or even require, a nonlinear approach to their reading. Of course, any book can be ‘navigated’ according to the reader’s own devising, but some books have developed alternative methods of how the reader can move through the book to get the most out of the experience. The first explicit example of what has been called ‘ergodic’ writing (see Aarseth 1997) to which I was exposed was the series of Fighting Fantasy books, which developed out of Role Playing Games (for example, *Runequest, Tunnels and Trolls* and *Dungeons and Dragons*; see Popp 2000). The first of these was *The
Warlock of Firetop Mountain by Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone, which was published in August 1982, by Puffin Books, Penguin’s children’s imprint, and is now being reprinted by Wizard Books. These books offer a character-based game which requires that the reader make decisions according to options in the text (which is divided into numbered sections, randomly distributed through the book to make linear reading difficult), or dependant on the results of dice throws or character attributes. However, it is not just gamebooks which give the reader a freer rein in the reading process, or at least, the suggestion of a free rein. Here are three examples to demonstrate the prior exploration in print form of nonlinear reading techniques. Our Fragmented World by Ronald Harvey (1988) is a selection of political, philosophical and personal observations which the ‘Foreword’ writer, Rodney Aitchtey, suggests be opened at random. The Interactive Book by Celia Pearce (1997) urges the reader to “let kismet be your guide” (1997: xxi) and provides a number of suggestions for how the reader might ‘use’ the book, in a style akin to ‘surfing’ the Internet with links (to related chapters) highlighted in the text. Sue-Ellen Case’s book The Domain-Matrix (1996) also attempts “to emulate more the web sense of cyber-reading than the traditional composition in print” (1996: 7), and the practice of ‘surfing’. (Case’s book also considers some issues relevant and similar to those in Digital Dialogism, but here is not the place to expand on these.)

The conventional starting point of the thesis, the Contents page, acts as a hypertext network overview, a TOC. It provides a number of markers, or signposts, for notable points in the thesis, should the reader want to find a specific entry. Many of these are part and canto titles for one of the number of ‘strands’, or loosely defined pathways, in the thesis. The most notable and linear of these strands is the epic poem ‘The First Unborn’, and it is this that is divided into parts and cantos. This poem acts as a central focus for the thesis and reader, should they wish a central focus. It could be read on its own, but as it is often fractured by not always being on consecutive pages, even this strategy is not straightforward. The major Mirrorworld to the poem are the notes contained in ‘In Lieu of an Appendix’ (a conceit derived, in part, from Nabokov 1973); with another being the experiences of Ermy, a character from the poem attempting to write a thesis. This latter strand also acts as Counterpoint to the
'academic' strand, which in turn relates to the poem, the quotations and any other notes contained in the thesis.

An overall structure can be identified and described as follows. After this Introduction is a block of six sections on various aspects of the thesis, including referencing conventions, the use of definitions, and an outline of the different fonts used for the different strands (in a fashion reminiscent of the guide page in Rucker, Sirius, and Mu (eds) 1993). Following this come three alternative points of entry, a form of Tangle, which are background ideas to the writing of the thesis: performance and memory, the 'self' and writing, and Wittgenstein's influence on the thesis, incorporating a parody of one of his works. The next block consists of the main part of the thesis, its body, which comprises the strands referred to above. The poem notes come next, followed by a Postscript, and Bibliography. This final block should not be avoided as it provides a neat summary of the links to other texts, the intertexts and hypertexts that are referenced in the thesis.
Closing Statement: ‘Disce quasi semper victurus; vive quasi cras moriturus’

In keeping with the thesis’ embodiment of an ‘ethic of unfinish’ and the wish for it to act as a node (or matrix of nodes) in the docuverse, containing links to other nodes and networks, this closing statement will provide ‘hotspots’ which, when activated, will lead the reader to relevant, yet diverse, sources.

There are currently four main texts that illuminate this thesis in terms of what I attempt to do with it, or which support my approach and clarify my position. All of them were read after the thesis was submitted. They are nothing to do with dance, but display certain theoretical similarities with the idea that there is no straightforward way to ask questions and give answers in respect to activities such as dance. Gerald Bruns’s (1999) book, among other things, examines the links between philosophy and poetry, and philosophers’ intimacy with the world (or lack of it). This book suggests that the lines between literature (poetry) and philosophy (ethics) are collapsed, when literary works are explored from a number of directions in order to explore the worlds of writer and reader, the subjects and objects of ‘self’ and ‘world’. Alan Fletcher’s (2001) immense collection of images, ‘factoids’, aphorisms and musings, denies any attempt at a linear reading and urges a playful and aleatoric approach. It presents the reader with a large number of starting points and sets up debates and dialogues by juxtaposing apparently opposing viewpoints. R. D. Laing’s (1977; first published 1976) semi-autobiographical ‘story’ is a shifting meditation on the ‘self’ in the world, which uses a range of voices to ask ‘Who Am I?’. As the writer himself suggests, there are no easy answers, and that stories are often the best way “to convey the nature of [...] perplexity” (Laing 1977: 143); science and morals “shatter each other” (Laing 1977: 143). The fourth book, by Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner (1971; first published 1969), raises questions about the way education is conducted. It is McLuhanesque, polemical and of its time, but still seems relevant in challenging received notions of anything. The final words of this introduction are also the final words of Postman and Weingartner:

Intellectual strategies for nuclear-space-age survival – in all dimensions of human activity – include such concepts as relativity, probability, contingency, uncertainty, function, structure as process, multiple causality (or non-causality), non-symmetrical relationships, degrees of difference and incongruity (or
simultaneously appropriate difference).

Concepts such as these, as well as others both implicit in and contingent on them, comprise the ingredients for changing ourselves in ways that complement the environmental demands that we all face. The learning of such concepts will produce the kinds of people we will need to deal effectively with a future full of drastic change.

The new education has as its purpose the development of a new kind of person, one who – as a result of internalizing a different series of concepts – is an actively inquiring, flexible, creative, innovative, tolerant, liberal personality who can face uncertainty and ambiguity without disorientation, who can formulate viable new meanings to meet changes in the environment which threaten individual and mutual survival.

The new education, in sum, is new because it consists of having students use the concepts most appropriate to the world in which we all must live. All of these concepts constitute the dynamics of the question-questioning, meaning-making process that can be called 'learning how to learn'. This comprises a posture of stability from which to deal fruitfully with change. The purpose is to help all students develop built-in, shockproof crap detectors as basic equipment in their survival kits.

(1971: 204)
On the Referencing of Major Philosophical and Literary Works

References to works authored by Wittgenstein (even if edited by someone else), will follow the conventional capital-letter system. Those works that are divided into sections only, such as *Zettel* (1967), will be cited by the capital-letter(s) denoting that text (see Bibliography) followed by the section (§) number, e.g. *Z* §543. References to *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) will either be section numbers if they are from Part I (pages 1e-172e), e.g. *PI* §281, or page numbers if they are from Part II (173e-232e), e.g. *PI* 181e (the ‘e’ after the page indicates the page of the English translation if there exists an edition with the original German en face). References to *Culture and Value* (1998; see note in Bibliography) will be given as *CV* page and manuscript number, e.g. *CV* 11e: MS 109 204. Works which are not divided into sections, such as *The Blue and Brown Books* (1958), will give the page number after the letter, e.g. *BB* 154. Works that are mentioned but not quoted from will be referred to by the date of publication of the edition in the Bibliography, unless a particular section or page is drawn to the reader’s attention. Any other references that deviate from or are not included here should be self-explanatory, for example, quotations from prefaces or introductions numbered in small Roman numerals.

Major philosophical works by other writers are also referenced according to recognised conventions, for example, giving the chapter and section or paragraph. This makes it possible to find the reference in any publication which retains an annotated structure, and not just the item cited.

There are references to texts of literature, for example the texts of Dante and Milton, and the works consulted are listed in the Bibliography. However, as many of these writings have been so frequently published, the references are for book, chapter, paragraph and line numbers (according to the structure of the work) instead of date of publication and page reference.

Occasionally, across the philosophical and literary works, there may be a variation in translation from one version to another, and if this impacts significantly on the sense, the specific edition may be cited.
On Influences

A list of influences would extend the thesis by its word-length again. The Bibliography lists only those texts cited in the thesis, and omits many texts that were of influence but which did not make the final version. The influence of a work (of art, of literature, of music, of philosophy, etc.) is often difficult to define. It may be a turn of phrase or a bridge between hitherto unlinked references that connects diverse references. New influences are constantly arriving on the scene, as acquaintances at a cocktail party. Some are recalled at a later date, many are forgotten, until their face is seen again and their name *in labris natat* (see Wittgenstein *PI* 219e). The primary influence, it could be said, is Ludwig Wittgenstein, who is like a good friend who you get to know better and better over a lifetime, but still never fully understand. The second influence is Friedrich Nietzsche, the slightly mad friend who runs in from time to time and shouts something ‘profound’, and is either life and soul of the party, or extremely frustrating. The face across the room who you know a little bit about and would like to know more of is Jacques Derrida. Like Nietzsche he is inspiring in short bursts but frustrating too. (More will be said about these guests throughout the thesis.) Other people at the party who could be given notice are James Joyce, Vladimir Nabokov and Italo Calvino. It is in these forms that they appear to you: Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1998; first published 1922), Nabokov’s *Pale Fire* (1973; first published 1962) and Calvino’s *If on a winter’s night* (1993; first published in Italian 1979, and in English 1981). Also making appearances are works by Marshall McLuhan such as *Counterblast* (1970) and with Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage* (1967). Each of these works plays with structure, form and the reader’s relationship with the writing. In *Ulysses*, the reader is presented with an immense array of references and styles; fictional characters inhabit a super-realistic Dublin, experiencing one day in 1904 in extreme detail, yet prefiguring Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* (first performed in Paris 1953) in its lack of action; the work has been described as being, in a way, “allotropic”, existing as ‘novel’ and ‘anti-novel’ at the same time (see Joyce 1998: xvii). In the multilayered *Pale Fire*, the writer and editor of the poem, which gives the book its title, are fictionalised and the story *exists* between the lines of the central poem’s satirical academic commentary; the work is
more self-contained, though, than *Ulysses*, and is set in, arguably, a more enclosed, fictitious world. As is *If on a winter's night*, in which the processes of reading and writing are taken apart and laid bare; stories are started but never finished, yet the whole follows a narrative in which you, the reader, are the main protagonist. These literary works have theoretical underpinnings. The work wouldn't exist without the theory, and vice versa. The same could be said of McLuhan's experiments with images and typography; his 'mosaic' writings. And although his dictum "The Medium is the Message" has come under critical attack (see Grosswiler 1998 and Horrocks 2000, for examples), there is still something about it which seems to strike a chord of correctness when talking about these works, and others like them. Certainly, Wittgenstein's writing and his philosophy are intricately linked in terms of "stylistic and literary considerations" (Kripke 1982: 5fn.4) and the 'contents of his thoughts', that is, his investigations of words and their uses.

Indeed, the concept of the cocktail party is also an inspiration. At a party, it has been theorised, we filter and accept or reject aural messages based on a series of criteria: the cocktail party effect (see Carterette and Friedman 1978). Of course this leads us into notions of attention and perception and communication, rather prematurely. This thesis is like a cocktail party (it is like many things) at which the reader is a guest. Some faces and names are familiar, and much 'information' is presented in the guise of a lot of noise and chatter. The reader must, as in the party situation and in life and in art, filter the 'meaningful' from the 'meaningless'. The writer has already filtered a great deal of material (there is a *reason* why everything is included here, and this could be called the 'meaning'), but the filtering continues in the reading process.
... the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable,

and yet already read: they are quotations without inverted commas.

(Barthes 1977: 160; italics in original)
On Dictionary Definitions

The concept of the ‘dictionary definition’ of a word is problematic, and is used advisedly. Where ‘dictionary definitions’ are given these should not be seen as offering strictly "philosophical assistance" (O’Brien in Fann 1967: 404) or the definite meaning(s) of a word. They are pointers to the diversity of meaning of a word, not a full indicator of how the word should be used, or where. The etymologies of words are generally indicated by italicised source words followed by an English translation. Whether a root word is Latin, Greek or another language is not always specified. Again, these are used playfully and often as ‘poetic’ and polysemic devices to show the linkage (nexus of meaning) and development (change of use over time; fluxus of meaning) of words. All definitions and etymologies of words are derived from the dictionary that was to hand (Sinclair 2000).
On Reading

It will be clear to a reader of this thesis that it defies a standard structure of an introduction followed by a chapter-by-chapter argument leading to a conclusion. The decision to define the thesis as an unconventional, non-linear exploration rather than a fully expounded dialectic or deduction, was not made easily. It has required that a discussion of the form and structure be written into the thesis, as a meta-theoretical explication and justification of the approach. However, this material can be interpreted as relevant to the topic(s) of the thesis in less than merely tangential ways. Any study of dance (of anything) that attempts to bypass or ignore the mode (language, voice, style) in which it is written (or expressed), and which is assertoric in its delivery, fails to acknowledge the 'intrinsic' problems every mode 'contains'. And not only does it neglect to notice and make use of these problems, it generates more problems and fosters and furthers misunderstanding. That is not to say that this thesis (or rather, the writer) believes it contains nothing that is problematic. On the contrary, it is the problematising [sic] of the issues through the anarchic (mis)use of structure (and subject matter) that serves the purpose of highlighting the infelicitous and inferential processes of express-ion/ing and interpretat-ion/ing.
Digital Dialogism: dance at the edge of language.

This thesis is a map without a territory, even one to precede, but it has a key and signposts (or better, it is a series of signposts). And these pages are that 'key', indicating some of the conventions that will be followed through the course of this thesis.

THE FIRST UNBORN

The strand written in 'Garamond' font, size twelve and to start with in Dante's terza rima ('though this poetic form I was forced to shelve when the point had been made, and I changed schema to demonstrate a range of writing styles as though shifting from one to another bema);

moving into more 'modern' modes in which rules are less prescribed rhyme and metre are ditched ballast dropped over the side
even the font changes and the look changes as the reader is taken on a journey through ideas across the page over the page

These pieces of writing ('Lucida Handwriting' font, size 8 points, single spaced) contain related thoughts to the accompanying text, but do not follow any particular convention.

The text boxes containing the fictionalised account of a writing process (that of Ermy, a character from the poem, 'The First Unborn') are characterised by the use of 'Arial' font, size 9 points, single spaced, for the description of what Ermy is doing, except when Ermy thinks, 'My thoughts look like this condensed by 1 point'. Occasionally what he reads will be presented in a style that approximates what he sees. Also, this strand expands to fill a whole page at times to usurp and replace the other strands. When Ermy types his notes they are shown thus:

Indented and in 'Lucida Sans Typewriter' font, size 8 points, 1.25 spaced.

They are fragmented and more like a stream of 'cognition' than written in finished prose. They ask questions and lead to references that are not always followed up. (See Z §§)
However, it should be noted that these conventions and rules are not rigid and can be broken without warning. The main body of the text, the flesh of the writing (this part printed in ‘Times New Roman’ font, size 12 points, 1.5 spaced) is the most liable to be disrupted and discontinuous. Before it’s too late, it should be pointed out that the poem is to be voiced, read out loud (it was intended to be spoken and heard), unless there are instructions on how to read.

And so, various conventions come and go as we encounter mythological and fictional and ‘real’ characters who guide us through some of the main findings of the research.

However, I would just like to say, and this can be applied to the thesis as a whole: what is not written is more important than what is.

At times there may be two or more quotations, sometimes complementary, sometimes oppositional or contradictory. The role and use of quotations in academic writing is linked to the ideas that there is a validity in the written word, an authenticity of thought; an expression is appropriated and displayed for what it is: somebody else’s words, their ‘gesture of thought’. Like a movement that is copied by one dancer from that of another, or a dancer imitating (being taught) a movement by a choreographer, the quotation is at once an old (‘original’) expression and a new (‘unoriginal’) expression. Like the movement in a dance piece, the quotation means little or nothing without its new and earlier surroundings, its literary environment, its

The problems of presentation and thesis construction and conventions are touched on here. The writing becomes less note-like as Ermy gets into his stride, and begins to structure his thoughts as an oral presentation. Issues of identity and the notion of authorial voice (authenticity) are indicated and challenged here, as the blurring between my reality (experience) and Ermy’s reality is demonstrated and played out for the reader.

My head comes to rest in my hands as I re-read the last paragraph. ‘Does i say what i want to say in the right way? What is the right way? Does the concept and its execution work? Does the reader get a sense, the sense, that my intention is to upset and portray my own position in the writing process, the thinking process?’ I close my eyes for a few seconds and breathe out through my nose. I decide that it is time to move onto another strand.

Context: C16 from Latin *contextus* a putting together, from *contextere* to interweave, from *com-* together + *texere* to weave, braid.
On the Impossibility of Writing

A thousand times tries the writer to express themselves in the way they want
The times a writer tries to express what they want to say
All the attempts by a writer to say what they want
Uncountable, perhaps, the number of times a writer tries to express
How many times does a writer try to say what they want to say
What number expresses the difficulty a writer faces
How can we describe the ways, the struggles of a writer to express themselves?
When a writer finds a way of saying what they want to say
How does the writer know that what they write says what they want
A writer uses words to try
A writer employs
A writer writes words to say the things
Words can often fail the writer in their
The writer can often not find the words to say what they want to
The writer sits down to write and cannot find the words
The writer knows the words, but cannot put them into an order
The order of the words is not always easy to find
The writer orders the words in the best way they can
A range of expressions to say what they want
Does the writer know what they want to say?
The writer knows what to write, but cannot
The writer thinks they know what to write
The writer thinks
There are innumerable thoughts that
The writer struggles, wrestles
The writer wrestles with wretched writhing
A sentence is the result of the writer’s
The sentence is a result
Sentences form the outcome of the writer’s thinking
The writing of sentences, and the structuring of these sentences, by a writer
How the writer puts together the sentences they write
When sentences are structured into paragraphs and chapters
Paragraphs and chapters are the outcome of the writer’s
The finished chapters of a book
The writer’s book is finished when the chapters
The word is the smallest part of the writer’s
The letter is the smallest
To make sense, the letters need to be put in the right order
The meaning of a sentence depends on the letters of the words
The letters of the words
The letter of the law
The word of the law
The laws of grammar
The rules of grammar
Writing according to rules
The writer follows rules
The writer writes the rules
The rules write

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The reasons this thesis has taken the form that it has are rooted in the problems hinted at in the section entitled ‘On the Impossibility of Writing’. Every time an attempt was made to write the ideas, to express and explain the findings and results (if they can be called that) of any research, reading and exploration of the issues, the problem(s) of language, and writing, came to the fore. The notion that a thesis on dance could not be anything but metaphorical and mythological (analogical, allegorical, antithetical) began to push aside the themes of the thesis. But the themes were linked to the structure of the thesis in an almost symbiotic relationship. When thinking about the connection between ‘dance’ and ‘language’ (an extension of the links between dance and meaning), the multiplicity of both made it difficult to consider either as a distinct group of activities and forms. Any consideration of the human being in a technologically- and linguistically-based context, that is culture (or to make matters worse, range of cultures), opens up so many issues of difference, ontology and personhood (the social construction of the ‘self’, of ‘identity’, the meaning of ‘freewill’ and the ‘value’ of human life, to name but a few of the issues). Even for the categorisations of ‘human being’ and ‘culture’, terms that many English language speakers can use with confidence, the range of uses (meanings) is extensive and includes exoteric and specialist utilisations (for example, scientific, philosophical, poetic and historic).
“There is no beginning, there is no beginning...”

(From the
Writer
of
Digital Dialogism
to the
Reader
of
Digital Dialogism
to act
as a
Preface
but
not
to be read
as a
Preface)
La sottise, l'erreur, le péché, la lésine,
Occupent nos esprits et travaillent nos corps,
Et nous alimentons nos aimables remords,
Comme les mendians nourrissent leur vermine.

Charles Baudelaire 'Au Lecteur'
(1982: 183)

Folly, error, sin and parsimony,
Preoccupy our spirits and work on our bodies,
Feeding our consciences,
Like beggars nourishing their lice.

Charles Baudelaire 'To the Reader'
The enigmatic opening line of Samuel Beckett’s exposition for *Krapp’s Last Tape* (written in 1958) reads: “A late evening in the future” (Beckett 1986: 215; as are the following descriptive quotations). The action is centred in a timeless room, except to say that it is towards the end of the day, but paradoxically the play is about time. It evokes the future and the past, while being set in the present that isn’t the present at all, it is as Beckett tells the reader (but not the audience) “in the future.” What does Beckett mean by this? The main character, a “wearish old man” called Krapp is no help. Beckett’s description of him (from the coined word “wearish” – a play on weary? – to the clothes he wears) places him in a non-definable period that could refer to 1958, or 1978, or 2008. Neither is he specific about when the events of his life which he is re-playing took place. Krapp is a clown, not bound by the usual rules of time and space. He has a white face and purple nose, and disordered grey hair, ill-fitting garb and eats the most comical of foods – the banana – and almost slips on a recently discarded banana-skin. Krapp’s obvious link to excrement and nonsense, through his name, is echoed in his grimy and dirty appearance. Dressed in rusty black, with a “Heavy silver watch and chain”, Krapp represents time and decay, like Father Time, the begetter of time capable of cutting it short with his scythe yet holding on for dear life to his hourglass. Krapp’s being in his dotage is important. It immediately suggests decrepitude, failure of key faculties like sight (“Very near-sighted (but unspectacled)”), hearing (“Hard of hearing”), mobility (“Laborious walk”) and most prominently yet least explicit, memory. Perhaps Beckett is suggesting that memory is the central aspect of human beings, as Fishbach and Coyle imply: “Memory is the scaffolding upon which all mental life is constructed” (in Schacter 1995: ix), but as such it is hidden, invisible, and taken for granted. Alvarez supports this idea: “[In] *Krapp’s Last Tape*, memory and the contrast between a lost past and the sour present had become Beckett’s only themes” (1973: 97). We, human beings, are nothing without memory—no language would be possible, no interaction with others and we would face constantly new interaction with the world making adaptation and advances (social, technological, etc.) impossible.
Fast forward to Soderbergh’s film *Sex, Lies and Videotape* (1989), in which a young man, Graham (played by James Spader), suffering from male erectile disorder when in the presence of others, masturbates while watching own-made video recordings of sexually explicit interviews with women. It wasn’t always a problem for him, we are told, and is related to his being a pathological liar. Male erectile disorder, whatever its cause – physical, or as in this case, psychological – is mistakenly regarded as an old man’s problem and commonly referred to as ‘impotence’. Impotence, the mere word conjuring up images of frail, frustrated men of a certain advanced age, is also used to convey lack of power and strength, particularly in men. It implies failure, through a breakdown in usual and desirable function, and can be personally and socially debilitating for the man who experiences it and suffers it (let us just consider the male point of view in this example). It is a sign that the machinery of the body is malfunctioning; a psychosomatic disorder *in extremis*, in an extremity that is, if we believe Freud (see Freud 1995 and Lacan 1977), the crucial body part not only in shaping men’s sexual identity, but women’s sexuality too (through a lack of it). There are obvious difficulties with this phallocentric approach, and only a phallus fixated person would seriously entertain the idea that it was the crux of the matter. But, when normal function is disrupted, there is a focus on the cause or causes of what may then be felt as a problem. The problem may or may not be seen as an inability to reproduce, or as an inability to reach orgasm, or as an inability to satisfy any number of personal desires (egotistical and otherwise). The problem is heightened when there is an ability to recall previous successes. The past impacts on the present.

[...] I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.

(Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, ll.16-22)

Rewind way back to the Seventeenth Century, to find John Milton, growing old and blind (see Trevor-Roper 1997), weaving his experiences into his poetry, for example:
When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide

(Milton’s sonnet number XX)

But cloud instead and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, [...] 
So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate;

(Milton, Paradise Lost, iii, ll.45-6 & 51-3)

O loss of sight, of thee I most complain! [...] 
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,

(Milton, Samson Agonistes, ll.67 & 80)

Milton’s Samson like the Biblical Samson, is made impotent by a treacherous woman. His strength and prowess were contained in his seven locks of hair, uncut since birth. His wife, Delilah (one of his enemies, the Philistines), tricks Samson and shears his locks. He is then blinded by the Philistines, and bound. Samson, however, wreaks his revenge on his captors by pushing down the pillars supporting the banqueting house, killing a fair few of his enemy as well as himself. Milton’s retelling is somewhat personal: the poet was old (into his sixties, very old for the seventeenth century, but not quite as old as Krapp, who is sixty-nine) and had been blind for many years from progressive myopia.

Throughout Beckett’s play, there are references to the night and darkness, and loss of sight. As an example, Krapp sings, off-stage, the following song (the same song is repeated later in the play):

Now the day is over,  
Night is drawing nigh-igh,  
Shadows—[coughs]

(Beckett 1986: 219)

Milton, being bereft of vision, could not write, and would dictate passages of his poems to his daughter, after sleepless nights filled with flashes of inspiration:
Taught by the Heavenly Muse to venture down
The dark descent [...] 
Yet not the more/Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt 
(Milton, Paradise Lost, iii, ll.19 & 26-7)

The central device of Krapp's Last Tape is that of the elderly Krapp listening to
diary recordings on an old tape player (instead of a daughter, a technological
extension). In the recordings he is dictating his musings to someone—himself in the
future.

The organism compared with a
dictaphone spool; the impression, the
trace, is the alteration in the spool that
the voice leaves behind. Can one say
that the dictaphone (or the spool) is
remembering what was spoken all over
again, when it reproduces what it took?
(Wittgenstein RPP I §220)

In near silence, running his fingers through his still damp hair, Ermy stares at
the VDU in front of him. White ASCII against the black, partially reflective
reboot screen, an underscore flashing in the top left-hand corner.

'I'm looking tired,' Ermy thinks as he pulls at the skin on his face while inspecting
the spectral picture of himself in the coated, anti-glare glass of the monitor.

'Come on,' he murmurs with elongated vowels, the impatience beginning to
make his head hurt, tight and anxious.

A large black fly, the size of a B-52 and twice as loud, circles above Ermy's
head. His arm extends out behind him to the can of insecticide. Two well aimed
bursts of ack-ack fire explode around the fly, which then dives erratically towards the window, rebounds off the glass and makes a passage
for the open doorway. Ermy thinks, 'those flies, disease spreading machines; no conscience
troubles my action,' as he places the aerosol back on the shelf and turns
to the PC.

A familiar sample of sound announces the successful restart, and a picture
appears in blocks across and down, filling the screen. Once again his own
face is visible on the monitor, more pixelated than his previous reflection.
Ermy smiles, even though he has seen this picture almost everyday for the
last year or so. A mostly white image of himself, a digital image never existing
in printed form. Ermy feels this is somehow apt.

Lifting his hands from the wrist rest, Ermy rubs his eyes and draws the heels of
his thumbs down his pale face, unshaven in two or three days. A strained
yawn and on with work:

Today's Issue: The Virtual Body as Myth
"And what has this got to do with this thesis?"

The answers are complex, but not complicated. The thesis is infused with intertextual references, parodies of style, appropriations and deconstructions of ideas; it is a multilayering of many texts to make a whole, a 'patchwork quilt' (do we see such a quilt as one thing? or a collection of many things?); it sometimes starts with one subject and moves into another without apparent (explicit, obvious) connection; it is 'intended' to 'represent' (two loaded words) the humanised, modern world and 'thought processes' as we move through this world; it uses technology as a door (one of many) to enter into discussions about dance, language and philosophy (even more loaded words).

To discover more about why it is relevant we must do some archaeology.

What is a body? What is a Virtual Body? Can one exist without the other? What does this (exist) mean? Is not the definition of a body: something physical?

Is the body what gives the person substance? Or does the person give the body substance? What do I mean by 'substance'?

What is the relationship between body and person? What is the relationship between someone else and my body? What happens when my body is transformed into something else? Like what?

Say I had a false leg. Am I a different person? Well, I am in a way. But different to what?—To who I was before. But I am always different to who I was before because my experience changes who I am.
Not the beginning exactly (that is a while further away, if it is definable at all), but to September 1999, when I, Deveril, under my old name, Deveril Garraghan, presented a ‘work in progress’ in the Dance Studio of the Performing Arts Technology Studios building of the University of Surrey:

FMS
Or, ‘Clinging to the Past’

A video monitor is wheeled in by a man with his arm in a sling. He has some problems carrying out his task, but he eventually manages and a video is played.

Close-up video of mouth, with overlaid text: “Please do not adjust your set”, flashing intermittently with “Please adjust your mindset”.

The words are out of sync. with the mouth’s movements.

The voice is saying:
What you are about to see is an experiment and should be viewed as such. There are lessons to be learnt by us all. This is a learning experience. But don't take that as an excuse, although it is one. When this is all over you may not be able to remember all of what you have seen here tonight, for that is the way it works. Take what you can, and make it your own. That is also the way. A fragment of my dreams will live forever in you. It's a cheeky bugger isn't it. And now, take the weight off your soles. [Pause] Are you sitting comfortably? We are about to take a trip down memory's lanes.

The video monitor is wheeled out. The audience settle. The lights fade down to blackout and the voiceover starts.

So who am I?

I can’t answer that.

"What gives me the right to speak of an ‘I’, and even of an ‘I’ as cause, and finally of an ‘I’ as cause of thought?" (Nietzsche 1990: 46; BGE §16)

I'm missing the point of the issue: what makes the Virtual Body a Myth?

As I understand it (from my dictionary), a myth is a person, or thing, that is fictional or unproven. Or, a theme or character type embodying an idea.

The virtual is artificial. Virtual Reality (VR) equals Artificial Reality. How can this be? Is it the same as 'unreality'?
The short demonstration performance had evolved from a series of notions concerning the nature of memory and its relationship with objects. These ideas were soon attached to theories of recovered memory and memory distortion. The opening voiceover of *FMS* consisted of extracts from the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Dissociative Disorders:

- Have you ever been unable to remember your name, age, address, or other important personal information?
- Have you ever felt as if there were large gaps in your memory? Have there ever been hours or days that seemed to be missing, or that you couldn't account for? Has there ever been a time in which you had difficulty remembering your daily activities?
- Have you ever found yourself in a place and been unable to remember how or why you went there? Have you ever traveled away from home unexpectedly and been unable to remember your past?
- Have you ever felt as if there was a struggle going on inside of you? Have you ever felt confused as to who you are?
- Have you ever felt as if, or found yourself acting as if, you were a child? Have you ever acted as if you were a completely different person?
- Have you ever found things in your possession that seemed to belong to you, but you could not remember how you got them?
- Have you ever felt as if you were living in the past, or reliving the past as though it were occurring in the present?

...reliving the past as though it were occurring in the present?

...reliving the past...reliving the past...reliving the past... [Fade out]
With the text, the suspended light bulb flickers on. From the rear of the stage, the
'Teacher' appears. He is dressed in a raincoat and carrying an umbrella, all his
garments are in shades of brown. He walks forwards very slowly. He also carries a
basket, filled with the objects he will need for the next series of actions. His head is
wrapped in cling-film. He moves to the desk, shakes the umbrella and sits.

On the desk is a computer, a microphone, a video camera and an audio cassette
player. Also on the desk are apples in various states of decay, wrapped in cling-film. He
has a hole in the cling-film over his mouth. The 'Teacher' whispers into the microphone,
with a broken, distorted voice:

There is no beginning.
There is no beginning.

A lost voice flows through the room. An echo of fear.

A forgotten face appears at the window, and blinks one eye open. The other is
missing. A look of fear.

He picks at the cling-film over his right eye, making another hole for him to look
through. He continues:

A smell from the past wisps by the door. So that is what fear smells like.

There is no beginning.
There is no [Pause] beginning.

Frag [Pause] ment.

A fault in the continuum. A feather-like crack.

The text continues, but the content is not important here. (For those interested, the
action is centred around a correspondence course with source materials and tutorials
on various media: videotape, audio tape, in books and on computer disks. The
theme, simply put, is the failure and invention of memories in relation to romantic
relationships, the artistic muse, the role of technology in memory extension, the
instability of the 'self' and the decay of the 'body'. In FMS each memory, each story,
is recorded as a stream of sounds on an audio cassette; or in the form of a series of
images on a video cassette; or as digital information on a computer disk; or as words
in books and letters; or as pictures in photographs kept in an album; or simply as an
object such as a flower or basket.)
The title of the piece: *FMS*, is the abbreviation for False Memory Syndrome. The definitions and explanations vary for this controversial condition. The arguments for and against the validity of it as a 'real' psychological disorder are not to be discussed here (see, for example, Loftus and Ketcham 1994, Ofshe and Watters 1995, Schacter 1995 and 1996, Scott 1996 and Pendergrast 1998), but a section from False Memory Syndrome Foundation's website should suffice as a description:

When the memory is distorted, or confabulated, the result can be what has been called the False Memory Syndrome: a condition in which a person's identity and interpersonal relationships are centered around a memory of traumatic experience which is objectively false but in which the person strongly believes. Note that the syndrome is not characterized by false memories as such. We all have memories that are inaccurate. Rather, the syndrome may be diagnosed when the memory is so deeply ingrained that it orients the individual’s entire personality and lifestyle, in turn disrupting all sorts of other adaptive behaviors. The analogy to personality disorder is intentional. False memory syndrome is especially destructive because the person assiduously avoids confrontation with any evidence that might challenge the memory. Thus it takes on a life of its own, encapsulated, and resistant to correction. The person may become so focused on the memory that he or she may be effectively distracted from coping with the real problems in his or her life.

John F. Kihlstrom, Ph.D.

Increasingly throughout the country [USA], grown children undergoing therapeutic programs have come to believe that they suffer from “repressed memories” of incest and sexual abuse. While some reports of incest and sexual abuse are surely true, these decade-delayed memories are too often the result of False Memory Syndrome caused by a disastrous “therapeutic” program. False Memory Syndrome has a devastating effect on the victim and typically produces a continuing dependency on the very program that creates the syndrome. False Memory Syndrome proceeds to destroy the psychological well-being not only of the primary victim but through false accusations of incest and sexual abuse other members of the primary victim’s family.

The above was taken from the website: http://advicom.net/-fitz/fms/aboutFMS.html. Upon attempting to revisit this site two years later, it was found to no longer exist at this address.

However, after another search, the same information was found on a different website: http://www.fmsonline.com/brochure.html. The relevance of this phenomenon - the disappearing website - is alluded to elsewhere.
Notes were written in the run up to making the piece:

This piece is not about child abuse, however. The traumatic events repressed by the protagonist in this piece relate to his personal and intimate relationships with women in his life. He, or someone, kept video diaries documenting these relationships, but through time they have become distorted and replayed such that they offer only abstract glimpses of the past; perhaps as seen and remembered by him. He is so obsessed by the past that he relives these false memories repetitively, unable to separate fact from fiction, past from present, and his own experience from that of others.

A possible interpretation might be that we now use cameras and other machines to capture and hold our memories. Videos, films, photographs act as triggers to let loose recollections of the past, while other memory banks contain the lives of thousands – books, audio recordings, computers, etc. When we see or interact with these, we assimilate their information into our own lives, make our own memories of them. I can trick myself into believing that I was there when I look at someone else’s home movie. Or pretend that it was I who took that photograph in a stranger’s album. Those can be my thoughts in your diary. My life story totally fabricated from fragments of other people’s lives or the words of fiction. Who is to know that I was never really there at all, if I tell them that I was? If I tell myself enough, truly I will grow to believe it myself.

This led into thinking of how the reliance on technology to act as a repository for memories is perhaps misguided. Just as human memory is unreliable, corruptible and shaky in its foundations, so it is with technology. We all know how an audio cassette can become tangled or stretched by the rollers; or how rock carvings and inscriptions can become eroded; or how a precious video can be accidentally erased; or how a computer disk can develop a surface error; or how vinyl records become scratched, warped and inaudible over time; or how books and photographs become faded and can get burnt; or how websites are updated or removed making the information they once contained proffered transitory or inaccessible.

Here the words I wanted Barthes to have written in Camera Lucida (1984) about photography. But he didn’t say what I wanted him to:

Walter Benjamin killed himself shortly after the Gestapo had confiscated his apartment, which contained his library [...] and many of his manuscripts [...] How was he to live without a library, how could he earn a living without the extensive collection of quotations and excerpts among his manuscripts?

(Arendt 1973: 168)
Any extension, whether of skin, hand, or foot, affects the whole psychic and social complex.

(McLuhan 1964: 4)

Marshall McLuhan’s book *Understanding Media* (1964) is subtitled *The Extensions of Man*. McLuhan talks of extending the central nervous system globally and he argues that all media are extensions of human beings and our senses, and that there is no distinction between a physical extension and one that contains information. ‘Information’ can come in many forms, for example, words, images, numbers, statistics and even physical movements. Technological media is an extension of our memory and as a result, of us as a totality. If there is no separation, as such, between our memory and our body, any extension of either is an extension of *us*, of *me*. My bookshelves are my memory store, and contain things that I know, things that I have known and forgotten, things I will know if I get round to reading the books, and things I will probably never know. We are tempted to say, “When I read, somebody else’s *thoughts* are transferred into me.” Whose thoughts are they then? The writer’s or mine?

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The man at the computer turns his head to look around the room in which he sits. ‘Really. This is it. But—’ His thoughts stop, and he is still.

The books on his shelves stand at various angles—some upright; some leaning onto others as though they were a photograph of dominoes mid-topple; some lying on their sides in vertical piles. ‘Michael Hein... where is it?’

His sight alights on the book he wants and he sees his hand move out towards the tome’s spine. The weighty article is levered off the shelf, leaving a gap into which the smallest of its neighbours falls. *The Pearly Gates of Cyberspace* forms an archway with *The Cyborg Handbook*, but Ermy doesn’t notice this.

He is already reading.
The Erotic Ontology of Cyberspace

Michael Heim

Introduction

Cyberspace is more than a breakthrough in electronic media or in computer interface design. With its virtual environments and simulated worlds, cyberspace is a metaphysical laboratory, a tool for examining our very sense of reality.

Ermy re-reads the opening paragraph. He mutters with a quizzical tone, 'Sense of reality...’ He skim-reads down the page. When designing virtual worlds, we face a series of reality questions. How, for instance, should users appear to themselves in a virtual world? Should users appear to themselves in cyberspace as one set of objects among others, as third-person bodies that users can inspect with detachment? Or should users feel themselves to be headless fields of awareness, similar to our phenomenological experience? Should causality underpin the cyber world so that an injury inflicted on the user's cyberbody likewise somehow damages the user's physical body? And who should make the ongoing design decisions? If the people who make simulations inevitably incorporate their own perceptions and beliefs, loading cyberspace with their prejudices as well as their insights, who should build the cyberworld? Should multiple users at any point be free to shape the qualities and dimensions of cyber entities? Should artistic users roam freely, programming and directing their own unique cyber cinemas that provide escape from the mundane world? Or does fantasy cease where the economics of the virtual workplace begins? But why be satisfied with a single virtual world? Why not several? Must we pledge allegiance to a single reality? Perhaps worlds should be layered like onion skins, realities within realities, or loosely linked like neighborhoods, permitting free aesthetic pleasure to coexist with the task-oriented business world. Does the meaning of ‘reality’—and the keen

With thumb and forefinger he turns the page.
The Erotic Ontology of Cyberspace

existential edge of experience—weak as it stretches over many virtual worlds?

He lingers on the word 'weaken'. He considers typing something, but the sentence won't form for him. He continues reading and taking passages from the text.

"The way we understand the ontological structure of cyberspace will determine how realities can exist within it." (Heim 1991: 60)

"By connecting with intellectual precedents and prototypes [Plato and Leibniz], we can enrich our self-understanding and make cyberspace function as a more useful metaphysical laboratory." (Heim 1991: 60)

"Ontology": the quasi-scientific, metaphysical study and systemisation of being and existence, with a hierarchical structure based on categorial schemes containing either universals and particulars, or abstract and concrete entities (although the distinctions have been blurred in some ontologies). (See Honderich 1995)

"Erotic": C 17th from the Greek erōtikos 'of love', from erōs 'love'. Now the word is used to mean something more sensual, physical, bestial.


Heim claims that the allure of the computer is erotic, and goes on to poeticise about how the "world rendered as pure information not only fascinates our eyes and minds, but also captures our hearts" (Heim 1991: 61).

Ermy snorts and shakes his head. And reads the sentence in a whisper: 'The world rendered as pure information not only fascinates our eyes and minds, but also captures our hearts.' He crosses his arms and picks at a dry patch of skin near his left elbow. He tries to make sense of the words.

He is overwhelmed by the concepts he is contending with. He decides to go to another book, one with pictures (he smiles) for some clarity, and he hopes, inspiration. After a short flick he finds the pages he is looking for. He makes a note of a key quotation.

It says here, concerning virtual reality: "The dream of another body will increase the perception of the self as an object, since internal experience will inevitably be of the real body" (Buick and Jevtic 1995: 119).

This seems to be an easy sentence to understand, yet it is problematic when taken apart and examined in terms of the category-mistakes it seems to contain.

[Must make reference to Ryle's definition of 'Category-mistakes' and his illustrative examples (1949: 16ff).]
Although the human memory is still not fully understood, it could be described as part of the complex of characteristics that makes us human (but not totally unique or distinct from other animals which also display the ability to remember; and even certain metals, for example nickel, are described as having 'memory'). Despite not knowing how we do it, we say that we 'remember things' (unless we have a neurophysiological problem). Section 306 of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) reads:

"Why should I deny that there is a mental process [called 'remembering']? But 'There has just taken place in me the mental process of remembering....' means nothing more than: 'I have just remembered ....'. To deny the mental process would mean to deny the remembering; to deny that anyone ever remembers anything.

That is also to say that we cannot talk about 'the memory' (a 'mechanism' for remembering—not a notion to hold onto) without referring, in some way, to the act of remembering 'a memory' (the thing that is remembered—not an 'object', as will be discussed). It is worthwhile considering the use of the word 'memory' as it refers to the so-called 'part' of human beings (and other animals we can suppose) that stores memories, and this second use of the word 'memory', as—and here words could be said to fail to describe—the *image*, the past experience remembered.

Ermy moves from book to keyboard; turning pages and tapping at the plastic keys when a thought forms. Sometimes he pauses, a knee vibrating, perhaps in time with some distant, unheard beat.

Shoulder tension pulls his attention from reading and typing. Ermy throws back his head, mouth open, and rocks his occiput against his gristly trapezius.

He sighs his relief, and resume his writing.
It is so difficult to find the \textit{beginning}. Or, better: it is difficult to begin at the beginning. And not to try to go further back.

(Wittgenstein \textit{OC} §471)

We are told that everything has a beginning and an end. There is no beginning. However, when we look back at our lives we cannot be sure of the beginning, the start. There is no beginning. There is not one definite event or thought that we can say with certainty forms our earliest memory. There is no beginning. Over the time of our lives, and even from one day to the next, these memories shift, get jumbled about, and their order is forgotten and reinvented. And even (especially) our early memories are prone to this process. (See, for example, Ceci 1995, Levine 2000 and Wheeler 2000.) Any memory can find itself dislodged and combined or related to another memory, separated from the first in time and space. Take a computer as an analogy. A computer disk drive doesn’t store data in distinct blocks, but scattered across its surface. We can improve its performance by defragmenting the disk, rearranging the files into adjacent blocks. But this is not a permanent arrangement, and with time and with more data to store, the disk fragments this information again and again. The passage on the \textit{FMS} programme for the audience read:

memories are not stored in any single location in the brain [...] nor are they distributed throughout the entire brain [...] Different parts of the brain hold on to different aspects of an experience, which are in turn linked together by a special memory system hidden deep within the inner recesses of our brains [...] How accurate are the tales we tell about our lives? 

(Schacter 1996: 9)
We have designed computers to extend our brains, and computers (and other forms of technology) give us analogies for looking at the workings of the brain. But it's a bit of a chicken and egg situation. Are our brains organic computers or do they just appear to be like the mechanised versions we have constructed? Or are computers like our brains because that's how we see our brains? Daniel Dennett has written:

The level of description and explanation we need [to describe the brain] is analogous to (but not identical with) one of the "software levels" of description of computers: what we need to understand is how human consciousness can be realized in the operation of a virtual machine created by memes in the brain.

(1993: 210; italics in original)

**Virtual machine** is another term for the computer's memory (the 'plastic' part) that can store programs and data: "the merely transient patterns that are made to track whatever it is that is to be represented [...] 'made of rules rather than wires' [...] in other words] what you get when you impose a particular pattern of rules on all that plasticity" (Dennett 1993: 211; italics added). Although Dennett is talking about the 'conscious' brain, he helps to find a place in the argument for the idea of the unconscious, or how memory might function as a separate system.

Dennett adds that "A meme's existence depends on a physical embodiment in some medium" (1993: 204), whether it is a brain or a book or a computer or whatever is dependent on the content of the meme. The metaphor of the meme is interesting as a tool for describing how ideas get around and are stored. But if it can be seen as 'scientific', as Susan Blackmore suggests it can (see Blackmore 1999), is another matter.

[A meme is] a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation [...] Examples of memes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or building arches. Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via a sperm or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the memes pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation.

(Dawkins 1976: 206)
A contentious statement: The act of performance is one of expression and transmission of ideas, of memes. *FMS* was an attempt to explore the transference of memory, not only between the contents of the performance texts and the character on stage, but also between performer and audience. This was a circularly-evolved exploration, with theatrical devices both initiating and being born out of the themes being examined. For example, there was a question of how to present a series of video-dances (the main impetus of the piece in terms of beginning the process of creation) without an apparent reason. The Beckett play suggested the device of presenting the dances as memories and the Soderbergh film added some extra resonances to the basic starting points. As sources they are not emphasised in the performance, and anyone watching it would probably not have immediately considered them (even a knowledge of Beckett might not have helped). The format and structure were inspired by Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape*, which begins with Krapp looking through a ledger which contains contents and descriptions of his reels of tape, his memory banks.

"The dream of another body..." Does a body dream? If it does, is it the whole body, or just a part (the brain, for example)? Or is the word 'body' simply being used as a synecdoche for a person? No-one says: My body was dreaming; or, my brain was dreaming. Do they mean 'dream' in the sense of 'what we (human beings) experience when asleep'? Or are they using it in a different sense? For example, to mean the 'aspiration of someone'. (Is a dream like a breath? Patently not, but could be described poetically as such.) To talk of dreaming in an awake state is certainly an error, but still useful. [See *RPP I* §234.]
The public improvisation of *FMS* prompted thinking on how the performance process itself was linked to the theme of technological extension of memory. The text to be spoken was read off a computer screen, in part due to a lack of time to learn and remember it before the performance. This suggested that there was a reliance on the computer to 'remember' the words. Also in the performance the text for one of the videos was 'spoken' by the computer. However, the old Mac SE/30 was not properly able to reproduce the voice, giving its delivery a broken, staccato property and a fragile quality. Just as the human voice was distorted (by an effects pedal), so too was the voice of the computer. Computer technology is usually considered to be special and an advancement of human capabilities, but it is as capable of failure as humans are. There exists a one-sided relationship with technology. Humans depend on it for so many things, yet it is not dependant on us. It makes no difference to the computer whether it is turned on or left off, at least not in the same way as it makes a difference to us whether it is on or off. If a computer is damaged it does make a difference to its ability to function properly, but it is not aware of this damage as we are aware of its damage. We might even consider this damage as we consider personal damage. If valued computer files get a virus or get trashed or inoperable, we may feel a sense of loss and regret. Not exactly the same, certainly not as intense, as a profound personal loss, but not too dissimilar.

"increase the perception of the self as an object..." How does one 'perceive the self'? When is the self capable of being perceived of 'as an object'? The word 'self' is the main problem here. It has taken on a Cartesian sense, it seems, but not quite. The Cartesian self is imperceptible, incorporeal, but a substance of sorts; only through thinking is it 'experienced'.

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A newspaper article on Alzheimer’s disease (‘What happens to me?’ The Guardian, 7 July 1999), outlines the problems presented by the disease. The interview with John Carey, a 51 year old ex-casting director for films, diagnosed as having Alzheimer’s and Multi-Infarct Dementia, highlights the effects of the disease on the ‘self’ (see below), especially on someone still considered relatively young. The last paragraph reads:

*Lose your memory and the self goes down with it. We’ve tended to see those selves with Alzheimer’s as old women and men. What would they have been doing if they didn’t have the disease? Watching daytime television, reliving the long-lost past? But this isn’t about your mum or your gran getting Alzheimer’s. John is saying what it’s like when it’s you who is going into the dark.*

(Grant 1999: 2; italics added)

‘Losing your memory’ is equated with losing the light around you. Just as Milton (like Homer before him) and Samson lose their sight, Krapp loses his sight, his memory and his virility, so too the ‘Teacher’ in FMS is prevented from seeing properly and remembering unaided because of the loss of things that meant a lot to him, but which he still has reminders of in the form of various objects. Rod Michalko in his phenomenological and socio-historical study of losing one’s sight and blindness writes:

> The loss of a valued object is often described in terms that depict both the value of the object lost and the worthless nature of what results from this loss [...] A sound mind, a fortune, and sight are not spoken of in terms of loss since they are themselves valued. We do not say of persons who have had their sight restored that they have *lost their blindness.*

(1998: 26; italics in original)

This thesis is about losing one’s blindness, about learning to see, about seeing things in new ways. It is about the ways of seeing that are in themselves blind. It is about clearing away the obstructions to vision. It is about sight and about blindness and not about sight and not about blindness. It is about the eye, and the ‘I’. It is about losing the ‘I’. It is about loss and lack and it is about finding and having. The ‘I’ is Implicit in the theses, in the writing: “that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing” (Barthes 1977: 142).

“*The subject as multiplicity*” (Nietzsche *WP* §490).
There is no such thing as the subject that thinks or entertains ideas.
If I wrote a book called *The World as I found it*, I should have to include a
report on my body, and should have to say which parts were subordinate to my
will, and which were not, etc., this being a method of isolating the subject, or
rather showing that in an important sense there is no subject; for it alone could
not be mentioned in that book.—

(Wittgenstein *TLP §5.631*)

The eye is not part of the visual field, according to Wittgenstein (*TLP 5.6331*); the
'*I*, the philosophical self, "the metaphysical subject, [is] the limit of the world—not
a part of it" (Wittgenstein *TLP 5.641*). Of course anything 'metaphysical' doesn't
exist: to quote and paraphrase A.J. Ayer, if we "regard the self as a
substance" (1990: 134), when we try to observe it, we are unable to—it is
insubstantial. It is not verifiable through introspection, or through what we call 'self-
consciousness', neither is it satisfactorily explained by the Humean 'stumbling on
perceptions' which when bundled together constitute a notional *self*, nor is it the
(metaphysical rather than metaphorical) soul. Personal identity can be defined of "in
terms of bodily identity, and bodily identity is to be defined in terms of the
resemblance and continuity of sense-contents" (Ayer 1990: 136). From here the
philosophical argument (well Ayer's argument) slips, via the reduction of the self as
talk about sense-experiences, into the subject of solipsism. However, the question of
'personal identity' is answerable in many more ways than Ayer's definition.

*I am not a poet but a poem*, as
Jacques Lacan wrote somewhere...
Serré, fourmillant, comme un million d’helminthes,
Dans nos cerveaux ribote un peuple de Démons,
Et, quand nous respirons, la Mort dans nos poumons,
Descend, fleuve invisible, avec de sourdes plaintes.

Charles Baudelaire 'Au Lecteur'
(1982: 183)

Serried, seething, like a million ants,
In our brains riots a Demon horde,
And, when we breathe, Death in our lungs,
Descends, a sightless river, with deaf moans.

Charles Baudelaire 'To the Reader'
If I do not know how to begin a book that is because something is still unclear. For I should like to begin with the original data of philosophy, written & spoken sentences, with books as it were [there is no full stop] And here we encounter the difficulty of “Everything is in flux”. And perhaps this is the very point at which to begin.

(Wittgenstein CV 11e: MS 110 10)

This quotation from one of Wittgenstein’s diary manuscripts dated 12.12.1930, indicates the problem of starting a written philosophical endeavour—like a million ants, or a deadly swarm of hornets, ideas will not stay still:

I jump about all round the topic; that is the only way of thinking that is natural to me. Forcing my thoughts into an ordered sequence is a torment for me.

(Wittgenstein CV 33e: MS 118 94v)

Combined with this is the added difficulty of lack of clarity: how can one begin to write when the thoughts aren’t clear? So, perhaps the reason to write is because the thoughts aren’t clear, in the hope that in the doing, clear sense will come. In starting with the “original data of philosophy” lies the root of the problem: reading is a tricky business. It places demands on the reader, it can frustrate as much as it can illuminate, it keeps the reader in a state of mental agitation. Often, when reading certain texts, it is impossible to read without wanting to write—‘thinking’ off one page, to ‘think’ on another. “Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity” (Wittgenstein TLP §4.112). Paul Feyerabend writes of “the relation between idea and action” (1993: 17) and suggests that the generally accepted order of events is “that a clear and distinct understanding of new ideas precedes, and should precede, their formulation and their institutional expression” (Feyerabend 1993: 17). He continues:

First, we have an idea, or a problem, then we act, i.e. either speak, or build, or destroy. Yet this is certainly not the way in which small children develop. They use words, they combine them, they play with them, until they grasp a meaning that has so far been beyond their reach. And the initial playful activity is an essential prerequisite of the final act of understanding. There is no reason why this mechanism should cease to function in the adult [...] Creation of a thing, and creation plus full understanding of a correct idea of the thing, are very often parts of one and the same indivisible process and cannot be separated without bringing the process to a stop.

(Feyerabend 1993: 17; italics in original)
So, as there is often no beginning to identify with any, what was once called, *surety* and would now be called certainty or precision (thoughts aren't *precise*, in one sense, but then how more precise can they get when they are expressed?), there is a difficulty in finding an end. Of course there has to be an *end* to a philosophical or creative process in one sense – a book may eventually be published, even it is after the writer's death, or a painting will get left in an 'unfinished' state, only to be displayed in a gallery, etc. – ideas are crystallised into a form, be it words, sounds, 'representational' or abstract markings, or movements.

One aspect of postmodern life is the radical proliferation of information. There is always more and more to read; there is no end of things to read. Academic study in the postmodern age partakes of the postmodern sublime: there is always too much for anyone to get his or her mind around. There is no escape from perplexity.

(Fortier 1997: 147)

"Thinking" in primitive conditions (pre-organic) is the crystallization of forms, as in the case of crystal. — In *our* thought, the essential feature is fitting new material into old schemas (= Procrustes' bed), *making* equal what is new.

(Nietzsche *WP* §499; italics in original)

Nietzsche (1968b: 273):

*WP* §500 (1885–1886)

Sense perceptions projected "outside": "inside" and "outside"—does the body command here?—

"real body." Supposedly contrasted with the virtual body. But there can surely be only one type of body experienced and to call it 'real' or otherwise is unnecessary. The virtual body: what can this be called? Is it a 'representation', in an artistic sense, of a human body? It is not a purely visual representation in the idealised version of VR: the body can be 'experienced' by all the senses, through touch as can a 'real body'. The ultimate goal: total and immersive verisimilitude. The willing suspension of disbelief is unnecessary because the experience does not require that the participant pretend that the world they are in is anything but real: The imagination is dead: only the technology is new. The visions are bereft [...] but the point is that the technology will, supposedly, let us experience them as *if* they were real.

(Robins 1995: 139; italics in original)
"The work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders for a particular purpose" (Wittgenstein PI §127). What does Wittgenstein mean by this? It may be a note about collecting examples, or it seems to me, that it is more about constructing examples which serve to illustrate an issue (consider that Wittgenstein was an experienced engineer and architect; this will recur as a motif, as it does in Wittgenstein’s writings). This assemblage of examples is the work of philosophy that results from the activities of the philosopher is like a machine built for a certain job. So the philosopher is an inventor, a creator, an artisan. Is the philosopher an artist too? (The last two words in italics have been synonyms to each other in the past, but they have drifted apart in recent times.) I think that the answer has to be: yes and no.

To restate, it could be said that there is never a fully completed philosophy. How can anyone determine the end of a thought process? A work of art (be it a painting, a poem, a play, or whatever) even when hung on a wall, reproduced in a book, performed on a stage or put aside by the artist, is not at the end of its making. There is never a finished work of art. Until the work is ‘dead’, and this is a loosely used term because it is not ‘alive’ in the first place, there is a chance for its being interpreted. With each new person who comes into contact (through any of the senses) with the work – and even those persons who re-contact the work – comes a new life to the work of art—this life is the interpretation. A work of art is truly finished when it is ‘dead’, destroyed and not remembered by any living human being. The ideas sketched in this thesis are a work-in-progress report; incomplete and needing to be filled in. Yet they are the final product, the end of the process, but written into the thesis is the process (the thinking, the questioning, the understanding, the act of writing).

But what about the ideas that the human being could exist in "a kind of meta-atmosphere composed of a pure digitalized [sic] electronic information"? (Tomas 1995: 38) The human body as an archaeological artefact, an extinct yet reconstituted dinosaur, or a plaything for the transmigrated, who possess it as a familiar spirit. (See, for example and explanation, Moravec 1988.)

Ermy ponders this remote possibility, and shakes his head. 'I'm not interested in that. I don't think. What would be the point? We wouldn't then be human beings.'
Wittgenstein once said that, "A philosopher who is not taking part in discussions is like a boxer who never goes into the ring" (Rhees 1984: 133). What about discussions with yourself? Do they count? Writing philosophy can be a lonely activity, so perhaps it is no wonder that philosophers invent interlocutors with which to spar (the list of examples is too daunting to attempt to summarise it). Once again, Wittgenstein, in 1948, wrote in his diary:

Almost the whole time I am writing conversations with myself. Things I say to myself tête-à-tête.

(CV 88e: MS 137 134b)

This is all well and good if you are Wittgenstein, but lesser philosophers (i.e. this one) do not have such eminent sparring partners. However, I consider the creative aspect of this philosophical work – and it is with some reluctance and trepidation that I call it such – to be the construction of imaginary characters and situations through which to investigate the themes. The title of this thesis, Digital Dialogism: dance at the edge of language, reflects the back-and-forth of ideas between conversers. (The title as a whole and in parts, while being sufficiently vague and multifaceted, stands in little need of explanation: “Anything the reader can do for himself, leave it to the reader” (Wittgenstein CV 88e: MS 137 134b).)

Somewhere, St Augustine wrote that the representations of art are libri idiotarum: the books of the simple. [See Clement 1994: 1] Also, he wrote in his Confessions:

We see the things which you have made, because they exist. But they only exist because you see them. Outside ourselves we see that they exist, and in our inner selves we see that they are good.

(Augustine 1961: 346)

Obviously he is writing as though to God (other translations use ‘Thou’ instead of ‘you’), but there is a problem here because he uses the things he sees as a proof of God’s existence, while saying that only because God exists do the things he sees exist. Augustine’s belief in eternal, spiritual truths is what underlies his argument. His inner/outer distinction is based on his views of the sluggish corporeal sense organs and the immaterial (and superior) soul. There is a suggestion of a hidden inner world where the soul resides before being set free at death to rejoin God. Augustine follows Plato’s transcendence of embodiment, and also his elevation of sight as the prime sense, through the insistence that goodness is seen through the power of the soul, divine inspiration, or what we might call ‘intuition’ [C 15th Late Latin intuitio a contemplation, from Latin intueri to gaze upon, from tueri to look at].
Words plucked from the air can often develop a highly resonant complex of meanings. 'Dialogism' is one such word. Based on ideas presented in the 1929 book by Valentin Nikolaevich Vološinov (1986), it refers to the structuring of an utterance or a series of utterances, even those which could be said to be monologues or soliloquies (to use theatrical parlance), where an utterance is an "active, performed" (Holquist 1990: 60) linguistic construction, be it spoken or written. In the book, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his world*, Michael Holquist (1990) describes the philosophical traditions of Bakhtin and his circle and the nature of dialogism as a way of connecting human beings and the world, through language. It stresses multiplicity and relative centres rather than duality and absolutism. The self is not the Cartesian 'I' but an ever-changing and contextually dependent sign. The word 'I' is an empty word (sign) used to 'shift' the "center of discourse from one speaking subject to another" (Holquist 1990: 23); the self is not perceived as is the other. The self is dialogically authored (like a story perhaps) and shared;

Existence is not only an event, it is an utterance. The event of existence has the nature of dialogue in this sense; there is no word directed to no one.  
(Holquist 1990: 27)

As with other signs, in a Saussurean sense, the 'I' is made of the signifier and the signified, but in dialogism what is most important is the relationship between these aspects. Dialogism is bound up in the act(s) of communication (communicating), but emphasises the multitude of differences at play in any given dialogue, over time and in different spaces. It is syntagmatic and attempts to account for the range of meanings created by combinations of words in social contexts, that is, as actually spoken and written, and from the point of view of those who use the language. "Discourse does not reflect a situation, it is a situation" (Holquist 1990: 49; italics in original).

In dialogism, life is expression. Expression means to make meaning, and meaning comes about only through the medium of signs. This is true at all levels of existence: something exists only if it means.  
(Holquist 1990: 49; italics in original)

In a Wittgensteinian way, understanding is shown "as a response to a sign with signs" (Holquist 1990: 49; italics in original); and all signs are linked, as in the later Lacanian 'signifying chain', but without an insistence on it breaking and disappearing into an 'inner being' (see Vološinov 1986).
This is a thesis about dance. But it doesn’t wear this on its sleeve. Maybe it is more of a thesis for those interested in dance. Maybe it is a thesis for those wishing to consider dance from new directions. Maybe it is a thesis for the writer to indulge in a ‘dance of language’, rather than ‘language of dance’. Maybe it is a thesis about the processes of thought. As Nietzsche wrote: “thinking wants to be learned like dancing, as a kind of dancing” (in TII, ‘What the Germans Lack’ §7, 1968a: 76). This thesis is the result of thinking about dance and allowing that thinking to dance itself.

This is a thesis about the implications of technology on the performing human being. But, this is almost an incidental. It is the starting point more than the vanishing point of a perspective. “The Renaissance Legacy” of the vanishing point, writes McLuhan (in McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 53), prompts a detached observer, situated externally to the frame of experience. If this thesis were a painting it would have multiple vanishing points and employ aerial perspective; it is ‘involving’ rather than ‘detaching’; it is akin to Cubist, Futurist and Constructivist art, especially sculptural works (but this is not a metaphor to adhere to too closely). Conceptually it started from a narrow focus and grew outwards. It has ended up wider than it was supposed to – the frame is expansive rather than restrictive – and it is the result of two views: the reader’s (and there is a multitude of readers) and the writer’s, or rather, the work’s. This is perhaps the inverse of how a PhD usually progresses. Perhaps the focus of a PhD moves in and out from a central line, widening and narrowing in scope as information is fed in and then more or less intensely examined (and exploited).

Emmy gazes into space and contemplates this last bit. "To intuit now means to know by intuition, which now means to find out something just by knowing it, almost as an instinctive knowledge. But it comes from the Latin for looking at something. I do not look anywhere to know something though. But what is knowing?"

He breathes in, filling his lungs with stale air. He glances at the window; it is shut. He disconnects his coccyx from the seat and lifts the latch on the frame and swings the window outwards to let the air in.

Emmy pauses and peers through the brick dust and glass.

He thinks, ‘Even though I don’t usually see it, I know there is an outside to my house. What if I was blind? Would the distinction between inside and outside be the same? Could I doubt that there is an outside? Why should I doubt it? As a sighted person, do I doubt the existence of things around me when I shut my eyes? Well, I could but it wouldn’t do me much good to doubt it besides I can always allay my doubt by opening my eyes, or even touching something. Better note some of this down.’
This is a thesis about the difficulties of writing a thesis on philosophy, especially a philosophy of performance in the modern technological age. It is not a history. It is not an ethnography. It is not an analysis of a specific work, or artist, or genre, or technique. It isn’t a treatise on what dance and technology is or should be. It could have been any of these things. It is a product of the lack of “the calm of an easy security” (Barthes 1977: 155) found in interdisciplinarity.

"Inter-disciplinary structures in all their forms are symptoms of this: every discipline is aligned on the degenerated concepts of another" (Baudrillard 1990: 58).

The use of visual metaphors for 'knowing' and 'not knowing'. Even a blind person I met on the train, and had a conversation with, used the word 'see' in this sense, before saying 'see you later' as I got off at my destination. This is noted as common in Michalko (1998), as is the use of the problem of blindness as a metaphor for other kinds of 'lack', 'inability,' or 'incompetence'" (Michalko 1998: 24). Blindness is equated with many negative attributes and is a poetic metaphor which has been used in a range of texts.

When sight is lost or not used there is a fallacious assumption that the other senses have a heightened ability to experience the world. Indeed research cited by Patrick Trevor-Roper "concluded that the loss of a major sense impairs rather than increases the acuity of the others" (1997: 163fn). Extra care is taken by the blind person so as not to endanger themselves; they learn to judge and navigate through the world from the available information.

What is the 'haptic' sense? [Come back to this.]
This thesis takes as many forms as the subject it purports to be a study of. It doesn't encourage or condone the making of generalisations and assumptions (although it can be guilty of doing just that). It is, as will be outlined elsewhere, about the descriptive language of dance, of the world. Indeed it is as much about the world as it is about dance. And this could be said to be only a little bit about either. It asks questions of language and concepts that may be uncomfortable for some readers. They were uncomfortable for the writer. It is a challenge to the complacent use of terminology and concepts which is pervasive in the descriptive language of dance and its processes. Notice how the word 'descriptive' has found its way into the phrase 'the language of dance'. One of the notions questioned is that of 'the language of dance'.

"Language is something that is spoken" (Rhees 1970: 70).

Whatever language we use for description now seems abstract and thin, by contrast with the immediacy and concreteness of lived experience. Where reality is a web of specific, particular, individual things, each with its own tang, language now appears as a disembodied ballet of abstractions.

(Black 1968: 119)
This thesis is about wordplay – 'language-games' – and the play of words. It is about the play of meaning, but has little to do with the meaning of play. It is, however, playful and serious at the same time. It is a world in which the word is all there is—the imaginary worlds of children are perhaps its relatives. It wants to say that the wor(l)d is all there is. But this is too extreme. We all, even scientists, live according to a 'world-picture' (a Weltanschauung) learnt as children (see Wittgenstein OC §167), that is mostly hidden from us, and which thwarts us from time to time in our attempts to say what we want to say (see Wittgenstein OC §422). Wittgenstein suggests that

The propositions describing this world-picture might be part of a kind of mythology. And their role is like that of rules of a game; and the game can be learned purely practically, without learning any explicit rules [...] The mythology may change back into a state of flux, the river-bed of thoughts may shift. But I distinguish between the movement of the waters on the river-bed and the shift of the bed itself; though there is not a sharp division of the one from the other.

(Wittgenstein OC §§95 & 97)

This thesis explicitly expounds and explores a mythology, to investigate a world-view. (If there was another way of doing it, it wasn't made apparent.) The mythology extends to the process of writing a thesis. It is part of the play between so-called 'rational thought' and 'creative thought'. One shapes the other and is shaped in return, just as the river shapes (erodes, shifts the silt) and is shaped (contained) by the river-bed. Rivers meander and change course, as do world-views and mythologies.

When Feyerabend writes:

the initial playful activity is an essential prerequisite of the final act of understanding. There is no reason why this mechanism should cease to function in the adult[,]

(1993: 17)

he can be seen to echo one of Sigmund Freud's descriptions of creativity in the writer:

The creative writer does the same as the child at play. He creates a world of phantasy which he takes very seriously—that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion—while separating it sharply from reality. Language has preserved this relationship between children's play and poetic creation.

(Freud 1995: 437)
Disregarding the description of seriousness as an ‘investment of emotion’ (the word ‘emotion’ will come under scrutiny in the thesis) and the ‘separation from reality’ (‘reality’, another word with issues), there is a hint at the commonality between artistic (and philosophic) writing and play; for Freud, “a piece of creative writing, like a day-dream, is a continuation of, and a substitute for, what was once the play of childhood” (Freud 1995: 442).

[link back to FMS]

The destructive nature of children.

The breaking of rules. The breakdown of structure. The break from the norm.

Nietzsche: “who has to be a creator always has to destroy” (TSZ ‘Of the Thousand and One Goals’, 1969: 85).

John Milton, bereft of vision, could not write with an implement, so after sleepless nights filled with flashes of inspiration, he would dictate passages of his poems to his daughter; this is referenced in his works, for example, Paradise Lost, iii, lines 19-20. Today, Milton could use a computer and voice recognition software, or if he could touch-type, just a keyboard, or a combination of the two.

Trevor-Roper writes “blind poets rarely compose long or complex poems. Milton was the exception” (1997: 169). Homer, too, was blind.

See also Feyerabend (1988: 178) on Homeric formulae: “The requirement of memory demanded that there be ready-made descriptions of events that can be used by a poet who composes in his mind, and without the aid of writing...” The Homeric poet “has no interest in originality of expression, or in variety. He uses or adapts inherited formulae.” (Quotation from Page, D. I. (1966) History and the Homeric Iliad. Berkeley: ?????, p.230)

Emmy has some words he would like to say. “How to reference these connections? Should use bothnotes or endnotes?” But before he can act on them he is typing again.

Interfaces. Cybernetics. The links between humans and machines.
Filippo Marinetti called for the death of the literary 'I', which was to go hand in hand with the destruction of syntax, imagination without strings and words in freedom—words as visual art, as onomatopoeia, the use of


(Marinetti 1913)

Futurist poetry abolished punctuation, and thereby abandoning the concept 'sentence', in speech and in writing. Breathing mechanised allowing for a jackhammer assault on the listener; words like fists 'in no conventional order'; all writing from and of the universe, the world of the writer, analogised for speed (telegraphic, digital, optical), laconic, terse; a restricted speech code as between friends will exist between poet and audience, so that

[poets] can make themselves understood with half a word, a gesture, a glance. So the poet's imagination must weave together distant things with no connecting strings, by means of essential free words.

(Marinetti 1913)

Free words=free association(?)—sounding like a psychoanalytic tract. But how can the connections be constr(u)cted when they are not there? The poet-writer is not in control—their imagination (subconscious? unconscious?) is. Do they seek to deceive?

"can we experience the Jungian Self in a dance?" (Zweig in Anderson 1996: 144)

"In poetry, as in psychoanalysis, language is pushed to its limits, and becomes a struggle with the inexpressible" (Benvenuto and Kennedy 1986: 119).

[Wonder whether this is too clichéd and treading on old ground. Note that the word 'cliché' is derived from the French verb cliquer to stereotype; imitative of the sound made by the matrix (the gangue in which a mineral is embedded, or a kind of mould) when it is dropped into molten metal. The word 'matrix' is derived from the Latin for womb, and mother. Much more polysemous than I had thought. A matrix is also the metal mould for casting type for printing, and now a signal generating circuit in computing.]
C'est le Diable qui tient les fils qui nous remuent!
Aux objets répugnants nous trouvons des appas;
Chaque jour vers l'Enfer nous descendons d'un pas,
Sans horreur, à travers des ténèbres qui puent.

Charles Baudelaire 'Au Lecteur'
(1982: 183)

It's the Devil who pulls the strings that make us dance!
It is in hateful objects that we find peace;
Each day, one step further towards Hell,
Without horror, through the stinking shadows.

Charles Baudelaire 'To the Reader'
The overall structure of the thesis was (going to be) influenced, in part, by Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* (1953), and its album format. His notes for this posthumous publication were collections of written-down thoughts (often on scraps of paper and merely clipped together, perhaps in an order intended for publication, but never fully completed to Wittgenstein’s high standards), which follow a theme for a short distance before moving onto another. As Saul Kripke (1982) and others argue, “Wittgenstein’s professed inability to write a work with conventionally organized arguments and conclusions stems at least in part, not from personal and stylistic proclivities, but from the nature of his work” (Kripke 1982: 69). The work is ultimately a graft hybrid, a chimera. Often non-sequential, and repetitive, he approaches the same topics from different angles. He writes in metaphors, analogies and allegories to illustrate the problems; to allow us to re-examine the familiar, the ordinary and everyday. He re-phrases his questions and queries, undergoing a “perpetual dialectic, where persisting worries, expressed by the voice of the imaginary interlocutor, are never silenced” (Kripke 1982: 3). Just as a poet cannot carry a long or complex poem in their head (see Trevor-Roper 1997), or just as a painter cannot carry a large canvas around easily—preferring to rely on sketchbooks—so too a philosopher cannot compose a convoluted argument without writing and recording their ideas. As Wittgenstein himself writes: “The philosophical remarks in this book are, as it were, a number of sketches of landscapes which were made in the course of these long and involved journeyings” (Wittgenstein *PI* vii). Some of the following sketches are more complete than others. (See Binkley 1973 and Kripke 1982, for discussions of Wittgenstein’s style and way of philosophising.)

“Dislocations” of specific words and phrases are, after all, ways of locating others” (Perloff 1996: 93; italics in original).

Also the Matrix: “The vast computer network in William Gibson’s *Neuromancer*. In the early days of the Net, the term was also used to describe the growing mass of interconnected networks” (Hale 1996: 73). The word ‘gangue’ is derived from the Old English *gang* for journey. One word takes me on an etymological journey through many others, or as Wittgenstein says: “(A multitude of familiar paths lead off from these words in every direction.)” (*PI* §§525 and 534)
With regards to Wittgenstein's influence on the content of the thesis it must be stressed that it is the so-called later Wittgenstein, the post- Logical Atomist Wittgenstein (if he should be categorised), who is the major figure of inspiration. Despite the fact that it was his first work Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung, better known by the title of the English publication Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (Wittgenstein 1961; hereafter shortened to Tractatus), which was the most notable publication of his work in his lifetime, Wittgenstein underwent a transformation of ideas thus reinventing himself as a different kind of philosopher. There is, quite predictably, debate as to the validity and appropriateness of referring to the 'Two Wittgensteins'—often accompanied by talk of his transitional or middle period. Whatever the grounds for any side of the debate, it is to be assumed from statements by Wittgenstein that there was a shift in his thinking and method, to a certain extent. (See Hintikka in Teghrarian 1994: 1-40. Attention is drawn also to Dennis O'Brien's chapter, 'The Unity of Wittgenstein's Thought' in Fann 1978: 380-404, and Richard Bernstein's essay, 'Wittgenstein's Three Languages' in Copi and Beard 1966: 231-47. The myth of the 'Two Wittgensteins', according to Bernstein, focuses on the concept of a 'logically perfect language': the Tractatus, it is said, moves towards a construction of such an ideal language, outlining a truth-functional view of propositions — "The truth-functional view of language supposes that the truth or falsity of a complex sentence is a function only of the truth or falsity of the component elementary propositions into which complex sentences, in principle, may be analysed" (Hunnings 1988: 32) — through developing a Picture Theory (discussed in another part of this thesis); while the Philosophical Investigations is said "to uncover the perversity of the quest for the ideal language" (Bernstein in Copi and Beard 1966: 234). The intricacies of these philosophical issues will not be untangled here.) The (highly simplistic) version to be adopted here: In 1928-9 and afterwards, conversations with Piero Sraffa and others led to Wittgenstein, in a way, recanting and denouncing his own theories, which had already caused a stir in European philosophy (influencing the Logical Positivist Vienna Circle, among others), and thereby started another revolution in philosophy, a Wende der Philosophie.
Discussions with the Marxist economist Piero Sraffa, who criticised the *Tractatus*, and made its author "feel like a tree from which all branches had been cut" (von Wright in Malcolm 1958: 16), prompted a radical self-criticism in Wittgenstein. ("Later, during [...] the sixties, Sraffa considerably played down his influence on Wittgenstein’s later intellectual development" (Potier 1991: 48). For what reason or reasons, Sraffa’s biographer, Jean-Paul Potier, doesn’t make clear, although Ray Monk states that in May 1946, Sraffa decided “that he could no longer give his time and attention to the matters Wittgenstein wished to discuss” (Monk 1990: 487).

This thesis is a scrapbook of pictures, “and what is the use of a book, thought Alice, without pictures or conversations?” (Carroll 1992: 3). It could be seen as an album of mementoes: it is not chronological, although it was considered as a possible device for ordering the thoughts and reflections. It is not altogether a jumble either. There is a linearity to it in a certain respect (or a multiple linearity in a similar way to how it has a multiplicity of perspectives), but it could just as well be presented as a hypertext, or on random loose leaves (if each page was self-contained). It will be given in the most linear form, but the reader is free to experiment with order.

Liberties have been taken with academic writing conventions, while trying to remain faithful to the referencing of other writers: Quotations hang freely, or are constrained in parenthetical devices, often juxtaposing references and quotations which might seem to be unrelated, but have some bearing on the thinking process of the writer. They sometimes comment on the accompanying text in a more direct fashion, but this is not always the case. These are connections to be made beyond those which a writer can or wants to make explicit. A quotation in isolation can be illuminating as a quotation surrounded by description, justification, and paraphrasing. It is what is left unsaid that can be as important as that which is spelt out. The reader is sent off to find the place (the extra-context, why else are the references given?) from which the quotation comes on a search for meaning - the modern quest (Is it so modern?); a Holy Grail for our times - or to imagine the words that are unwritten and could be around it: (On the role of notes Samuel Johnson wrote in the ‘Preface’ of his work Shakespeare in 1765: “Notes are often

Ermy reaches to turn on the small lamp hanging beside his desk. He takes delight from the crackle he can produce by holding the switch half on and making the bulb sputter out light like a child spraying saliva with their tongue. He is intrigued by the power of electricity to bring a kind of life to the metal filament. He thinks about the wonder such things must have evoked in people before electricity was commonplace. ‘Well,’ he thinks, ‘even human beings were viewed like this as mysterious as life. What is the body after the light has gone out of it? A pile of ashes. A spent bulb. We can see light and feel heat, but not feel light and see heat. We can see when something is alive, but we can’t see life. We can see and tell (or guess) when someone is thinking, or in pain, but we cannot see thought, or pain. Are they material or immaterial? Even though electricity is materially-based it appears to us as though it is not. Is this correct? I’ve read something about this...’ He reaches for a book and opens it at the back. He scans the index and registers the entry. He fingers the page as though it were in Braille, until he finds the quotation:

Why do we think of the phenomenal as immaterial? We do so because, as Ryle put it, we insist on thinking of having a pain in ocular metaphors - as having a funny sort of particular before the eye of the mind. That particular turns out to be a universal, a quality hypostatized into a subject of predication.

Ermy types.
The *Tractatus* will be used as a model for an old way of talking about dance (and here urged to be discarded), and the subsequent change(s) in Wittgenstein's work as the model for the thesis itself. One problem of stating this is the danger that in referring to the *Tractatus* (and indeed the rest of Wittgenstein's *oeuvre*) it may be taken to be an adoption of it, or an interpretation (in all likelihood, a *mis*interpretation) of it, or an application of it in a way that is mistaken or inappropriate. It may be seen as offering a reading of the *Tractatus* as well as using it as a framework. This is not entirely the case. While there are certain similarities in the theories being compared and merged, and this is played out in the structure and style of the progeny of their *coitus*, one does not echo or mirror the other. There will be an assessment of the similarities of both old and new models of discussing dance (and the latter-day issues prompted by new technologies) and the works of Wittgenstein, which serve as a stylistic support, a stylobate, a *stulos* or (architectural) column.

"It is as if our concepts involved a scaffolding of facts." That would presumably mean: If you imagine certain facts otherwise, describe them otherwise, than the way they are, then you can no longer imagine the application of certain concepts, because the rules for their application have no analogue in the new circumstances.

(Wittgenstein Z.§350)

"Why do we think of the phenomenal as immaterial?" (Rorty 1980: 31)

Gilbert Ryle (1949) notes the use of what his index terms 'Optical metaphors' in language about understanding and other 'mental acts', for example the formation of arguments. "When a person has got an argument, his first or his fiftieth deployment of it in speech or writing certainly takes time" (Ryle 1949: 302). The act of understanding or arguing is not an instantaneous process, but has a number of stages. We do not always 'see' the processes operating (indeed we cannot, even viewing the activity of the brain is not to be taken as 'seeing' the arguments forming), but we can track the argument's stages: the "consecutive 'seeings' of implications" (Ryle 1949: 303), in some way, when they are expressed in words. Rorty refers to and refutes the hypostatisation of mental qualities and sensations, perhaps following Ryle's assertion that sensations are not perceivings, observings or findings; they are not detections, scanings or inspectings; they are not apprehendings, cognisings, intuitings or knowings. To have a sensation is not to be in a cognitive relation to a sensible object. There are no such objects.

(Ryle 1949: 214)
Dance is made up of movements.

In between the movements are stillnesses.

A dance is the combination of movement and stillness.

The totality of the dance is the movement and stillness it contains.

The movements in physical space are the dance.

The dance divides into movements.

Each movement can be taken in isolation.

A movement is not an object (a thing), but it exists.

A movement can only exist in a thing (a body).

It is essential to a movement that it is of a thing but not a thing.

A movement can be divided into parts, so that each part of it can be said to be a movement.

Each part is capable of isolation while retaining a connection to the whole.

Just as we cannot imagine spatial objects detached from other objects and outside space, so too there is no movement we can imagine excluded from the possibility of combining with others.

No two parts can occupy the same space and time. (It is impossible for movements to move through each other.)

When I know a movement I know how it can occur in any given sequence of movements.

To know a movement is to know all its internal properties.

If all movements are given, then at the same time all possible combinations of movements are given.

Movements produce positive and negative space.

The movement itself must be situated in positive space, but it is surrounded by negative space.

A movement must have some motion.

Bodies contain the possibility of movement.

The possibility of movement is the potential form of a body.

Bodies function as simples.
2.0201 When we talk about bodies as *complexes* we refer to the mind in the body, and this can be resolved into a statement about constituents.

2.021 Bodies make up the *substance* of movement. That is why they cannot be composite.

2.0211 If bodies had no substance, then movements would not have any sensible qualities, or any sense.

2.0212 In that case we would not use movement to represent the world.

2.022 It is obvious that an imagined movement, however different it may be from a real one, must have *something*—a form—in common with it.

2.023 Bodies are just what constitute this unalterable form.

2.0231 The substance of a body can determine the form, but the movement meaning remains unchanged. It is by the means of movement that meanings are represented—only by the configuration of bodies that they are produced.

2.0232 In a manner of speaking, a movement can be the same in a different body.

2.0233 If two movements have the same form, the only distinction between them, apart from their external properties, is that they are different.

2.02331 Either a movement has unique properties, in which case we can immediately use a description to distinguish it from others and refer to it; or, on the other hand, there are several movements that have the whole set of their properties in common, in which case it is quite impossible to indicate one of them.

For if there is nothing to distinguish a movement, I cannot distinguish it, since otherwise it would be distinguished already.

2.024 Meaning is what subsists independently of what is the case.

2.025 It is form and content.

2.0251 Movement meaning is a form of object.

2.026 There must be meanings, if the world is to have unalterable form.

2.027 Objects (meanings), the unalterable, and the subsistent are one and the same.

2.0271 Meanings are what is unalterable and subsistent; their configuration is what is changing and unstable.
2.0272 The configuration of movement meaning produces dance.
2.03 In a dance movement meanings fit into one another like the links of a chain.
2.031 In a dance movement meanings stand in a determinate relation to one another.
2.032 The determinate way in which movement meanings are connected in a dance is the structure of the dance.
2.033 Form is the possibility of structure.
2.034 Movement makes up a dance.
2.04 Any movement is a possible source of dance material.
2.05 Dance makes movements meaningful.
2.06 Emotion makes dance movements meaningful.
2.061 Dance externalises inner feelings.
2.062 Inner feelings are the meaning of the dance.
2.063 The inner feelings of the dancer are the meaning that they externalise in dance.

2.1 We picture meanings to ourselves.
2.11 A picture presents a situation to the mind.
2.12 A picture is a model of reality.
2.13 In a dance movements have the elements of the picture corresponding to them.
2.131 In a dance the elements of the dance are the representatives of meaning-objects (emotions, thoughts).
2.14 What constitutes a dance is that its elements are related to one another in a determined way.
2.141 A dance is a picture is a fact.
2.15 The fact that the elements of a dance are related to one another in a determined way represents that meanings are related to one another in the same way.
   Dance has pictorial form.
2.151 Pictorial form is the possibility that things are related to one another in the same way as the elements of the picture.
2.1511 That is how a dance is attached to inner reality; it reaches right in to it.
2.1512 It is laid out against reality like a measure.
2.15121 Only the end-points of the graduating lines actually touch the object that is to be measured.
2.1513 Part of the dance, its pictorial relationship, is that which makes it a dance.
The pictorial relationship consists of the correlations of the dance’s elements with emotions and thoughts.

These correlations are the feelers of the dance, with which it touches (inner) reality.

If a dance is to be a picture, it must have something in common with what it depicts.

There is something in a dance that enables it to be a picture of what it depicts.

What a dance must have in common with inner reality, in order to depict it as it does, is its pictorial form.

A dance, like a picture, can depict any inner reality whose form it has.

An angry dance can depict anything angry, a happy one anything happy, etc.

A dance cannot, however, depict its pictorial form: it displays it.

A dance represents its subject from a position outside it. (Its standpoint is its representational form.)

A dance cannot, however, place itself outside its representational form.

What any dance, of whatever form, must have in common with inner reality, in order to be able to depict it is logical form i.e. the form of (inner) reality.

The meaning of an expressive movement is given solely by the character of the emotion which it stands for.

Every expressive movement is a picture of the emotion it expresses.

Dances can depict the world.

A dance has logico-pictorial form in common with what it depicts.

A dance depicts (inner) reality by representing a possibility of existence and non-existence of states of being.

A dance represents a possible situation in physical space.

A dance contains the possibility of the situation that it represents.

Dance can be a true or false representation of inner reality.

What a dance represents it represents independently of its truth or falsity, by means of its pictorial form.
2.221 What a dance represents is its sense.

2.222 The agreement or disagreement of its sense with inner reality constitutes its truth or falsity.

2.223 In order to tell whether a dance is true or false we must compare it with reality.

2.224 It is impossible to tell from the dance alone whether it is true or false.

2.225 There are no dances that are true without or before experience.

3 A logical picture of facts is a thought.

3.001 'A meaning is thinkable': what this means is that we can picture it to ourselves.

3.01 The totality of true thoughts is a picture of the world.

3.02 A thought contains the possibility of the situation of which it is the thought. What is thinkable is possible too.

3.03 Thoughts can never be of anything illogical, since, if it were, we should have to think illogically.

3.031 Dance is the representation of thoughts.

3.032 It is as impossible to represent in dance anything that 'contradicts logic' as it is in geometry to represent by its co-ordinates a figure that contradicts the laws of space.

3.0321 In all action, what is done must occur in accordance with the mechanical principles of movement.

3.04 It might very well be that, above all, the dance asks for direct communication without any detours. Because its bearer and intermediary is man himself, and because his instrument of expression is the human body, whose natural movement forms the material for the dance, the only material which is his own and his own to use. (Wigman 1966: 10)

3.05 Dance creates movement images that increase sensitivity to reality.

3.1 In a dance sequence a thought finds an expression that can be perceived by the senses.

3.11 We use the perceptible sign of a dance sequence as a projection of a thought.

3.12 The method of projection is to feel the sense of the movement sequence.

3.12 The sign with which we express a thought (an emotion, a feeling) is called a gesture.
This is not a thesis about Wittgenstein (or indeed about anyone), but it must be stated that it is nigh on impossible to separate the person from the philosopher (or philosophy); as Erich Heller states, 

"The appreciation of Wittgenstein as a person and thinker (and how misleading is this "and"!?)" (Heller in Fann 1978: 93).

Wittgenstein will be sketched out to give a background to his works, and often his life (the mythology) and personal comments will be used in place of his philosophy—"Work on philosophy — like work in architecture in many respects — is really more work on oneself" (Wittgenstein CV 24e: MS 112 46). This is a challenge to the notion that philosophy is one type of activity or writing, only found in certain circumstances; Wittgenstein is reported to have said that "it is much more revealing and important when you find this sort of confusion in something that's said 'in a silly detective story than when you find it in something that's said by a silly philosopher'" (Wittgenstein PO 326). Wittgenstein also based much of his philosophy on what we could call 'ordinary language' (see, for example, BB 28 & 56) or 'everyday speech': common words, expressions and utterances which 'contain' or rather 'obscure' and to a certain extent 'simplify' experience according to the inherent 'understandings' of the language and culture to which it belongs. And it is wrong to think that ordinary language always conforms to a "standard of exactness" (Wittgenstein BB 25) like that (supposedly) found in science or mathematics, it rarely does. Each part of language has its own set of rules, but in the case of ordinary language these rules are not strict. However philosophy uses words in peculiar ways which often don't tally with their uses in everyday situations, and often tries to demand strict meanings for words. However,

It is wrong to say that in philosophy we consider an ideal language as opposed to our ordinary one. For this makes it appear as though we thought we could improve on ordinary language. But ordinary language is all right. Whenever we make up 'ideal languages' it is not in order to replace or ordinary language by them; but just to remove some trouble caused in someone's mind by thinking that he has got hold of the exact use of a common word.

(Wittgenstein BB 28)

"[To read fantasy and adventure stories] was all I asked for [as a boy...!] Even today I would rather read 'thrillers' than Wittgenstein" (Sartre 1965: 53).
Philosophers invent new words, or "very often talk about investigating, analysing, the meaning of words" (Wittgenstein BB 27-8) as though there is a real meaning besides that which "someone has given to it" (Wittgenstein BB 28). Lewis Carroll's Humpty Dumpty, the archetypal philosopher, in response to Alice's admission of not knowing what he meant by the word 'glory', says with some contempt:

'Of course you don't—till I tell you. I meant 'there's a nice knock-down argument for you!''

'But 'glory' doesn't mean 'a nice knock-down argument,' Alice objected.

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.'

(Carroll 1992: 159)

He goes on to describe the made-up words 'slithy' and 'mimsy' as being like a 'portmanteau': "two meanings packed up into one word" (Carroll 1992: 160). Here we are tempted to ask: What is 'meaning'?

Meaning' is one of the words of which one may say that they have odd jobs in our language. It is one of these words which cause most philosophical troubles.

(Wittgenstein BB 43-4)

See Ayer 1990: 171ff. "The principle of verification is supposed to furnish a criterion by which it can be determined whether or not a sentence is literally meaningful" (1990: 171). Also Hintikka in Teghrarian 1994: 23-5; for example: "what makes it possible for a complex sentence to represent reality is no longer its pictorial character, but the use that connects it with other propositions, ultimately the world" (Hintikka in Teghrarian 1994: 24).

This is similar to Donald Davidson's denial of objects and entities in the mind (see Davidson 1990). But, John Heil in his chapter on epistemic privilege writes:

Davidson's suggestion requires that we jettison the notion that content-bearing states of mind are usefully regarded as entities - Cartesian ideas, sentences in mentalese, neural inscriptions, pictures on an interior television screen. Such entities might exist.

(1990: 402)

Heil doesn't disagree with Davidson's suggestion, and the rest of his chapter questions viewpoints that attempt to provide a definitive model.

But I am not interested in whether 'mind' exists or not (I don't accept the standard account of the 'mind'), or if there are mental 'objects' as such. I am more concerned with the language we use. Not one explanatory statement of 'mind' satisfies all examples—we cannot define it comprehensively.
From around 1930, shortly after his return to Cambridge and his subsequent appointment as research fellow, Wittgenstein began to lecture in his own inimitable style, and it is these lectures and their accompanying notes (both his students' – see, for example, Wittgenstein 1966 – and his, although the latter are few and far between because in the main he lectured 'off the top of his head' and resented anyone else taking notes) which illuminate the shifts in his thinking, alongside his own diaries, notebooks, manuscripts and aforementioned writings on scraps of paper (Zettel, in German, hence the title of one of his posthumous publications (Wittgenstein 1967); see von Wright's chapter, 'The Wittgenstein Papers' in PO 480-510 for details of the original documents, and Glock 1996, for example, for a comprehensive list of publications and sources). In his time at Cambridge, and after he left for good in 1947, Wittgenstein wrote and lectured on mathematics, logic, aesthetics, psychology, religion, philosophical methods, epistemology and language, drawing on a range of writers including Bertrand Russell, Gottlob Frege, Saint Augustine, Sigmund Freud, Leo Tolstoy and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. He came from an extremely wealthy Viennese family and was highly cultured, yet he renounced any personal wealth in favour of an austere life and considered manual labour to be preferable to philosophy in many respects. He spent time in Norway, Ireland and the USA, teaching schoolchildren in Lower Austria, and he was interested and accomplished in a number of areas from engineering and architecture to music and crime fiction and movies. In the 1914-18 War he fought for his country in Russia and in Italy (where he was captured and put into a camp), and from 1941 he worked as a porter in a London hospital before working on the physiology of shock in Newcastle. Wittgenstein was not the stereotypical academic philosopher. His life experiences profoundly shaped his philosophy, and although it is not possible here to expand on the links at length, it is necessary to note that Wittgenstein's work is based on his experiences as a human being at the extremes of existence, and his constant questioning of these experiences. (For more biographical analysis see, for example, McGuinness 1988, Monk 1990, and Edmonds and Eidinow 2001.)
Following the influence of Sraffa, Wittgenstein began to see philosophy within the context of the human world, people and cultures. "Wittgenstein once remarked to Rush Rhees that the most important thing he gained from talking to Sraffa was an 'anthropological' way of looking at philosophical problems" (Monk 1990: 261). Even his thoughts on mathematics place it in the context of human practice, and this is the case with the rest of his work. Perhaps it is this focus on the humanness of human beings that makes it possible to apply his writings in a number of disciplines, including ethics (see, for example, Diamond 1995); psychiatry (see, for example, Sass 1994); the philosophy of aesthetics and art (most relevant here is his influence on Best 1974, also Tilghman 1970); the philosophy of science (see, for example, Feyerabend 1993; Feyerabend also wrote about the Philosophical Investigations, see Fann 1978: 214-50); and even literature and other art forms (see Perloff 1996, for an overview of his influence on writing); the list is long and growing, with new books, or those still awaiting publication, showing that interest in Wittgenstein is anything but dwindling. He has, however, been criticised for a number of reasons (both during his life and since), and these are sometimes valid, sometimes based on misunderstanding or unsatisfactory arguments. He is often accused of being obscure and impenetrable or not sustained enough in his arguments. However, to counter this it could be said that the obscurity lies in his 'style of thought' and not in his language, for as Hanna Pitkin notes: "He writes elegant, lucid German" (1972: vii). Any 'obscurity' may be a strength in his writing, allowing it to be variously interpreted and applied (equally mis-interpreted and mis-applied) and used for inspiration. The keywords here are 'inspiration' and 'interpretation'. Wittgenstein, it seems, was aware of the need for and unavoidable 'nature' of interpretation (although he often had a distinctive formulation in mind for the meaning of this word, for example, in the case of 'obeying a rule' it means, or ought to be restricted to mean, "the substitution of one expression of the rule for another" (PI §201); the importance of 'obeying a rule' may well be crucial in understanding the following thesis and some of the arguments contained in it, see Kripke 1982).
There is in this thesis, inspiration taken from interpretations of Wittgenstein's investigations. The results (the interpretations and the subsequent thoughts, attitudes and questions) are not simply based on uninformed readings of Wittgenstein's works, which have been used in conjunction with a range of other texts about the subjects contained therein. Neither have Wittgenstein's works been taken as an unchallenged gospel (his attitude to dogma was that it is like a brake, "as though someone attached a weight to your foot to limit your freedom of movement" (CV 33e: MS 118 86v; cf. Nietzsche WP §377 and BGE 31, for example)), yet a key piece of inspiration is found in his 'Preface' to *Philosophical Investigations*:

I should not like my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking. But, if possible, to stimulate someone to thoughts of his own.

(*PI viii*)

As David Best wrote: “I cannot do better than echo that view” (1974: xv).

*How much we are doing is changing the style of thinking and how much I'm doing is changing the style of thinking and how much I'm doing is persuading people to change their style of thinking. (Much of what we are doing is a question of changing the style of thinking.)*

*Wittgenstein LC 28*

*In other words we must not ask ourselves whether it can define thought but whether it makes us think, and leads the mind to assume deeply effective attitudes from its own point of view* (Artaud 1970: 51; italics in original).

Nietzsche has written about the ways in which language shapes concepts.

WP §522 (1886-1887)

*Ultimate solution.*—We believe in reason: this, however, is the philosophy of gray concepts. Language depends on the most naïve prejudices.

Now we read disharmonies and problems into things because we think only in the form of language—and thus believe in the "eternal truth" of "reason" (e.g., subject, attribute, etc.)

We cease to think when we refuse to do so under the constraint of language; we barely reach the doubt that sees this limitation as a limitation.

*Rational thought is interpretation according to a scheme that we cannot throw off.*

(Nietzsche 1968b: 283; italics in original)

[See Augustine on 'eternal truths' above.]

Summary: Because, in describing and avowing our psychological states, we use words that imply we are looking at or able to touch objects we mistakenly assume that there are objects in us.
Wittgenstein and dance may appear to be an uncomfortable pairing, if he is generally understood as a philosopher of language. Dance is often considered beyond the clutches of language—a silent artform, but for the musical score or accompanying sounds of the dancers’ feet or costumes. Dancers have traditionally not spoken—their movements ‘speak’ for them. Dance is regarded to be a ‘pure’ form of communication—it expresses the dancers’ emotions without the need for them translating them into words and speech. Patently these are unsupported generalisations, and there are notable exceptions to these attitudes and examples that clearly unsettle them. (These issues will be addressed in more detail elsewhere.)

What the application of Wittgenstein’s methods can afford is a means of ‘deconstructing’ (the term is used reluctantly, although Wittgenstein once wrote: “It occurred to me today as I was thinking about my work in philosophy & said to myself: ‘I destroy, I destroy, I destroy —’” (CV 19e: MS 154 21v)), and then reconstructing (restructuring) the underlying and more apparent conceptions of dance—which can only find expression in language (this somewhat disregards the ‘immediate’, ‘physical’, ‘emotional’ responses to dance—how it makes us feel—but this issue is perhaps one of the threads running through this thesis).

For Walter Benjamin the quotation was “like robbers by the roadside who make an armed attack and relieve an idler of [their] convictions” (1973: 43); it is destructive yet cleansing, disruptive yet focussing in effect (see Benjamin 1973 and Arendt 1973).

A dangerous idea for a philosopher: “that we think with our heads or in our heads”. Wittgenstein in Zettel §605, it gives us “something occult” (Zettel)

Emy shifts uncomfortably on his orthopaedic back chair, and sniffs. He reads from the old book with the blue cloth hardcover. ‘In my head.’ The words seem to echo. Emy’s brow knits and his upper lip starts to curl. ‘In my head. In my head. In my head.’ He turns back to the computer, his right index finger poised over the ‘B’ key, his left little finger already pressing the shift key.

But I am troubled by the suggestion that ‘in my head’ is somehow wrong.

Where else is it?

Where’s what? And to use the word ‘where’ is to imply a location that doesn’t exist. Of course my head exists, and there is even an inside to my head, but there is no place where a thought is.

[There are plenty of disavowals of this model or picture of the mind, Ryle is not the only one. However, there are plenty of supporters of this model too.]
What about emotions and feelings?

"The thought is in my head."

"The anger is in my stomach."

"The love is in my heart."

"The pain is in my foot."

"The body is in virtual reality."

But do we not hear a voice in our head when we think? [This is 'common-sense’, but I mustn't get sucked in by what Dawkins calls 'The Argument from Personal Incredulity': I can't understand how that might be, so therefore it isn't feasible.]

Ryle suggests

that the phrase 'in the head' is felt to be an appropriate and expressive metaphor in the first instance for vividly imagined self-voiced noises, and secondarily for any imaginary noises and even for imaginary sights, because in these latter cases a denial of distance, by assertion of metaphorical nearness, is intended to be construed as an assertion of imaginariness; and the nearness is relative, not so much to the head-organs of sight and hearing themselves, as to the places where their shutters are put up.

(Ryle 1949: 39)

Here we are dealing with our own thoughts. There is nothing to observe here, as Davidson points out, in the way that Ryle might suggest observing someone else to see that they have a mind (see Davidson 1990). So what is happening when I see someone else doing something and surmise that they feel a certain way?

[Return to this.]

Davidson writes of the following kind of statements: "These metaphors are probably instructive" (1990: 392).

"I have before my mind."

"My mind entertains such things."

"In my mind...": the phrase which Ryle says "can and should always be dispensed with" (1949: 40), an over-sophisticated expression for the misleading metaphor of 'in the head' (Ryle 1949).

A joke after Ryle:

Question: "What can be deep, but never min(e)d?"
Answer: "Thoughts."

Emry wonders whether this joke is at all funny. 'Perhaps it is not meant to be funny, as such. Just clever. What was Nietzsche entitled one of his biographical essays? He also thinks of meaning-blindness. He thinks of translating the joke into other languages. Then he realises that once again he has been led off the subject slightly. How to get back on track? He thinks of a question.

What am I trying to do here?

The problem is: trying to discuss the Virtual Body in such a way that doesn't resort to using language that is riddled with category-mistakes; that pays heed to the idea that our concepts are constructed out of metaphors. But as soon as this is stated it seems that the whole of language is unavailable for use, or as Nietzsche might have it, "has to be placed within inverted commas" (Blondel 1991: 150).
The philosophical precedents here are writers such as the supportive and anarchic Feyerabend, the explanatory and scientific Dennett, the inquisitive and therapeutic Wittgenstein, the destructive yet optimistic Nietzsche, the antagonistic and pragmatic Rorty, and the instructive and clarifying Davidson.

Paul Feyerabend (1993) writes of the difficulties faced by philosophers who attempt to proffer new views which seem to go against the common-sense frameworks, the natural interpretations, which throw up the "impenetrable stone wall of well-entrenched reactions" (Feyerabend 1993: 64; italics in original), of what Paul Churchland, for example, would call "folk psychology" (1988: 56). Feyerabend describes the unity of 'phenomenon' and word, or "appearance plus statement" (1993: 57), which is learnt by language users as children, invisibly influenced by the beliefs and ideologies of their ancestors. He writes of the development of observation languages, through the 'argument of observation' and the supposed unambiguous sensation and its given connection with "parts of a language" (1993: 59). The language then contains very well hidden concepts, which "are ambiguous and dependent on background" (Feyerabend 1993: 60-1), and not only this but these are related to how things are perceived bringing about a circularity which means that in order to uncover a concept we must "always use part of it in the attempt to find its constituents" (Feyerabend 1993: 61). But we can introduce new observation languages and use them in comparison with the old, well established languages. However, there are the previously mentioned problems in trying to do this, and Feyerabend writes that we must emphasize that a comparative judgement of observation languages, e.g. materialistic observation languages, phenomenalistic observation languages, objective-idealistic observation languages, theological observation languages, etc., can start only when all of them are spoken equally fluently.

(Feyerabend 1993: 64; italics in original)

On page 22 Feyerabend (1993) asks: "How can we discover the kind of world we presuppose when proceeding as we do?"

'The answer is clear: we cannot discover it from the inside [...] we need a dream-world in order to discover the features of the real world we think we inhabit (and which may actually be just another dream-world) [...] We must invent a new conceptual system that suspends, or clashes with, the most carefully established observational results, confounds the most plausible theoretical principles, and introduces perceptions that cannot form part of the existing perceptual world.

(Feyerabend 1993: 22-3; italics in original)

Feyerabend favours counterinduction and the acknowledgement that "all methodologies, even the most obvious ones, have their limits" (1993: 23; italics in original). His book, Against Method (1993), targets the practice of science but has ramifications for the arts and other disciplines where critical and analytical theories affect perception of them (and vice versa). It is historical as much as it is philosophical. When he writes of the sciences that "the new situation requires a new philosophy and, above all, new terms" (Feyerabend 1993: xii) it is applicable to the arts. Furthermore, as the arts attempt to apply 'the scientific way' to their practice and self-analysis, as Feyerabend writes of science:

Shall we continue using outmoded terms to describe novel insight or would it not be better to start using a new language? And wouldn't poets and journalists be of great help in finding such a language?

(Feyerabend 1993: xii)
Ermy is reminded of a quotation and pulls off the top shelf the black paperback with the white and yellow writing on the spine:

WITTGENSTEIN Culture and Value

He opens the book at a few pages in from the back and skims the alphabetised subject index: poetry writing (poets, poetry) 6e, 23e, 28e, 38e, etc. Deftly he finds the correct entry, and the line he could only half recall:

one should write philosophy only as one writes a poem.

He types in the page reference for later.

See Wittgenstein Culture and Value, 1998: 28e for quotation on philosophy and poetry.

Ermy puffs out a gasp and looks at the clock in the corner of the screen.

It reads:

22:41

'Time for bed.' Ermy thinks to himself. And then wonders what it means to think something to oneself, as he shuts down his computer.
To demonstrate quickly a form of deconstruction, consider Moore and Yamamoto’s description of ‘Body Movement’ as “The Original Extension System” (1988: 74), and their statement that “all extensions distil biological experience, leaving out some aspects while exaggerating others” (Moore and Yamamoto 1988: 78). The word ‘distil’ implies the extraction of an essence, but this thesis denies that there is such a thing as an essence of experience. Why should it be a paradox, as Moore and Yamamoto later write, that “body movement is at once natural and contrived, visceral and symbolic, personal and social, ever present and constantly disappearing” (1988: 85; italics in original)? These pairs are only contradictory if they are set up as opposites. To reapply a comment Wittgenstein made about talk of mental processes and states: “The decisive movement in the conjuring trick has been made, and it was the very one that we thought quite innocent” (PI §308). Body movement is body movement is body movement. It may well be considered ‘natural’, ‘contrived’, ‘visceral’, etc., but to what end? These words seem to explain, to penetrate, but rely only on a picture of the world that is built from a set of concepts that encourage, as it were, confusion. The paradox is merely grammatical. And therefore so should our investigation of the phenomena be grammatical (Wittgenstein 1953). (The subject of grammar will be taken up along another path.)

“in the final analysis all problems are linguistic problems” (Arendt 1973: 201).
In her chapter entitled ‘Family Resemblance’ (in Fraleigh and Hanstein 1999: 3-21), Sondra Fraleigh examines the diversity of what can be called dance activities and the difficulties of defining them. The concept of ‘family resemblance’ was employed by Wittgenstein to illustrate relationships between words and other phenomena, by drawing up overviews, frameworks and criteria (see PI §67 and BB 17; also, the term was used by Nietzsche in relation to the links between different traditions of philosophy, see BGE §20). As a concept it is anti-essentialist, stressing networks of similarities as opposed to a single common feature – an analytic definition – of any given set (as an example Wittgenstein uses the term ‘game’ to show how there is a range of activities linked across a series of overlapping conditions which can be applied to the term ‘game’ in most, if not all, of its manifestations). It should be noted that in the case of certain terms, the devising of a genealogy can be incredibly difficult and self-defeating, and seldom gives elegant results (see Wittgenstein BB 19). Related to this concept is the notion and application of ‘criteria’: “These are ways of telling whether something satisfies a concept X, or evidence for something’s being an X” (Glock 1996: 93); although it is often difficult to combine criteria with a family-resemblance concept. The Family of Meanings that Fraleigh describes for dance come under the following headings: “Creativity Is Apparent in All Dance”; “Aesthetic Value Belongs to All Forms of Dance”; “Dance Always Has Style”; “Meaning Depends on Context”; “Dance Is Both Art and Entertainment”; “Dance Is Often Used as an Educational Medium”; “Dance Is Used for Therapeutic and Healing Purposes”; “Dance Is a Source for Self-Knowledge and Human Development”; “Dance Often Intersects with Religion”; “Dance Is a Broad Category of Human Activity”; “Ritual Often Sustains Dance Practices”; “Dance Is a Theater Art” (Fraeligh and Hanstein 1999: 6-14). Having stating that she is using the ‘family resemblance’ concept, Fraleigh falls into the traps of generalisation and essentialism in her extended explanations of each defining factor of what ‘dance’ is—she describes criteria, and categories. Fraleigh says things such as “Dance is not just movement, but movement that has been created for some particular purpose” (Fraeligh and Hanstein 1999: 6); “Dance always has style [...] Style emerges from intention” (Fraeligh and Hanstein 1999: 8; italics in original); “Affective qualities are aesthetically distilled in dance” (Fraeligh and Hanstein 1999:
11); dance “is not competitive in essence” (Fraleigh and Hanstein 1999: 13); and “Dance is further contextualized as theater and often called art” (Fraleigh and Hanstein 1999: 14). These will not be de- and re-structured according to a Wittgensteinian method here, but should indicate the kinds of examples that contradict the ‘family resemblance’ concept. By succumbing to the “tendency to look for something common to all the entities which we commonly subsume under a general term” (Wittgenstein BB 17), Fraleigh has bastardised the concept—the point of which is to not delimit with a set of commonalities. The final nail in the coffin comes when Fraleigh writes that dance may become “the means for communication and art making, but its intrinsic character does not require this” (Fraleigh and Hanstein 1999: 14), which is surely the least Wittgensteinian of suggestions. In an attempt to sketch what should be a web of similarities (and differences), Fraleigh merely gives a list of analytic definitions for the word ‘dance’. Fraleigh seems to start with her own conception of ‘dance’ (admittedly she states that it “is a broad category of human activity [...] which evolves new forms” (1999: 13)), rather than with a number of examples with which to explore “their multifarious relationships” (Wittgenstein PI §66), and then moving onto another set of examples when will be found “many correspondences with the first group, but many common features drop out, and others appear” (Wittgenstein PI §66), and so on.

Wittgenstein’s Blue Book (1958) contains the following observation and comment:

The idea that in order to get clear about the meaning of a general term one had to find the common element in all its applications has shackled philosophical investigation; for it has not only led to no result, but also made the philosopher dismiss as irrelevant the concrete cases, which alone could have helped him to understand the usage of the general term.

(BB 19-20)
The secondary literature on Wittgenstein’s ‘family resemblance’ concept is wide-ranging and too difficult to encapsulate here (it is generally consigned to chapters or just part of a book, rather than being seen as warranting a whole tome in the way the Private Language problem does), and contains appraisals and objections—incoherency often being the main one, but this could be said to be a misunderstanding of Wittgenstein’s ‘method’. Whatever the philosophical objections to it, the ‘family resemblance’ concept is a useful, if not an altogether satisfactory, account of how words and phenomena can be classified and linked — if this is what we want to do to them — but one which cannot be used in every circumstance, for every concept. In summation of the ‘family resemblance’ concept, Hunter suggests that

the criterion of class membership [is] linguistic: anything is an X if the linguistic community routinely so describes it [...] If we did not have some way, apart from their resemblances, of setting the right objects before us, we would have no way of surveying them to find out if they have common features or family resemblances or whatever. If we choose objects because they have common features, or because they have family resemblances, it will be no discovery, but a foregone conclusion, that they are related in those ways.

(1985: 59)

This relates to such statements by Wittgenstein as “The meaning of a phrase for us is characterized by the use we make of it” (BB 65), which might be seen to undermine the ‘family resemblance’ concept. However, other things written by Wittgenstein allow for ambiguities (BB 58) and multiple ‘meanings’ for the same concept (PI §531-2).

The term ‘family resemblance’ as used by Wittgenstein has been taken up by many writers in the arts and studies of aesthetics, and “welcomed as a liberation, an acceptance which has by and large led to the abandonment of attempts to discover the essence of art” (Glock 1996: 35), or the search to define ‘beauty’ (see Wittgenstein LC 10). In writings on dance, it is used either often without explanation to indicate links between related artforms — “we can see that there is a family resemblance between the postmodern fairytale and the ballet fairytale” (Banes 1994: 281) —, or, seemingly ignored in discussion of beauty and ugliness in dance and the range of dance styles (see, for example, Mackrell 1997).
Wittgenstein is relevant to the discipline of writing and theorising about ‘dance’ (of whatever form) in ways much more closely related to the language used to describe ‘dance’. As Best (1974) has already demonstrated, Wittgenstein’s later philosophy offers more than just tangential strategies for looking at dance and the arts in general. Best writes of the position of his own book, *Expression in Movement and the Arts: a philosophical enquiry*, stating that “a viable theory of aesthetics can be constructed only from within a general philosophical position” (1974: xi-xii), and applies Wittgenstein to the enquiries into dance. What Best calls “underlying, misconceived presuppositions” (1974: xii) about a range of notions saturated then, as they still do, the dance and art world(s). His aim is to expose the fallacious and confused conceptions, including “the relationship of mind to body” (Best 1974: xii), that constitute the ‘philosophical’ grounding for many people in the arts. The importance for Best in doing this is intimated when he criticises a particular approach as “[projecting] the meaning of dance into a transcendent(al) realm”, thereby losing sight of the meaning being instead “somehow inextricably bound up with human interests and emotions” (Best 1974: xiv). Wittgenstein was also averse to what he termed, as early as 1918, “transcendental twaddle” (in Engelmann 1967: 11), or “what we would call in current parlance, bullshit” (Perloff 1996: 31). (Wittgenstein could be said to have held a somewhat transcendent(al) or mystical view, especially when parts of the *Tractatus* are considered, but he moved away from this conception.) The problems (“mysterious difficulties” (Wittgenstein *PO* 187)) of understanding the world, the questions presented by language yet not recognised as such, can often only be answered, Wittgenstein suggests, by people inventing something that no explanation seems able to remove. [… This] satisfies a longing for the supra-natural transcedental, for in believing that they see the ‘limits of human understanding’ of course they believe that they can see beyond it.

(Wittgenstein *PO* 187)

“One cannot separate the body and mind, nor the senses from the intellect, particularly in a field where the unendingly repeated jading of our organs calls for sudden shocks to revive our understanding” (Artaud 1970: 66).
Dance in the world, of the world. The "postmodernist world where television advertisements, posters and everyday communication reflect [the] dispersal of meaning and focus" (Adshead-Lansdale 1999: 14); Barthes' "infinite text" (1976: 36), which it is impossible to live outside of, not only when writing but when reading (in its many senses) and living in the world of constructed and constructing meaning(s).

A Random Note about the Writing in 'The First Unborn'

The writing in 'The First Unborn' is *écriture masculine*: undeniably (unashamedly?) masculine, although not to be read as anti-*écriture féminine*, in a sense. It takes some of the metrical and structural constraints of masculine poetry, and

The sentence left hanging: The same as an unfinished dance sequence?

Does such a thing exist?
Digital Dialogism: dance at the edge of language.

(The Prolegomenon to a Thesis on 21st Century Dance Writing.)
THE FIRST UNBORN

(An Epic Poem, the Spine to a Thesis on Dance and New Technology.)
In the writing in this thesis there is a reliance on concision (brevity; also cutting apart, division; from the Latin concidere to cut to pieces; also scindere to cut), and fragmentation (the act of fragmenting or the state of being fragmented; fragment: a piece broken off or detached; an incomplete piece; a scrap; a theme as well as a style of the writing and thinking). As there is incision and division, so too is there grafting, a series of scions affixed to a stock text. Implicit in the relationship of the scion and the stock is the point of union, the cut, the split, the rend, the scissura, it is with (con) scission. Writing is simply grafting/graph(ing). (Writing is graft (work), but it is also a “play of revelation and concealment” (Spivak in Derrida 1997: xlv).) In the etymological tree the roots of the words ‘graft’ and ‘graph’ are the same. The Greek word Graphein (to write) linked to grapheion (writing tool), off-shoots – by-passing gramma for letter (alphabetic unit) or weight, another route – to graffio and graffito (a little scratch; graffiti the marks made on walls and artefacts), a detour through graphite (the pencil), leads us to stilus (writing implement) – influencing the cutting implement, stiletto –, leads us (backwards) to stylus, which brings us to style. (Cf. ‘Type’ from typus figure, from tupos image, from tupein to strike.)

“Our investigation is therefore a grammatical one [...] for the process is sometimes like one of taking a thing apart” (Wittgenstein PI §90).
Style (the particular mode of orthography, punctuation, design, etc. followed in a book) is grafted to the content. Style is how it looks as much as how it reads. Words are symbols, pictures after all—something forgotten in the desire to give them a heightened importance: symbols. **Changes in font interrupt the flow of the reader**, alerting them to the act of reading, of looking. The reader has to work (graft) harder. Words ‘stand out’ from the page; punctuating the space of the page; black contrasting with the white. Words may be broken, fractured, cut up into syllables and phonemes. De-contextualised. This serves to alter their meaning, give them new aspects—like the Jentsch rabbit-duck picture. It increases the writer’s word-power by giving more meaning(s) per word. Perhaps. Fragmented words show ‘family resemblances’. As illustrated in the ‘de-constructive’ writings of Derrida, “the individual phonemes/graphemes constituting words are often evoked out into an independent dance” (Spivak in Derrida 1997: xlvi).

### In reading: seeing the picture of the word: “I saw the word fleetingly” — that is a special experience, it cannot be portrayed on film. (Wittgenstein *RPP* §590)
Style (a distinctive, formal, or characteristic manner of expression in words) is grafted to the content. Style is how it sounds as much as how it *reads*. Spoken words are symbols like pictures after all—something forgotten in the desire to give them a heightened importance: symbols. **Changes in intonation interrupt the flow of the listener**, alerting them to the act of listening, of hearing. The listener has to work (graft) harder. Words 'stand out' from the noise; punctuating the silence of space; sound contrasting with the silence. Utterances may be broken, fractured, cut up into syllables and phonemes. De-contextualised. This serves to alter their meaning, give them new aspects—like the Jentsch rabbit-duck picture. It increases the speaker's word-power by giving more *meaning(s)* per word. Perhaps. Fragmented words show 'family resemblances'. As illustrated in the 'de-constructive' writings of Derrida, the individual phonemes constituting spoken words are often evoked out into an independent dance (after Spivak in Derrida 1997: xlvi).
Style (the manner in which something is expressed or performed, considered as separate from its intrinsic content, meaning, etc.) is grafted to the content. Style is how it looks as much as what it *means*. Dances are *symbol* pictures after all—something forgotten in the desire to give them a heightened importance: symbols.

'I am the person who hits the right note. Ermy is my name, due to ermine hair and my resemblance to a wintry stoat.

What is your name? Where are you from and where must we go? I have a right to know these things if I am to accompany you there.'

'I agree, you are right to speak these pleas. And all will be answered soon, I promise, when we are set on our way to Hades.'

'But, what do you mean when you say all this? Please don't consider me discourteous, but why should I risk life in the abyss?'

'Again, the question is not impious, your concern for your self shows great esteem. And one more thing—my name is Orpheus.'

At the utterance of the last morpheme, Ermy fell to the floor like a moth caught by a flame it thought to be a moonbeam.

Changes in movement *interrupt* the flow of the audience, alerting them to the act of watching, of looking. The watcher has to work (graft) harder. Dances 'stand out' from the stage; punctuating the space of the stage; movement contrasting with the still. Dances may be broken, fractured, cut up into sequences and movements. De-contextualised. This serves to alter their meaning, give them new aspects—like the Jentsch rabbit-duck picture. It increases the choreographer's artistic-power by giving more *meaning(s)* per movement. Perhaps. Deconstructed dances show 'family resemblances'. As illustrated in the 'de-constructive' writings of Derrida, the individual movements constituting dances are often evoked out into an independent set of words (after Spivak in Derrida 1997: xlv).

"One might say that it is in its function of dismantling language that poetry has to operate, in order to express something beyond ordinary language—whether the effect of creation or revelation takes place as a disturbance, or ineffable enjoyment" (Benvenuto and Kennedy 1986: 119-20).
Orpheus was a prince, he had been taught; the poet whose voice denied the Sirens the bodies of all-but-one Argonaut.

And as Ermy genuflects, the room listens for the next words of the Thracian hero, somewhat embarrassed by the man's actions.

But the singer is silent, says zero, says nothing, until he puts his hand on Ermy's shoulder and whispers, 'Shall we go?'

The kneeling man stands as swift as a swan, shakes Orfeo's hand, then nods his reply and in a nanosecond they are gone, as a sea of faces waves goodbye.

Wittgenstein points out that, when we use a proper name, there often is no one description that we would be willing to equate with the name: we may have in mind several descriptions, different ones may come up at different times, and so on. Indeed, Wittgenstein has sometimes been taken to be suggesting that proper names operate by means of a 'cluster' of descriptions.

(Goldfarb in Tait 1997: 83)
(Words as things. The transmutation – transformation? transliteration? translation? transference? – from one word/concept to another is not always altogether satisfactory. Substitution. Replacement. Synonymisation [sic]. "The limit of language manifests itself in the impossibility of describing the fact that corresponds to (is the translation of) a sentence without simply repeating the sentence" (Wittgenstein CV/133; MS 110 61). (See Ayer 1990: 48ff.) "[Wittgenstein] might have added that poetry is the 'form of life' that shows this limitation most startlingly" (Perloff 1996: 199). The danger of the wrong word: What danger? Good writing/bad writing. (Ethics/Aesthetics.) "The choice of our words is so important, because the point is to hit upon the physiognomy of the thing exactly, because only the exactly aimed thought can lead to the correct track" (Wittgenstein PO 165; cf. CV/44; MS 117 225). Following a rule. Grammar.)

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Grammar.)
It could be said that writers, both wittingly and unwittingly, conceal things in their writing and in the act of writing (cf. Nietzsche BGE §289; see below). This allows the reader opportunities to find things out for themselves, often from other sources, sometimes by prompting a kind of self-asked and self-answered question. Indeed, it could be argued that the words (generally the product of writing) themselves are concealing and fluid, despite their apparent openness and transparency. It is as though the signs (words) do not point to anywhere in particular, while at the same time they prompt moves in certain directions. The prompts themselves are not always openly displayed—hidden signs, codes. (These highly simplified expressions of complex ideas have their links with the works of Charles Sanders Peirce, Ferdinand de Saussure, Jacques Derrida and Umberto Eco, among others. Generally un(der-)examined for the purposes of this thesis, but touched by the sprawling stolons of the research.) In this thesis, prompts are sometimes found in the contradictions set up between opposing viewpoints, or even in the so-called same viewpoints of people with superficially similar theories. This may be an example of hiding behind others' ideas. Or it may be a way of showing that there is no one answer or way.

The Tao Te Ching of Lao Tzu (1994) states: "The name that can be named is not the enduring and unchanging name."

It is very difficult to describe paths of thought where there are already many lines of thought laid down,—your own or other people's—and not to get into one of the grooves. It is difficult to deviate from an old line of thought just a little. (Wittgenstein Z §349)
A constant, yet often unacknowledged, element of philosophy is the 'question', because it is generally the 'answer' that is most important. Wittgenstein wrote: "In philosophy it is always good to put a question instead of an answer to a question" (RFM II §5), although it frustrated him that he asked "countless irrelevant questions" (CV 77e: MS 136 117a). This thesis asks questions, not because it is totally unsure about a subject and wants an answer, but because the question can get inside a problem and investigate it that way rather than explode it into a set of answers which may be an attempt to stop the investigation (yet, as we know, answers seldom offer the end to an argument). A question can provide clues about the asker's viewpoint and show their understanding of a problem.

For Wittgenstein, the question is not a humble assertion: it is another way of taking a wider look around [...] Some of Wittgenstein's own questions are commissions: commissions to think in new ways, to see clearly and synoptically, to see aspects yet unnoticed.

(Binkley 1973: 71)

SYN-OPTIC

"We have led ourselves to suppose that we somehow have to transcend the ordinary instead of just seeing more clearly" (Binkley 1973: 27).

Art is a re-structuring of the world to allow us to see things in a new way. The artist re-structures. Art is re-constructive, re-constitutive. A chemistry of signs: An alchemy turning the base elements of human existence into the gold of human culture.

The ordinary is re-framed, re-formed, re-focused by the context.

The process is a re-doing of an act. But it is also an un-doing, a de-construction (form) and deconstruction (content).

"I strive not after exactness, but after a synoptic view" (Wittgenstein §464).
[Re-think:
Re-word:
Re-form(ulate).
Re-(con)figure:
Re-phrase:

Plagiarise (see Laing 1990: 19).

Laung-uage.

Re-(contextual)ise:
Re-(de)sign(ify).
Re-present:
Re-reference: "When I think in language, there aren't 'meanings' going through my mind in addition to the verbal expressions:

the language is itself the vehicle of thought"

(Wittgenstein PI §329).

re- prefix 1. indicating return to a previous condition, restoration, withdrawal, etc.: rebuild; repair; retract; reunite. 2. indicating repetition of an action: recopy, reLarry.
The thesis is not based on an intention to present the *truth*. It is not even *a* truth, as such, but an opening up of thoughts in the reader, you, that hopefully will lead you, to a number of ‘truths’ that work for you. These truths may even be opposed to what you think you understand in the work presented here. That is a welcome response to this piece of writing. Wittgenstein states that “The *truth* of certain empirical propositions belongs to our frame of reference” (*OC* §83). Hans-Johann Glock writes:

The words ‘is true’ have a meaning or role only because human beings make, dispute and verify assertions; the concept of truth does not exist independently of our linguistic behaviour. But whether or not these assertions are true depends on how things are, because that is how we use the term ‘true’.

(1996: 368)

With a sense of irony, there is a nod to redundancy or deflationary theories of truth, and the Nietzschean killing of truth:

What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions—they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins.

(Nietzsche 1976: 46-7)

And as Nietzsche points out, when we are driven by the will to truth: “why not rather untruth? And uncertainty? Even ignorance?” (*Nietzsche BGE* §1; italics in the original). For Nietzsche “Truth is the kind of error without which a certain species of life could not live” (*WP* §493). He also wrote: “Truth is ugly. We possess art lest we perish of the truth” (*Nietzsche WP* §822; italics in the original).
Just as Wittgenstein has influenced this thesis in a number of ways, so too has Nietzsche, another German-language philosopher, although to not so great an extent (unless his anti-foundationalist influence on the last fifty years of the Twentieth Century in philosophy is counted, particularly his influence on writers such Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Richard Rorty; see Robinson 1999). Fraleigh describes Nietzsche as “the dancer’s philosopher” (1987: xxxi), influencing, among others, Isadora Duncan (alongside Walt Whitman and Jean-Jacques Rousseau: “the only dance masters [she] could have” (Duncan 1988: 62); Duncan’s book opens with a quotation from Thus Spoke Zarathustra, ‘The Seven Seals’, section 6) and Doris Humphrey (who, in The Art of Making Dances (1959) cites Nietzsche’s writings on the Ancient Greeks). His works are indeed peppered with references to dance and dancers, but it is not just his use of dance as an image and metaphor that is relevant to this thesis. His writing style(s) and radical anti-philosophy bias are of import too. The essay, ‘Nietzsche’s Voices’ by Ronald Hayman (1997), explains the modes in which Nietzsche set about writing his philosophy, and how we might approach the multiplicity of writing conventions. (See also Derrida 1978, for a less accessible essay on the subject of Nietzsche’s styles.) Nietzsche moves from poetry to aphorisms to philosophical prose to fictionalised philosophy. Like Wittgenstein, Nietzsche often wrote as and when the muse was with him, or when he had enough energy to manage to write. Nietzsche wrote notes on scraps of paper, as did Wittgenstein, and later pieced them together to form extended, yet often errant, works. His philosophy is put into the mouths of characters in his texts: Zarathustra the prophet (Nietzsche 1969) or the madman of Joyful Wisdom (Nietzsche 1960). And even when it isn’t, there is a sense that there is a monologue being written, a rhetorical argument, or what might be called “confidential discord and discourse” (BGE §289), or in other words, ‘a dialogue with himself’ (although not in the same way that Wittgenstein seems to ‘debate’ with himself). Nietzsche wears masks (a recurring theme in his works, see Nietzsche 1990), it could be said, when he writes: “Every philosophy,” he says, “also conceals a philosophy; every opinion is also a hiding-place, every word also a mask” (BGE §289; italics in original; cf. Wittgenstein BB 28).

Any true feeling cannot in reality be expressed. To do so is to betray it. To express it, however, is to conceal it. (Artaud 1970: 53; italics in original)
Canto 2: Some Exposition.

Ermy and Orpheus, like Yang and Yin, proceed to get their journey underway, and the latter lets his fable begin.

'Now Ermy, as I promised I would say, I will tell you the reason why we’re here and what occurred to cause me such dismay.

I had a love, Eurydice, my dear, a nymph so fair I had to marry her to prove to all that my love was sincere.

On our wedding night, one man did demur: the satyric, sylvan Aristaeus. But Eurydice, loyal and demure, denied him and declined his advances, at which he chased her to an anguine death, a snakebite which sent her to Tartarus.

It is to this place we must travel if I am to plead with Hades for her return, and bring her back to breathe an earthy breath.'

Ermy, not normally so taciturn, had listened intently to Orpheus, and knew there was still lots for him to learn.

'Why me?' he asked. 'How can I be of use? I feel a blank page when it comes to Hell, I've never even heard of Tartarus.'

'Ermy, you have much to offer, this I could tell when I first saw how your grey matter shone. You were the only volunteer as well.

I think I should give you a quick lesson on the mythical Underworld which lies past the river of sadness, Acheron.

Now, depending on who you analyse there are different orders to what comes then, or different names for the evil Erinnyes, the Keres, the Moeræ and the children of Night—Hypnos and his sib Thanatos, or Sleep and Death as they are known to men.
If every writer wears a mask, or a series of masks, and if every word is a mask, there is a challenge to the notion that the writer is expressing anything stable (part of the logocentric attitude): if we were to try to remove the mask, it is possible that there will be an unending succession of masks, an infinite Russian doll. The same is applicable to writing as it is to speaking. Language, in its many forms, is a mask that most persons wear. Logonomic rules are the “virtually mechanical” (Laing 1965: 95)

social dictates of which language-mask is worn at any given time. Masks (selves, identities, personalities, characters) are placed and replaced on and over previous masks. The writer, as for the speaker, ‘hides’ behind these masks, but can never be located as a fullness. Here we see an example of ‘the death of the author’ of Barthes (1977), the loss and recreation of identity through writing, a dissociative disorder, a schizoid disruption: “schizophrenic, as all literate men have been since the invention of the phonetic alphabet” (McLuhan 1962: 22), a self divided, disintegration of what is considered as a whole and its subsequent reintegration into a new form. As Christopher Horrocks writes: “In this paradigm, the primacy of a text’s meaning and possible interpretation is construed as an effect of a constant semiurgy: the mobilisation and reconfiguration of signs in endless combination with multiple effects” (2000: 28). If the word is a mask and the written word is a technology, is it appropriate to say that technology is a mask?

It is indeed becoming more and more difficult, even senseless, for me to write an official English. And more and more my own language appears to me like a veil that must be torn apart in order to get at things (or the Nothingness) behind it. Grammar and style. To me they seem to have become as irrelevant as a Victorian bathing suit or the imperturbability of a true gentleman. A mask. Let us hope the time will come […] when language is most efficiently used where it is being most efficiently misused.

(Beckett 1984: 171-2)

Ermy sits on the edge of his bed, and swings his white lead legs onto the mattress, lowering his cracked alabaster back onto the firm mattress. In his hand a copy of Alice in Wonderland. Ermy had begun the book the previous evening. He feels like the tardy, pink-eyed white rabbit as he rushes down the rabbit-hole into the surreal wonderland. He is intrigued by the questions of the Caterpillar:

"Who are you?" said the Caterpillar.
This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, "I—I hardly know, sir, just at present—at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."
"What do you mean by that?" said the Caterpillar sternly. "Explain yourself!"
A technology through which any human act is 'mediated' is a mask, a (sur)face, behind which there is no 'inner self', no true meaning to be uncovered. Each utterance, each inscription, each (pseudo-)linguistic expression is an outering of sense (see McLuhan 1962), but 'sense' in the mould of Derrida's 'trace'. (Here too are connections with McLuhan's extension theory, and its relative, the law of enhancement – or amplification – from his tetrad of media, which accentuates the metaphoric and linguistic, the rhetorical and grammatical (see Grosswiler 1998).) However, while there are superficial links between Derrida and McLuhan, they are opposed (at least in the latter's earlier writings) on the issue of "the primacy of speech over print and television" (Horrocks 2000: 28), or what Derrida calls, logocentricity (a form of idealism that assumes there is something beyond the text giving fixed meaning to the text). McLuhan makes provocations such as: "The interiorization of the technology of the phonetic alphabet translates man from the magical world of the ear to the neutral visual world" (1962: 18), which heads a section based on an 'anthropological' comparison by J.C. Carothers of non-literate Africans and literate Westerners. The reading is not carried out in the same way as Derrida's deconstruction of Lévi-Strauss (Derrida 1997), but rather as an appropriation of Carothers' assumptions and assertions. Without recounting these writers' arguments in full – another side-track – it is necessary to highlight them as having a bearing on this text.
People nowadays think, scientists are there to instruct them, poets, musicians etc. to entertain them. *That the latter have something to teach them*; that never occurs to them.

(Wittgenstein CV 42e: MS 162b 59v; italics in original)

This thesis is a poetic academic investigation (if this is not a contradiction in terms). Binkley writes that “Philosophy is more like poetry than it is like science or theology or lexicography” (1973: 28). “The language used by philosophers is already deformed, as though by shoes that are too tight,” (Wittgenstein CV 47e: MS 163 47v).

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I know the power of words. Seeming trifles that fall like petals beneath the heel-taps of dance. But man with his soul, his lips, his bones...

(Mayakovsky 1965: 412)

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Now Ermy feels like Alice, and wonders if we are not all like Alice. He wonders what it means to feel like someone. What is to 'feel' like yourself? Ermy thinks, 'I don't feel what it is to be myself; I just am myself.' "I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, sir," said Alice. "If I change, what is this change? What are the criteria for the identity of a person? I think it was Wittgenstein who said that—"because I'm not myself, you see."—Perhaps in the Blue Book. My body is what people recognize me by, and my voice. "I don't see," said the Caterpillar. "My body changes little from one day to the next—"I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly," Alice replied very politely, "but it can change over time; indeed it does—"for I can't understand it myself to begin with; and being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing."—"My hair is receding, perhaps, like a locked cliff. Only I can tell—"It isn't," said the Caterpillar. —You make my teeth jut more invisible to crowd, progressively, as a reaction to my hair's retreat—"Well, perhaps you haven't found it so yet," she said to Alice;—"Only notice these things—"but when you have to turn into a chrysalis—you will some day, you know—and then after that into a butterfly, I should think you'll feel a little queer, won't you?—"My ears respond to the cold as I approach winter and develop down, which thickens and lengthens.—"Not a bit," said the Caterpillar.—Brows drop and grow, soon to envelop my eyes, which never reflect, adap to the changing reflection in the mirror by making less distinct the image they convey to my brain or is it my brain misinterpreting the messages?—"Well, perhaps your feelings may be different," said Alice;—"This is not visible to you, only me. Muscles tighten and shrink, joints seize up and crack.—"all I know is, it would feel very queer to me."—Walking takes on a new meaning not just a way from here to there, but a measure of my body: stamina, strength, stability.—"You," said the Caterpillar contemptuously.—Canus asserts 'The body is king'.—"Who are you?—"Mina is Canute against the tide of time." Ermy begins to nod off, contemplating his body and person. He realizes, or decides, that they are one and the same thing. But what about his personality?
This thesis challenges any idea akin to the proposition: Poetic language is more advanced than any other form of language. What could be said to distinguish ‘poetry’ from other forms of language is that there are different grammatical rules and conventions, but there is no single definition of ‘poetry’ (instead, a family of poetic styles). The question ‘What is Poetry?’ remains unanswered, despite attempts to box it up in a neat defining package. The question should be, as Wittgenstein said: “How do we use poetry?” (LC 34). A purpose of poetry is to condense experience and belief into a near abstract collection of words, both meaningless and meaningful at the same time (which is what philosophy does too). “Do not forget that a poem, even though it is composed in the language of information, is not used in the language-game of giving information” (Wittgenstein Z §160), or, in other words, it takes ‘ordinary’ words and makes them strange by de- and re-contextualising them. Recent writings about language have suggested that ‘ordinary’ language is as ‘unordinary’ as the language of poetry; each has its peculiarities and irregularities, its uses and each is capable (without implying an autonomy which language doesn’t possess) of making its users vagarious, erroneous and erratic.

“Since poetry is in truth only a superior, more concentrated and intense life than what we live from day to day, like the latter it is composed of hyper-alive elements and moribund elements” (Marinetti 1913).
A poem works on a number of levels - it can be visual, aural, metaphorical, literal, clear or opaque - all at the same time. If you remove one element - the poetic structure, the poeticity - the poem changes from one thing into another, especially when the structure and form of it is central to its being. There is a reason why a poet writes a poem in a particular way, and this should not be overlooked when interpreting the poem, even when this is a matter of typographic structure. Anyone can re-write, re-word, re-structure a poem, but to do so is to miss the point of the poem—it is only that poem when it is seen or heard in a certain form. But in saying this is it not saying that any act of interpretation is a removal of the poem's 'central quality'? That depends on what you conceive the poem's 'central quality' to be. If it is to offer a (perhaps limitless) range of interpretations, then no. The multiple acts of (re-)interpretation (re-)affirm the poem's here-called 'central quality'—that which makes it a poem, the poem that it is, the poems that it is when read by different people. Wittgenstein discusses the questions: "How should poetry be read? What is the correct way of reading it?" (LC 4-5)—there is no one way of reading it, it depends on the poem, but each poem may have rules which help them to make sense, as it were, such as metre (rhythm). But if someone were to read a poem with a prescribed metrical pattern with the wrong rhythm, would that alter the meanings of the words that make up the poem?

"Ut pictura poesis" (Horace. Ars Poetica 1.361)

Compare with music. "A man may sing a song with expression and without expression. Then why not leave out the song—could you have the expression then?" (Wittgenstein LC29). Compare with dance. The object (subject) of this thesis.
Nietzsche writes, “For one cannot subtract dancing in every form from a noble education—to be able to dance with one’s feet, with concepts, with words: need I still add that one must be able to dance with the pen too—that one must learn to write?” (TI §7). Removed from the context of his criticism of the contemporary (to Nietzsche) German education system, the German people’s lack of understanding of nuance and crude and shallow ‘spirituality’, this is still an urgent call for the use of language in a way that ‘dances’ and thereby sends shudders through the reader. For Nietzsche, as for Wittgenstein and Derrida, writing is an aesthetic act: it is of the body, of the blood, of gesture, of sensation, of mood, of tone, of Stimmung.

Next, the river of lament Cocytus flows unto the Grove of Persephone which is guarded by bronze-tongued Cerberus.

Beyond this burns scalding Phlegethon, the river of fire fuelled by crimes of passion, which bemoans, through gates of chalcedony, Tartarus, the gaol of degradation in which Eurydice dwells, unaware of my plan to end her condemnation.

The Afterworld consists of otherwhere, like the rivers Lethe and Styx, and the Elysian Fields, but we won’t go there.

‘I still can’t see why you even need me,’ Ermy said, ‘you seem to have it sorted, and there is no way I can help, surely.’

At this, Orpheus dimly retorted, ‘My lucent friend, the gains are much too great and grave for this quest to be aborted.

My account was merely to educate you about the Hell of the Ancient Greeks, do you think that it’s the same to this date?

Hell doesn’t look like it does on antiques. No! It has altered like the Earth, and hence it is now controlled by computer geeks.
It may be poetic to say that dance is like poetry, and of course the reciprocal of this: poetry is like dance. If poetry abstracts and expresses the otherwise indescribable by means of language, employing a range of linguistic devices from metaphor, allusion, allegory, irony, simile and so on, then dance may be the non-linguistic analogue of poetry. (See Fraleigh 1987 e.g. p163.)

Behold the binary code that hides sense, the downwards spiral of the genome race, the propensity of humans for pretence.

Take the machines which move at quick'ning pace, the robots we entrust with human lives, and rubbish we call satellites in space.

The silicon utopian dream that thrives in valleys of the cerebral cortex of soulless technocrats with virtual wives,

who fantasise of having cyber sex with hardbodies, software and virus-free whores, while ENS makes their muscles flex—

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was, "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?"

"Come, we shall have some fun now!" thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking riddles.—I believe I can guess that," she added aloud.

"Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?" said the March Hare.

"Exactly so," said Alice.

"Then you should say what you mean," the March Hare went on.

"I do," Alice hastily replied; "at least—at least I mean what I say—that's the same thing, you know."

"Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter. "You might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see'!"

"You might just as well say," added the March Hare, "that 'I like what I get' is the same thing as 'I get what I like'!"

"You might just as well say," added the Dormouse, who seemed to be talking in his sleep, "that 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same thing as 'I sleep when I breathe'!"

"It is the same thing with you," said the Hatter, and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat silent for a minute, while Alice thought over all she could remember about ravens and writing-desks, which wasn't much.

And so Ermy eventually relaxes into sleep, thinking of ravens and writing-desks, or rather, not very much.
This thesis is academic in that it distils a number of thoughts and ideas by a range of thinkers, in the main writers, into a partially recognisable form that can be called a 'thesis'. A PhD thesis should be the result of 'original' research, and a coherent argument. Or be 'original' in its argument (the 'thesis' is the argument). But where does the originality come in this thesis? And where is its coherency when it is based on incoherency? Hopefully the originality comes in the way that the material is presented and combined (juxtaposed).

Wittgenstein wrote on the subject of being 'reproductive in his thinking', agreeing that he had "never invented a line of thinking but that it was always provided for [him] by someone else & [he did] no more than passionately take it up for [his] own work of clarification" (CV 16e: MS 154 15v). He concluded this paragraph by stating: "What I invent are new *comparisons*" (CV 16e: MS 154 15v).

Thus we can understand poetry is anarchic in as much as it questions all object relationships or those between meaning and form. It is also anarchic to the extent its occurrence is the result of disturbances leading us nearer to chaos.

(Artaud 1970: 31-2)
This thesis is multilayered, multifaceted, but there is no one satisfactory simile to describe it. It is not onion-like: the reader does not start at the outside and peel away the outside skin and through successive layers to reach the core. It is not linear in the traditional sense of linear, that is beginning at starting point and moving through a narrative or an argument to an end. It has, or rather is, a number of meta-texts (the term ‘metanarrative’ has associations to be avoided here) that can be read separately (from the ascribed beginning or, for the more adventurous, from any random point), or in conjunction with each other. An analogy with the thesis is that of the human being, the human body. But it is just an analogy, designed to enliven the description of the thesis’ structure; a tree might have served as well. As in the case of Nietzsche, these metaphors are not tangible images: they lead instead to the philological notion of interpretation [...] The body, as a relation of forces of the assimilated signs is an interpretative space.

(Blondel 1991: 205, 238)

This analogy has obvious difficulties, but it will be sketched out in terms of similarity, with a disregard for the differences. The body is not just part of the human being, it is the totality of the human being (themes arising from this statement and others like it will be explored throughout this thesis). Yet the body both is and is not generally viewed as a single unit: it is composed of parts, such as organs, skeleton, nerves. Some of these parts are essential to life, others are not so crucial (for example, a limb can be lost and the body would still be a living human being, and regarded, one might hope, as a person (again, a recurring theme for this thesis)). The parts of the human organism work together, usually, to the benefit of the person by maintaining life, without the need for much control or input from the person (besides the continued and successful obtainment of the necessary nutrients and other chemicals needed to sustain the body at a cellular level); the thesis is divided into parts, but each of them is linked to others, and it is self-sustaining, dependent only on the reader. The body is made up from a large number of tiny units, and it is sufficient here to start at the unit of the cell. The thesis, too, is multi-cellular, if letters can be seen as the cells. The cells (letters) are grouped into tissues (words; the body only has four basic types of tissue, which could be seen as similar to the divisions of words into classes, for example, nouns, verbs, adjectives and pronouns), which are then integrated into systems of organs (sentences).
The body of the text is made up of collections of sentences (paragraphs, sections, chapters), just as the body of the human is structured as a series of inter-linked systems. The human body cannot be said to have a beginning or an end, although it can be said to have boundaries (although even these are difficult to define at times). It can be described in a number of ways: for example, artistically, from different directions, from the ‘inside’, from the ‘outside’, macroscopically, microscopically, metaphorically, scientifically from a range of disciplines, and philosophically. As someone might say the body is multilayered, so is this thesis. But do not forget Wittgenstein’s question: “Is a bit of white paper with black lines on it like a human body?” (PI §364)

Cf. expressions such as 'written on the body', 'body as text', gestural language; the dancing pen. First line of 'Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough': "One must start out with error and convert it into truth." (Wittgenstein PO 119).

Dance and the Lived Body:
What other kinds of body dance? To talk of the dancing 'dead body' is absurd (or found in literature). 'Lived' to mean 'experienced' (in the present)?

A Descriptive Aesthetics:
'Aesthetics' implies description. Is dance the 'descriptive aesthetics'? Or the 'lived body'? Is the book an attempt to outline a way of describing? The "descriptive method of phenomenology, which aims for an exact simplicity" (Fraleigh 1987: xiii). Does it ever manage this? What does 'exact simplicity' mean? Fraleigh claims to "avoid (or explain) the technical language [surely, languages] of phenomenology, dance, and aesthetics" (Fraleigh 1987: xiii).

"Dance is in essence an embodied art" (Fraleigh 1987: xiii): what does this mean? It means that a person does it.

Wittgenstein, Z §326: The concept of a living being has the same indeterminacy as that of language.

"To experience the dance is to experience our own living substance in an aesthetic (affective) transformation" (Fraleigh 1987: xvi). WHAT?
"To express the dance is to express the lived body in an aesthetic form" (Fraleigh 1987: xvi). WHAT?
"The body, understood in its lived totality, is the source of the dance aesthetic" (Fraleigh 1987: xvi). WHAT?
"It [the body] is not simply the physical instrument of dance, nor is it an aesthetic object as other objects of art are. The essential reduction and significance of dance lies in this distinction: I am embodied in my dance; I am not embodied in my painting. The painting is separated from me; it is, finally, out there in front of me, but my dance cannot exist without me. I exist my dance. Yet it is also true that we are embodied in all of our actions - or more properly that we enact our embodiment in all of our projects. All performing artists are embodied in their art, but the dancer most clearly represents our expressive body-of-action and its aesthetic idealization" (Fraleigh 1987: xvi). WHAT?
"Thus the art of dance draws upon the meanings we attach to our bodily enacted as a whole, as these may be made to appear in the moment. Its main material, its medium, is human motion - and its opposite." (Fraleigh 1987: xvi). WHAT?
Etc. etc. ad nauseum...
Our collective embodiment... the personal and the universal body... dance celebrates embodiment... What do these expressions mean?
Canto 3: Preparing for the Journey.

The focus is now not on one but two,
but consider them as inseparable,
like the body-mind whole that I call ‘you’;

a cypher that is indecipherable;
a gyring thought ravelled in a gyrus;
a composite poet: Dante-Virgil

who will lead us into our Tartarus
and show us things that we have never seen.
Like Jesus resurrecting Lazarus

our guides will revive thinkers who have been
dead for years, gather up their scattered parts
and repair them like a broken machine.

They'll be taunted and haunted by Descartes’
ghost, which resides in our everyday words.
(And this is sort of where the story starts.)

Many of the names we may not have heard,
the idea-paths may at first seem uphill,
but Orpheus will remain undeterred.

So must we if we are not to get ill.
Do not lay down all hope at hell’s arched gate,
or like this canto we'll reach a standstill.

This tale of Orpheus is inchoate,
and for Ermy an obscure world draws near
where words and images will obfuscate.

One last stanza to try to make things clear—
in this realm there is no real, anything
at all can happen in an epopoeia.

(And I mean, virtually anything.)
The spine of the thesis is an epic poem: 'The First Unborn'. It supports the thesis as the vertebrae in animals support the torso and head. It has a top (a start) and a bottom (a finish, of sorts), and is a composite of parts, segmented and flexible with a limited range of movement. It is composed according to different stylistic (literary) conventions. Like the spine it has other supporting structures and organs hanging off it. The backbone is also the conduit for the spinal cord, part of the central nervous system, extension of the brain, which gives rise to the numerous pairs of spinal nerves (31 in humans) that radiate outwards to the peripheral nervous system and all the visceral and somatic parts of the body. In the thesis there are quotations and references which are like the nerves, spreading out from the central nervous system to the peripheral regions. In the human body, nerve information is capable of being sent in both directions; in the thesis, links can work both ways too.

"The pleasure of the text is that moment when my body pursues its own ideas—for my body does not have the same ideas I do" (Barthes, 1976: 17).
Part One: Brainstorm

Canto 1: The Journey Begins.

'Fasten your seatbelt,' Orpheus urges,  
'this could be a bumpy ride to the land  
where lightsome life with dense death converges.'

As fast as bits down coax, Ermy and  
Orpheus drive the info superhighway,  
 cyber-strangers in a strange-cyberland.

'We are searching for a great soul who may  
be able to help us on our journey,'  
says Orpheus to his new protégé.

'Do you know where to find him?' asks Ermy.  
'Indeed I do. His spirit, if I can  
call it that, is now in purgatory.'

'Why is he there if he was a great man?  
I thought that was a place of suffering,  
am limbo before you go to heaven.'

'I believe it was his own requesting  
that took him there, and keeps him in a state  
of flux, a perpetual teetering  
on the thorny-hedged edge of death's estate,  
from where he can just see the other side;  
and at this point he can meditate  
on the unknown nature of this divide.  
He will show that life and death intertwine,  
just as is proved by any suicide  
who is internally internecine.  
So before our quest can really begin,  
we must jump to the side of Wittgenstein—

The shallow yellow sunlight leaks through the gaps around Ermy's deep red velvet curtains, and hits his closed eyes like a gently lapping wave. Ermy is unencumbered of his slumber, and begins to wake up. Coming round he becomes aware of the bed against his body, his knaggy neck, hyperventilating slightly, an irritation on the dehydrated skin of his leg, throbbing creaking arthritic knuckle, a burn of cardialgia, tender kidneys and the need to urinate, heart-pumping-blood-humming-in-his-head, sticky mucosity of his mouth, dry lips and swollen tongue, grumbling borborygmus, a blocked nostril, and countless other sensations which seem amplified in the first few moments after waking, but which subside during the day into the background of what we might call awareness, or consciousness, or being. His first thought is a song-fragment commingled with his reading from the night before, distorted and reworked. "It tortures me to move my hands—The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this—to try to move at all—but all he said was, 'What is the mind?'"
The other parts of the thesis (including this one), are potentially analogous to other parts of the body, but at an extreme and laborious stretch. The thesis is to be viewed as a whole which is capable of being dissected and divided, and laid out in parts that can function independently for only so long in isolation (this is not altogether unique to this thesis; many things may be lacking in some way when taken out of context). A heart will beat when removed from the body for a short time. After that, it is still a heart in some senses, but just dead flesh in others. It is still seen as a human organ and treated accordingly (this treatment varies from culture to culture), but it is no longer the blood pumping organ of a body. It may represent a person, but it isn’t a person.

Now all that Ludwig feels is the rent in his right side, poker-hot metal burning layers of cloth, before scorching through skin.

The shard of shrapnel is not discerning and cuts its way through the colon, searing mesenteric artery, shattering the lumbar vertebra, and exploding fatally like a firework of fuchsirn. The fragment’s force sends the rag doll dancing choreic choreography in carmine and khaki, until it ends its sad spin with sandbag wall, stuffing gone and sanguine...

The last thing Ludwig feels is the rent in his right side, poker-hot metal burning layers of cloth, before scorching through skin—

Ermy throws back the covers and without thinking, comes to sitting with his feet on the floor, thoracic spine hunched, head pulling his neckskin into a curious curve, and cracking like a nut the cervical vertebrae. Ermy winces, and exhales his discomfort. He wiggles his fingers, ‘by... what wiggles my soul? He smiles for the first time, casting his eyes downwards into his cheekbones. Now his routine begins.

Sat once again at the desk where his computer is, Ermy is in full flow.
We talk of [mental] processes and states and leave their nature undecided. Sometime perhaps we shall know more about them—we think. But that is just what commits us to a particular way of looking at the matter. For we have a definite concept of what it means to learn to know a process better [...] And now the analogy which was to make us understand our thoughts falls to pieces. So we have to deny the yet uncomprehended process in the yet unexplored medium. And now it looks as if we had denied mental processes. And naturally we don’t want to deny them.

(Wittgenstein PI §308)

There is a problem in trying to deny that we, humans, have not got what we call ‘minds’. In saying that, it is necessary to use the word ‘mind’ while at the same time attempting to remove it from the equation. And of course, most people will say that they know that they have a mind, although when pressed cannot tell you exactly how they know, or what the mind is and how it works, but they are certain all the same, that it exists. However, philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and Dewey set aside the notion of ‘the mind’ common to Descartes, Locke, and Kant — as a special subject of study, located in inner space, containing elements or processes which make knowledge possible.

(Rorty 1980: 6)
But why should we want to set it aside? Isn’t that tantamount to denying it? We do not deny that we have (are) a body, although if we were bloody-minded enough we could re-start the debate with an idealist, Berkeleian denial that there is anything material that we actually experience, including our bodies. But there is no longer a serious need (or room) for such a philosophical standpoint. There is still, it seems, a stubborn refusal by some philosophers and many people to let go of the question of the ‘mind’ and its relationship to the ‘body’.

Alice, however, proceeds to get tangled up in the distorted logic and linguistic play of the tea party guests, just as before. She doesn’t notice that each statement she makes takes her into an ever complex series of questions and problems. In her naivete she opens her mouth and speaks what perhaps she should have kept to herself. Her belief that she can answer the riddle is transformed into a spoken sentence made up of ambiguous words. What is her belief? How does she believe that she can guess? The March Hare asks her to synomnyze her utterance. Is ‘believing’ the same as ‘thinking’? Is ‘guessing’ the same as ‘finding out an answer’? The March Hare and Mad Hatter disagree with Alice that in her saying one thing, she can mean another. But what do they mean when they say that she should say what she means? Does their use of the word imply that the meaning of what she says lies separate to the words that she speaks? It is almost as though beyond the spoken words, hidden somewhere, is a distinct thing to be signified in a specific way, but which is capable of being mistaken for another, almost identical thing. I can say what I mean, but not mean what I say—if I am meaning to be deceitful, say. Here ‘to mean’ implies that I have an objective, a reason for using the words that I say. But for Alice there is no objective like this. She is merely expressing that in her opinion she can solve a riddle, because she has had some experience of this in the past. Why did Carroll italicise the word ‘said’? Why did he not use the word ‘asked’? Or any other word denoting a question? The riddle, as the Hatter puts it, is rhetorical; it is not for answering. She just assumes that it is, through relating the form of the phrase as she hears it to the form of previously heard riddles.

[Rules of language-games]

See Blue Book p.27
Canto 2: Section 432.

Just beyond, as Orpheus had outlined, a man in uniform, like St Vitus dancing, with a calm visage well-defined.

As in slow-mo, movements anfractuous and anguished, are soothed and brought to a close by the larynx and lyre of Orpheus.

Wittgenstein, sinking into a repose, opens his eyes, and with poise and great grace he lifts a lissom limb, a long-stemmed rose, to wipe the dirt and the sweat from his face, as furrowed as a field. He caught his breath before entreating of the man from Thrace,

‘Who are you that has stopped my dance of death? What reasons have you for intervening my afterlife's task of nocturnal depth?’

‘I am Orpheus,’ said the prince, leaning with an outstretched hand, ‘and this is Ermy. We’re here to learn about use and meaning.

And to know if you feel the same as me. And to challenge some age-old conceptions about thought, and what happens when we see.

We need to understand sense perceptions, the language of experience, and more about psychological descriptions.

There is much to learn about metaphor, and language in general—its power of illusion over the philosopher.

“Metaphors are the means by which the oneness of the world is poetically brought about” (Arendt 1973: 164).
However, we will not attempt to prove or advance any theories—'Gott helfe mir!
Why do you need me? It sounds as though you've already done most of the hard work here,' interrupted Wittgenstein, 'I advise that you think no more, it makes nothing clear and can be a dangerous enterprise.'
'And this is why we need you to guide us. To reach our goal we must philosophize on things about which you are dubious, or rather, inquisitive as to why we have become tangled,' said Orpheus.
'Trapped like, what was it you once said? A fly in a bottle? My love, too, is trapped in the Underworld. We can revivify Eurydice and save her from ruin, as long as we are able to reach her ere the last nail is put in her coffin.

We need you to make sure we do not err.'

"Truth sits upon the lips of dying men" (Matthew Arnold Sohrab and Rustum, 1.656).
Canto 3: On Philosophy.

'First things first,' said Wittgenstein, 'We must do away with all explanation, instead description must take its place. I'll show you how by misusing words we are misled. If you talk of thinking as a mental activity that goes on in your head,

I would say, that is metaphorical. We speak in words that need to be brought back from a use that is metaphysical.

I will try to keep you on the right track with questions that shake the ideal you can never get outside of, you must turn back.

A picture holds us captive, a trapan which lies in our language, repeated there inexorably, to entrap human beings in a kind of linguistic snare. We must battle against our bewitchment by means of language and the vacant stare of an introspection experiment.

As we dissect language, sharper is the conflict between it and our requirement, which is at risk of becoming empty as the conflict becomes intolerable. The actual use of language cannot be interfered with by philosophy; all it can do in the end is describe it. A question can be unanswerable, 'natural language'. (Much work and hypothesising has been done on first language acquisition, including the work of Roman Jakobson, Noam Chomsky and Roger Brown, and hypotheses with such names as the bioprogram hypothesis, critical period hypothesis, innateness hypothesis and the language instinct. There can be limited discussion of it here. See Akmajian et al 1990 and Trask 1999, for an introduction and summary.)

Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) and much of his later work is centred around an examination of the use of language, words and concepts in philosophy and how this conflicts with our usual usage of these concepts. From around 1932 onwards Wittgenstein developed an analogic picture of language as a game (taking chess as his initial model, but expanding to reference other games and activities). He coined the phrase 'language-game' (*Sprachspiel*), to describe the ways language works - how we 'play' with words - in our interactions with other human beings; and it is through these 'games' that children learn their first (and arguably most subsequent) words (Wittgenstein 1953, 1958 and 1967)—their
This is a thesis about the divisions (and difficulties) brought about through language; both philosophical and everyday, or what Locke called the ‘civil’ use of words (Essay III.ix.3), and demonstrated in mind-body dualism and its insidious influence on Western languages, and even in the linguistic distinctions between (and conceptual implications of) such lexations as ‘human being’ and ‘human body’. In particular, the concept and the problem of ‘Private Language’ underscores, in a way, the following thesis. The term is a relatively new phrase in philosophy, but its roots are in the 17th Century writings of the dualist Descartes, the materialist Hobbes, and the empiricist Locke. As an extended (yet still brief) outline of a ‘traditional’ account of how language works, John Locke will serve as an example. (Another example might be the Port-Royal theory of grammar and language of Antoine Arnauld and Claude Lancelot, from c.1660.)

\[\text{See Wittgenstein PI \S 533}\]

Of course language has uses other than that of ‘communication’ between two or more people; it can be used to help oneself understand something, or clarify something, or remember something (see 2 \S 329). And here is where problems of ‘private language’ come in: “the problem of how words mean [...] what a rule of language is” (Rhees 1970: 55); “how language is related to inner experiences” (Malcolm in Fann 1967: 181).

The whole point of a language is to communicate. As the Mexican historian and translator Miguel Leon-Portilla has put it, “In order to survive, a language must have a function.” A language spoken by one person, or even a few hundred, is not a language at all. It is like a child’s secret code.

(Malik 2000: 16)

\[\text{Cf: Wittgenstein PI \S 139}\]
In his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Locke 1975; first published 1690; herein referred to as *Essay*), Locke held that words exist to convey ‘Ideas’ and signify these ‘Ideas’ in our own ‘Minds’. ‘Ideas’, in a Lockean sense, are:

"whatasoever is the object of the understanding when a man thinks" (Locke *Essay* I.i.8; this definition rests on a system of thought derived from Descartes, but it is not necessary to go into the similarities and differences here). These ‘ideas’ come to us through experience (Locke denied any sort of ‘innate idea’), via our senses and sensations, although this is not the only way, as in the case of “doubting, believing, reasoning, knowing, willing” (Locke *Essay* II.i.4) and other so-called internal experiences; for Locke, Thinking was the Mind turning “its view inwards upon it self” (Locke 1975: 226; *Essay* II.xix.1). In this ‘traditional’ view of language and thoughts, to explain it in a highly simplified form, words and speech are seen as being attached to objects in our minds which we all have and access when we use or hear the word (compare the Platonic notion that there exist ‘ideals’ independent of our minds). These meanings are consensual and stand for ‘nominal essences’ (see Locke *Essay* III.iii.15ff) which support the language we speak, and therefore the nature of the knowledge we share. The whole process is demonstrated when someone makes up a new word (see Locke *Essay* III.vi.44ff), whereby they connect an utterance to something that they have observed (as outlined above, either in the world through the senses, that is ‘Sensation’, or ‘in themselves’ as “the operations of [their mind]” (Locke *Essay* II.i.4), what Locke calls ‘Reflection’). Each word that exists has a ‘proper signification’ which needs to be passed on to other people through communication (see Locke *Essay* III.vi.51). Or as Wittgenstein explains the traditional, message model of linguistic communication:

[Wittgenstein] should like to say: you regard it too much as a matter of course that one can tell anything to anyone. That is to say: we are so much accustomed to communication through speech, in conversation, that it looks to us as if the whole point of communication lay in this: someone else grasps the sense of my words—which is something mental: he as it were takes it into his own mind.

(Wittgenstein *PI* §363)
What this thesis would like to urge is expressed by Wittgenstein when he writes:

Sometimes you have to take an expression out of the language, to send it for cleaning, — & then you can put it back into circulation.

(CV 44e: MS 117 156)

Philosophy is the uncov’ring of bumps that the understanding has got by banging its head against the limits of language. Of course we want to clarify, and clarify completely, but this means that problems should disappear completely.

Blow up the house of cards to smithereens!

It is not considered possible that a total re-shaping of the language will take place in the light of any ‘new’ philosophy — it would be hypocritical to expect it to, and even more so to back a full-scale adoption of a new conceptual framework — a clean up is needed. Wittgenstein wrote:

At present we are combatting a trend. But this trend will die out, superseded by others. And then people will no longer understand our arguments against it; will not see why all that needed saying.

(CV 49e: MS 126 64r)

The point is that these frameworks are unstable, as is the language on which they are built. There is a danger in believing that what seems like a viable proposition today will be so in the future. How is it that we can proceed taking this into account? There is no easy way of generating a new language that can guarantee an unproblematic raft of concepts on which it floats (see Wittgenstein PI §492). There is also the risk of simply talking the ‘old language’ in a new way:

perform it afresh so to speak in a manner that suits our times. In doing so you really only reproduce [...] What I mean is not however giving an old style a new trim. You don’t take the old forms & fix them up to suit today’s taste. No, you are really speaking, maybe unconsciously, the old language, but speaking it in a manner that belongs to the newer world, though not on that account necessarily one that is to its taste.

(Wittgenstein CV 68-9e: MS 134 133; italics in original)

Language is purpose-built like a building (and as Wittgenstein talks of architecture in this context, it can imitate past styles), yet it is built up over time like a city with everyday language the central winding alleyways of the old town, surrounded by the newer, more ordered suburbs—the languages of science and other specialised activities (see PI §18 and BB 81). Language is constantly changing (at an almost imperceptible rate).
Canto 4: The World Through New Eyes.

Orpheus and Ermy stand in silence, as Wittgenstein continues his lecture, "What we do is not some sort of science, philosophy, like doing architecture, is more work on one's own conception, on how one sees things. We can't conjecture turbulently, convince through deception. We seek perspicuity, a world-view made of connections from its inception.

Everything should lie open to view, what is hidden is of no interest. And let us forget about "false" and "true", for the truth of a statement is the test of my understanding of the statement. It is what human beings say that is true and false. We have form of life agreement. If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement.

This thesis is not the work of a scientist. It is not intended to be a "scientific" work. There are no proofs or theorems to be tested as right or wrong. (There is an emphasis here on asking questions rather than giving answers.) When theories are propounded, it is not an attempt to prove or disprove them, but to open them up and look at them from different directions: "Philosophy is not a choice between different 'theories'" (comment attributed to Wittgenstein, cited in Perloff 1996: 18). Science can display its own form of logocentrism, as in the term used by Ludwig Klages, characterised by a mechanistic and rational attitude, "which is indifferent or hostile to everything living and vibrant" (Mautner 1997: 327; cf. Nietzsche WP §§554 and 555). If science is about facts and truths, then this thesis is philosophy in a Wittgensteinian sense: it is about meanings. It is about human experience and a description of that experience from a subjective point of view. Binkley, in his study of Wittgenstein's language, writes "Philosophical descriptions, like aesthetic descriptions [...] ways of looking" (1973: 55).

Scientific terminologies are difficult to employ, especially to a non-scientist or a lay-scientist. They carry so much weight that to apply them can add credibility to a thesis, but to misapply them can cause serious damage to the structure of an argument. This is often not considered of what we call everyday, or common terms. But, in using certain words and phrases we can lead ourselves into difficulty without realising it. Take for granted any term, scientific or common, and apply it as though it is unquestionable and correct is to neglect to consider its etymology, its usage, its meanings, its ability to confuse. As an example, Rom Harré writes: "I am inclined to think that one could show, step by step, that the 'cognitive' entities and processes cognitive scientists propose are either disguised presentations of prescriptive..."
According to ‘traditional’ views a person is able “to think either in terms of a private vocabulary with its private meanings or to think by means of the private meanings of words that also have a common meaning in virtue of being part of a public vocabulary” (Saunders and Henze 1967: 4). Locke wrote:

Any words will serve for recording. As to the first of these, for the recording our own thoughts for the help of our own memories, whereby, as it were, we talk to ourselves, any words will serve the turn. For since sounds are voluntary and indifferent signs of any ideas, a man may use what words he pleases to signify his own ideas to himself: and there will be no imperfection in them, if he constantly use the same sign for the same idea: for then he cannot fail of having his meaning understood, wherein consists the right use and perfection of language.

(Essay III.ix.2)

Even in some of Wittgenstein’s early writing we see possible evidence of this sort of thinking:

The world is my world: this is manifest in the fact that the limits of language (of that language which alone I understand) mean the limits of my world.

(TLP §5.62; italics in original)
However, debate rages over the translation and the sense of the clause in the parentheses. Jaakko Hintikka believes it is clear "that a correct translation of the words in the brackets [der Sprache, die allein ich verstehe] is 'the only language that I understand'" (Hintikka in Copi and Beard 1966: 157; Hintikka's chapter 'On Wittgenstein's 'Solipsism', Copi and Beard 1966: 157-61, discusses the particular form of 'solipsism' used by Wittgenstein in the Tractatus), which removes the strong implication of a private language. David Keyt also discusses the problems presented by this passage (especially with regards to Wittgenstein's 'solipsism'), outlining the arguments of Anscombe -- "of the language that only I understand" (1959: 167) -- and Stenius -- "which is the only language I understand" (1960: 221) --, and while most native German speakers prefer Stenius' translation, Keyt notes, "The most conservative conclusion that one can draw is that the parenthetical remark is genuinely ambiguous, in which case the proper translation could be settled only by a word from the master himself [Wittgenstein, that is]" (in Copi and Beard 1966: 301 fn.). Brian McGuinness (the translator of the §5.62 quoted above), "no longer believes that there is a reference to a private language at 5.62" (in Copi and Beard 1966: 141 fn.). The 'private language' argument is wrapped up in the philosophical concept(s) of 'solipsism': the view that only oneself exists, or the problem of other minds, or whether other things (that is creatures, or perhaps in certain debates machines) have an 'inner life', a mind as humans do. In relation to language, "It seems to a solipsist that I have to learn what words refer to by connecting them with items of my own experience" (Squires in Honderich 1995: 838).

See Ayer (1990) on behaviour as a counter-argument to solipsism of Wittgenstein on behaviour.
When Wittgenstein writes: “When I think in language, there aren’t ‘meanings’ going
not only of definitions but of judgments also. What determines our judgment, our concepts and reactions, of
course, is not what one man is doing now, or an individual action, but the hurly-burly of human actions, or
the background against which we see any action. We see life as a weave, made with one pattern interwoven with many
others. The conceptual world we live in, is not always complete, but patterns appear almost the same, recurring with
variations. The actions of humans as they are all mixed up together demonstrates to us how language functions.

thought is, it is only the use we put the word to that helps us with what it ‘means’. It has different meanings in different sentences: “I thought it was raining”; “I thought about you the other day”; “I had the exact same thought”; “I thought for ages about what I should do”; “I thought of the answer to the question”; etc.) The memory-image or imagination-image is not carried by language, we think. It is like a picture of the person’s face. But as Wittgenstein notes in a series of remarks collected and printed in Zettel (1967; §§621-655), it is not a picture yet the experiences of seeing a picture and ‘seeing’ an imagination-image are linked by language-games that “are radically different—but [which] hang together” (Z §625). To see a picture it helps to have our eyes open, to ‘see’ an image it often helps to shut our eyes (see Wittgenstein Z §626).

“A picture is not worth a thousand words, or any other number. Words are the wrong currency to exchange for a picture” (Davidson 1984: 263).
Many of the terms most used by humans to describe themselves and their experience are based on age-old beliefs, that may or may not still be held, but which nevertheless have shaped our view of the world and what we are. Cross-culturally these things are often different (see Wierzbicka 1999), which should indicate that there is no inherent right or wrong in our languages, and therefore in what makes us human. Western science is now considered the benchmark for proving what is correct about the world, and has gone some way into unlocking the so-called secrets of life, but other cultures and other scientific methods come up with theories which may or may not be provable (or disprovable) by western science. For example, take the human mind. This is a long-contested concept: what is the mind? Is it a separate spirit-like thing attached to a body? Is it part of the brain? Is it an epiphenomenal property of brain processes? Does it even exist at all? How does it work? What happens when one person thinks that they have one kind of mind, and another person thinks their mind is something different? Each person feels as right as the other, and it makes little difference to their ability to control their bodies. A. J. Ayer writes: “It should be clear, [...] that there is no philosophical problem concerning the relationship of mind and matter, other than the linguistic problems of defining certain symbols which denote logical constructions in terms of symbols which denote sense-contents” (1990: 132). If we can accept for just a short while that there is no such thing (no substance) as the mind, but that there is a linguistic concept (or number of them) we can use in certain situations, we can begin to understand that so many of our ‘ways of describing’ are what shape us, and not the other way round—but, it must be added that language is not considered as the only shaper of our experience of the world. It prompts many fundamental questions, or rather, questions about fundamentals: “If I don’t have a mind, as I was led to believe, then what am I?”
In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein wrote:

*The limits of my language mean the limits of my world.*

The notion that language is important to shaping the world of experience, first laid by Wittgenstein and Benjamin Lee Whorf (1956), is particularly clear at the core of his thesis. Whorf writes:

It was found [through linguistic study] that the background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade [...] We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds—and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds.

(1956: 212-3)

The use of the word 'mind' should not be viewed with prejudice, although it is tempting to balk at its mention following the expressions above. As will be discussed elsewhere, certain words are not totally unusable, just to be used with caution, used, as Wittgenstein might say, as tools. We must be careful not to become muddled:

we are tempted to say 'the mechanism of the mind must be of a most peculiar kind to be able to do what the mind does'. But here we are making two mistakes. For what struck us as being queer about thought and thinking was not at all that it had curious effects which we were not yet able to explain (causally). Our problem, in other words, was not a scientific one; but a muddle felt as a problem."

(Wittgenstein *BB* 5-6)

What Wittgenstein prompts us to do is not look for something beyond the word which is not there (see also Feyerabend 1993). Just as the word 'mind' has its uses, so too do other words that present us with such muddles.

I have been trying in all this to remove the temptation to think that there 'must be' what is called a mental process of thinking, hoping, wishing, believing, etc., independent of the process of expressing a thought, a hope, a wish, etc.

(Wittgenstein *BB* 41)
Wittgenstein gives us a rule of thumb:

If you are puzzled about the nature of thought, belief, knowledge, and the like, substitute for the thought the expression of the thought, etc. The difficulty which lies in this substitution, and at the same time the whole point of it, is this: the expression of belief, thought, etc., is just a sentence;—and the sentence has sense only as a member of a system of language; as one expression within a calculus.

(Wittgenstein BB 42)

Approaches such as extreme linguistic relativity hypotheses, and even Wittgenstein's rule of thumb are potentially scary. They risk reducing everything (human actions, the world) down to language, words (or worse: nothing). Paul Feyerabend writes:

... concentration on language alone, or on 'texts', can easily lead into absurdity, as is shown by Austin and by the practice of deconstruction: on the one hand philosophers produce texts, like poets; on the other hand they take it for granted that their texts reveal a reality beyond the thoughts, impressions, memories, figures of speech, etc., etc. from which they arose. (Scientific realists to a certain extent share in this predicament.)

(1993: 210)

Anyone who has suffered severe pain and tried to describe the experience to a friend or to the doctor often finds themselves at a loss for words. [...]

The reason for this difficulty in expressing pain experience, actually, is not because the words do not exist. There is an abundance of appropriate words, but they are not words which we use often. There is another reason: the words may seem absurd. We may use descriptors such as splitting, shooting, gnawing, wrenching or stinging, but there are no 'outside', objective references for these words. If we talk about a blue pen or a yellow pencil we can point to an object and say 'that is what I mean by yellow' or 'the colour of the pen is blue'. But what can we point to to tell another person precisely what we mean by smarting, tingling, or rasping? A person who suffers terrible pain may say that the pain is burning and add that 'it feels as if someone is shoving a red-hot poker through my toes and slowly twisting it around'. These 'as if' statements are often essential to convey the qualities of the experience.

(Melzack and Wall 1996: 36-7)

We could move into the idea that single signs (words) do not signify. Of course, you say, that individual words have meaning, but the point, as stated above, is more that they only have meaning as part of a language which provides a context for them and a system of rules for their use (see Wittgenstein PI §43 and BB 42, quoted above). Whorf too says something similar: "Sense and meaning does not result from words or morphemes but from patterned relations between words or morphemes" (Whorf 1956: 67); and "Apparent isolations of words in a vocabulary list also derive what meaning they have from the patterned 'potentials of linkage,' which ramify from them and connect them with complex patterns of linguistic formulation" (Whorf 1956: 67fn.4).
When describing human behaviour, for example "pain", the behaviour and outside occasion belong together.

How do I know you have pain in your hand? What is it to know I have pain in mine? How do words refer to sensations? And do I mean that we can only define pain in terms of behaviour? For what of toothache, which some call a private pain?

Let us now ask: 'Can a human body have pain?' One is inclined to say: 'How can the body have pain? The body in itself is something dead; a body isn't conscious!'...it is as though we saw that what has pain must be an entity of a different nature from that of a material object; that, in fact, it must be of a mental nature. But to say that the ego is mental is like saying that the number 3 is of a mental or an immaterial nature, when we recognize that the numeral '3' isn't used as a sign for a physical object. (Wittgenstein BB 73)

The human capacity for language certainly shapes our ways of thinking. But most linguists have long since given up on the idea that people's perceptions of the world, and the kinds of concepts they hold, are determined by the particular language they speak. It is absurd to suppose that all French speakers have a common view of the world, thanks to a common language. (Malik 2000: 16)

But in forming an answer we contradict the earlier statement that there is no answer, or that the mind is a purely non-physical thing. "Wittgenstein has found that anything, physical or mental, internal or external, that does not admit of articulation is indistinguishable from nothing" (Price 1973: 60). It seems that which ever way we turn we are led to an impasse—if the mind is not physical then it is not like anything, and how can we seriously argue for the existence of something that is nothing?; or if it is like a tree in a sense, then why can't we see or feel it? Perhaps the answer to this last question is that we can see and feel it. But this is perhaps only because we can say that we "know it is there". And if it is anything physical then it is most likely the brain. So we come to the conclusion that the brain is the mind, and the mind is the brain. Maybe, but not quite. We still get an uncomfortable feeling that this is not wholly satisfactory either. In his Blue Book, Wittgenstein writes

"On the other hand we can perfectly well adopt the expression 'this body feels pain'..." (Wittgenstein BB 73)

"The kernel of our proposition that that which has pains or sees or thinks is of a mental nature is only, that the word 'I' in 'I have pains' does not denote a particular body, for we can't substitute for 'I' a description of a body." (Wittgenstein BB 74) - last words of Blue Book.
The 'Private Language' debate centres around the argument not that all languages that we might call 'private' are possible or not, but that a certain form of 'private language' is improbable and objectionable. In a Wittgensteinian (and philosophical) sense what is being disputed is that there is any possibility of having a 'private language' in which

The individual words of this language are to refer to what can only be known to the person speaking; to his immediate private sensations. So another person cannot understand the language.

(Wittgenstein PI §243)

In the conclusion to his book, Can There be a Private Language?, Warren Smerud (1970) clarifies the differences between the two main kinds of 'private language' at the same time as giving a summation of his argument:

If the question [Can There be a Private Language?] is whether a man could invent and use a sign to stand for and record the occurrence of an immediate private sensation having no behavioural indicators either contingent or criterial, the answer appears to be 'yes'. On the other hand, if the question is whether it is possible that a man could invent a sign of this kind which not only (a) is used by him to refer to such a sensation but which also (b) is logically impossible for others to understand, the answer is 'no', for if it is granted that the sign can be employed to refer to a sensation, then it has a meaning, and if a sign has meaning, then it is logically possible that others could come to understand it.

(Smerud 1970: 114-5)
This holds for most forms of experience. There is no essence of consciousness to be discovered; so-called inner contents of a hidden inner realm which just you have access to. An "inner process" stands in need of outward criteria. To know what happens when someone understands we do not look into his head, but at what he does with that which he understands.

Communication is also like that. We are not trying to put something in to someone else's mind, and that is that.

"The first use of language, is the expression of our conceptions, that is, the begetting in another the same conceptions that we have in ourselves" (Thomas Hobbes in *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, 'How by Language Men Work Upon Each Other's Minds', Chapter 13, §2).

What is the nature of the raven and the writing-desk? When the Hatter says his 'riddle' what is he using to help him? Might he just as easily have asked "Why is a lemon like a sock?"? The raven and the desk do not need to exist in any form for him to be able to use the words in a sentence. He does not even need to picture a desk or a black bird, and neither do we, even to help us try to make sense of the question (although we might try to pull up images of both so as to see if there are any physical resemblances). The words act in an abstract way. Their existence is simply to prompt a tangential probing by the listener into the uses of the words themselves, and how other words are connected to them. (A meaning blind person would have extreme difficulties trying to formulate an answer.) Suppose that the Hatter (who is mad, let us not forget (see *RPP I*, §§198, 216 etc)), had a 'picture' of a book and one of an apple come to him and in mistakenly (wittingly or otherwise) used the words raven and writing-desk instead of book and apple. Firstly, how would we ever know that this was the case? (To him a book is a raven and so on.) Secondly, does it mean that the riddle is utter nonsense because he is asking for the relationship between two things that differ from the things that we think they are? (The answering of a riddle is nonsensical in many ways because it requires an understanding of the unusual way that words work in the rules of riddling, which subvert the rules of everyday speech.)
Dance seems like both writing (dependent on seeing) and speech (reliant on hearing; although this suggests that sign-language used by deaf persons is not ‘speech’, when in one sense clearly it is, or at least, it performs the same sorts of functions as vocalised speech) in certain respects, but is obviously neither. Choreography is seen as ‘writing’ dance, but dancing is more like speech as a natural human act, but without the ‘clarity’ of words. There is obviously a logocentricity at play when we watch dance, in that we want it to say something (and to say something about it). Dance could then be said to be a form of non-verbal communication. But what is communication? What is it to communicate? We can find various answers to these questions. ‘Communication’ is yet another word that is fraught with definition difficulties and ‘explained’ by theories of ‘how it works’. It is impossible and impractical here to give an account of all the various definitions and theories, however a brief overview will be attempted.

‘Communication’ can be described in mathematical or scientific terms – as in the Shannon-Weaver transmission model of communication (Shannon and Weaver 1949) – which are often applied or mis-applied generally; or in ways which describe specific forms of communication – for example, through the mass media – or in interpersonal communication from a sociological, anthropological or psychological standpoint – see, for example, Benthall and Polhemus 1975. What is most relevant here are those theories that account for the role of technology in the communication via linguistic and physical (non-verbal) means. However, it is useful to sketch a common understanding of ‘communication’. 
The word *communication* will be used here in a very broad sense to include all of the procedures by which one mind may affect another. This, of course, involves not only written and oral speech, but also music, the pictorial arts, the theatre, the ballet, and in fact all human behavior. In some connections it may be desirable to use a still broader definition of communication, namely, one which would include the procedures by means of which one mechanism (say automatic equipment to track an airplane and to compute its probable future positions) affects another mechanism (say a guided missile chasing this airplane).

The language of this memorandum will often appear to refer to the special, but still very broad and important, field of the communication of speech; but practically everything said applies equally well to music of any sort, and to still or moving pictures, as in television.

(Weaver 1949: 92; italics in original)

**Black** warns us that the Shannon-Weaver theory can be misinterpreted when applied to language and that:

the basic notions of information theory are essentially statistical: they provide some interesting insight into global features of language, but are inapplicable to particular utterances.

(1968: 15-6)

Claude Shannon's *A Mathematical Theory of Communication*:

The fundamental problem of communication is that of reproducing at one point either exactly or approximately a message selected at another point. Frequently the messages have *meaning*, that is they refer to or are correlated according to some system with certain physical or conceptual entities. These semantic aspects of communication are irrelevant to the engineering problem. The significant aspect is that the actual message is one selected from a set of possible messages. The system must be designed to operate for each possible selection, not just the one which will actually be chosen since this is unknown at the time of design.

(1949: 3; italics in original)

**McLuhan and Powers** claim that Shannon and Weaver's model show a mistaken understanding for it has, what they call, 'a left-hemisphere bias' and because it:

ignores the surrounding environment as a kind of pipeline model of a hardware container for software content. It stresses the idea of inside and outside and assumes that communication is a literal matching rather than making.

(1989: 75)
On the subject of speech, Hobbes wrote, "The generall use of Speech, is to transferre our Mentall Discourse into Verbal; or the Trayn of our Thoughts into a Trayn of Words" (1985: 101). In the logocentric attitude, spoken language is the primary and truest expression of meaning, written language is a mere derivation and supplement to speech, which is closest to the soul of the speaker; speech is an authentic expression of the logos and writing is an adjunct. If we go to the idea suggested elsewhere, regarding the gesture, it is possible to adapt the logocentric attitude in terms of physical movement.

Take art, for example. By this I mean those activities of human beings in which it is hard to say anything that is as good as: saying nothing. Perhaps from Tolstoy's false theorizing that the work of art conveys "a feeling", we think art serves "to arouse feelings": is then, perhaps, perceiving it with the senses included amongst these feelings?

Suppose you tried to separate out the feeling which music gives you from hearing music. Now, a man makes a hand gesture. So he may have meant something or nothing. And if the former, was it the movement that he meant—or was there another thing?

If we ask him, could he reply: "I meant something by this movement, which can only be expressed by this specific movement"?

It seems to be a series of blind alleys from which there is no escape. We are too busy looking for the way out to stop to think "why do we need a way out of here when we are working just fine?". Think of it this way: if it were proven that there was no such thing as a 'mind', would human beings cease to be able to function as they do? Would human beings stop wanting to fall in love; or climbing tall mountains; or having children; or painting pictures; or laughing at jokes; or shouting when they stub their toe; or inventing more lethal weapons; or writing novels and poetry; or trying to solve mathematical riddles, etc.; or doing any of the things that humans up until now have done, just because they can? One answer is that we will not stop being human IF and (more cautiously) when they find 'the mind', but we will be complete in some way, more contented. Arguably we will be more satisfied and less frustrated by our efforts to define ourselves, but how much more complete can we be?
The rulebook of language (grammar) is not simple, and is not set in stone either—but there are "pragmatic constraints" (Glock 1996: 22), 'conventions' of a sort, which hold language together for the benefit of the human beings (and other organisms, arguably) who use it. (This could be seen to run contrary to a neat Chomskyan rule system.) The 'game' analogy makes it clear that a word's meaning is not any object it might stand for, what Wittgenstein calls a 'meaning-body', nor is it an object in the mind, a mental entity. Neither is meaning a process which accompanies a word. For no process could have the consequences of meaning.

(Wittgenstein PI 218e)

Instead the 'meaning' of a word is its use. However, many words are treated as though they refer to an object (consider the word 'pain', as an example), rather like a noun, and this complicates certain matters. The ostensive method of learning a word ('pointing') applies to some words, but doesn't apply to a good deal of others (what is it to point to 'a pain'?). Philosophers after Locke attempted to do a similar thing with what they saw as being mental representations of objects (although there is some confusion as to whether Locke intended for the word 'idea' to refer to a mental entity, as such), and similar problems are encountered in relation to discussing 'identity', 'self' and 'person', as examples. As a summary, Richard Rorty writes:

"The mind-body problem, we can now say, was merely a result of Locke's unfortunate mistake about how words get meaning, combined with his and Plato's muddled attempt to talk about adjectives as if they were nouns" (1980: 32-3).
This is not all, for as Wittgenstein states:

\[ \text{The meaning of a phrase for us is characterized by the use we make of it. The meaning is not a mental accompaniment to the expression.} \]

\[ (BB\ 65) \]

In other words, when words are put together (as a proposition, a sentence) the result is seen by Wittgenstein as

\[ \text{a move or operation in the game of language; it would be meaningless without the system of which it is a part. Its sense is its role in the unfolding linguistic activity.} \]

\[ (\text{Glock 1996: 193}) \]

Again this brings us back to the concept of ‘context’, and also the idea from Wittgenstein outlined in his entry:

\[ \text{Every sign by itself seems dead. What gives it life?—In use it is alive. Is life breathed into it there?—Or is the use its life?} \]

\[ (PI\ \$432; \text{italics in original}) \]

In his chapter on ‘Linguistic Meaning’, Grant Gillett writes:

\[ \text{My expression has a sense in each setting. This requires that you and I have a set of forms of representation whose meanings vary according to collateral features of use such as context or supplementary communicative devices [...]. One could not be counted as understanding the ‘language’ unless one understood how to react to any given ‘utterance’.} \]

\[ (1992: 122-3) \]

At the beginning of what is known as ‘The Brown Book’, Wittgenstein (1958) discusses the learning of words and how they have a use as signs, comparable to and often inter-linked with gestures (pointing, for example) and other non-verbal signs (an arrow, perhaps). He also asks questions of the idea that there are certain feelings which accompany words (after William James). Certainly, he says, there are gestures which accompany words as we speak them (they may even be able to stand in their place), and these will have a set of sensations attached to them, but not every use of a particular word will have the same experience. “If in some language the word ‘but’ meant what ‘not’ means in English, it is clear we should not compare the meanings of these two words by comparing the sensations which they produce” \[ (BB\ 79) \]. It would not be easy, he suggests, to discover the feelings these words give people at any given usage. Even uttered more than once within the same sentence would a word evoke the same meaning on subsequent uses to the first time?
Emotions are bodily feelings, hence can be at least partially reproduced, if James is right, by voluntary movements.

But even so, what is to be deduced from this? Are we to understand that an emotion is physically induced?

Possibly one could be sad because one is crying, but of course one is not sad that one is crying. I’d like to say: One no more feels sorrow in one’s body than one feels seeing in one’s eyes. A cry is not the description of a state of mind, even though a state of mind sometimes is inferred from it. Do not be misled by the belief that “the expression of pain is a cry” has the same meaning as when I say that “the expression of thought is a proposition”. An utterance, like the cry it replaces, is not description either. Nor is an expression of sadness like the feeling of sadness. And a gesture

‘Seeing’ is of the eyes, we say, and ‘imaging’ (the word as used in Wittgenstein Z §629) is done by nothing that we can identify—although we might say it is the brain (materialist conception), or the mind’s eye (‘common-sense’ conception). So the question of what carries a mental image if it isn’t language still remains. But if we were to describe the mental image of a face we would use words or a drawing—neither would resemble the image, but might come ‘close’ depending on our proficiency with either. But what is a ‘close resemblance’ to a mental image? Can we hold the mental image still and clear enough to compare it to the picture or the sentence? If we were to use pictures to stand for (represent?) mental images, what would these pictures look like? “The mental picture is the picture which is described when someone describes what he imagines” (Wittgenstein PI §367).

Grammar does not tell us how language must be constructed in order to fulfil its purpose, in order to have such-and-such an effect on human beings. It only describes and in no way explains the use of signs.

(Wittgenstein PI §496)

“We should not however make the mistake of thinking that words, even as used by the lower personal mind, represent the opposite pole from these variable symbols, that a word DOES have an exact meaning, stands for a given thing, is only ONE value of a variable” (Whorf 1956: 259; emphasis in original).
Suppose that the best picture of the mental image is a movement or a gesture or an attitude of the human body (see Wittgenstein PI 178e). We would have to be content with the body's portrayal of the mental image, and seek no further interpretation of it. We cannot say what the body's portrayal means in any other way than by the body it was portrayed on. Can we put it into words? What are the words describing? They describe the visible body: the movement, the position of limbs, the speed, the 'aesthetic qualities' of the movement, the angle of the head, the facial expression, and so on. We might say that we can "see emotion" (Wittgenstein Z §225), but what we are doing is describing the body's movements as such and such an emotion word. To say that a movement is sad is not to see the emotion 'sadness', either directly or indirectly, but it is somehow "personified" in the body (Wittgenstein Z §225). We say we understand a movement when we can describe it, and describing it helps us to understand it. If we describe the movement of a person as we would describe a picture, we will describe it in the same words that a picture prompts in us. Is to describe a picture in such a way a demonstration that we understand it? What is there to understand in a picture? "The meaning". "The sense". "The intention of the artist". We say that we offer an 'interpretation' of the picture (the movement as picture).

Wierzbicka (1999: 175) on facies:
One crucial feature that facial 'messages' have in common with verbal utterances is that they, too, express meanings which can be identified in the same metalanguage of universal semantic primes in which all verbal meanings can be identified. This means, in effect, that all facial messages can also be expressed verbally.
is similar. The gesture—we should like to say—tries to portray, but cannot do it. How curious it is: we should like to explain our understanding of a gesture by means of a translation into words, and the understanding of words by translating them into a gesture. (Thus we are tossed to and fro when we try to find out where understanding properly resides.) And we really shall be explaining words by a gesture, and a gesture by words. Not every purposive movement of the human body is a gesture. I wish to say that we can't adduce the "private experience" to justify expressing it. Why should I say that the "expression" derives its meaning from the feeling behind it—and not from the circumstances of the language game in which it is used? We labour under the queer temptation to describe our language.

The use we put descriptions to depends on our circumstances, the situation we are in, the context. What is our understanding of a body's portrayal of a mental-image and what we refer to as 'emotions' (although we should not say that emotions are the same as, or even similar to, mental-images) based on? Again, it is primarily dependent on the context of the portrayal: a piece of scenery has "life only in the play" (Wittgenstein Z §238). It is also dependent on our world-view, our cultural background, our language (again, consider that there are gestures that vary across cultures (see Wittgenstein Z §219 and Wierzbicka 1999)). The sense (meaning) appears to come to us separately from the action—perhaps the major cause of our thinking that meaning is connected to a movement (any gesture or utterance or sign, for that matter) and resides in a different place from the movement, a place that is in the person doing the movement and then in us by way of it being transmitted from one body to another (our own). How does this occur exactly?

Wittgenstein PO 203:
We say 'making this gesture isn't all'. The first answer is: We are talking about the experience of making this gesture. Secondly: it is true that different experiences can be described by the same gesture; but not in the sense that one is the pure one and the others consist...

Best writes that it "is said that aesthetic meaning does ultimately depend upon feeling, but not so much emotional feeling as kinaesthetic feeling, i.e. the feeling of the movement" (1974: 141).
and its use, introducing into our descriptions an element of which we ourselves say that it is not part of the language. It is a peculiar phenomenon of iridescence which seems to fool us. A poet's words can pierce us.

'affective contagion' consist of and how does it work? Is it the same as what is called 'kinaesthetic empathy'?

Kinaesthetic empathy (movement-feeling-meaning) or affective contagion (emotion as disease, a virus), or whatever metaphor is dreamt up to 'explain' a (mythological) transference of 'meaning' does not always take into account that the information transmitted is often open to interpretation, misunderstanding, non-understanding. In the transmission of information from one body to another, at which point does the cause of the misunderstanding appear? In the Shannon-Weaver model of communication, for example, there is 'noise' which distorts the information, or adds to the information in non-beneficial ways. Can we talk of the 'noise of the body'?

For a discussion of one 'theory' on how communication is effected physically, see Best 1974: 141-52. Best summarises his chapter on kinaesthetic empathy:

'It is sometimes suggested that the aesthetic meaning of dance depends not on the emotions, but on the physical sensation of moving, which can be communicated to spectators, or other dancers, by causing in them a feeling of empathy. But no causal explanation can be adequate to account for meaning. (1974: 200)

"Noise in communication is like dirt, or like friction, in being ineradicable" (Black 1968: 14).

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The 'noise of the body' is the problem that "the gesture—we should like to say—tries to portray, but cannot do it" (Wittgenstein PI §434; italics in original). As Best notes the "notion of identifying the meaning of dance with kinaesthetic sensations is analogous to a theory of linguistic meaning which is still very prevalent, and which is notably exemplified by the philosopher John Locke" (1974: 144-5; see, for example, Locke Essay III.ii).

To appropriate a term from Simon Reynolds (1990: 13); words related to Barthes' phrase 'grain of the voice', perhaps:

*Mélisande dies without any noise (understanding the term in its cybernetic sense): nothing occurs to interfere with the signifier and there is thus no compulsion to redundance; simply, the production of a music-language with the function of preventing the singer from being expressive.*

(Barthes 1977: 187; italics in original)

Wittgenstein also writes about a similar phenomenon; "Soulful expression in music" (Z §157); also referring to "expressive playing" (Z §§163-4, for example).
And that is of course causally connected with the use that they have in our life. And it is also connected with the way in which, conformably to use, we let our thoughts roam up and down in the familiar surroundings of the words.

And now, we have to descend into the old chaos—we must feel at home there. We are getting bogged down in the sodden ground. Grasping the difficulty in its depth is what is hard.

The problems arising through a misinterpretation of our forms of language have the character of depth.

But what makes it deep?

And down he fell, as one that swoons on sleep.

"For our forms of expression prevent us in all sorts of ways from seeing that nothing out of the ordinary is involved, by sending us in pursuit of chimeras" (Wittgenstein PI §94).
Canto 5: Etiam disiecti membra poetae.

Now with the rules broken, Orpheus and his colleague find the chaos that Wittgenstein had spoken about, before collapsing exhausted without reaching the end of his deliv’rance. But, there are new rules, even in disorder. Rules which exist to be broken, or to be read like sign-posts, hanging without a path, which they interpret, so that they might beat their way through the forest of irrelevant questions. The next instalment, after this short canto, leads the friends, Ermy and Orpheus, into blindness, blinking bloody black tears away from desperate and dismal eye-sockets. Their bodies dissected and dispersed (as was the dark prince when torn apart by hoards of Thracian women; but we shall call this a future-past event for our noble hero), throughout the world fractured and fragmented too. Having rent open the world, and journeyed down into hell in order to try to make things better, they find themselves faced with new problems: scattered, scarred, schizoid, sclerosed and screaming sombre songs for the unified yet isolated souls of the techno-generation; a collective intelligence, a code, a compartmentalised consciousness; binary bodies extended beyond the corpora vilia. So, further down the spiral they must travel...

It’s just a war of metaphors, you say – but metaphors are not “just” metaphors; metaphors are the tools of thought. No one can think about consciousness without them, so it is important to equip yourself with the best set of tools available. Look what we have built with our tools. Could you have imagined it without them?

(Dennett 1993: 455)
Wittgenstein writes in the ‘Preface’ to *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1961) that the aim of the book [and philosophy per se; see *TLP* §4.114f.] is to draw a limit to thought, or rather—not to thought, but to the expression of thoughts: for in order to be able to draw a limit to thought, we should have to find both sides to the limit thinkable (i.e. we should have to be able to think what cannot be thought).

It will therefore only be in language that the limit can be drawn, and what lies on the other side of the limit will simply be nonsense.

*(TLP 3)*

To paraphrase: the book asks “What are the limits of the ‘thinkable’?” One answer to this is that: These limits are the same as the limits, the boundaries, of language, beyond which “the attempt to say things can only produce nonsense” (Shand 1994: 221), and therefore silence is preferable; as Wittgenstein’s own summation of the book states: “what can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence” (*TLP* 3).

Is dance a way around this? Or rather, does dance fulfil the ability to express the inexpressible, the unutterable, by circumventing language and thereby the risk of speaking nonsense?

It is, perhaps, an aim of this thesis to disrupt the apparent links between the views (a) of dance as a form of ‘pure communication’ that bypasses verbal language, yet is capable of expression (of emotions, of thoughts, of meanings) as though it were a language; and (b) of a certain view of language and meaning, that sees words as representatives or representations of objects (‘real’ and ‘mental’).

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**The problem(s) of translation:** “any translation which intends to perform a transmitting function cannot transmit anything but information – hence, something inessential” (Benjamin 1973: 70).

**And this is how it is:** if only you do not try to utter what is unutterable then *nothing* gets lost. But the unutterable will be – unutterably – *contained* in what has been uttered!

(Wittgenstein in Engelmann 1967: 7 & 83; italics in original)
The *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is a complex book on many levels. It is a treatise *about* philosophy (or rather the problems with it) as much as it is a philosophical work in itself; yet it is often described as a literary work, even by Wittgenstein himself. Gottlob Frege, in a letter to Wittgenstein, wrote that “The book thereby becomes an artistic rather than a scientific achievement; *what is said in it takes second place to the way in which it is said*” (cited in Monk 1990: 174; italics added). It is structured in a distinctive way (similar to the system of Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell’s *Principia Mathematica*, first published in 1910, of which Russell wanted Wittgenstein to rewrite the first eleven chapters). Supposedly it has no beginning or end, and it operates as a matrix (or series of matrices) of inter-linked thoughts, or remarks, although at the same time, a hierarchy is set up in the off-shooting nature of the remarks. This system is designed to demonstrate the logical links of its statements—themselves interesting as many of them are merely sentences with an aphoristic tone (frequently described as aphorisms), economic and poetic, “there is no babbling in it” as Wittgenstein wrote to the editor Ludwig von Ficker (*FL* 94), although as Glock notes: “They are not aphorisms, since they are rigidly fitted into a tight structure” (1996: 363); they often suggest whole chapters for which they are simply the titles: “Every sentence of the *Tractatus* should be seen as the heading of a chapter, needing further exposition” (Wittgenstein cited in Rhees 1984: 173)—in the same remark to Maurice Drury, in 1949, in which he declared that Charlie Broad was right about the *Tractatus* being syncopated and every sentence was a chapter heading, Wittgenstein says that his “present style is quite different; I am trying to avoid that error” (cited in Rhees 1984: 173). The remarks in the *Tractatus* are both, at the same time, “as clear as crystal” (Wittgenstein *RUL* 68) and opaque, relying on a prior understanding of the work of Frege and Russell and the philosophy of logic. Many of the terms are technical and unexplained, and to compound problems of interpretation further, often redefined by Wittgenstein or used in different ways at different points in the text.

The problem(s) of translation: “das Übersetzen eines lyrischen Gedichts z.B. in eine fremde Sprache ist ganz analog einem mathematischen Problem” (Wittgenstein *RPP* I §778).

Russell and Frege take concepts as, as it were, properties of things. But it is very unnatural to take the words man, tree, treatise, circle, as properties of a substrate. (Wittgenstein Z §704)
In 1929 Wittgenstein gave a lecture in Cambridge on the subject of Ethics, building on Moore’s definition – “Ethics is the general enquiry into what is good” – stating that he, “[Wittgenstein] could have said Ethics is the enquiry into what is valuable, or, into what is really important, or [he] could have said Ethics is the enquiry into the meaning of life, or into what makes life worth living, or into the right way of living” (PO 38); he situates Ethics within the study of Aesthetics; he suggests that the language of ethics and religion is based on simile (“[if] we try to drop the simile and simply [...] state the facts which stand behind it, we find that there are no such facts” (PO 43); cf. Davidson (1984) on metaphor); he ends the lecture by announcing:

My whole tendency and I believe the tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk Ethics or Religion was to run against the boundaries of language. This running against the walls of our cage is perfectly absolutely hopeless. Ethics so far as it springs from the desire to say something about the ultimate meaning of life, the absolute good, the absolute valuable, can be no science. What it says does not add to our knowledge in any sense. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it.

(PO 44)

Many of Wittgenstein’s investigations into ethics and aesthetics are based on the grammar of their expressions, or rather, the different ways in which words are used in talk about aesthetical and ethical subjects (see Wittgenstein PO 103-8 and LC 1-40).

**[Ethics] employs a practical mode of thought. It assumes that alternative options are often open to us. Freedom of choice is a presupposition of moral thought and language. This, of course, is no guarantee of the truth of a belief in free will.**

(Raphael 1981: 114)
The *Tractatus* has as its first remark (if read as a conventional text) a statement about ‘the world’. According to the *Tractatus* “is the totality of facts not things” (Wittgenstein *TLP* §1.1), or as Gordon Hunnings states it: “[Wittgenstein’s] concern is with the world not as it is known, but as it is determined by the facts” (1988: 5; italics in original, cf. *TLP* §1.11).

The *Tractatus* gives a number of definitions of what a ‘thought’ is, for example, those which see it as a meaningful utterance:

A propositional sign, applied and thought out, is a thought.

A thought is a proposition with a sense.

(Wittgenstein *TLP* §§3.5 and 4)

And those which have been taken to mean it as a projection of a mental entity, with what Wittgenstein calls in a letter to Bertrand Russell: “psychical constituents” (*RUL* 19.8.19):

I don’t know what the constituents of a thought are but I know that it must have such constituents which correspond to words of Language.

Does a Gedanke [thought] consist of words? No! But of psychical constituents that have the same sort of relation to reality as words. What those constituents are I don’t know.

(RUL 72) The problem(s) of translation: what does it mean to say we can translate one movement into another? Or the movement into language? Language is translative.

Ermy is struggling to understand how the concept of the world as a humanised reality meshes with the idea that technology changes the human ‘consciousness’. He once again starts to type:

McLuhan wrote:

> Media, by altering the environment, evoke in us unique ratios of sense perceptions. The extension of any one sense alters the way we think and act—the way we perceive the world.

When these ratios change, men change.  

(McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 41)

["Sense ratios change when one sense or bodily or mental function is externalized in technological form", McLuhan in *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962: 265).]

Ong theorised on how “writing has transformed human consciousness” (1982: 78).
The limits of language (and therefore thought) are given by the essence of language, "a single or unified logic; [...] a single unified universal form of language" (Shand 1994: 222): "language is a mirror of reality" (Hunnings 1988: 2).

Language is definable as "the totality of propositions" (Wittgenstein TLP §4.001):

A proposition is a picture of reality.
A proposition is a model of reality as we imagine it.

(Wittgenstein TLP §4.01)

(or in other words: "abstract [entities] designated by declarative sentences in particular languages" (Williamson in Honderich 1995: 724), and bearing truth and falsity across languages). Not only is this the case for propositions about 'objects' (or what a word has a relation to in the world, the 'meaning' of a word), but also for so-called 'non-existent objects'.

Consider Frege's ideas on 'names'...

What is consciousness? Perhaps it is how we react to the world, or rather, how we are able describe it. Rephrase to this: It is the human ability to describe what they have experienced. Consciousness and related words are terms which have a variety of uses in our language.

Ermy recalls a book he read a while ago. It is in another room, so he gets up and walks across the landing, and through the doorway. He scans the shelves. He sees the familiar title: A History of the Mind

Turning to Chapter 16, he skims the page and smiles. On the next page is the section he wants.
The word ‘conscious’ derives from the Latin *con*, meaning ‘together with’, and *scire*, meaning ‘to know’. In the original Latin the verb *conscire* (from which came the adjective *conscius*) meant literally to share the knowledge with other people. This implied, originally, sharing the knowledge widely. But, as time went on the usage changed, and it shifted to mean sharing knowledge with some people but not others, sharing it within a small circle – and thus being privy to a secret. Caesar and his generals, for example, were *conscius* of their battle plans.

There was then a further change in this direction. The circle of those with whom the knowledge was shared became tighter and tighter – until eventually it included just a single person, the subject who was conscious. To be *conscius sibi*, conscious with oneself, had come to mean that the subject was the only one who knew something – and by implication that he was unwilling to share it with anyone else. By the first century AD Horace could write that a man’s epitaph should be ‘*nil conscire sibi*’: to be ‘conscious with himself of nothing’, and so to have no guilty secrets.

After the word ‘conscious’ came into English in the Middle Ages, its meaning underwent another shift. People wanted to make a distinction between, on the one hand, ‘having private knowledge that one would not want anyone else to have access to’ (for example – as already implied by Horace – knowledge of one’s own secret actions), and, on the other hand, ‘having knowledge that by its very nature no one else could have access to’ (for example, knowledge of one’s innermost thoughts and feelings). The work was therefore split into two words.

‘Conscious and conscius,’ thinks Ermy as he walks back to his computer. He slides onto the angled seat, places the open book at an angle resting against the monitor, and types in a sentence.

But, leaving aside such special contexts, it is clear that by far and away the more common modern English meaning of ‘to be conscious’ is to have knowledge of one’s own private feelings and thoughts.

(Whitney 1993: 101)

But here lies the problem.

The problem of ‘knowledge of one’s own private feelings and thoughts’. What does it mean ‘to know’ these things? Wittgenstein calls these ‘things’ the “‘content’ of experience, of experiencing” (RPP I §91). Nicholas Humphrey has suggested “that consciousness involves a particular sort of ‘thinking about one’s own mental states’” (1993: 110). And that it is possible to “‘just sit and think’ and be conscious of [...] thinking – but only because such conscious thoughts (unlike unconscious thoughts) involve auditory and visual images, and these in turn have a sensory component to them” (Humphrey 1993: 111). What does this mean?

Wittgenstein:

Where do we get the concept of the ‘content’ of an experience from? Well, the content of experience is the private object, the sense-datum, the ‘object’ that I grasp immediately with the mental eye, ear, etc. The inner picture. - But where does one find one needs this concept?

(RPP I §109)
"I have said elsewhere that a proposition 'reaches up to reality', and by this I meant that the forms of the entities are contained in the form of the proposition which is about these entities" (Wittgenstein PO 34; see TLP §2.1511). As Hintikka puts it

In the *Tractatus*, all propositions, [...] were pictures. As pictures, they could be compared with reality immediately.

(in Teghrarian 1994: 23)

And Mounce writes, "A proposition is like a picture because it represents something in the world and it does so because it is made of elements each of which stands for something in the world" (1981: 22). The concept of 'picture' (*Bild*) as used by Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* is unusual, and offers commentators much scope for interpretation and disagreement. In criticism of Stenius' understanding of the term, David Shwayder proffers the interpretation:

A Wittgensteinian picture is not the kind of thing which is put into a frame and hung upon the wall. The picture, for Wittgenstein, is the *thought* which *may* be expressed by hanging the picture on the wall.

(1966: 305; italics in original)

This basic conceptualisation of 'picture' in terms of how language describes the world constitutes the crux of Wittgenstein's 'Picture Theory of Language'. Shwayder summarises the picture theory of Wittgenstein thus:

Every picture is a presentation (*Darstellung*) that such and such is the case; and every presentation that such and such is the case is a picture; a presentation that such and such is the case is an act of thinking that such and such is the case; in a more fashionable idiom, it is an act, whether or not overt, of *asserting* that such and such is the case; a *Satz* [proposition, sentence] is an overt picture, an overt act of asserting. A picture, at all events, is essentially assertional or propositional.

(1966: 305-6; italics in original)

The later Wittgenstein challenges, as does Ryle, the idea that there are such private objects: "experiential data that are logically independent of publicly observable phenomena" (Saunders and Henze 1967: 11), and that in talking about consciousness it is not a matter of describing these objects as they really are, somehow, in the brain, or as an underlying system for language.
Sitting at the computer, mouse intermittently fingered, keyboard intentionally jabbed, and screen intently eyed, I can move from continent to continent in a matter of a few hundred milliseconds. Though seeming slow in comparison to nerves, which send impulses at the rate of up to 120 metres per second, the speed makes the time negligible in terms of my perception of it. [Excepting the time I sit waiting for connections to be made and information to be downloaded: "ours is a brand-new world of allatonceness" (McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 63).] Nervous systems are in fact relatively slow at transmitting signals, the short distances involved create an apparent speed—the human 'reaction time' is approximately half a second. We "can only experience the immediate past" (Rabbitt in Gregory 1987: 671): the present is made up of experiences from a (very) short time ago. But this lag is built into our perception of the world; our descriptions of our experiences don't always account for it, there is no need to explain it. The synapse is a no-man's land; forgotten space between the fronts. The seconds waiting for my PC to traverse the "extended nervous system of the electronic body" (Kroker and Weinstein 1994: 160) are empty, dead; the activities and processes hidden, secret. But it should be noted that the Internet is not like our nervous system, or our brains, in many respects. As a metaphor it is useful up to a point, and should not be taken too literally.
The study of neural coding is a central issue in the investigation of nervous system function. Before we can understand how neural circuits process information, we must understand how they represent it. Information is conveyed to and processed within the brain primarily in the form of action potentials [...]. How does the sequence of action potentials fired by a neuron, or group of neurons, represent the information that is encoded and conveyed to other neurons? (Abbott and Sejnowski 1999: vii)

The computer's means of data storage and retrieval can be conceived of as similar to the way in which human beings' brains function. (See, for example, Churchland 1988 and Karmiloff-Smith 1992.) The raw computerised data is broken up and stored in fragments of digital code which need to be reassembled and read anew each time they are accessed. However, this is not how we experience the processes of thought. Our brain, like the computer, hides the piecing together of the thoughts making us experience thoughts, usually in an organised way no matter how many jumps and connections the train of thought might appear to take if we were to write down each step that we are aware of.

[Here, I would like to describe the connectionist/PDP model of the brain: Connectionist AI is exciting [...] because it provides an alternative picture of the way in which the human mind operates, a picture more in tune with what is known about the brain. (Flanagan 1991: 240)

In the connectionist approach [...] meaning is not located in particular symbols; it is a function of the global state of the system and is linked to the overall performance in some domain, such as recognition or learning. (Varela, Thompson, and Rosch 1993: 100)

Parallel Distributed Processing (PDP) models [...] assume that information processing takes place through the interactions of a large number of simple processing elements called units, each sending excitatory and inhibitory signals to other units. (Rumelhart and McClelland 1986: 10)]

It is generally agreed that there is a relationship between brain structure and storage of what we call memories. Memory is not located in one part of the brain, but spread throughout the brain with certain areas being more responsible for memory handling and recall than others. Indeed damage to specific regions of the brain will usually result in particular kinds of memory loss, impaired behaviour and personality changes. These different parts of the brain work interactively to construct our responses to new experiences, that is, experiences of the immediate past which are dealt with in reference to other experiences stored as memories. Just as memories are held in a brain-wide distribution, memory is not a single process either. We can talk of and experience short- and long-term memory, explicit and implicit memory, learning and consolidation of memories, and memory distortion—"Considering the immense complexity of neural circuitry in the brain, the expectation that recall should be veridical appears unrealistic" (Mesulam in Schacter (ed) 1995: 382). Memory is multilayered; new experiences are laid on top of old ones and connected in ways that are beyond our control. Associations and connections are immeasurable, unpredictable and indescribable. The hypertext and any other computer-based model is close to a brain but different in that hyperlinks between nodes are humanly constructed and somewhat set; the experience of life and memory recall is aleatoric. Paths on the Internet are traceable and mappable, and although my link by phoneline may take me through different nodes at different times, the route is not as important as the final destination; in my brain and memory processes, although I can say that I have reached a memory that I wanted to get to, the route I took may be more interesting than the final recollection (is there such a thing as a final destination in a memory process?).
Quotations of words, movements, fragments of sound and music, a spoon before and remember poems, all these things top of the other in a jumble of interpretations. Nothing new under the sun:

"Nothing new under the sun,"

reason, lines from poems, all these things and done before, an infinite materials, to be plundered and glittering similes, my

merging and mixing, a cacophony of interpretations. Things rep

until eventually there is no black. Everything that has

been said, and written, a database of source

dissolved and played

d, plagiarised and played

and more lie one on

philosophical one, and more like

the nature of

in one's mind, and more like

"a shingle host of cliches, a shingle host of cliches, "

thing but white noise and

thought.

existence. Nothing new under the sun:

"Nothing new under the sun,"

reason, lines from poems, all these things

and done before, an infinite materials, to be plundered

merging and mixing, a cacophony of interpretations. Things rep

and glittering similes, my

and more lie one on

philosophical one, and more like

the nature of

in one's mind, and more like

"a shingle host of cliches, a shingle host of cliches, "

thing but white noise and

thought.

existence. Nothing new under the sun:
Part 2: Crack in the World

Canto 1: Into the Void,
Hollow.
hOle.
Whole.
Holos.
Hell.

One
bit
at
at
i
m
e
Ermy feels his blood
pushed like sand
through a needle's
hollow-eye
constricted vessels
beating an ack-ack
rhythm
ack-accelerating
beyond
the bounds of
human
understanding.

Particles of light
hard and fast
burn the retinas
of Orpheus
and Ermy.

The words of
Wittgenstein
whitter like
white vitriol
mordant wit
acerbic
and
sententious
flowing
like
flowers of sulphur
like
flour
like
flakes of snow
like
fallout.

The burning cold
of a mysterious flame
forcing viscid voices from
the ends of fossilised forelimbs
arboreal arms
petrified persons
transformed into
trunks of trees
wooden
lifeless
lacking
empty tubes
the hollow.
Erny
tries
to
talk
but
the
pressure
in
his
lungs
due
to
the
rate
of
descent
denies
him
this
wish
a
gasp
is
all
he
can
manage.
Orpheus' taut tracing paper
and Emy's

Skin covering their
zygomatic bones

Wrecked wrinkles

Black hole pores

Of looking

Over

Unlearning

The subtle leap

From fly

To human

A baby

Nerve cells

Destroying

So that

It might learn

The sound

Emy sucks in
grey as milk

Cold as marble

Rocks

Resonant

Yet still

Absolute consonant

Now absent

Absolute

Resolve

Resolve
connections built
and lost
use specifies
astigmatic vision
aspects varying
seeing one thing
as another.

Wittgenstein
awakening
from his
stunning slumber
an echo
of his former
self
speaks
once more
'The limitlessness
of visual space
stands out most clearly
when
we can see
nothing
in pitch-darkness
seeing nothing
in complete
darkness.'
Still they spill
up and down
are the same
a steady fall
for a while
gives a gap
a short pause
for the three
with wither'd eyes
to clasp hands
in the dark
feel each other
transfer their hope
before being hurled
violently

side

side

the

lined

the

of

million

souls

stained

sharp

at

flesh

Ermy

unto

dermis

Orpheus

the

husk

the

philosopher

bayonets

infinitely

atoms

our

protagonists.
Transmogrified
  electrified
transmitted
amber-like
charged
streamed
ambiguous
ambisonic
ambient noise
hum

crackle
static
from the
dendritic end
of the axon
electric
chem
chemic
chemical
telegraphic
signals

dash       dit dit dit dit       dit

dash dash     dit     dash dit dit     dit dit     dit dit dash        dash dash

dit dit     dit dit dit 

dash         dit dit dit dit     dit 

dash dash     dit     dit dit dit     dit dit dit     dit dah    dash dah     dit
"Oh, Aiden's special."

"The other's special."

"If you're special, I suppose, that's a mouth wish."

"This wish..."

"What is it that you wish?"

"I wish that we could have spoken to each other when we were alive."

"I wish that we could have existed in the same world."

"I wish that we could have known each other."

"My wish is broken."

"Moving..."

"I can't see..."

"The mouth from which he flies has no longer a form."

"And that, you see, my dear, is our trouble."

"And that, you see, my dear, is our re..."
With a clean and clear motion, the knuckles clench and click as the fingers fold into a fist. Stretched skin, leather, tense over tendon and bone, speaker amplifying the burst of noise as each joint screams. A shudder of the wrist sends concentric ripples across the tender surface of the fist; fingers spasmodically twist like pondweed, and the thumb darts away from the tangled fronds into darker waters.

With the intensity and speed of a spark, the whole limb arcs and jerks, animated by the shock, an electric eel hanging on a hook, desperate and defiant. Convulsions, convolutions of muscle, uncontrolled, held contraction before being discharged. Barely able to breathe in the brevity, brachium bent into a bow, fingers pitchfork fast into the arch of the arm.

I cannot describe the feeling of the movement.

I cannot describe the feeling of the movement.

I cannot describe the feeling of the movement.

I cannot describe the feeling of the movement.

I cannot describe the feeling of the movement.

I cannot describe the feeling of the movement.
Phillip Zarrilli (1995) outlines the difficulties of describing the experiences of performing, using the terms ‘body and mind’, ‘body-mind’ and ‘bodymind’ (somewhat confusingly) to explore their integration, overcome the separation, and thereby produce what he calls “a psychophysiological paradigm of acting” (Zarrilli 1995: 193). Again the muddle created by using a word in a new form to replace the (‘same’) word from another form rears its ugly head. But Zarrilli attempts to get rid of any misunderstanding by turning to other cultural models of the human being, in other words, other words. “But it is easier to bury a problem than to solve it” (Wittgenstein PI §351). Zarrilli cites David Edward Shaner’s use of the word ‘bodymind’ as the “presence of both aspects [mind-aspect and body-aspect] in all experience” (Shaner 1985: 45; in Zarrilli 1995: 189). Shaner describes the relationship as ‘polar’ instead of ‘dual’,

because mind and body require each other as a necessary condition for being what they are. The relationship is symbiotic.

(Shaner 1985: 43; in Zarrilli 1995: 189)

It is one short step from here to expressions such as “think with our body and act with our mind and vice versa” (Shaner 1985: 46; in Zarrilli 1995: 189). Rejecting Cartesian mind-body dualism is hamstrung by failing to account for the web of inhesion that seems to connect a word with a meaning.

Double aspect theory: an ontologically monist, yet conceptually dualist theory, after Spinoza, that holds that mind and body are not distinct substances but merely different aspects of a single substance (contrasted with attribute). It considers certain states as having mental and physical aspects, to avoid dualism and materialism by identifying each aspect without analysing each in terms of the other. Cf. Davidson’s ‘anomalous monism’: “the mental and the physical are two irreducibly different ways of describing and explaining the same objects and events” (Davidson in Honderich 1995: 36).
The word ‘body’ seems to present us with problems. If we try to remove the dualistic overtones (undertones) and refer to the ‘bodymind’ or some such other contraction or construction, we still feel compelled to think of two (separate) aspects of one thing. Jonathan Zuess in *The Wisdom of Depression* writes:

> We usually think of our body and mind as somehow being independent of each other. The truth is that they are so *inter*-dependent that they might really just be different ways of describing the same thing. I like to refer to them with a single term, the bodymind, because it expresses their essential oneness.

(1999: 6; italics in original)

When the word ‘body’ is used it should not be as a means of simply objectifying a person, or to imply that there is another element to them which is not being used (the mind). In a way, the word body is being used synonymously with the term “human being”. It may be difficult to accept that if only the word ‘body’ is used it does not refer to the whole person. There is no need to clarify to ourselves that a human being whose body we see and relate to, does not bear a resemblance to another human being. But neither, as Wittgenstein implies, does that say that we should believe him to *have anything* else inside him.

My attitude towards him [a friend] is an attitude towards a soul [not an automaton] I am not of the opinion that he has a soul [...] If the picture of thought in the head can force itself upon us, then why not much more that of thought in the soul? The human body is the best picture of the human soul.

(Wittgenstein *PI* 178e)

This simple ambiguity in inference of the word ‘body’ highlights the problems under discussion. Wittgenstein writes about the other side of the coin, so to speak:

We feel then that in the cases in which ‘I’ is used as subject, we don’t use it because we recognize a particular person by his bodily characteristics; and this creates the illusion that we use this word to refer to something bodiless, which, however has its seat in our body. In fact *this* seems to be the real ego, the one of which it is said, ‘Cogito ergo sum’.—‘Is there then no mind, but only a body?’ Answer: The word ‘mind’ has meaning, i.e., it has a use in our language; but saying this doesn’t yet say what kind of use we make of it.

(*BB* 69-70)

"I do not know how the sentence ‘I have a body’ is to be used" (Wittgenstein *OC* §258).
We might start to develop such constructions as body, mind, bodymind or bodymind to describe ever more aspects and relationships of concepts that all begin with a series of linguistically and philosophically produced confusions that it is hard to break free from. These are the metaphors we live by.

Since communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use in thinking and acting, language is an important source of evidence for what that system is like.

(Lakoff and Johnson 1981: 3)

A simile that has been absorbed into the forms of our language produces a false appearance, and this disquiets us. 'But this isn't how it is!'—we say. "Yet this is how it has to be!"

(Wittgenstein PI §112)

Food in sleep shews very like our food awake; yet are not those asleep nourished by it, for they are asleep. But those were not even any way like to Thee, as Thou hast now spoken to me; for those were corporeal fantasies, false bodies, than which these true bodies, celestial or terrestrial, which with our fleshly sight we behold, are far more certain: these things the beasts and birds discern as well as we, and they are more certain than when we fancy them.

(Augustine 1969: 36)

Belief in the body is more fundamental than belief in the soul: the latter arose from unscientific reflection on [the agonies of] the body (something that leaves it. Belief in the truth of dreams—).

(Nietzsche WP§491)
Canto 2: De-scribing the Neu Baud-y.

Ermy, Orpheus and Wittgenstein have become an alphabet:

A primordiAl AlphAbeT soUp
GenerATive
proCreATive
They Are now The world
The world is now Them
repliCATinG
Their senses hAve fUsed
They no IonGer TAsTe
heAr
feel
see
smell
speeCh is inAUdible
movemenTs form Their mode of CommUniCATion
TrAnsCribinG
TrAnsIATinG
eleCTrons flow AlonG Their ArTeries And veins
ArTeries And veins Are ArTifiCiAl And vAporifiC
GAses Are solid
And solids Are flUid
in The neTwork
The nexUs

Living things are collections of molecules, like everything else [...] What lies at the heart of every living thing is not a fire, not warm breath, not a 'spark of life'. It is information, words, instructions. If you want a metaphor, don't think of fires and sparks and breath. Think, instead, of a billion discrete, digital characters carved in tablets of crystal [...] think about information technology [...] The information technology of the genes is digital.

(Dawkins 1996: 112)
The CirCUiT
There is no CenTre
bodies flow from one To The next
inTerConneCTed
inTerConneCTiviTy: hUmAniTy invisible And divisible
The next is rAndom
The AleAToriC CliCkinG of A ChiliAd keypAds
The GhosT in The mACHine
mUTATinG
biTloss
dAnCer: you TrAnsmUTATion of All goinG–by inTo goinG
The mirror of The soUl CrACKed
A JUmble of frAGmenTs
AwAIrinG de–frAGmenTATion
de–sEXed
de–hUmAnised
de–sTABilised
de–exTended
de–Coded
de–fOrmed
de–rAnGed
de–evolved
de–pArTed
devoUred

Negation of the dancer: "the erasure of the body as matter and its substitution as a set of codes and signs" (Brown 1994: ii).
Orpheus' body turns back to words. He is a song.

Ermy's body turns to words. He is a story, of sorts.

Wittgenstein was always words. Sentences, short paragraphs, remarks. He has been re-edited. But he is happy with this re-ordering, re-structuring. It is the story of himself that he would have written. He is the imagination of himself. He is not just in the story—he is the story.

Our three heroes have dissolved into the world of words and unable to speak for themselves, must rely on others to give them voice. Here are fragments of the three as they exist in the hyperworld.

What is new is not that the world lacks meaning, or has little meaning, or less than it used to have; it is that we seem to feel an explicit and intense daily need to give it meaning: to give meaning to the world, not just some village or lineage. This need to give a meaning to the present, if not the past, is the price we pay for the overabundance of events corresponding to a situation we could call 'supermodern' to express its essential quality: excess.

(Augé 1995: 29)
The Ballad of the Head of Orpheus.

Calliope, bearer of the infant
who would die at the hands of a bacchant,
assembles up her sisters, the Muses,
who between them assemble Orpheus
as he lies in parts, while his blood oozes
and his viscera become detritus.

“Oh Orpheus, melanous son of mine,
whose twilight voice did the bright sun outshine.”

Decapitated yet ne’er decayéd,
Orfeo’s black ivory driftwood head
floats on the desolate waves of theory.
Cast about in chaotic entropy
singing sable songs of metatheory,
undergoing Wittgenstein’s therapy.

“Oh Orpheus, with your poetry pure
you could cast a shade and the sun obscure.”

The Musae, their task all but completed,
bear once again their kin, now depleted,
and excavating the earth from a plot
at the foot of mighty Mount Olympus,
take the incomplete corpse to the spot
and wail a threnode for poor Orpheus.

“Oh Orpheus, never will you return,
to re-sound a noctilucent nocturne.”

The nine inter him in the sod and sob,
while across the watery waste doth bob
the severed head of their poetic son.
His deep blue voice, as dark as the benthus,
but as light as spindrift, off the ocean
lifted high, mellow and melodious.

“Oh Orpheus, as rare as an eclipse,
your demise is as the apocalypse.”

And so on drifts the head of Orpheus,
leaving a wake of words, as rubious
as the blood streaming from his open neck,
until he is on the shore of Lesbos,
like the sole survivor of a shipwreck
with no body, except for his epos.

“Oh Orpheus, as solemn now as dusk,
your tragic end has made the world subfusc.”
Ermy's Fit.

"Ermy..." The voice whispered across the vacuum, like vapour or a breath of autumn.
"Ermy..." Again.
Ermy is not deaf, but he cannot hear the word.
Ermy is not blind, but he has no eyes with which to see the reflection talking to him.
Ermy feels nothing, his nerves and skin have dissipated.
Ermy has no brain, he is all brain, a visceral brain.
Ermy is liquid silver, his body fluid and flighty.
Ermy cannot taste or smell the lack of air around him.
Ermy feels nothing, his neural networks have stopped working.
Ermy is not dead, but he knows not that he is alive.
Ermy has no tongue, but he can whisper his own name.
"Ermy..." The word has no meaning.
Ermy exists in the limen between the old cortex and the new.
Ermy is literate and illiterate.
Ermy is like a hole.
Ermy is like light.
Ermy is a quantum.
Ermy is a photon.
Ermy assumes new forms with every immeasurable moment that passes.

Time means naught to Ermy.
One instant an old bearded man, the next a handsome youth, a finely honed athlete.
Another instant he has wings and can fly, and in another he is still, as solid as an alchemist's stone.
Ermy is a slayer of giants and conveyor of souls.
Ermy filled Pandora with the ability to beguile.
Ermy is time-weaver and creator of fates.
Ermy exists in the space between the warp and the weft.
Ermy is narcotic.
Ermy transforms perceptions.
Ermy urges love.
Ermy brings fortune and misfortune.
Ermy the son of thunder, is as quick as lightning.
The Jigsaw Puzzle.

In the hand of the dead woman, clasped between her fine fingertips with nails as red as cherries, was a solitary piece of jigsaw puzzle. A center piece, almost square with protrusions on three sides and a protrusion-shaped hole cut into the fourth side. The dead woman's thumb obscured one of the protrusions, as this was the part by which she held onto the puzzle piece for dear life, or should I say, death. About an inch square, it was made of light wafer-thin wood, with the picture glued onto that. The picture itself, or rather the bit of the picture that I could see, was not very inspiring, or at least, not very helpful. It was mostly a sort of pale gray with a fuzzy black bit in one of the corners, and it had ten small circles of various sizes and colors and designs. They were curiously arranged. In the top protrusion was a black circle, a hollow ring slightly larger than the other shapes, and below that was a reddish ring with a small red dot inside of it; either side of this was a black dot, and at seven o'clock from this was a bluish green dot; on the same diagonal line as this was a red dot, which was in line with a black ring (directly below the red dotted ring and larger black ring) and a red dot in the bottom right-hand corner, near the fuzz; the last two shapes were to the left, a black dot in the other visible protrusion and in the neck of the same, like a bottle-stopper, was another black ring. The whole effect reminded me of tutti-frutti ice cream. I licked my lips.

Using the tweezers from my jacket pocket, carefully I lifted the piece from the petite porcelain paw. It came easy. Holding the piece so as to have the side with the concavity at the top, which was the way it seemed to want to go, I could see that on the protrusion that the girl had held in her thumb and finger, part of the paper with the picture on it had come unstuck and curled up. Using the tweezers, I unfurled the tiny coil to reveal an eye.

The iris was brown, like a berry, but I couldn't tell if it was the eye of a man or a woman. I realized that the black fuzz was probably hair, perhaps curly and wispy down the side of the face. I plumped for it being the eye of a woman. The eye was un-made up, as far as I could tell, and I felt that it was the eye of a lady, and a young one at that. She didn't need to cake on the slap to impress or cover up any crow's-feet. She was white sugar refined and confidently attractive, in my humble view. I could hear her talking, soft like marshmallow but not as tacky. When she spoke people listened, interested and beguiled by her charming intellect. But what did I know? She could have been some boring little madam, haughty and opinionated. I figured that she must have had some money, or her father had some money or something, otherwise she wouldn't have been able to afford having a portrait done. Sure, it was a portrait of a lady. But which lady?

I looked again at the girl in the room with me. It wasn't her, that much I knew. She was brassy, but not in the same way as the girl in the portrait. The dead girl was a redhead, pretty in a pretentious way. Her face was fake, like a copy of a masterpiece. It was slightly overdone with too much paint, like the artist didn't quite know when, or how, to stop. The smudge around her eyes had spread a little into the rouge on her high cheeks, and around her mouth, mixed with the gloss on her lips was another red, the unmistakable ross of dried blood. It had dribbled a small way from the side of her mouth, like she was a messy spaghetti eater. She looked like she could have been a wop, with her arched eyebrows over her pinelli-shaped eyes and modest aquiline nose. Her chin was well-defined without being chiseled, but she looked more and more like a Roman statue the longer I looked at her. Here I was, surrounded by arty dead girls. Or was I the arty one?

But this train of thought wasn't helping me much. Who was the dead girl? Either the jigsaw puzzle was a clue, or it wasn't. I thought about smoking a cigarette, but then decided that I could wait to start that habit, and I turned the jigsaw piece over in my hand. The back of it was plain, no marks whatsoever. I glanced again at the eye on the picture side. Could it tell me anymore? I found a small paper bag in my pocket and popped the piece of jigsaw in it for safekeeping.

The redhead was still lying there when I looked back at her. Her face was serene, and if it wasn't a cliche, I might have said that she looked like she was sleeping. I knew she wasn't asleep—people don't fall asleep with knives sticking out of their chests. Or with their eyes gazing blankly into space. It was such a shame, I thought, she had gotten all dressed up for this. Her tantalizing tendrils of wavy hair had been carefully arranged to flatter her face. And that dress! Boy, that dress was knockout—it had certainly floored someone. It was a black evening affair, low-cut and sparkly like the night sky in the desert. It wasn't a classy dress, but it did the business, all the way down to her slinky ankles. I wondered where she had been going, if she was going out at all. She hadn't had a chance to put any shoes on, perhaps she had a romantic night-in planned. I tried to discern from the room whether she had been expecting guests.

One thing I could see was that the room didn't seem to show any signs of a struggle. Had she known her killer? Or was her killer the tidy sort?
The physiology of release hallucinations is perhaps easier to understand if one considers sensory deprivation. Normally, only some of the sensory input that constantly bombards the brain is relevant. Most of it is filtered out. Experience with sensory deprivation—as in John Lilly’s famous tranquility tank—shows that removing all sensory input leads to psychotic thinking, perceptual distortions, and hallucinations. Milder degrees of sensory loss (such as cataracts, hearing loss, or the feebleness of touch called peripheral neuropathy) lead to less florid results. But the rule of thumb is that a brain deprived of external input will start projecting an external reality of its own, readily perceiving things that are “not really there.” This release of the senses, particularly sight and sound, is not as rare as you might think: when your hearing is drowned out by the white noise of the shower, for example, how often have you hallucinated that the phone was ringing or that someone was calling your name?

Normal persons deprived of sensation progress from having mild to severe hallucinations, starting out with what looks very much like form constants (geometric patterns, mosaics, lines, rows of dots) and building to more developed, dream-like juxtapositions of perceptions the longer they remain in isolation. (Cytowic 1998: 133)

I felt pity for him, but also revulsion [...] I found him terrifying and grotesque. What disturbed me most was the flickering screen of his face, the bleak images of a soul in torment. Or so I imagined. Then I began to consider what might remain of a “soul” or a “self.” Beyond fear and anger, his features would at times arrange themselves into meaningless emotional composites, or degenerate into some other, abstract, choreography. I began to doubt that there was anything at all going on behind that face.

(Broks 2000: 8)

mindbody meatbody deathbody stinking sagging shitting fetus bursting organs hanging buried alive in a coffin of blood oh god not me don't let it be me got to get out of this bucket of tripe it's sucking me down throwing me up take it away this pulsing writhing spurring spinning body-go-round, BODY

(Skal 1988: 25)
The Hyperworld: an introduction.

Taking the term 'hyperworld' from Ted Nelson's Literary Machines (Edition 87.1, 1987), to describe how 21st Century high-technology (urban) cultures are multilayered, and constituted of linked 'texts', superficiality and destabilised meanings.

Cities are composed of layers of signs, different patterns of civilisation rest one on top of the other in a vast urban lamination, a lasagne of art and design. There is not a single plan, but many. The foundations may be the Roman or medieval streets which still dictate the general arrangements of the topography. Piled above that, successive campaigns of building are eloquent of the different vanities of the ages [...] Right now the surface is a volatile, pixilated, urgent, congested rush of people and things where microwaves and white vans fight for air and road space... as well as our attention.

(Bayley 2001: 25)

Is this a deliberate emphasis on what may be seen as an Occident-centric generalisation? The 'hyperworld' metaphor stretches to include the metropolises of Japan (indeed parts of Japan may stand as the supreme example of a hyperworld), other Asian countries, Russia, Africa and South America, and the rest of the developing world keen to compete in a global capitalist market, through emulating the 'monoculture' of the West. Theodore Roszak in Where the Wasteland Ends describes, somewhat lamentably, such developments:

The building of megalopolitan complexes is no longer a derivative of industrialization [...] It is the stage on which we have chosen to enact the drama of our time; it is our collective mindscape physically embodied. The supercity alone guarantees the utmost in artificiality, which is the unquestioned goal of progress.

(1973: 10; emphasis in italics added)

As Gregory Stock (1993) outlines, the considering and analogising of the (human) world in terms of global-interconnectivity and symbiosis is not a recent trend. Ancient Greeks such as Aristotle and others after them described "human civilization [as] an immense living being" (Stock 1993: xx). The roots of the hyperworld lie with the conceptions of the ancient Greeks (although as will be pointed out, this may still be late in the evolution of the hyperworld). The Greek world was characterised by the growth of the city-state (as today it is the re-emergence of the nation-state) and the political, intellectual and economic changes this brings. A side-effect of this was philosophical writing. As David Melling writes "The programme of colonial expansion coincided with the development of widespread literacy in the Greek world" (1987: 4); with the Greek alphabet allowing anyone to become proficient in not only recording details but developing "new forms of literature [...]

exploiting the potentialities of written language" (Melling 1987: 4). Combined with wall and vase paintings, with theatre and oratory still major oral traditions, the expression and transmission of ideas was metaphorically the nervous system of the world—the synapses of which are still firing today, albeit weakly. In the Empire of Rome, as McLuhan points out, the roads were most importantly an information network (McLuhan and Powers 1989). But also consider the extant graffiti of Pompeii: the word 'graffiti' having evolved from the Italian for 'little scratch', which in turn came from the Latin for 'stylus', which had come from the Greek for the verb 'to write', and has links with the act of grafting, that is, the joining of one thing (plant tissue, body part) onto another.
Global Scarification

In other terms this could be seen as the scarification of the world's body to convey ideas, to mark allegiances, to transplant the mind of one person onto the body of someone else: what is formed is a hybrid, a combination of two things to form something new, an information-chimera.

Concepts similar to the emerging idea of a hyperworld can be seen in the works of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: the 'noosphere' "an evolving collective mind" (Stock 1993: xx); Marshall McLuhan and co-writers: the 'Global Village' (1962, 1964, 1967, 1989); Jacque Ellul (1965); Simon Nora and Alain Minc (1980); Paul Connerton's social memory (see 1989); and Pierre Lévy: 'collective intelligence' (1997). In these theories, the hyperworld can only exist as a result of human interaction.

Observation 1: the world is changing due to a growing human population's needs and wants and whims. Observation 2: human beings are changing due to a growing technologically-mediated information-based global-culture.

The hyperworld concept is also inspired by theories of intertextuality. EXPAND.

The human being, as reader, is the central focus of any practice of interpretation. EXPAND.

Meaning is bounded only by the limitations of human cognitive and intellectual abilities. EXPAND.

[See Walter Benn Michaels in Tompkins, J. P. (1980: 185ff.), esp. on Abrams]

Humans in the hyperworld use technology as means to any number of ends, but the emphasis is on what can be called for the time being, 'information', using symbols and signs in the form of pictures and words; and as Ong reminds us: "writing (and especially alphabetic writing) is a technology, calling for the use of tools and other equipment..." (Ong 1982: 81).

Technology begets text and interpretation becomes textology. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? Expand...

This prompts the question, What is (a) text?

David Harris (1996) warns that there may be a danger in using the textual metaphor, but the danger comes not in using it but in believing it is the truth (see Davidson 1984). So, as in Valentine Cunningham's In the Reading Gaol, it can be argued "that the convergence of writing and worldliness, text and context, literature and history" (1994: 2-3) is still a necessary and extant consideration in viewing the world as a hyperworld.

The hyperworld is made up of inter-linked, reader-dependent artefacts and actions. Artefacts are inscribed objects, and actions are non-inscribed events, or what Connerton (1989) calls 'incorporating practices'. If it is assumed that text exists, thereby ignoring the writers who argue for the non-existence of the text... EXPAND.

[It is possible to substitute 'choreography' for 'writing' and 'dance' for 'literature' in order to develop such an argument for a dance-centred study.]
The hypothesis is that the hyperworld in simple terms can be likened to an expanded hypertext system. By hypertext is meant, at the most basic definition, non-sequential writing as first outlined by Nelson in 1965. This definition needs to be extended to include such terms as links, networks, interconnectivity, and discontinuity. There are a number of hypertext models, but each one has a basic series of characteristics. Drawing on Landow (1997) and culled from Deleuze and Guattari (1988), it can be said that hypertexts are:

1. Formed of networks: constructed so that any point connects to any other point by way of links;
2. An embodiment of anarchy: they violate genres and modes and discrete print texts;
3. Multi-dimensional: thereby being a rejection of linearity;
4. Rhizomatic: having multiple entryways and exits;
5. Collections of fundamentally different kinds of information;
6. Unpredictable and discontinuous: invoking the principle of asignifying rupture—"You can never get rid of ants because they form an animal rhizome that can rebound time and again after most of it has been destroyed" (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 9);
7. De-centralised, yet always a middle: a temporary centre; a short-term memory, or antimemory;
8. Nomadic: free to travel; fluid.

These characteristics will be examined in relation to the hyperworld as distinct from hypertext systems (WHY?), but using the analogy where appropriate.

It must be noted that a hyperworld is not to be confused with a cyberworld, or a virtual world, or the real world. EXPAND!

In the hyperworld, as in the other examples, people are still bodily present, and are little changed physically (apart from the augmentations and prosthetics that science has created to improve the quality of experience for many people).

What is different is human consciousness.
In Western cultures, most human beings have progressively moved away from a world of natural signs (ascribing meaning to events and objects beyond our control, e.g. earthquakes, volcanoes, meteors, the tides, trees and animals, rivers and rocks), to one of artificial signs (constructed by people to communicate and convey ideas, beliefs and stories).

But now even these artificial signs are being superseded, in a way, by things less real. No: beyond real, "more real than the real" (Baudrillard 1983: 99); "that which is always already reproduced" (Baudrillard 1992: 186). Is this the world of Baudrillard: the hyperreal? Or is it that "Reality just is what we are currently given to make of it by these various forms of seductive illusion" as Norris suggests (1990: 23)?

Not only have individuals been affected, but the groupings of humans and their institutions have evolved new forms. Marshall McLuhan wrote in 1967 that "Societies have always been shaped more by the nature of the media by which men communicate than by the content of the communication" (McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 8). There is fossil evidence that the human-like animals known as Neanderthals (Homo neanderthalensis) were physiologically able to speak in very much the same way as 'modern' humans do. There is evidence that Neanderthal culture was more complex than was previously believed, and indeed that they possibly interbred with what were our more direct ancestors. This serves to challenge a traditional linear account of evolution, and suggests, as Stephen Jay Gould terms it, a "bushy view of evolution" (see Gould 1999). (The same might be a possibility of the other early humans, the Asian Homo erectus, who also may have coexisted with Homo sapiens.) It also assumes the ability of both species to interact with each other using some form or forms of language. As humans developed and evolved so did the languages that they used; and as populations diverged, so did the early languages. Early human beings constructed methods of indicating to each other the essentials that they required for life, as the bee communicates to the hive the direction in which to travel, and for how far to go, to get to the nectar-bearing flowers (see Dawkins 1995: 85ff.). As requirements changed, so did the means of communication. As societies grew in complexity and number of persons involved, so did the concepts that were necessary to keep the society, and what we now term culture, organised sign- and gestural-languages (assuming that they came first, but there is no strong suggestion that they existed prior to attempts at verbal communication) were made somewhat ineffectual by the need to express more convoluted concepts, and to regulate the power within the society through the invention of stories and beliefs (see Wills 1995). After speech came symbolic forms of communication in the shape of stones, not just as functional tools like the handaxe, but beads for trade and adornment. From about thirty-two thousand years ago, cave paintings and other inscriptions and artefacts allowed more and more complex ideas to be expressed. Christopher Wills writes that these iconic objects "exemplified a new way of looking at the world in which representations of objects rather than the objects themselves had become important" (1995: 299-300). It could be said that from the first daubing on a cave wall human beings had created a proto-hyperworld, where images replaced the verbal, and meaning became both frozen and ambiguous-impossible to determine yet easy to construct.

"More than any other single invention, writing has transformed human consciousness" (Ong 1982: 78).
Part 3: Android

Canto 1: In the midst of death...

Eurydice opens her kohl'd eyes with a coal-black scream. The dirt of a thousand decades covers her wan body. Her mouth, as dry as a pumice, cracks and lets loose a long expiration. The hard but empty breath sputters from her dusty lips, and scatters across the grey ground like flakes of flint. Scratching through the earth, Eurydice raises her glassy hand, like a flock of larks, in a painful rapture through the rupture in the crust. She heaves a heavy sentence from her muddy mouth. ‘Where am I?’
Around her the strident fans of the Underworld force out an infernal rhythm. The turbid fug in her ears fogs the turbines’ fugue. As one awakening from a coma, Eurydice torpid and torrefied, torques her bony body in a series of mangled moves. Emerging from her spirit ditch, the pale imitation of Eurydice scans the seared surroundings. Smoke and smog fill the close and cloying chasm. Wheels with aillion cogs turn incessant circles, generating heat and the harsh chthonic thrum, now clearing a path to Eurydice’s cardrums. The vicious vibration impacts onto her tympanum like thunder, causing Eurydice to jolt her head in a pattern of panic and disorder. It is this that brings her awareness flooding back. The hum of the snakebite, sharp and shrill, shoots up her saphenous nerve. Her leg stiffens and she lurches a willowy hand to rub her knotted calf. Now she notices the bulge in her once waspish waist. With a wince, unexpectedly, she hisses a sibilant gasp. And then her waters break.
Into the arid hell flows her amniotic fluid, evaporating within seconds leaving a livid pink stain on her anaemic thigh.

'Oh, Orpheus!'

Eurydice weeps waterless tears, which burn her baked cheeks, caked with chalk and clay.

Huffs of smut billow from geysers all around the expectant woman, as she now begins to puff shallow breaths with deep lungs, expectorating green-grey phlegm onto her belly.

Her moans mingle with the metallic music of hell, and her uterus contracts to its own tempo.

After what seems to Eurydice like a million years, the movement reaches its crescendo, accompanied by her choric cries.

'What kind of hell is this?'

'Orpheus, come to me my love!' 

Like a volcano on the verge of eruption, Eurydice's womb is ready to explode.

The heat inside her belly is unbearable, and with a final push the baby's head breaks through the vent of the cervix.

A few smaller contractions expel the baby, still attached to its mother by the umbilical cord and placenta, but now breathing in the parched atmosphere for the first time.
The baby lets out a stridulant squall, strange and sepulchral, strained and strong. Eurydice, her swollen belly vacant, lifts the infant, still sticky and stuccoed with blood and earth, to her chest. The baby in her arms is oddly cold, sucking not the milk from her breast, but the little heat from the mother’s ghostly hands. Eurydice looks at her progeny. Where there should be fresh flesh is bronzy alloy and opaque plastic. In place of one eye is a sloe lens, reflecting in its convex pool of pitch the pallid face of Eurydice. Under translucent skin, nerves of nylon and steel lie alongside organic nerves, each serving their respective parts of the baby—half human, half machine.

And so, one dead, the other powerless to be born, two new characters burst onto the scene.
Canto 2: Meccanik Dancing.

'My baby...'
Eurydice hugs the tiny baby, half firm and unyielding, and half soft and responsive to
the mother's tender touch.
The baby gently turns its face to its mother, drained and drowsy in the dreary drone of
hell.
With latex lips, the babe smiles its first smile.
Eurydice mirrors her first-born.
The afterbirth follows the child into the afterlife, and after all her effort, Eurydice drifts
back into dreams.
Orpheus, swart yet pure of heart, leans over Eurydice and places an inky kiss on the white rose cheek of his beloved. Her eyes lift their lacy lids, and she gilds him with a golden gossamer gaze. Without a word, Orpheus slides his arms under his lily-light lover, and carries her to the bed. Eurydice, clinging to Orpheus like a vine, kisses his niello neck. He closes his eyes and sighs, and delicately lays Eurydice onto the sheets as perfect as petals. He follows her down into an embrace. He encloses her and she envelops him.
Eurydice awakes with a fright.
She is not sure which is the dream and which is real.
This the nightmare or that?
She is shivering, yet sweltering too.
An oppressive heat weighs on her like lead, and she struggles to move her head.
‘My baby!’
With fragile eyes, she glances around for the newborn.
Through the dry ice Eurydice sees the figure of a young boy, dancing like a chequered shade.
His steps are faltering, yet gritty and graceful.
Eurydice groans, and despite feeling groggy, grasps at the ground around her and hoists herself onto all fours.
She crawls on her hands and knees across the rough earth, towards her son.
He continues his cascade of movements, falling like dead flies onto the floor, and rising like butterflies through the barely air.
His cupreous limbs display a naïve concinnity, and with each articulation his joints become more confident.
And with each gesticulation his poise increases in sureness.
Growing at an accelerated rate, the result of millions of nanomachines working at a molecular level, the baby is now approaching adolescence.
Eurydice can scarcely comprehend what she sees.
Her offspring, hardly an hour old, dancing, dun and dusted, in the desert of the dead.
Canto 3: Unholy Communion.

Eurydice, bewildered and bewailing, cries out for her lover once more. 'Orpheus!' The word echoes around the young man, dancing like Pan in the pandemonium. His development decelerates to a halt. The diabolic son of Eurydice is now of age. And as his growth slows, so does his dance. Moving now with the speed and control of a cloud on a calm day, Eurydice's son would appear motionless to a human. Amid the amber ambience of the abyss, the amalgam of machine and man, majestic and magnificent in his monstrosity stands proud, befitting his parentage. He is fixed in the moment. Eurydice, transfixed and tranquil, tries to speak, but like the girl Philomele, cannot. There are no songbirds here near sulphurous Avernus. The demi-machine, unnamed and unnatural, glides to his mother across the gypsum. Two hands, one plaster-white and skeletal, and one of burnt sienna and sclerotic, entwine in the erubescent Erebus. Mother and son, undead and ungodly, in the Tartarean tenebrosity.
Part 4: Silent Running

Canto 1: An Abundance of Absence.

This next canto is mostly silent, but for the words that form in your head as you read to yourself.

What is the difference between reading in your head and reading out loud?

In which case do you hear the words you are reading?

Do you need to move your lips or tongue, or feel the words in your voice box when you read to yourself?

Is it reading to yourself if you make the sound of the words?

Imagine that each word you read has a corresponding movement.

Here is an example sentence:
Orpheus hears the silent scream of Ermy as their atoms are cast like seeds across the barren fields of cyberspace.

If you were to read this sentence using only the movements, would another person hear the words as they saw them?

Would they translate from the movements to the sounds?

Would you need to change from the words-as-movements to the words-as-sounds (audible or in your head) to understand them?

If you had to move when you read a sentence, would the words be different to you and a person who could only see the movements?

Would you feel as though you were broadcasting your thoughts?
How might inflection and other verbal differences be indicated in the words-as-movements?

Is it possible to move sarcastically?

The word 'sarcasm' has its root in the Greek word for 'flesh'.

Could my physical rhythm and tone change just as my verbal rhythm and tone change when I want to be sarcastic, loving, cruel, patronising, polite, etc.?

Is laughter like words-as-movements or words-as-sounds? Or is it like neither?

If I were to say, “That was funny” in a deadpan voice, would people believe me in the same way as though I were laughing naturally?

What if I were to force a laugh? How does this express my reaction to an event?

Is it correct to say: “Sometimes my movements are silent expressions of what could be called my psychological state”?

Are certain words the verbal expression of my physical state, for example, if I am in pain?

Are conscious social gestures the same as verbal language?

When I drum my fingers in time to the beat of a piece of music, am I translating the music into movement?

Would another person be able to tell what the piece of music was by simply looking at my fingers? Perhaps. But would they be satisfied with just the visual experience?

Would my physical action prompt them to hear music? Perhaps, if they were told that this was what they had to do.

Listen to the music of my movements.

Listen to the words of my movements.

Intonation “pumps energy from a life situation into verbal discourse - it endows everything linguistically stable with living historical momentum and uniqueness” (Voloshinov 1976: 106).
Canto 2: A Dance of Senses.

Now back to Orpheus falling through the gloom
and Ermy unsighted in the hell-black doom
and Wittgenstein's soul, torn and uncanny; three
with their odd existence, one which few have known.

Around them myriads of meaningless signs;
and Ones and Zerоes rot like fallen leaves;
and words drop hailstone-like onto their raw flesh,
spat sounds in horizontal sandstorm flurries.

Every sensation like a flame on skin.
Ice pick lobotomies through the eye sockets,
the three snow-blind, silenced from frost-bitten tongues,
shiver and shake in the sfumato of Hell.

The steel desert stretches, like deadly nightshade
in blacks and blues, beyond the blindsighted's ken.
Yet Orphée, poor, poor, porphyric Orpheus
gathers up his wits, then stops his starts and fits.

Ermy is writing a speech.

Time to share some of my ideas on what my ideas actually are: how the world is structured and how it relates to my ideas; and how ideas can be presented according to concepts of hypertext.

But this is not the talk I wanted to give. In fact, the talk I was going to give is not the talk I wanted to give either. I had too many things to say, and too many ways in which to say them.

I thought about telling stories. I thought about reading out lists. I thought in analogy and metaphor.

[Slap face]

Metaphor is like a slap in the face in the middle of a conversation. [Possibly a reference to Davidson 1984.] I thought about truth. I pondered the difference between objectivity and subjectivity. I thought about meaning. "Meaning is mortal" (possibly Baudrillard 1994: 164). I thought about poetry. "I think that meaning in poetry is more important than the style of how poems are written" said the Dalai Lama (2000: 123). I thought, "That's bullshit." I thought, "The medium is the message." Except it wasn't me who thought that. Or was it? Surely some of it was someone else. I wondered about you, the reader of my thesis, the listener at my talk, the masses, the elite. I looked for ways in, and for ways out. I read books and articles, papers and essays. I looked at pictures. I watched TV. I thought again about presenting the truth. "The truth is out there." I wondered what that meant. And I disagreed.
But Ermy, dear depersonalised debris, 
demented and distraught cannot find his self  
and reassemble an undeconstructed  
reconstruction of the person he had been.

And Wittgenstein too finds himself in pieces.  
A strange jigsaw with infinite solutions;  
an uncountable number of pictures made  
out of the same parts. There is no example  
to guide the jigsaw-artist. A new picture  
at each attempt. A new image of the self.  
Each new image is different to the last,  
but the differences are superficial.

"We are like sailors who have to rebuild  
their ship on the open sea, without ever  
being able to dismantle it in dry-dock  
and reconstruct it from the best  
components" (Neurath 1983: ???).

I listened to the radio and my favourite music. I thought  
about interpretation. Pierre Lévy got there before me:
What is interpretation?  
The subtle mind attempting to coax the inert body of  
the letter into graceful motion.  
The evocation of an author's breath in the presence of  
dead signs.  
The dangerous reconstruction of the knot of affects  
and images from which the text arises.  
And finally, the production of a new text, the  
interpreter's text.  
But if the signs are alive?  
If the text-image or thought-space grows,  
proliferates, and metamorphoses continuously;  
following the rhythm of the collective intelligence?  
If the lead characters make room for the very  
substance of the angels?  
If the opaque and gigantic stratification of texts  
effaces itself before a fluid and continuous medium,  
whose explorer always occupies the center?  
(1997: 109-10)

So, what is interpretation? I read some Rorty and Dewey and  
some Wittgenstein. Not to mention Susan Sontag.
A picture is a surface we can enter. A surface we imagine we get into. And it appears as one thing, at the same time as something else: mere patches on a canvas, movements of light and dark patches on a screen. The image of the self is not even this, it has the illusion of a surface. But, we cannot see this image, like a picture. We see pictures, but not always see what they are of. A picture, like an image, can be of anything. The human face could be called a picture; its changes represent the course of passion. Wittgenstein is just like a face. Now like the picture he would have painted: the perfect picture of a rose in the dark. Not just in the picture—he is the picture.

But, this is not to imply that the world is lived in pictures in too literal a sense: pictures make up a part of what we experience, and language is what might be said to tie all of these experiences together. However, Nicholas Mirzoeff suggests that “the visual disrupts and challenges any attempt to define culture in purely linguistic terms” (1999: 7). Words, spoken and written, transform what we see into culture: “the world-as-a-text has been replaced by the world-as-a-picture” writes Mirzoeff (1999: 7) in his assessment of the ‘picture theory’ of W.J.T. Mitchell. But it is only in the interaction of pictures and texts in films and theatre (and television and other screen-based media) that we find “a nexus where political, institutional, and social antagonisms play themselves out in the materiality of representation” (Mitchell 1994: 91).
To Ermy moves Orpheus, who feels his fear and senses without seeing, his soma white. A restless dance of miserable hands, Ermy flapping away, now this side and now that side.

Self-morphing, ectopic and ectoplasmic, ethereal Ermy, a displaced complex who can't get himself together without aid, amorphous around Orpheus, mind's eye blind.

The maelstrom continues in its strobic cone as Orpheus struggles to strum his lyre's strings, and Wittgenstein waits patiently, watching with intensely keen, all-seeing yet empty eyes.

Just as before, Calliope's son plays well, and reunites Ermy's once disjointed bod. The triumphant triumvirate tremulous yet intrepid resume their treacherous trek.

A performing body is a picture of a body. It is an animation. The more it is abstracted and made strange (through technology, for example), the less human it becomes.

To reduce pictures to words—and this includes the pictures of dancing bodies (real, animated, virtual)—denies the power of the picture. But there is a challenge to the dominance of the visual metaphor in many languages. We are experiencing, perhaps, a 'pictorial turn': "a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visuality, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies and figurality" (Mitchell 1994: 16). Now we transform performing, dancing bodies to pictures with the aid of film, video and digital technologies. Like medical imaging techniques, which transform the human being into new bodyscapes and textures without the need for dissection, we can see the dancer as a series of dots, colours and shapes, in parts and fragments without altering the person in too drastic a way. An x-ray shows us the bones of a body, an image which can then be read by a trained interpreter. Magnetic resonance imaging can show the body as it functions and can enhance the physician's understanding of the patient's ailments. An x-ray can show us the inside of a human being in a way that a work of art can never do—even when an artist claims that their work shows their 'inner being' (or some other such term of vagueness), all they are saying is a metaphor for the act of "being creative".

To say "dance is like writing" is not the same as saying "writing is like dance". A movement is not a word, but it can be used in place of one—but does the movement do the same thing as the word? Do we then have to translate the movement into a word? Do we translate a word into another word when we hear it?
Let us forget about 'dance' for a short while. (Try not to think about pink elephants for a while.) Let us contemplate this thesis. The object. The artefact. The *arte factum*.

What is this article before you? How does it articulate? What does it articulate? Does it articulate? Is it articulated?

**Part 5: Fahrenheit 451**

**Canto 1: Ten Trenches Deep.**

The Stygian stench stings the dry stenotic sinuses of Ermy, who is despondent and depressed by his decompression sickness, the resultant effects of the vile descent.

But Orpheus comforts his ill companion, 'Do not despair, dear Ermy, the worst is passed as soon as we have traversed these sands that blast us like the heat of Helios—he who knows all that transpires on Earth, but whose light ne'er rose o'er this caliginous kingdom. This opaque place, which can the brightest into shadows make, is home to a host of lost luminaries.

They are shallow buried like Polyneices, except in this place they are to us alive, able to contemplate, to converse and shrive. Like Antigone and some say Ismene,

[Shout] THIS BIT IS WRITTEN IN CAPITALS.

[Sotto voce] This bit in very small font.

I thought about text. Texts. I thought in fragments, words. "In the beginning was the Word." I thought about thought. I thought about the human mind.

[Very quickly] What is the mind? Is it a separate spirit-like thing attached to a body? Is it part of the brain? Is it an epiphenomenal property of brain processes? Does it even exist at all? How does it work? What happens when one person thinks that they have one kind of mind, and another person thinks their mind is something different? Each person feels as right as the other, and it makes little difference to their ability to control their bodies.

[Slow down] Richard Rorty wrote that, "We should restrict ourselves to questions like 'Does our use of these words get in the way of our use of those other words?'" (1992: 177). If we can accept, even for just a short while, that there is no such thing as the mind, but that there is a linguistic concept (or number of them) we can use in certain situations, we can begin to understand that so many of our 'ways of describing' are what shape us, and not the other way round.
This thesis is constrained and presented as a book, with the limitations (not to be read as a pejorative) that this format offers. As Walter Ong writes:

sealed up yet able to breathe eternally
in a pretence of living, waiting until
a fate is decided by a tribunal
and they are thrown into the caustic hellfires

as torn pages of old books cast onto pyres.
In the first bowge or trench lies Pythagoras,
a proponent of metempsychosis
and perhaps, too, of the Orphic theories on

the process that is known as bilocatton;
both of which assume that there is a psyche
detachable from the physical body.
However, he also thought that numbers held

the key to understanding much of the world.
This was inspired by the pitch of instrument
strings and musical interval measurement
and the relative ease with which they could be

expressed as numerical ratios. He
is still extant, but only just, and it might
take a great deal of my powers to excite
him to talk to us beyond a few small words,

Because visual surface had become charged with imposed meaning and because print controlled not only what words were put down to form a text but also the exact situation of the words on the page and their spatial relationship to one another, the space on a printed sheet - `white space' as it is called - took on high significance that leads directly into the modern and post-modern world.

(1982: 128)

The book and linear writing control and influence the way ideas are expressed, recorded, communicated, transmitted, interpreted, indicated, signified and gesticulated (and here a gesture might be more appropriate and successful at getting the meaning across, but a book is not very good at articulating a gesture). However, some of the contents of this thesis-as-book (the technology of linearity) are not subject to the laws of linear writing. When the conventions of linear writing (and the book) are disrupted and distorted and disregarded, questions of validity and value arise, alongside issues of intelligibility and (in)coherence. This thesis could be viewed as anarchic or a nullification of the book, but it is not an outright damnation of the book as

"Ein Buch ist ein Spiegel, wenn ein Affe hineinsieht, so kann kein Apostel heraus gucken" (Lichtenberg 1968: 477).

But this kind of approach is potentially scary. It reduces everything down to language, words. "If I don't have a mind, as I was lead to believe, then what am I?" It prompts many fundamental questions, or rather, questions about fundamentals.

What is the world we live in?
so we will bypass him, as fast as lyrebirds.’
And so, on past Pythagoras fly the three,
and through the iron-grey atmosphere of Hell,
across the bridge over the first thought-filled trench.

[Section on the Hyperworld metaphor]

In the hyperworld there is no regard for the distinction between one form of text and another. As in a classic postmodern novel, such as Calvino’s *If on a winter’s night a traveler* (1993), the text shifts from one mode to another – one sentence is upset by the next as the reader is challenged to attend to the processes of writing and reading, the book as an object and as a means of provoking thought(s) and ideas. The testing-ground for hyperworld-proper is television (or is it the archetypal example of the hyperworld?). On television, even without channel-surfing and reference to MTV, classic black and white movies are buttressed against cookery programmes, documentaries, soaps and sport, in a bricolage of texts. Our experience is linear in some respects. EXPAND.


What is the world we live in?

It is superficial. Mediation blurs with reality. Time is irrelevant yet all-controlling, all-consuming as the present swallows up the past and future. The visual dominates the verbal; the so-called 'mental' rules over the so-called 'physical'. Is the world in here [point to head] or out there? [gesture 'around']

The printed book is dying a slow death at the hands of hypermedia. Books are exterminated every day as their innards are ripped open and ripped off, and displayed on the internet, often as fragments—a byte here and a byte there [cf. Napster, and music and other files on the Internet]. There can be seen a disregard for the physical text, it is a shock to the system. The printed word is somehow tangible, alive, inviolable (cf. Revelation 22:19). As Ong remarks: "Writing makes 'words' appear similar to things because we think of words as the visible marks signaling [sic] words to decoders: we can see and touch such inscribed 'words' in texts and books" (1982: 11). But, he writes also, a printed "word is not a real word" (Ong 1982: 75), and he use’s Lotman’s term: 'secondary modeling system', to define it. Words on a page (or even on a computer screen, perhaps especially on a screen) are "coded symbols" (Ong 1982: 75) awaiting a human being to transform them into "sounded words, real or imagined, directly or indirectly" (Ong 1982: 75).
In his book *Of Grammatology*, Derrida wrote: "The end of linear writing is indeed the end of the book, even if, even today, it is within the form of a book that new writings—literary or theoretical [or both in one]—allow themselves to be, for better or for worse, encased" (1997: 86). The book is still a useful means of dissemination. It is, in a way, a self-contained technology and in the main doesn’t require any other technology to read it (the hands and the eyes are not technological), to access the material it contains; understanding (being able to read and interpret and use) the language of the information contained within the book is the main thing that the book requires; and compared to many other technologies, a book, by virtue of it being reliant on language and little else, will not become obsolete as quickly as modern computer technology does. Of course, languages change over time and information and knowledge (paradigms, traditions, cultures) shift in adequacy and acceptability, but this rate of evolution is relatively slow. It could be said that a book is ‘intuitive’ because of its tactility, its organising of space and meaning into a generally uniform and recognisable form, its easily navigational structure, its use of the visual “representation of an utterance, of words that someone says or is imagined to say” (Ong 1982: 84; italics in original). However, this is to imply that there is a ‘naturalness’ about books that makes them universal and timeless: not an implication to be proffered lightly.

Beyond, shrouded in steel-mist the ground gives way, agape like an orbit in a long-dry skull. 'Look! Yonder, yawning like a cat's yawling maw is our next port of call, we must make a yaw.'

Changing tack, Orpheus leads his friends à droit; a sweeping arc, curving deep and long, towards the second narrow pit, in which Plato sits, head chained to chamber wall, so it can't be turned.

Ong goes on:

Our complacency in thinking of words as signs is due to the tendency, perhaps incipient in oral cultures but clearly marked in chirographic cultures and far more marked in typographic and electronic cultures, to reduce all sensation and indeed all human experience to visual analogues.

(1982: 76)

[Sit down as though to tell a story]
The 'end of the book' as a concept is not just about the end of the printed artefact, but, as suggested above, the end of a way of organising and regarding knowledge. It is a reaction to the totalisation of a body of writing (of knowledge, of doctrines, of words as receptacles of fixed meaning) in the book: a self-contained work which Derrida argues "is profoundly alien to the sense of writing" (1997: 18). New technologies, new ways of writing, and reappraisals of the acts of reading and writing, of the written word and language in general, have been concomitant with, and indeed have paved the way for, the advent of electronic hypertext. They signal [...] a way of thinking about the way we organize, conceive and imagine the world in which we live. To think of the world not as a Book but as a hypertext is to conceive of it as a heterogeneous, mutable, interactive and open-ended space where meaning is inscribed between signs, between nodes, and between readers, not enclosed between the limits of a front and back cover, or anchored to some conceptual spine called the author.

(Keep, McLaughlin and Parmar 1993-2000)

"The ideal for a book would be to lay everything out on a plane of exteriority [...] on a single page, the same sheet: lived events, historical determinations, concepts, individuals, groups, social formations" (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 9).

The memory palace was a mnemonic system well known to ancient scholars and much information was preserved in them through the Dark Ages while the Vandals burned the books. Like scholars before him, Dr Lecter stores an enormous amount of information keyed to objects in his thousand rooms, but unlike the ancients, Dr Lecter has a second purpose for his palace; sometimes he lives there.

(Harris 2000: 296)

What is the world we live in?
"What is the point of this trawl through these trenches?" Asks Ermy, 'I thought we were on a mission to find Eurydice and take her back to the real world, whatever that is, and not wait or tarry at ev'ry Tom, Dick and Harry who has written a word on philosophy, and I'm still not clear what that is despite your attempts, Ludwig, to explain what it is not as much as what it is. I've been on my guard for Descartes, but I haven't seen him as yet, and frankly I'm getting more and more confused as to where we are going and what I am.

I've been blind and broken into many parts, then put back together in alien ways.

One moment I'm told that meanings don't exist and the next I'm asked to interpret something.

Will you please tell me what's going on, before... before I go mad!' And with this Ermy stops. He looks at Orpheus and Wittgenstein, who are somewhat surprised by his sudden outburst.

But why is all this relevant to a study of dance and new technology?—Meaning and transmission/communication; self and representation of self in technological context; criteria of personhood; art in the age of digital reproduction; layers of meaning (hypertextuality & intertextuality); notions of the body and disembodiment; kinaesthetic empathy.

The modern, urban world is dense in signs, in signifiers. The world is text. References within references. I walk along the street. There is information at every turn in what Baudrillard describes as "The Abyss of Meaning" (1983: 9); and "a universe where there is more and more information, and less and less meaning" (1983: 95). Adverts, abstract images and representations of lifestyles, the "you must have this" message. Words, slogans and phrases vie to be read; tunes, jingles and other noises contend to be heard. Around me I see people, vehicles, buildings, plants and animals, an assortment of artefacts and images created by other people; I hear a mixture of sounds, over-layered, constant, never silent; smells, sensations of temperature, light, humidity, surface under foot come and go. Gregory Stock writes: "Little of it ever rises to conscious awareness, but every person's body is always screening, analyzing and integrating the data" (1993: 67). At times I will become aware of the relevance, importance, pertinence of a particular piece of sense-data; connections have been found, language has been formed. I can relate my experience to others. A memory is made. I remember my past experiences, old thoughts. But does interpretation take place? Do I care about meaning? I digress.

[Hypertext as a model for the Hyperworld]
‘My most sincere apologies,’ says Ludwig, ‘for not hastening this journey to an end. But, Ermy, as Saint Augustinus once said: quia plus loquitur inquisitio

quam inventio—enquiring hath more to say than discovering. We are travelling through the labyrinth of paths that is language. Wouldn’t you say that is correct, Orpheus?’

These to some extent also describe the hyperworld. Some of these traits will be touched on in the next few minutes. I will demonstrate it in crass ways to sledgehammer it home. I will make jumps and leaps, so you had better hold on to your hats. Like a broken paving slab, the hyperworld is fragmented and segmented: still a paving slab by definition but existing in parts which connect at the ruptures. Don’t step on the cracks, or you may crack up.

In the hyperworld we make a game of joining the dots to make sense in the splintered nexus of being. From the divisions of time to the tunnel vision of motorway driving, watching television and political thought, we parcel things up, compartmentalise. We become sane schizoid, or even, in rarer cases, psychotically schizophrenic — the extreme reaction to living in a fragmented environment. In a book I’ve not read, Jameson wrote:

Schizophrenic experience is an experience of isolated, discontinuous material signifiers which fail to link up into a coherent sequence. The schizophrenic thus does not know personal identity in our sense, since our feeling of identity depends on our sense of the persistence of the 'I' and the 'me' over time.

(1985: 119)

[See Waugh 1992: 191]

Consider the syllogism:
The cyborg is schizoid.
We are all cyborgs.
We are all schizoid.

To paraphrase and condense Lévy: In the knowledge space we experience a crisis of identity, we have many identities for all of the virtual bodies we create and collective intelligences we participate in. "Thus the brain of Homo sapiens sapiens turns in upon itself, unveils its obverse and transforms itself into a polycosm" (Lévy 1997: 156).

Turn in on yourself for a moment: Try to recall your first memory.
[Pause]

Here I can either go on with a story about a popular farmyard animal, or leap into the rhizomatic, non-linear nature of hypertext (and by extension, the hyperworld). You decide...
'Indeed. But, unbeknownst to you, as we flit we are guides to a maze which seems infinite, and each apparently random choice we make is purposeful and leads to more tracks to take.

Whilst we do not see each of the new networks as they appear, they are made up like patchworks by others, each pattern different, each nap, each new story's fabric is stitched like a map,

but a map without a basis in real space. All of the routes intersect and interlace, without rules and predetermined connections and on ev'ry textual journey are lections—

variant readings, as it were, all special to each reader and each individual who becomes a part of the constellation in which we are but a mere collocation of words, nothing more and nothing less than that. We could have stopped off to have a lengthy chat with Augustine, for Wittgenstein's sake; Kant or Locke to discuss meaning and rules of grammar;

in later trenches we could talk with Nietzsche on truth and mythology; thence to Sartre to take apart imagination and his ontology and views on self-consciousness;

notion of the transference of 'meaning' directly another without the need for vision And at last the starting point: considering using new technology (for example, biomedical technology capable of generating electrical, and other, signals – information – out of bodily activity – muscular and joint movements, the functioning of internal organs including the chemico-electrical activities of the brain – that can be transferred into another body (in some way, such as by electrical muscle stimulation) or used to generate and control mechanical and digital outputs. The initial questions were an enquiry into the from one dancing body to

There are arguments and debates outlined and started in the thesis which can be taken off the page and followed beyond the reading of the words. There is an interior logic to the thesis—as is the case in a poem or any other work of literature, or even paintings and other works of art. This has a self-contained order, if a little chaotic at first glance; sense and nonsense are irrelevant terms in Wonderland. Having stated that this thesis is internally logical, it needs to be said that despite this, it is only meaningful when viewed from the outside and in combination with things external to it, such as philosophy, critical theory,
a swing towards another gaping chasm
could allow us to debate pragmatism
with John Dewey; and from this point, thread our way
to Gilbert Ryle for some meaningless wordplay

and discussions on category mistakes,
the kind of absurdities that language makes
possible for those easily confused by
what a word from one context seems to imply

when it is transplanted into another,
or treating as literal a metaphor;
a further furrow contains Canadian
media professor Marshall McLuhan,

whose works on technology and the senses
could be the node from which a quest commences
to find an understanding of the new edge,
for when he said 'the medium is the message'

he was trying to ensure that we don't fall
into the false belief that content is all,
that we should regard the manner and method
by which ideas are communicated—

performance; and the problems of definition when talking about human beings and
technology. These issues, it was decided, are described in language that creates
'philosophical problems' through a reliance on duality, that is, everything is
discussed as though it exists in a two-part fashion.

Secondary and related
questions were centred
around concepts of the
phenomenological
experience; the 'self' in
technologically-mediated
situations, and in particular
those that altered the
relationship of 'the body'
with the environment or
altered the body through
technology, such as through
prosthetics and so-called
'cyborg' technologies; the
practical implications for
these technologies on dance

Whorf writes:
The SAE [Standard Average
European] microcosm has analyzed
reality largely in terms of what it calls
'things' (bodies and quasibodies) plus
modes of extensional but formless
existence that it calls 'substances' or
'matter.' It tends to see existence
through a binomial formula that
expresses any existent as a spatial form
plus a spatial formless continuum
related to the form, as contents is
related to the outlines of its container.
Nonspatial existents are imaginatively
spatialized and charged with similar
implications of form and continuum.
(1956: 147)

I want to say: It is primarily the apparatus
of our ordinary language, of our word-
language, that we call language; and then
other things by analogy or comparability
with this.
(Wittgenstein PI §494; italics in original)
look at how something is said, not what is said.
For hours we could commune with the thinking dead,
asking them questions, playing language-games and
switching from analyst to analysand,
to appropriate terms from another field,
till at least some of our psycho-scars have healed
and our curiosity-thirst has been quenched,
at which moment the thinkers will be retrenched.

But you are right to urge a more rapid pace
because these discussions are still taking place,
it might be said, in another space and time,
an extra-dimension to this simple rhyme.'

And so, on these words, three become one once more,
to leave the rutted and rutilant route past
the hellholes heaped with writhing philosophers,
doing near endless headwork on subjects vast.

"The sky no longer falls on you from on
high; instead whole territories slide
away" (Baudrillard 1990: 21).

Once upon a time, a small chicken by the name of
Chicken Licken, was at the outskirts of the
farmyard. She was contentedly pecking at the earth
searching for grain and grubs, when all of a sudden
a whisper of wind disturbed the nearby oak tree. The
large tree's branches shook and the movement
dislodged a loose acorn. Our heroine was just
swallowing a small seed when the acorn, out of all
the places it could possibly go, landed with a
'click' on Chicken Licken's ickle head. Unseen by
Chicken Licken, the acorn bounced away from her and
became obscured from view in a tuft of turf.

As Chicken Licken is the character in a folk tale
she has a self-consciousness not usually
associated with chickens and other animals of
similar sized brain. Also she is equipped with the
necessary physical attributes and mental
capacities for speech and rational thought, so we
ought not be surprised when, feeling the acorn on
her head, she paused to make sense of what had
happened before uttering the words, "Oh dear, that
sensation is one of pain, but more importantly I
believe it to be a sign that the sky is about to
fall. I must run to tell the Queen, even though
I'm not entirely sure what she, or anyone else,
might be able to do about it. However, as I am the
character in a folk tale I am compelled to do
this, otherwise this would be a very short story,
and pretty dull for all concerned."

So, off she set on her mission to warn the Queen.
Now, let us imagine that Chicken Licken is like a human child. She has been part of a social group, of other talking chickens and farmyard animals, in which she has been exposed to language and concepts of interpersonal behaviour. She has a sense of self based on the responses of others to her behaviour, and she is able to ascribe to her self a range of conceptual specifics, such as pain. She is able to reflect on the immediate past and make judgments relating to her future actions, perhaps drawing on her experiential history. Having grasped a reasonable vocabulary she is also well-armed with rules of grammar and word usage. She understands the right and wrong times to apply particular words and behaviours. She knows what will happen to her in certain situations and this is related to her moral self, and an awareness of and regard for others. She is able to actively organise experience according to both social frameworks and shared ways of thinking, and her own internal rules - her imagination is obviously strongly developed.

Until at least 18 months of age a human being lacks what is termed Autonoetic Consciousness, that is “the ability to reflect upon ones subjective experiences in the past, present, and future” (Wheeler 2000: 197). It is essential to the functioning of episodic memory and “to awareness of the self as a continuous entity across time” (Levine 2000: 200). It also assists in decision making and self-regulation, which in turn affect behaviour. There “are age-related differences in encoding, retention, forgetting, and savings” of memories (Ceci 1995: 95). What you held in your memory as a child becomes lost to you as an adult because the mechanisms of storage and retrieval are different. Indeed, the ways in which young children learn and respond to their surroundings change according to the ways in which their memory works. So, if you believe that your earliest memory is such-and-such an event that occurred in the womb, or the pram, cot or before you could talk, chances are that you have at some point made it up like a story.

[Notes on Computer/Brain]
The black plastic drawer slides along its runners into the matt-black housing. An LED shows the word 'LOAD', the machine purrs and the TV screen announces the successful reading of the DVD. A few seconds later the disc's contents are being transferred onto the screen, enabling me to view them. With the handset I can scroll down a list of options on an interactive menu, which allows me to watch previously unseen footage of the movie, listen to commentaries, access other special extras or skip to my favourite part of the film. As I watch the film, I may be given the chance at certain moments to watch behind-the-scenes footage when an icon appears, taking me on a short tangent from the action. The commentaries by directors, actors and others involved in making the film give me more information about their processes, inspirations, references and techniques. The movie is opened up from the inside to reveal its secrets, in the hope that I, as viewer, will derive more enjoyment (and perhaps knowledge) from it.

In any hypertext model we see a move towards the importance of the retrieval – "utilization of stored information [...] our ability to access the residue of past experience and (in some cases) convert it into conscious experience" (Roediger 2000: 53 and 57) – in the reader of the text. The laying down, encoding, burning in, of the material is important in hypertext as it is in memory, but in both it is the ability to retrieve the material that is of the utmost importance. Hypertext prompts the reader to be active in the construction of meaningful networks. This transforms the reader into a composer of sorts. To say that the reader becomes an author implies a productive role (which may of course take place in certain hypertexts and hypermedia), as Landow notes, "Hypertext does not permit the active reader to change the text produced by another person, but it does narrow the phenomenological distance that separates individual documents from one another in the worlds of print and manuscript" (1997: 90). We live in a metaphorical library – our own individual hyperworld, our cosmopedia – all the books are there, we just browse and select. Think about it.

When we read a book (but, it should be strongly noted, not all books) from beginning to end, the author will have constructed a path for us – a narrative – to make us find our way through the text with the least effort on our part. We have constructed a linear passage through our lives which is based in a certain predictability: birth follows conception and development in the mother's womb; certain events and conditions notwithstanding, we grow and continue to develop in a number of ways through our lives to produce what Laing describes as "a basically ontologically secure person" (1965: 39); death will come to us all, marking an end to our human self and changing us from a living organism into something else (beliefs about the after-life and our views about the nature of death may affect our lives to some degree, but not the actual chemical processes of dying and decay). We are so used to reading a linear narrative, that often we are challenged when confronted by a non-linear text. In the postmodern world, the linear has had a bad press. It takes time and skill to construct a linear narrative, and as Michael Schudson writes: "Narratives simplify" (1995: 355). And is it easier to remember a story or a less-than-linear series of examples, even when linked in some way? Hypertext is often used to replace the linear structure of many books. Why this should be seen as a necessary reorganising of material is based on an often fallacious idea that hypertext is like the mind. In exploring the analogy of hypertext with how we think we can see some misconceptions. However, underlying the discussion is the notion that non-linearity is a human way to interpret the world. I am not anti-linearity, it simply is that that is not the way I work.
What is interesting about the role of my memory when I experience the world is the range of choices that it presents me with. When, to coin a phrase, I set my mind off on a quest to retrieve a lost or hidden piece of information, a memory, I am not like the computer which doggedly and singularly attempts to reach its target. I can divert myself, or become diverted, by something on the way (although not in the same way that a computer becomes diverted when a node is inaccessible and needs to be by-passed). Any point in my journey of recall can prompt behaviour based on past experience or my human ability to adapt according to my own cognition. This instability in the processes of memory and thought is often the key to creativity and artistic practice. The problems this instability introduces in the thinker need to be solved in some way; they become worked through and expressed in language, the visual and performance arts, music, etc.. If the 'basic' processes can be said to be similar in computer and hypertext systems, and in the human brain there are significant differences in the other levels of operation. While associations and connections are somehow in existence in the way the brain uses the information it stores, the issue of human cognition does not end there. Vannevar Bush (1945) predicted a mechanised information storage system which would be "an enlarged intimate supplement to [a person's] memory" - the 'memex'. But in Bush's 'memex'-model, it was the individual user who created the associations, the links from one piece of information to the next, forming a network according to their own personal connections.

There is so much information, so much (in)activity, that I do not attribute to a source or cause every thing I experience - to do so would be unnecessary and time-consuming. Neither do I weigh up a number of the possible sources, causes, meanings before deciding which is most apposite - although I am possibly aware that there are more interpretations 'waiting' to be applied In the conglomeration of signs only a few can hope to attain meaningfulness. Meaning is not resident in each sign as a yolk is inside an eggshell. We cannot break open the outer layer of a sign to get to the one meaning inside. A sign is more like a Schrödinger's box: the range of meanings as they coexist are either dead or alive in the box, but we can never really be sure which - both have equal weighting when observed from the outside. (Is the study of meaning and interpretation as complex as quantum theory? See Penrose 1990.) To grasp a meaning of a sign is to understand how that sign functions in the world.

To use Wittgenstein's differentiation between 'seeing' and 'seeing as' (see Wittgenstein 1953), we can say that we can see a sign but not see it as meaning anything to us. EXPAND.

But what if the sign wasn't made with the intention to mean anything? Baudrillard asserts that

Illeision is not false, for it doesn't use false signs; it uses senseless signs, signs that point nowhere. This is why it deceives and disappoints our demand for meaning, but it does so enchantingly.

(1990: 52)

Signs exist in reality and hyperreality at the same time. Any object takes on a dichotomous existence: the physical object and the multitude of aspects of meaning it can be interpreted as having when encountered by a human being. Let us take the book as an example. WHY? [The waning importance of the book and the move away from printed text as physical object...]
Moving back to the experiences of people in the hyperworld we can see how there is no beginning to the series of links that can be made in the world. We enter the mélange in the middle, at a random point. Each sign fights with its neighbour to be significant; "Real, total war has become information war" (McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 138); "The enemy then is mediated information" (Rucker et al 1993: 144). In the mêlée only meaning is the winner in a Pyrrhic victory where everything is hype. We are injected with a series of mind-altering substances, artificial stimulation. Excitation? Where is the excitement in a simulation? If we know that things are false (open brackets: what is real? Close brackets), can we derive pleasure from them still? If everything we see, hear, experience is un-real are we left without anything? The reason, if we can call it that, why signs today are so important, so ubiquitous, so hyperbolic is that they are a replacement for the objects they resemble. The word 'represent' is not present in the evaluation of hyperworld signs. Boundaries blur, subjectivity and objectivity no longer exist as two distinct poles. "The other," Baudrillard writes, the object, disappears on the horizons of science. The event, the meaning, disappears on the horizons of the media. (1990: 85)

[Linking section about watching Television]

"The fragmenting of activities, our habit of thinking in bits and parts - 'specialism' - reflected the step-by-step linear departmentalizing process inherent in the technology of the alphabet" (McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 45). This is exemplified by the Human Genome Project, whereby we have broken up the human organism into a mind-numbingly meaningless string of letters. The HGP has served to shatter and explode science into even more smaller parts, extending our understanding to further and further poles instead of unifying and clarifying it. It opens up more questions than answers. What can it really tell us about human beings? It doesn't tell us anything directly about human experience as it is lived. The enormity of the task has been confused with its meaning. As Kohn writes: "The Neanderthals' beads suggest that it might be a good idea to look outside the genome when trying to identify what it was that gave our ancestors the edge" (1999: 182).

And before you accuse me of being ignorant, I know about the benefits it can potentially offer to improve the life of future generations by leading to solutions in genetically transmitted conditions and improving health care, developing more efficient and cleaner energy sources, and improving agricultural methods, etc. My issue is not with the practical scientific outcomes, but with the total objectification of the human being; as simply code without identity. We spiral in on ourselves and totally miss the point of what is perhaps most special about ourselves.

And the spiral is not endless; we can never reach the bottom (or is it the top?). That is what is special about human beings - not that we can be taken to pieces, have our parts labelled, re-constructed, and improved on.

Or is it that we can do this to ourselves what makes us special?
The paradox(es) of dance: it is not language, although it has developed what we call 'the language of dance' (but it is a number of 'languages'); it is not gestural (non-verbal) communication in the same way that other 'conscious' gestures are: "Shrugging of shoulders, head-shakes, nods and so on we call signs first and foremost because they are embedded in the use of our verbal language" (Wittgenstein Z §651; italics in original)—where does 'unconscious physical gesture' come? Can an 'unconscious movement of the body' be called a gesture? (see Wittgenstein Z §227); it is not generally used to converse yet we can talk of one movement answering another, commenting on the preceding movement or a dialogue between two dancers; certain forms of dance have rules which are agreed on, for example, how a body part should be placed to make the move 'correct', but these rules are not 'grammatical'; the 'meaning' of a dance is not the dancer's 'intention' behind a movement, for no one can say what that is, sometimes not even the dancer, and these 'intentions' will differ for each movement, even the 'same' movement, especially from one performance to the next; we talk of dance as being a series of movements and we can divide a string of movements up into 'distinct' parts, but this is equivalent to hearing a foreign language and arbitrarily segmenting it into 'words' and assuming that each of these has a meaning attached to it in isolation from the rest: "Apparent isolations of words in a vocabulary list also derive what meaning they have from the patterned 'potentials of linkage,' which ramify from them and connect them with complex patterns of linguistic formulation" (Whorf 1956: 67 note 4); it is an 'external' action (sometimes, but not always) supposed to show the 'internal' or 'emotional', as though language was not good enough to do this (surely language is better—at least there are rules for the use of language); dance is not universal yet can be moved cross-culturally, but what does this do to its 'meaning'?—does the same dance performed in two different cultural contexts have the same meaning in each? (You might say: That depends on your definition of meaning.)—“Sense and meaning does not result from words or morphemes but from patterned relations between words or morphemes" (Whorf 1956: 67).
The ‘rules’ for dancing are not really to do with meaning and use in the same way as we might say the speaking words is rule-guided.

They (the rules of dance) are more based in anatomy than in ‘semantics’.

Saying a word is to some extent ‘anatomical’ (a large part of it is anatomical), but to teach a word is not just to explain to someone how to move the tongue, open the lips and vibrate the larynx in a certain way (and how is this action described? only by making the sound and getting the other person to imitate until they make the ‘same’ noise); learning a word is learning when to say it, as well as how to say it. Learning choreographed movement may well be about learning how and when to do a movement in a sequence of other movements, but it is possible to teach it without any instructions other than physical directions. If language were taught this way, people would behave more as parrots in their speech acts than able to use language in various situations. In this way, as music is like language, so is dance. “Understanding a sentence is much more akin to understanding a theme in music than one may think” (Wittgenstein PI §527). “Speech with and without thought is to be compared with the playing of a piece of music with and without thought” (Wittgenstein PI §341). “Understanding a musical phrase may also be called understanding a language” (Wittgenstein Z §172).

What kind of language is dance?

It could be said: In much dance language is written (implicit) the concept of the ‘language of dance’.

As we have seen, reference is the lesser part of meaning, patternment the greater. Science, the quest for truth, is a sort of diving madness like love. And music—is it not in the same category? Music is a quasilanguage based entirely on patternment, without having developed lexation. (Whorf 1956: 261)

‘All dance is nonsense.’ Yet this statement is in itself, nonsensical. It is almost the same as saying, every dance has a sense. What is the sense in dance?

To understand a sentence means to understand language. To understand a language means to be master of a technique. (Wittgenstein PI §199)
You say that you can describe your movements in a number of ways. You say that it is ‘busy in there’ when you dance, and point to your head. You say that you are hearing words, doing mathematical calculations, measuring angles and recording them. You say that it is a science-like process when you dance: you analyse and interpret each position of your body, you say. You can’t tell me what each of the words are at any given point of the movement, but you know that you can ‘hear’ them. You go off afterwards to write them down. They are the movements translated into words, you say or don’t say. Do you use words to initiate a movement?—Yes you do, you say. Do words come out of moving?—Of course they do, you say. What words?—All sorts of words, you say; emotion words, anatomical terms, abstract sentences rich with meaning. The words are your language for what the dance means, you say maybe. Can you recreate the movements from the words?—Oh yes, you say. You show me a position of an outstretched arm and intimate the range of things that are going on when you do this. I hear the words you say but I am sceptical as to whether or not you can be sure about what you are saying can be correct. The position is not in a context of a movement, or rather you abstract it from one. It is an isolated fragment of another movement, hypothetical yet physical. You act as though it is frozen in time and space, suspended for you to examine it from all angles, and you claim that this is the process that occurs all the time when you move.

Life’s infinite variations are an essential part of our life. And so precisely of the habitual character of life. Expression consists for us in incalculability. If I knew exactly how he would grimace, move, there would be no facial expression, no gesture. —But is that true? —I can after all listen again & again to a piece of music that I know (completely) by heart; & it could even be played on a musical box. Its gestures would still remain gestures for me although I know all the time, what comes next. Indeed I may even be surprised afresh again & again. (In a certain sense.)

(Wittgenstein CV 83-4e: MS 137 67a)

'The aim of music: to communicate feelings.'
Connected with this: We may rightly say "he has now the same face as before" —although measurement gave different results in the two cases. How are the words "the same facial expression" used? —How do we know that someone is using these words correctly? But how do I now that I am using them correctly?

(Wittgenstein CV 43e: MS 122 190)

'This musical phrase is a gesture for me. It creeps into my life. I make it my own.'

(Wittgenstein CV 83e: MS 137 67a)
Canto 2: Of Vision and Death.

Eurydice flutters like a page in flames
while her son touches her torrid, tindery cheeks,
which split and scar with each fingertip stroke,
like Lot’s wife, they turn to rock salt and crumble.

The curse of looking behind will befall
those who use the rear-view mirror instead,
unlike Perseus with reflecting shield
given him by Athena, they aren’t safe;
the Gorgon’s gaze can still petrify
those who view her in the looking glass.
But Eurydice is yet to be
the vexed victim of a harsher gaze:

the backwards glance of her belov’d,
so cruel a trick played by Hades
to deny Orpheus a look
at his fair wife, Eurydice.

If she is the past into
which we all look with sore eyes,
she is also the future,
like a suture in those eyes

which stops us from seeing,
prevents us from knowing,
changes our perception,
alters sense ratios,

shifts from one mode of
communication
to another in
the blink of an eye

which will never
open again
all ossified
and calcified

hard to touch
difficult
to locate
in the dark

heavy
grit dry
ice cold
grey eye

falls
like
a
stone

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Everything is determined, the beginning as well as the end, by forces over which we have no control. It is determined for the insect as well as the star. Human beings, vegetables, or cosmic dust, we all dance to a mysterious tune, intoned by an invisible piper.

(Einstein in Carey 1995: 274)
Part 6: Futureworld

Canto 1: The Time Machine: An In(ter)vention.

Orpheus speaks.

'Ve're nearly at the end of this journey. I know that much, for this instant. In the next it might change. Even now, or then, I knew what I knew. Before speaking I knew. Nothing changed with my uttering the words: 'We're nearly at the end of this journey'. Except that we got closer to the end. But my saying that protracted the journey, and meant that the end was pushed further away at the same time as being pulled closer. And so it has been all the time like this. Philosophy itself, in all of its guises, is like this too. Whenever a philosopher gets to the end, or thinks they are close to an end of their argument, they are not there. How can they be? Just as there is no definite beginning to philosophising, there is no finite end. Even the end of philosophy is just another false end which leads into a new philosophy, albeit one based in negation—at some point even the anti-attitude must become a 'conviction' which is worn like a mask. The end is like falling asleep: "the exhausted want rest, relaxation, peace, calm". The philosopher reaches exhaustion from the travelling, without ever reaching a satisfactory goal—even though they may believe that they have completed their voyage. They sometimes change direction, and start a new journey, driven by the will to truth. The end is a new beginning in a perpetual cycle of stopping and starting, each indistinguishable from the other. But always they will lay down to sleep, their journey incomplete as it becomes the potential journey for others to take up. Philosophy is a relay race which can never be won as it will never be finished.

Ermy looks again at the clock on his PC. 'Time is running out.' He sighs. A spasm in his upper back reminds him of the weight of his task. 'I'm so tired, and I've got so much to do still. I've got to structure all my thoughts, my notes rather, print and proofread it all, try to make sense of everything, make it coherent.' His right hand clutches at the mouse as he pauses before left-clicking on the relevant document icon. The software starts up and the word processed file comes up on the screen.

Digital Dialogism: dance at the edge of language.

This is a thesis about dance. But it doesn't wear this on its sleeve. Maybe it is more of a thesis for those interested in dance. Maybe it is a thesis for those wishing to consider dance from new directions. Maybe it is a thesis for the writer to indulge in a 'dance of language', rather than 'language of dance'. Maybe it is a thesis about the processes of thought. As Nietzsche wrote: "thinking wants to be learned like dancing, as a kind of dancing" (in TI, 'What the Germans Lack' §7, 1968a: 76). This thesis is the result of thinking about dance and allowing that thinking to dance itself.
The future is now here. The future is the present, and the past. To use a time-as-space metaphor: we're moving forwards into the past. But this is not a new observation. Just an example of the circularity of thought. The present is as brief as the future is infinite, as the past is unimaginable. Instantly is not quick enough when you want to live in the present. And the present is as throwaway as it is transient. It is as transient as it is transparent. We talk of surface and superficiality but ignore the perspicuity that this affords.

Ermy reads through the notes he has made over the last few years. He didn't think that this moment would come. The moment at which he has to make his ideas known to others, to present his work. He wonders if it says anything to anybody else. He ponders on how it is like making a dance piece—putting together a sequence of movements which seem to have some kind of meaning to the maker, but which are merely shapes in space made by a human being. A final thought comes to Ermy. 'Time is running out, the future is nowhere.' He types.

We live in a humanised world; ours is a world of myth, of language, of imagery. We have invented the mind, emotion, thought and spirit. We want easy answers to questions that don't have answers. We see ourselves reflected in the stars; our stories, our lives, our myths lie beyond our reach, painted and written for us by unknown and unknowable gods. Digital technology is one of the latest gods we worship, at the same time as seeing ourselves as the creators of a new entity in our own image. The computer, we intimate, is modeled on our brains and use the computer as a model for our brains. We live analogically and symbiotically with the silicon and human-made extensions of ourselves. We think. To be human is to be positioned between the earth's so-called nature and an adapted world of our own making. We talk of humanising nature and de-humanising ourselves through technology. We build our worlds with technology and become indissociably connected to the technology. Human beings construct their lives in concert with their technologies and life breaks down when the technologies break down. When humans become more dependent on machines, does this remove our humaness? Or does it somehow accentuate it through stark contrast with the inhuman technology? We anthropomorphise the digital machine as we do our pets, because we see in it not the actions of other people but actions as though of the machine itself. We differentiate and classify and redefine our relationships with objects the closer and more intimately they become attached to our bodies. Even calling them relationships implies a reciprocal return of affection and attention. We invent new terms for branches of the human family - the cyborg is made real by naming an organism that is steered by or steers a machine, a piece of technology, a fragment of humanised nature that augments our failing, fragile or inadequate bodies, or extends the human qualities we might call mind, memory or self, which we characterise in the same pejorative terms as we do our bodies - we hold an ideal before us and try to hold it, but it is always out of reach; our myths tell us of gods, perfect beings, objects that will allow us to achieve perfection, immortality or supreme knowledge of the universe; still the quest goes on.
Simulacra become the real. New forms of stimulation—virtual, haptic, pharmacological—give us new perceptions, conceptions and prompt questions of what it means to be physical beings. In the Global Amusement Arcade everything is a game, a pastime. A compression of the words 'pass' and 'time'; from a verb to a noun. Something we used to do is now something that we have. But time isn't currency anymore—it is valueless. When it is 'wasted', we do not feel perturbed by this. It is collateral damage. We understand its worthlessness. We do not need to worry about time as much as we used to—for example, our lives don't revolve around the same tasks that characterise an agricultural society—maybe we are moving to the end of time. Maybe time is not simply dying. Maybe... Time is dead.'

There is so much more to be said.

And of course, more to be read: more Derrida, Deleuze & Guattari's A Thousand Plateaus, more Lacan, some Teilhard de Chardin, Ellul properly, more Davidson (must re-read 'What Metaphors Mean' Ch. 7 in Inquiries... (1984)), the list is endless—I don't know when to stop...

Ermy realises that there is never going to be an end to his work, before he reluctantly, and nervously clicks on the Print icon. 'It is finished,' he says as he bows his head.
Canto 2: Die unendliche Geschichte.

So, this is the moment where it all must reach some kind of ending. The strands of the story need to be gathered up and somehow brought to a satisfactory denouement. But this is not an easy proposition. I want to write an ending that matches up to all of the endings that you, the reader or listener, can imagine.

I want Orpheus to find Eurydice and to be able to resist the urge to turn round and take her out of Hell. But this story has already been written and who am I to change the end?

I want Wittgenstein to find peace and to be understood. But this story is way beyond my control.

I want Eurydice to become more than a metaphor. But a metaphor will always remain a metaphor.

I want Eurydice’s son to give me the answers to a million questions. But questions will always want for answers.

I want Ermy to be real and to realise his value. But Ermy is just an unfinished sketch from the imagination, he does not exist in the same way that you do. But, like the meaning of a word, he does exist in some strange way, the same yet different for each of us. He is not a person like you, yet he can be spoken of as though he is. He is like a role in the theatre, an actor can portray it, but never become it.

But now I am tired of trying to become.

As Nietzsche wrote: “linguistic means of expression are useless for expressing ‘becoming’”. But in that case, what else is able to express it? Perhaps it is the doing that is the expression: “there is no ‘being’ beyond doing, effecting, becoming; ‘the doer’ [the performer] is merely a fiction added to the deed—the deed is everything.”
Conclusion: The Omega Man

Canto 1 and Only: First and Last and Always.

Can you see me?
    Where the sky changes from grey to blue, I dance.
I am the child of Orpheus and Eurydice.
    In the creased skin of an elbow joint, I dance.
I am nameless.
    When the sea is between ebb and flow, I dance.
I am the orphan son of a poet.
    At the last crackle of a bonfire, I dance.
I am not alive and I am not dead.
    In the free fall before crash landing, I dance.

Can you hear me?
    When a bulb pops, I dance.
I am the last thing you hear before you fall asleep.
    In the vibrating string of a musical instrument, I dance.
My voice is like electricity, silent, violent.
    When you can't breathe, I dance.
I am a cascade of falling leaves.
    Among the streams of information, I dance.
I am a digital watermark.
    When one door closes, and another opens, I dance.
I am asynchronous communication.
    Like the worker bee in the hive, I dance.
I am a daemon.
    Where the meatspace meets cyberspace, I dance.
An infertile body in a sterile world.
    At the edge of reason, I dance.
I am unbreakable code.
    In the time between a cry and its echo, I dance.
I am hidden text.
    As mote floats in a midnight headlight, I dance.
Can you sense me at all?
    In the vacuum of the heart, I dance.
I am the half-rhyme in this line.
    Where metaphor lives, I dance.
Ink, black and obsolete.
    Underneath a patina of green rust, I dance.
I am pixelated and lo-res.
    To the sound of a dissonant chord, I dance.
I am a synecdoche.
    Where fast becomes slow, I dance.
I am the result of a synergism.
    On the fine line, I dance.
Macabre and morphotic.
    From first to last, I dance.
I am found before the moment of understanding.

    Always, alone, I dance.
For the first time in history man, on this planet, is discovering that he is alone with himself [...] The conventional division of the world into subject and object, into inner and outer world, into body and soul, is no longer applicable.

(Heisenberg in Carey 1995: 277)

The community of human destinies is experienced in the anonymity of non-place, and in solitude.

So there will soon be a need – perhaps there already is a need – for something that may seem a contradiction in terms: an ethnology of solitude.

(Augé 1995: 120)
In Lieu of an Appendix: Notes to the Poem ‘The First Unborn’

It would be a misnomer if this section were called an Appendix. If it were a body part it would be the liver, the largest gland in the body, irregularly shaped and a major accessory organ of digestion. It is not merely an appendage, but an integral and important part of the body of the text.

The poem was written to be presented in an aural form, and as an attempt to poeticise and make ‘performative’ the main themes of the thesis. It was to be reference-laden and indirectly direct the reader to some other specific texts, and many more texts that cannot be accounted for or predicted. It is after deliberation that this key for ‘un-locking’ the poem has been forged (see CV 62e: MS 133 12), as this is an academic work after all.

In order not to disrupt the flow and ‘look’ of the text, the poem is printed in the thesis as an un-annotated piece of writing, but many of the deliberate references are relevant and interesting. There are also points of contact with the writer’s direct experience of writing: for example, lyrics of songs being listened to at the time which found their way into the poem; chance encounters with quotations from other works of literature, philosophy and science. Wittgenstein writes that the “lesson in a poem is overstated, if the intellectual points are nakedly exposed, not clothed by the heart” (CV 62e: MS 133 6). A fine example of poetry that clothes its points, or at least its references, and then strips itself bare by supplying notes is Eliot’s ‘The Waste Land’ (first published in 1922; 1972: 25-51). A piece of literature that is more guarded in its use of references is Eco’s The Name of the Rose (first published as Il nome della rosa in 1980; 1984), which alludes to Sherlock Holmes, Jorge Luis Borges and Wittgenstein: “But let us not forget that there are also signs that seem such and such and are instead without meaning, like blitiri or bu-ba-buff....” (Eco 1984: 107); “Can I say ‘bububu’ and mean ‘If it doesn’t rain I shall go for a walk’?—It is only in a language that I can mean something by something. This shews clearly that the grammar of ‘to mean’ is not like that of the expression ‘to imagine’ and the like” (Wittgenstein PI 18e; unnumbered passage). (For more on these works and their intertexts see, for example, Hutcheon 1988 and 1989, and Allen 2000.)
Cantos 3 and 4 of ‘Part One: Brainstorm’ are formed from the writings of Wittgenstein, and these are referenced in detail here, with the original German writings (if written originally in German and not in English) on transparent sheets which can and should be placed over the relevant pages. This is an acknowledgement of Wittgenstein’s own wishes and the problems of translation: “the relative values of words which are roughly synonymous in German are not mirrored in the English counterparts of these words” (Winch in Wittgenstein 1998: xviii). There are many other references to Wittgenstein’s life and works in the poem, and these are given following the conventions outlined in ‘On the Referencing of Major Philosophical and Literary Works’, except that it has not been deemed necessary to place the name ‘Wittgenstein’ in front of each reference. Not all of the translations have the German to accompany them, and where a quotation is close to word-for-word in the published text, only the work and section or page reference is given.

The references to Greek mythology are un-noted here. The major source was Guirand (1968), although Graves (1992) was referred to in passing, along with any Homer that was available (not in Bibliography). Certain liberties have been taken with the mythologies.

The film and song references are not included in the Bibliography, but the details given here should be sufficient to find the source. Some poetic references are given in a form (title, verse, line, etc.) that will make it possible to find the line in any edition of the poets’ works.

Caveat:

One no longer loves one’s knowledge enough when one has communicated it.
(Nietzsche BGE §160)

Knowledge is not translated into words when it is expressed. The words are not a translation of something else that was there before they were.
(Wittgenstein Z §191; italics in original)
THE FIRST UNBORN

'The First Unborn': The title of the poem is a play on the phrase 'the first born'. It is nonsensical, yet aspires to be meaningful. It is, to use Sorrell's word, a "nonphrase" (Sorrell 1992: 147). [Cf. Sterne's Tristram Shandy, vol. 1, book 14.]

Prologue: Alphaville

Canto 1: The Meeting.

'Alphaville': Alphaville (a film directed by Jean-Luc Godard, 1965), the automated city where love and tenderness - human qualities - are forbidden (suggesting that through technology we are dehumanised). This is the Underworld, Hades, Hell into which the human character (Lemmy Caution) must travel in order to regain humanity (the search for the thing that we love).

'boys wait and bleed without making a sound': 'Wait and Bleed', a song title on the eponymous debut album by Slipknot (Roadrunner Records, 1999). Also, a veiled reference to the fatal stabbing of Damilola Taylor on the 27th of November 2000.

'brains of plastic': Based on a line from Marilyn Manson's song 'CODEATGOD', on Holy Wood: "but you are plastic and so are your brains" (nothing/interscope records, 2000).

'he traces / a long-forgotten shape': Here Orpheus points to the constellation of Lyra, supposedly his lyre carried to the heavens either by Zeus's vulture or the Muses. Lyra can be seen between June and October in the Northern Hemisphere (best viewed in August at 2100hrs). The lyre is the instrument mythically invented by Hermes and given to Apollo, his half-brother, who in turn gave it to his son Orpheus.

'(But is meaning just a human-made lie?): 'Meaning'. The word that prompted this whole problem. Any idea that meaning is an easily definable and transferable entity or concept is mistaken (cf. the Conduit Metaphor of communication (see Brook and Boal 1995: 115-6) and Saussurean structuralism). The meaning of a word is different in so many ways to the meaning of a dance movement or physical gesture and these are different to the meaning of a picture which differs from the meaning of a road sign, and so on. Meaning is in a way determined by rules, but these rules are arbitrary, as are the rules of grammar (of writing, of dance). To suggest that anyone can get outside of the rules of grammar and provide a meaning for anything is thoroughly misleading; "the grammar determines the meaning of the word" (Wittgenstein PO 307). But even this does not fully answer the question: 'What is meaning?' A word, for example, has a range of meanings, through time and across contexts; the same word is never the same word in a new utterance.

It may be believed that dance magically communicates meaning from one person - the dancer - who expresses, for example, an inner emotion that is intended (wilfully, consciously) as the meaning of the movement, to another - the viewer (the list of examples could be read for hours, see Horst and Russell 1961, Wigman 1973, McConnell 1977, Hawkins 1992 and Mackrell 1997). This emotion could be considered to be of a certain kind or quality, perhaps anger, love, sadness, hate, etc., and can be
read (felt, experienced) as such. However, this belief is tied up with the common misconceptions that Best outlines in relation to the meanings and definitions of words (for example see Best 1974: 15). It should not be said that dance is capable of expressing meaning or emotion in a (de)finite way; that a dance movement contains meaning per se. This conception is misguided, as is the idea that dance is a language (as suggested by many writers, including Humphrey 1959—a book particularly ripe for deconstruction—and Haskell 1965; again the list could be long, and it is not restricted to mid-20th Century texts: see Claid 2001, for example).

It could be said, “Dance is a language if ‘definitions’ are ascribed to each movement, and then these ‘definitions’ taught to others.” But what are these definitions to be? They are not emotion, although we might feel emotion when they are done; ‘emotion’ is linked to a movement in the same way that it is linked to the word ‘emotion’. Wittgenstein writes that “the verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe it” (PI §244), it doesn’t mean pain; and Hacker writes:

In the place of the descriptivist, cognitivist, conception, Wittgenstein proposes a completely different picture—an expressivist, naturalist one. The verbal expression of pain is grafted on to the natural expressive behaviour in circumstances of injury [... Wittgenstein writes: ‘Language] is a refinement, ‘in the beginning was the deed’.

(1997: 36; italics in original)

(Wittgenstein quotation from CV 36e: MS 119 146, incorporating a line from Goethe’s Faust: Part One, 1949: 71.)

Even gestural movements are dependent on the use of other (verbal) languages, each movement does not itself convey meaning: “Shrugging of shoulders, head-shakes, nods and so on we call signs first and foremost because they are embedded in the use of our verbal language” (Wittgenstein Z §651). Nodding the head may signify a positive response; it can be used in place of or accompany the word “yes”. However, in another culture, nodding the head may be the gesture to accompany a negative response, the word “no”. Or similarly, it may be an involuntary gesture of a person with a nervous affliction, or the voluntary action of someone with a stiff neck. Another example is that of using the thumb to signify a favourable personal situation or acceptance of something or an acknowledgement of someone’s having asked something of you. It can also “mean” let him live (or die) or please pick me up in your car or the complete opposite of any positive usage (in that it may be used as a gesture of disdain). Richard Rorty writes: “For Wittgenstein, what makes things representational or intentional is the part they play in a larger context—in interaction with large numbers of visible things” (1980: 27). It is quite often the surrounding context that provides the way we are inclined to read a gesture. In the case of dance this should not be overlooked. Berger and Luckmann, in their discussion of the human production (and use) of signs write:

Signs are clustered in a number of systems. Thus there are systems of gesticulatory signs, of patterned bodily movements, of various sets of material artifacts, and so on. Signs and sign systems are objectivations in the sense of being objectively available beyond the expression of subjective intentions ‘here and now’. This ‘detachability’ from the immediate expressions of subjectivity also pertains to signs that require the mediating presence of the body. Thus performing a dance that signifies aggressive intent is an altogether different thing from snarling or clenching fists in an outburst of anger. The latter acts express my subjectivity ‘here and now’, while the former can be quite detached from this subjectivity—I may not be angry or aggressive at all at this point but merely taking part in the dance because I am paid to do so on behalf of someone else who is angry. In other words, the dance can be detached from the subjectivity of the dancer in a way in which the snarling cannot from the snarer. Both dancing and snarling are manifestations of bodily expressivity, but only the former has the character of an objectively available sign. Signs and sign systems are all
characterized by 'detachability', but they can be differentiated in terms of the degree to which they may be detached from face-to-face situations. Thus a dance is evidently less detached than a material artifact signifying the same subjective meaning.

(1991: 51; italics in original)

Is it possible that dance is a language when interpreted as, that is, called one by a viewer? Anyone could say that anything is a language in this case. Is it paradoxical to say that dance is not a language, but can be perceived and conceived of as one by both dancer and viewer? Not paradoxical, simply ridiculous. Perhaps what should be said is that there are certain (human-made) rules that can be applied to dance movement, which then give it the function of being a substitute, a proxy language (is this not what sign-language used by deaf people is?). As in the case of Wittgenstein's builders (see Wittgenstein PI §2; and Wittgenstein BB 77ff;) sense and meaning are only apparent and determined in accordance with the situation and shared understanding of the interlocutors. Would a dancer have to supply a dictionary or lexicon as a key to what their movements mean, and get everyone watching to agree to these, for the dance to be counted as using a language? Is this the case with verbal language? No. A culture, a form of life, that uses language doesn't need a dictionary to be able to converse (although dictionaries exist to help people converse, that is, use language). We can invent a new language (verbal, written, or physical) but until it is used by human beings it does not live. Wittgenstein writes:

Esperanto. Our feeling of disgust, when we utter an invented word with invented derivative syllables. The word is cold, has no associations & yet plays at 'language'. A system of purely written signs would not disgust us like this.

(CV 60e: 132: 69)

Language has history, myths (see PO 199 and note below) incorporated into it (see CV 60e: MS 132 62 and cf. Vygotsky 1986; see below). It has been said that the materials of the dance are not neutral, they carry meanings or significances which are independent of the dance situation. The basic movement material of the dance is impregnated with meanings with which the choreographer, performers and audience have to come to terms with.

(Hodgens in Adshead 1988: 65)

The basic premise is suggestive of correctness (philosophy, according to Northrop and cited by Hawkins in his collection of 'statements on dance', 'is simply looking at one's basic premises', 1992: 59; yet Hawkins seems to neglect this simple act in his writings), but how can the meanings or significances be 'independent of the dance situation'? Obviously the socio-cultural background will influence the movement of its dancers, as will other experiences (for example, dance training) and attitudes, but to say that these are impregnated into the dance as independent meanings (surely an oxymoron of sorts) is misleading and implies a given and non-interpretational set of meanings. Why must we 'have to come to terms with' – what does this mean here? – anyone else's meanings, when we are either willing or able to assign our own meanings to a dance?

We see a woman raise her arms and lower them repeatedly in rapid succession. Obviously there are a multitude of ways in which this could be done, in terms of quality, range of movement, where it appears the movement originates physically, etc., but for the sake of this example, let us say that she resembles someone struggling to keep her head above water. It might then mean that she is drowning. (Is she in the sea? Is she screaming 'Help me'? It might also be taken to mean that she is mimicking, or even feigning, drowning. If she is not in water but on a stage, we might assign to her movements the meaning that if she were in water we might believe her to be drowning. Or on seeing this same action we might assume that the woman, even though on the stage in the middle of a dance show is having some kind of seizure brought on by the heat and lighting effects. We are aware that people who have perhaps never seen
theatrical acting before have understood the stage-action to be real, not merely a representation of reality: for example,

A nineteenth-century touring company was travelling through the United States with a production of Othello. In Chicago, Iago's behaviour so enraged a man in the stalls that he stood up with a cry of 'You rascal! And shot him dead.

(Donaldson 1985: 12)

Furthermore, it is not enough to say of dance that it is a basic form of expression (for example, "man's first means of self-expression" Haskell 1965: 21), and in this imply that it 'expresses' things (as words do) in a way understandable by all human beings, that is, universally across cultures. Wittgenstein uses facial expressions as an analogy for our believing the sincerity of what someone says. He writes that it is due to a number of factors that determines whether we characterise a face as friendly, just as there are many factors (for example, gestures and tone of voice) to our believing the meaning of what somebody says. There is not one thing behind the words, or face, that allows for believing or not believing something. "If by 'believing' we mean an activity, a process, taking place while we say that we believe, we may say that believing is something similar to or the same as expressing a belief" (Wittgenstein BB 146). There is no separation between the meaning and the movement in dance, as there is no distinction to be made between a word and its meaning. Wittgenstein continues to discuss meaning and demonstrates that 'means of expressiveness' are not to be confused in our understanding of them, through our similar usage of verbs such as 'speaking' and 'thinking', as accompaniments to something aside from themselves: "such means of expressiveness as the play of facial expression or gestures which can be said to accompany speech, nobody would dream of calling thinking" (BB 148). Along the same lines, David Best in Expression in Movement and the Arts writes,

it is conceivable that, in time, a robot may be developed which could be programmed to dance. The dances could still be emotionally expressive even though the robot is incapable of feeling; [...] The robot's performances] can be understood as expressive only as extensions of the concept of human expression.

(1974: 169; my italics)

Clearly there are other dance forms, and movements within ballet, that are mimetic or supposed to portray other actions. Some dances are storytelling devices, wherein movements are meant to represent part of a tale, or a character's actions or emotions. Even these movements constitute a language only in the context of the dances they appear in. A Noh gesture representing sadness when done outside of a Noh theatre refers back to the meaning it carries on stage, but even to a Noh actor who sees me doing it as a mark of my sadness, it would probably not communicate this in the same way as my crying tears. And to someone not versed in Noh, it is doubtful as to how much it would convey my intended meaning of 'sadness' if viewed in isolation of any other signifiers (if this is possible).

It is also wrong to confuse technical language with the so-called 'language of dance' (perhaps not helped by titles of books such as The Language of Dance (Wigman 1966) and The Language of Ballet (Mara 1966; nota bene: apparently it is French—"a universal language in use throughout the world wherever the art is taught" (1966: v)). Analogously, Susannah Fiennes, a painter, in a critique of National Gallery exhibition of Rembrandt, seems to mistake an understanding of a technical vocabulary of painting for the "language of art" as encapsulated and communicated in a painting. Criticising the gallery's use of literal description and lack of in-depth and searching analysis of a painting, she proposes that a painting's meaning can be best (and only) understood by viewing it "from the painter's perspective" (1999: 80; see notes below regarding 'intention'). She is saying, in a rather elitist tone, that this is where the meaning is contained and that those of us "with no education in the language of painting" (1999: 80) are missing the point. I might not fully understand how to apply oil paint to a canvas in order to represent a face, but that does not stop me from interpreting.
someone else’s attempts at this representation. Yes, if we have a command of the grammar of this “visual language” (1999: 80), we may be able to explain the reasons why and how it works in some pictures and not in others, but we should not assume that we can understand the meaning of a picture, simply because we can describe it formally and technically. (Substitute ‘dance’ for ‘picture’.)

Relating the dialogism of Bakhtin to Einstein’s relativity theory, Holquist writes

Dialogism argues that all meaning is relative in the sense that it comes about only as a result of the relation between two bodies occupying simultaneous but different space, where bodies may be thought of as ranging from the immediacy of our physical bodies, to political bodies and to bodies of ideas in general (ideologies).

(1990: 20-1)

In this conception of meaning is another aspect, also simultaneously experiencing the relation of the two bodies: the observer, “an active participant” (Holquist 1990: 21).

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Canto 2: Some Exposition.

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‘binary code’: “the DNA of digital life” (Hale 1996: 43).

‘genome race’: The Human Genome Project. The HGP website (U.S. Department of Energy 2001) states:

Begun in 1990, the U.S. Human Genome Project is a 13-year effort coordinated by the Department of Energy and the National Institutes of Health [...] Project goals are to

- **identify** all the approximately 30,000 genes in human DNA,
- **determine** the sequences of the 3 billion chemical base pairs that make up human DNA,
- **store** this information in databases,
- **improve** tools for data analysis,
- **transfer** related technologies to the private sector, and
- **address** the ethical, legal, and social issues (ELSI) that may arise from the project.

Several types of genome maps have already been completed, and a working draft of the entire human genome sequence was announced in June 2000, with analyses published in February 2001 [Publication of Initial Working Draft Sequence February 12, 2001].

‘the robots we entrust with human lives’: Not literally and totally, however,

Man’s desire to seek his own obsolescence has taken another leap forward with the development of a sophisticated robotic surgeon. Called Aesop, this little fellow has a far steadier hand than the traditionally timorous surgeon’s assistant [...] Aesop is the result of a project between the French Research Institute of Digestive Cancers and the European Institute of Telesurgery. The idea of automotive surgery has impressed the EFTS so much that it has developed an operation simulator, which enables surgeons to practise on 3-D computer images of organs instead of on animals.

(Anon. 2000: 6)

‘while ENS makes their muscles flex’: ‘Electrical Nerve Stimulation’. Having experienced a rudimentary use of muscle stimulation using a TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator) machine attached to my arm (8 March 1999 in Nottingham), I was prompted to consider a number of things. Many of these are still to be fully explored,
but this was my initial query: What does the starting stimuli for movement matter to its interpretation? We can't see a non-cyborg dancer's impulse to move, but we do not question that there is an impulse behind the movement. It may be somehow rationally initiated, or purely from physical memory. This gives the movement an authenticity, a genuineness that we accept. However, in the case of Stelarc and electrical muscle stimulation, because we can't see the impulse from the electrode (although we can see the muscle stir as the current builds), we seem to want to question the movement's authenticity, and therefore its meanings. According to Stelarc (in conversation with Deveril), there is a tendency in an audience to disbelieve a movement’s raison d’être when electrically stimulated from an exogenous source. It is as though any movement not created from within the dancer cannot be real, authentic, or meaningful, as though all other dance movements are. There is still much to be investigated in this region, and the implications of direct body interactions are yet to be explored. Experimentation with technologically linked bodies may lead into the areas of kinaesthesia and kinesthetic empathy [Moore and Yamamoto write: “Kinesthesia (the “muscle sense” or “sixth sense”) is defined as the sensual discrimination of the positions and movement of body parts based on information other than visual, auditory, or verbal. Kinesthetic perception involves judging changes in muscle tension, body position, and the relative placement of body parts” (1988: 48); and “Kinesthetic empathy involves physical identification with the movements one observes being executed” (1988: 53). It must be noted, however, that there is some debate as to whether kinesthetic empathy is a psychological or physiological phenomenon, if a phenomenon at all, for example, see Best 1974]; consciousness; gestures/non-verbal communication [See for example Kurtenbach and Hulteen’s chapter ‘Gestures in Human-Computer Communication’ in Laurel 1990: 309-17; and books such as LaFrance and Mayo 1978, as a starting point]; haptic and tactile expression; somaesthesia and more precisely protopathic and erotogenic (and other pleasurable) experiences; etc.

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'I am like Fogg and you are Passepartout, / but it won't take eighty days to reach Hell':

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Canto 3: Preparing for the Journey.

'a composite poet: Dante-Virgil': An idea taken from the poem *The Bus to Hope* by Brian Lewis (1998).

'Like Jesus resurrecting Lazarus': The brother of Mary and Martha, see *The Bible*, John 11-12.

'Descartes'/ ghost': The 17th Century French philosopher whose saying “cogito ergo sum” is possibly the most famous philosophical dictum of all time (see Descartes 1997 or any other edition of his major works). It is responsible for much confused thinking. A ghost, of course, is a non-existent human fantasy creature and reference to it here is purely metaphorical and should not be confused for a statement of belief in spirit entities. See Ryle (1949; Chapter I: 'Descartes' Myth') and note below on 'The Ghost in the Machine', Wittgenstein: "Where our language suggests a body and there is none: there, we should like to say, is a spirit" *(PI §36)* ["Wo unsere Sprache uns einen Körper vermuten läßt, und kein Körper ist, dort, möchten wir sagen, sei ein Geist"].

'in our everyday words': This is a key theme of the thesis hidden in an abstruse way. The idea is most neatly summed up in a sentence of Wittgenstein's: “An entire mythology is laid down in our language” ["In unserer Sprache ist eine ganze Mythologie
niedergelegt“] (PO 199) [(PO 198). Wittgenstein also writes
People are deeply imbedded in philosophical, i.e. grammatical confusions. And
to free them from these presupposes pulling them out of the immensely manifold
connections they are caught up in. One must so to speak regroup their entire
language.

(PO 185)

Die Menschen sind tief in den philosophischen d.i. grammatischen Konfusionen
eingebettet. Und, sie daraus zu befreien, setzt voraus, dass man sie aus den
ungeheuer mannigfachen Verbindungen herausreisst, in denen sie gefangen sind.
Man muss sozusagen ihre ganze Sprache umgruppieren.

(PO 184)

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Part One: Brainstorm

Canto 1: The Journey Begins.

‘Brainstorm’: Brainstorm (a film directed by Douglas Trumball, 1983) in which a machine
allows a person to experience another person’s sensations (a similar premise to Strange
(1997); see the essays ‘Conditions of Personhood’ (pages 267-85; also in Rorty 1976) and
‘Where Am I?’ (pages 310-23), in particular.

‘As fast as bits down coax’;
She grabs her breath. ‘So you ask me how I feel? I feel lazy. And slow. And
antique. And I’m scared of all these machines. I shouldn’t be, but I am. I’m not
sure I completely like the new world.’

(Coupland 1998: 153)

Recent technological advances have moved at speeds beyond the comprehension of
most people. In the last sixty-five years, computers have ‘evolved’ from behemoths of
limited brain, to small, commonplace objects that are capable of completing sequences
of immense calculations at an alarming rate. (For information on machine evolution see
Mazlish 1993, Dyson 1997, and parts of Jeffrey 1999.) Kurzweil informs us that today “A
$1,000 desk-top personal computer can perform about 450 calculations per
second” (1999a: 1), and by 2009, $1,000 will buy a machine capable of 1 trillion
calculations per second. Hans Moravec (1998) in ‘When will computer hardware match
the human brain?’ writes:

In 1990, 1 MIPS [Million Instructions per Second] cost $1,000 in a low-end
personal computer [...] Since 1990, the power available to individual AI and
robotics programs has doubled yearly, to 30 MIPS by 1994 and 500 MIPS by 1998
[...] The most powerful experimental supercomputers in 1998, composed of
thousands or tens of thousands of the fastest microprocessors and costing tens of
millions of dollars, can do a few million MIPS. They are within striking distance
of being powerful enough to match human brainpower, but are unlikely to be
applied to that end [...] At the present rate [of development], computers suitable
for humanlike robots will appear in the 2020s.

Coupland writes: “what is it that we are now doing or creating that will transform us into
whatever it is that we are slated to next become?” (1998: 269-70). This is a pertinent question,
one that underpins this current train of thought. There are people doing and creating,
for example scientists experimenting with cloning procedures, who are shaping the
future of the human race in ways we cannot fully predict or understand. We can only
begin to philosophise about how future humans (or post-humans, or transhumans) will
contemplate and cogitate on their immediate experiences of the world and others. These
experiences could lead to a change in human relationships and the fabric of society as a whole. The 'Technology Postulate', which argues that within the next seventy years we will see such advances as nanotechnology, space colonisation and consciousness uploaded into computers, or other developments with great repercussions for human and machine existence, “is the antithesis of the assumption that the human condition is a constant” (Bostrom 1998). Article 1 of The Transhumanist Declaration states:

Humanity will be radically changed by technology in the future. We foresee the feasibility of redesigning the human condition, including such parameters as the inevitability of ageing, limitations on human and artificial intellects, unchosen psychology, suffering, and our confinement to the planet earth.

(Bailey et al Date unknown)

Cf. Nietzsche and the Übermensch.

‘I believe it was his own requesting / that took him there’: See diary entry (4.5.16) in McGuinness 1988: 240.

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‘I have a [...] say?’ Ermy enquires: “We have minds, we have bodies; but we are persons, human beings, neither minds nor bodies, nor a mixture of the two” (Binkley 1973: 10).

Wittgenstein considers the human being to be a person, and vice versa. This seems to be a complicated and convoluted way of saying very little. The Wittgensteinian writer, Grant Gillett suggests that the word ‘Person’ is, of course, used in interactions where one learns what people are like and has an especially rich meaning and pervasive role in thinking about one’s own life and experience [...] To understand the ‘fundamental idea’ of a person is therefore not only to know something but to be something,

(1992: 39)

Wittgenstein expands on this when he says that it is when I talk about the world that I appear on the scene, in the glory of my self if you like. But until I speak or act, I am not to be found; and then it is this human being that you encounter. The only satisfactory representation of the self is, after all, der Mensch, the human being.

(attributed to Wittgenstein by Gillett 1992: 37)

It is when a human being begins to consider themselves as an 'I', when they recognise a self, that is: when they talk and participate in human social acts, a ‘person’ is first born. Jeffrey Thomas Price writes that in Wittgenstein’s writings “There is no attempt to delineate a nature of man; investigation of the person instead concludes that his very appearance is in his imaginative expression” (1973: 16). Verbal language is the principal means of expression concerning Wittgenstein, as it is perhaps our most unique feature when compared with other animals, but it is not the be all and end all of human expression. That is not to say that we are in any sense better than animals, only that we can define an organism as a human being when it conforms to a list of criteria denoting human beings. Wittgenstein doesn’t go so far as to prescribe a list of criteria in any detail, but his Philosophical Investigations states: “only of a living human being and what resembles (behaves like) a living human being can one say: it has sensations; it sees; is blind; hears; is deaf; is conscious or unconscious” (PI §281). For Wittgenstein, sensations are, in a way, public; for they are articulated in a public realm, through language and behaviour:

‘Toothache is not a behaviour but an experience’. ‘We distinguish between ‘behaviour’ and ‘experiences’’. ‘[F]Dancing is a behaviour, toothache an experience.’ These are grammatical statements. About the use of the words ‘dancing’ and toothache’.

(Wittgenstein PO 279)
Wittgenstein suggests “that there is a great variety of criteria for personal ‘identity’” (PI §404; italics in original). When a person says ‘I am in pain’ it is to draw attention to themself (PI §405). Holquist in his discussion of the Russian dialogist(s) Bakhtin and Voloshinov writes of the word ‘I’:

its task is to indicate the person uttering the present instance of the discourse containing ‘I,’ a person who is always changing and different. ‘I’ must not refer to anything in particular if it is to be able to mean everybody in general. In Jakobson’s suggestive phrase, ‘I’ is a ‘shifter’ because it moves the center of discourse from one speaking subject to another: its emptiness is the no man’s land in which subjects can exchange the lease they hold on all of language by virtue of saying ‘I.’

(1990: 23)

Glock describes Wittgenstein’s attitudes to the ‘I’ being a referring expression, but one that doesn’t work in the same ways as other person-referring expressions (for example, proper names): “the use of ‘I’ is analogous not to a magic arrow that always hits its target [...] but to drawing a bull’s-eye around an arrow already stuck in the wall” (Glock 1996: 163). (For more on ‘shifters’ see Jakobson 1990; the word was taken from an earlier writer, Jespersen, and the dissolution of the ‘I’ can be found in the writings of Husserl and Russell, among others.)

Compare the preceding Wittgensteinian ideas with Amélie Rorty’s concluding paragraph:

Humans are just the sorts of organisms that interpret and modify their agency through their conceptions of themselves. This is a complicated biological fact about us. Whether there are other sorts of entities that do this is in part but not wholly an empirical question. The fullest analysis of the concept of person would investigate the biologically adaptive functions of the various cultural grafts: the obsessions with unification and choice, salvation and simplicity, isolated integrity and achievement. From this larger perspective, we might be able to see how the cultural history of the various versions of the concept of a person has been modified by and has in turn modified its biological base.

(Rorty 1976: 323)

This allows for cultural and biological changes, and suggests that the concept of the person is dependant on more than just looking at the human body in isolation from its environment and social context. For Wittgenstein, many of these issues “are best approached through an investigation of the role of human expression in experience” (Price 1973: 61). And of course, this experience is subject to numerable changes. Amélie Rorty’s chapter, ‘A Literary Postscript: Characters, Persons, Selves, Individuals’ (1976: 301-23), argues that personhood as a concept is not static. Through history and from society to society, the concept ‘person’ has adapted to accommodate views on a host of related concepts, for example, mind, soul, responsibility, individuality, and the self. The stages Amélie Rorty refers to in the chapter title are not totally distinct from one another or easily placed in a chronological order. Also they are taken in the main from literary sources, which reflect their socio-cultural context and serve to express and exemplify their worldview. Amélie Rorty writes that

Our idea of persons derives from two sources: one from the theater, the dramatis personae of the stage; the other has its origins in law. An actor dons masks, literally per sonae, that through which the sound comes, the many roles he acts [...] The idea of a person is the idea of a unified center of choice and action, the unit of legal and theological responsibility.

(Rorty 1976: 309)
In Amélie Rorty’s account, before the concept of ‘person’ came literary characters (for example, Greek mythological-characters) and figures:

Characters are, by nature, defined and delineated. If they change, it is because it is in their character to do so under specific circumstances.

(Rorty 1976: 304)

Figures are defined by their place in an unfolding drama; they are not assigned roles because of their traits, but rather have the traits of their prototypes in myth or sacred script.

(Rorty 1976: 307)

Rorty also suggests that “In contrast with the wholly external perspective on characters, the concept of a figure introduces the germ of what will become a distinction between the inner and outer person” (Rorty 1976: 308); a dangerous distinction in dualism, leading to the mind-body problem. However,

In the theory of character there is no mind-body problem: without reducing either to the other, physical and psychological traits are fused as different aspects of a single organism. Mind is the organization of the living body, whose ‘parts’ are identifiable through their functional activity. What cannot see is not really an eye, but only the sort of flesh that normally is eye-flesh. Soul is not a separate substance lodged in the body; it is the living principle, the organic force of some sorts of substances.

(Rorty 1976: 304-5)

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Canto 2: Section 432.

‘Section 432’: That is PI §432 (italics in original):

Jedes Zeichen scheint allein tot. Was gibt ihm Leben? — Im Gebrauch lebt es. hat es da den lebenden Atem in sich? — Oder ist der Gebrauch sein Atem?

Every sign by itself seems dead. What gives it life? — In use it is alive. Is life breathed into it there? — Or is the use its life?

Vološinov writes, for example, “Every sign as sign [...] even the sign of individuality, is social” (1986: 34).

Devitalised or un-vitalised signs are ubiquitous in modern societies. Illusion is not false, for it doesn’t use false signs; it uses senseless signs, signs that point nowhere. This is why it deceives and disappoints our demand for meaning, but it does so enchantingly.

(Baudrillard 1990: 52)

Signs exist in reality and hyperreality at the same time. Any object takes on a dichotomous existence: the physical object and the multitude of aspects of meaning it can be interpreted as having when encountered by a human being.

Baudrillard also writes:

Every event is today virtually inconsequential, open to all possible interpretations, none of which could determine its meaning: the equiprobability of all causes and of all consequences – multiple and aleatory imputation.

(1990: 17)

There is so much information, so much (in)activity, that we do not attribute to a source or cause every thing we experience—to do so would be unnecessary and time-consuming. Neither do we weigh up a number of the possible sources, causes,
meanings before deciding which is most apposite—although we are possibly aware that there are more interpretations ‘waiting’ to be applied. In the conglomeration of signs only a few can hope to attain meaningfulness. Meaning is not resident in each sign as a yolk is inside an eggshell. We cannot break open the outer layer of a sign to get to the one meaning inside. A sign is more like a Schrödinger’s box: the range of meanings as they coexist are either dead or alive in the box, but we can never really be sure which—both have equal weighting when observed from the outside. (Is the study of meaning and interpretation as complex as quantum theory? See Penrose 1990; cf. Wittgenstein’s ‘beetle in a box’ PI §293.) To grasp a meaning of a sign is to understand how that sign functions in the world. Wittgenstein warns us that “Perhaps we have to say that the phrase ‘interpretation of signs’ is misleading and we ought to say ‘the use of signs’” (PR §32).

‘like St Vitus / dancing’: The patron saint of epilepsy and nervous disorders, and of dancers. The condition of Sydenham’s Chorea is sometimes referred to as St Vitus’s Dance. Wittgenstein, as he got older, was troubled by “nervous instability” (Wittgenstein in a letter to Norman Malcolm, cited in Monk 1990: 523). He died in 1951 of prostate cancer.

‘my afterlife’s task of nocturnal depth’?: Based on a phrase from a poem by Wittgenstein’s friend, Paul Engelmann (1967: 75).

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‘we have become tangled’: See PI §125 and PR §2

Philosophy unties the knots in our thinking, which we have tangled up in an absurd way [...] The complexity of philosophy is not in its matter, but in our tangled understanding.

‘A fly / in a bottle’?: See PI §309.

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Canto 3: On Philosophy.

‘We must do [...] take its place’: PI §109 “Alle Erklärung muß fort, und nur Beschreibung an ihre Stelle treten”.

‘by misusing words [...] that is metaphorical’: BB 6 and 41. Cf. Davidson

First person authority, the social character of language, and the external determinants of thought and meaning go naturally together, once we give up the myth of the subjective, the idea that thoughts require mental objects.

(1990: 394)

‘We speak in [...] that is metaphysical’: PI §116 “Wir führen die Wörter von ihrer metaphysischen, wieder auf ihre alltägliche Verwendung zurück”.

‘I will try [...] must turn back’: PI §103 “Das Ideal, in unsern Gedanken, sitzt unverrückbar fest. Du kannst nicht aus ihm herastreten. Du mußt immer wieder zurück”.

‘A picture holds [...] of linguistic snare’: PI §115 “Ein Bild hielt uns gefangen. Und heraus konnten wir nicht, denn es lag in unserer Sprache, und sie schien es uns nur unerläßlich zu wiederholen”, PO 185 and CV 25e: MS 112 231 “Die Sprache hat für Alle die gleichen Fallen bereit”.

'and the vacant stare / of an introspection experiment': PI §412 "Mein Blick war 'vacant'"
and PI §413 "einen Fall von Introspektion'.

'As we dissect [...] conflict becomes intolerable': PI §107
Je genauer wir die tatsächliche Sprache betrachten, desto stärker wird der Widerstreit zwischen ihr und unserer Forderung [...] Der Widerstreit wird unerträglich.

'The actual use [...] is describe it': PI §124 "Die Philosophie darf den tatsächlichen Gebrauch der Sprache in keiner Weise antasten, sie kann ihn am Ende also nur beschreiben".

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'A question can [...] be badly framed': PI §321
'Was geschieht, wann ein Mensch plötzlich versteht?'—Die Frage ist schlecht gestellt.

'so as to / be nonsensical': BB 8.

'the idea that [...] to convey thoughts': PI §304
Das Paradox verschwindet nur dann, wenn wir radikal mit der Idee brechen, die Sprache funktioniere immer auf eine Weise, diene immer dem gleichen Zweck: Gedanken zu übertragen.

'to / express the [...] use / of language': BB 17, and CV 65e: MS 134 27 "Ist es wirklich möglich, solange eine philosophische Trübe das verschleiert, was das Staunenswerte oder Amgestaunte ist?".

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'It is for [...] unheard-of ways': PI §133 "Wir wollen nicht das Regelsystem für die Verwendung unserer Worte in unerhörter Weise verfeinern oder vervollständigen".

'though this does [...] the patently absurd': PI §464 "Was ich lehren will, ist: von einem nicht offenkundigen Unsinn zu einem offenkundigen übergehen".

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'Philosophy is the [...] limits of / language': PI §119 "Die Ergebnisse der Philosophie sind die Entdeckung irgend eines schlichten Unsinns und Beulen, die sich der Verstand beim Anrinnen an die Grenze der Sprache geholt hat", and CV 13e: MS 110 61 "Die Grenze der Sprache zeigt sich in der Unmöglichkeit die Tatsache zu beschreiben, die einem Satz entspricht (seine Übersetzung ist) ohne eben den Satz zu wiederholen".

'Of course we [...] should disappear completely': PI §133
Denn die Klarheit, die wir anstreben, ist allerdings eine vollkommene. Aber das heißt nur, daß die philosophischen Probleme vollkommen verschwinden sollen.

'Blow up the house of cards to smithereens!': PI §118
Woher nimmt die Betrachtung ihre Wichtigkeit, da sie doch nur alles Interessante, d.h. alles Große und Wichtige, zu zerstören scheint? [...] Aber es sind nur Luftgebäude, die wir zerstören, und wir legen den Grund der Sprache frei, auf dem sie standen.
Canto 4: The World Through New Eyes.

‘What we do is not some sort of science’: CV 33e: MS 118 113r
Leute haben mir manchmal gesagt, sie könnten das & das nicht beurteilen, sie hätten nicht Philosophie gelernt. Dies ist ein irritierender Unsinn, es wird vorgegeben, die Philosophie sei irgend eine Wissenschaft.

Richard Rorty
views science as one genre of literature – or, put the other way around, literature and the arts as inquiries, on the same footing as scientific inquiries [...] Some of these inquiries come up with propositions, some with narratives, some with paintings. The question of what propositions to assert, which pictures to look at, what narratives to listen to and comment on and retell, are all questions about what will help us get what we want (or about what we should want).

(1982: xliii; italics in original)

‘philosophy, like doing [...] one sees things’: CV 24e: MS 112 46
Die Arbeit an der Philosophie ist – wie vielfach die Arbeit in der Architektur – eigentlich mehr die Arbeit an Einem selbst. An der eignen Auffassung, Daten, wie man die Dinge sieht. (Und was man von ihnen verlangt.)

Richard Rorty
views science as one genre of literature – or, put the other way around, literature and the arts as inquiries, on the same footing as scientific inquiries [...] Some of these inquiries come up with propositions, some with narratives, some with paintings. The question of what propositions to assert, which pictures to look at, what narratives to listen to and comment on and retell, are all questions about what will help us get what we want (or about what we should want).

(1982: xliii; italics in original)

and CV 14e: MS 153a 90v
Der Denker gleicht sehr dem Zeichner. Der alle Zusammenhänge nachzeichnen will.

‘We can’t conjecture / turbulently’: PO 194 (“turbulenten Mutmassungen”) and PO 195.

‘We seek perspicuity[...] from its inception’: PO 175 and PI §122
Der Begriff der übersichtlichen Darstellung ist für uns von grundlegender Bedeutung. Er bezeichnet unsere Darstellungsform, die Art, wie wir die Dinge sehen. (Ist dies eine ‘Weltanschauung’?)

‘Everything should lie [...] of no interest’: PI §126
Die Philosophie stellt eben alles bloß hin, und erklärt und folgert nichts. — Da alles offen daliegt, ist auch nichts zu erklären. Denn, was etwa verborgen ist, interessiert uns nicht.

‘the truth of [...] of the statement’: OC §80 “Man prüft an der Wahrheit meiner Aussagen main Verständnis dieser Aussagen”. Richard Rorty writes
a pragmatist theory about truth [...] says that truth is not the sort of thing one should expect to have a philosophically interesting theory about. For pragmatists, ‘truth’ is just the name of a property which all true statements share [...] Pragmatists doubt that there is much to be said about this common feature [...] They see certain acts as good ones to perform, under the circumstances, but doubt that there is anything general and useful to say about what makes them all good.

(1982: xiii)

‘It is what [...] of life agreement’: PI §241
Richtig und falsch ist, was Menschen sagen; und in der Sprache stimmen die Menschen überein. Dies ist kleine Übereinstimmung der Meinungen, sondern der Lebensform.
If language is [...] of judgments also': PI §242 "Zur Verständigung durch die Sprache gehört nicht nur eine Übereinstimmung in den Definitionen, sondern (so seltsam dies klingen mag) eine Übereinstimmung in den Urteilen".

What determines our [...] see any action: Z §567 "Nicht, was einer jetzt tut, eine einzelne Handlung, sondern das ganze Gewimmel der menschlichen Handlungen, der Hintergrund, worauf wir jede Handlung sehen, bestimmt unser Urteil, unsere Begriffe und Reaktionen".

'Ve see life [...] with many others': Z §§568-9

'The conceptual world [...] recurring with variations': Also Z §568.

'The actions of [...] how language functions': Z §567
Wie könnte man die menschliche Handlungsweise beschreiben? Doch nur, insofern man die Handlungen der verschiedenen Menschen, wie sie durcheinanderwimmeln, schilderte.

When describing human [...] occasion belong together': Z §492
Das Benehmen des Schmerzes und das Benehmen der Traurigkeit. Man kann diese nur mit ihren äußeren Anlässen beschreiben [...] Benehmen und Art des Anlasses gehören zusammen.

and see Z §§532-4 and PI §246.

How do I know you have pain in your hand?': See Z §536 and PO 328.

What is it to know I have pain in mine?': See PI §303 and Z §538.

How do words refer to sensations?: PI §244 "Wie beziehen sich Wörter auf Empfindungen?"

And / do I [...] a private pain?: See PO 254-5 and 347.

In what sense are my sensations private?: PI §246 "In wiefern sind nun meine Empfindungen privat?"

'It is nonsense [...] pain or not': See PI §408 and OC §504.

Whether I know [...] up by evidence': OC §504
Ob ich etwas weiß, hängt davon ab, ob die Evidenz mir recht gibt oder mir widerspricht. Denn zu sagen, man wisse, daß man Schmerzen habe, heißt nichts.

'and if I have grounds to base a doubt on': See OC §122.
'This holds for [...] to / be discovered': See PI §§92 and 371 "Das Wesen ist in der Grammatik ausgesprochen" ["Essence is expressed by grammar."]

'so-called inner contents': See PI 217, 231, 293 and RPP I §896.

'of a hidden [...] of outward criteria': PI §580 "Ein 'innerer Vorgang' bedarf äußerer Kriterien".

'To / know what [...] into his head': See Z §36.

'but at / what he does with that which he understands': See PI §§152-5 and 363.

'Communication is also [...] that is that': See Glock 1996: 373.

'Take art, for [...] as: saying nothing': CV 26e: MS 156a 57r "In der Kunst ist es schwer etwas zu sagen, was so gut ist wie: nichts zu sagen".

'Perhaps from Tolstoy's [...] conveys "a feeling": CV 67e: MS 134 106 "Aus Tolstoys falschem Theorisieren, das Kunstwerk übertrage >ein Gefühl<, könnte man viel lernen". See also Dewey:

I can but think that much of what Tolstoi says about immediate contagion as a test of artistic quality is false, and what he says about the kind of material which can alone be communicated is narrow. But if the time span be extended, it is true that no man is eloquent save when some one is moved as he listens. Those who are moved feel, as Tolstoi says, that what the work expresses is as if it were something one had oneself been longing to express. Meantime, the artist works to create an audience to which he does communicate. In the end, works of art are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience.

(1958: 104-5)

'we think art [...] amongst these feelings?': CV 42e: MS 162b 59r "Wenn die Kunst dazu dient >Gefühle zu erzeugen<, ist, am Ende, ihre sinnliche Wahrnehmung auch unter diesen Gefühlen?".

'Suppose you tried [...] from hearing / music': PO 202.

'Now, a man [...] there another thing?': Z §29

Also er konnte etwas meinen oder auch nichts meinen. Und wenn das erstere: dann eben seine Handbewegung,—oder etwas Anderes? Hat er mit seinem Ausdruck etwas Anderes als diesen gemeint, oder hat er nur seinen Ausdruck—gemeint?

'If we ask [...] this specific movement?': Z §30 "Ich habe etwas mit dieser Bewegung gemeint, was ich nur durch diese Bewegung ausdrücken kann".
"Can we find [...] is used in?: OC §601
Es ist immer die Gefahr, die Bedeutung durch Betrachtung des Ausdrucks und der Stimmung, in welcher man ihn gebraucht, erkennen zu wollen, statt immer an die Praxis zu denken. Darum sagt man sich den Ausdruck so oft vor, weil es ist, als müßte man in ihn und in dem Gefühl, das man hat, das Gesuchte sehen.

"Why / should the [...] author would wish": CV 67e: MS 134 106
Und schon erst recht unsinnig ist es, zu sagen, der Künstler wünsche, daß, was er beim Schreiben, der Andre Beim Lesen fühlen solle. Ich kann wohl glauben, ein Gedicht (z.B.) zu verstehen, es so zu verstehen, wie sein Erzeuger es sich wünschen würde, - aber was er beim schreiben gefühlt haben mag, das kmmert mich gar nicht.

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"Ah, but couldn't [...] by volunt'ry movements": RPP I §727
Würde ich aber nicht doch sagen, daß der Schauspieler etwas der wirklichen Sehnsucht Ähnliches erlebt? Ist eben nicht doch etwas an dem, was James sagt: daß die Gemütsbewegung aus den Gefühlen des Körpers besteht, und daher, wenigstens teilweise, durch willkürliche Bewegungen reproduziert werden kann?

and see Z §655.

"But even so [...] one is crying": RPP II §323 "Es wäre ja möglich, daß man traurig ist, weil man weint, aber natürlich nicht darüber, daß man weint".

"I'd like to [...] in one's eyes": Z §495
Fast möchte ich sagen: Man fühlt die Trauer so wenig im Körper, wie das Sehen im Auge.

and see RPP I §451, and Schulte, p.122.

"A cry is [...] inferred from it": RPP II §723 "Ein Schrei ist nicht die Beschreibung eines Seelenzustandes, obwohl man aus ihm auf einen Seelezustand schließen kann".

"Do not be [...] is a / proposition": PI §317 "Irreführende Parallele: Der Schrei, ein Ausdruck des Schmerzes—der Satz, ein Ausdruck des Gedankens!"

"An utterance, like the cry / it replaces, is not description either": See RPP II §728.

"Nor is an [...] feeling of sadness": PI 209e
The epithet 'sad', as applied for example to the outline face [see PI 204e], characterizes the grouping of lines in a circle. Applied to a human being it has a different (though related) meaning. (But this does not mean that a sad expression is like the feeling of sadness!) [(Das heißt aber nicht, daß der traurige Gesichtsausdruck dem Gefühl der Traurigkeit ählich sein)]

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"And a gesture [...] but cannot do / it": PI §434 "Die Gebärde versucht vorubilden—möchte man sagen—aber kann es nicht".

"How curious it [...] gesture by / words": Z §227
Es ist sonderbar: Unser Verstehen einer Geste möchten wir durch ihre Übersetzung in Worte erklären, und das Verstehen von Worten durch
'Not every purposive [...] is a gesture': CV 49e: MS 126 15r "Nicht jede zweckmäßige Bewegung des menschlichen Körpers ist eine Geste".

'I wish to [...] "private experience" to justify / expressing it': PO 278.

'We labour under [...] to fool us': PO 282.

'A poet's words [...] of the words': Z §155


'And now, we [...] at home there': CV 74e: MS 136 51a "Beim Philosophieren muß man in's alte Chaos hinabsteigen, & sich dort wohl fühlen".

'We are getting bogged down in the sodden / ground': See CV 77e: MS 136 129b "Bacon ist in seiner Philosophie stecken geblieben, & diese Gefahr droht auch mir" and Dante, Inferno, Canto III, l.133.

'Grasping the difficulty in its / depth is what is hard': CV 55e: MS 131 48 "Die Schwierigkeit tief fassen, ist das Schwere".

'The problems arising [...] character of depth': PI §111 "Die Probleme, die durch ein Mißdeuten unserer Sprachformen entstehen, haben den Charakter der Tiefe".

'And down he fell, as one that swoons on sleep': Dante, Inferno, Canto III, l.136.

Canto 5: Etiam disiecti membra poetae.

'Even in his dismembered state, the limbs of a poet', Horace, Satires, I. iv. 62.

'I mistrust all systematizers and I avoid them. The will to a system is a lack of integrity.'

TI, 'Maxims and Arrows', §26)

The world, the hyperworld, is anarchic. Any ruling body (political organisations set up to maintain, by force or more subtle forms of coercion, the society on whose behalf it believes it operates), try as it may, cannot control the range of images and messages we are exposed to; neither can it regulate how we interpret them. The subversion of a state hegemony by the images and texts of the hyperworld is a revolution on all fronts. But the state can apply it to its own ends, employing the anarchic principal to (mis- and
dis-)inform; the state, Kroker and Weinstein argue, “remains behind to sequester those who cannot, or will not achieve escape velocity into hyperspace” (1994: 83): anyone who is not aware and able to converse in the hyperworld becomes subsumed into the non-technomass. The hyperworld also suggests the resurgence of nihilism, the rejection of justification of morals, meaning and values that represent the absolutist standpoint. Where once there was truth, now there is dissimulation; where there were relationships, now there is dissociation (social, mental). The dissipation of society has resulted in the dissipation of individuals. If there is, as Kroker and Weinstein (1994) suggest, a technological class on its way to a virtual class (if they are not that already), it is a disparate one linked only by the media-net: “The worldwide communication complex that generates an electronically fabricated environment of image and information” (Kroker and Weinstein 1994: 160). In effect it is a new form of intertexture: an interwoven system of telematic devices; individuals connected by mass-media. But not everyone needs to join the virtual class, to blast off into hyperspace, to participate in the hyperworld. McLuhan writes that “the electric puts the mythic or collective dimension of human experience fully into the conscious wake-a-day world” (1962: 269).

History has traditionally purported to be linear. How can this be? Nothing occurs end to end without a relationship to a host of other occurrences. While there may retrospective simplification of events (perhaps this is all history can hope to be), it would be difficult to write an all-encompassing linear account of a given series of events. In writing linear history there will (must) be bias and omissions. A hyper-history could begin to join together in a web, allowing the historian to investigate and infer from the collected events for relationships and causes (although in the age of simulation, cause and effect become debatable concepts, as Baudrillard implies). New historicism has already redefined the nature of history, and the nature of historical texts (non-literary fictions): history is mediated through texts. These texts interconnect in more than one dimension, as it were, with some above and some below, or at any given point in the nexus. Any act of interpretation is an act of archaeology: the scraping away of the dust of time to bring something into the present and to evaluate it according to your own prejudices (cf. Foucault on “the archaeological analysis of knowledge itself” cited in Landow 1997: 44). This can be related to Connerton’s statement:

what the historian deals with are traces: that is to say the marks, perceptible to the senses, which some phenomenon, in itself inaccessible, has left behind. Just to apprehend such marks as traces of something, as evidence, is already to have gone beyond the stage of merely making statements about the marks themselves; to count something as evidence is to make a statement about something else, namely, about that for which it is taken for evidence.

(1989: 13)

‘Rules which exist […] which they interpret’: See PL §198.

‘beat their way […] irrelevant questions’: CV 77e: MS 136 117a

Ich frage unzählige irrelevante Fragen. Möge ich durch diesen Wald mich durchschlagen können!

[“I ask countless irrelevant questions. If only I can beat my way through this forest!”]

Also, see Dante, Inferno, Canto XIII: “The Poets enter a pathless Wood” (1949: 149).

With regards to old philosophical questions, Richard Rorty writes,

So pragmatists see the Platonic tradition as having outlived its usefulness. This does not mean that they have a new, non-Platonic set of answers to Platonic questions to offer, but rather that they do not think we should ask these questions anymore.

(1982: xiv)
The old definitions (for example, mind, body, true, good) are not totally relevant any more. We cannot say with certainty what is and what isn't, in any sense. In many philosophical writings, mind and body are still the main defining attributes of human beings. Often the words are different, and more often the concepts and beliefs are different, but behind each new definition lies a desire to reach the ultimate answer of the question, “What is it that makes us ‘Human’?” Of course, each philosopher believes to some extent that their philosophy has provided the answer; the next philosopher might not agree and proffer another argument.

There is no way out but through. We are stuck in an impasse of terminology and definitions. To break out of these constraints it is necessary for us to break down the walls of other people's experience and opinions which prevent us from moving forwards. Try as we might to fit into a mould of respected scientific or philosophical thought, there is not one which wholly satisfies the uses to which we want to put it. Just as we begin to believe one theorist, another comes to knock the first over. We then realise that we have been seduced by them both, conned into thinking that we can find universal answers to the questions we have been asking. We are too set in a way that dictates how we describe the world and ourselves as part of, or distinct from, that world. Following Richard Rorty and the pragmatists, we should not be asking these questions anymore. We should not need to have to ask questions like: Am I a mind in a body? Or of a body? Or a body that has a mind? Or a body that is a mind too? This notion of two somehow separate parts, even if they may be what Antonio Damasio describes as “an indissociable organism” (1995: xvi), is precisely the barrier we face in trying to figure out how any entity can and should be described.

We can discard the mind-body problem in favour of Rorty’s assertion: “I do not think there is a problem” (1980: 7). However, this now leads from one impasse into another wall shored up with questions like: Is it now impossible to talk about my experiences as a living human, now that my vocabulary is deficient? Can I discuss still the changes in human experience due to technology if my fundamental concept of a human is indescribable? Does this new cybernetic organism class as human or machine, or neither? Am I in danger of creating a new problem: the human-machine problem? Those can be answered “No”, “Yes”, “Neither”, and “Yes. But I can refuse to recognise it as a problem”.

‘Their bodies dissected [...] fractured and fragmented’: Lacan writes
This fragmented body [...] usually manifests itself in dreams when the movement of the analysis encounters a certain level of aggressive disintegration in the individual. It then appears in the form of disjointed limbs, or of those organs represented in exoscopy, growing wings and taking up arms for intestinal persecutions [... cf. the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch].

(1977: 4)

‘a collective intelligence’: See Lévy:
What is collective intelligence? It is a form of universally distributed intelligence, constantly enhanced, coordinated in real time, and resulting in the effective mobilization of skills. [...] The basis and goal of collective intelligence is the mutual recognition and enrichment of individuals rather than the cult of fetishized or hypostatized communities.

(1997: 13; italics in original)

‘corpora vilia’: Plural of ‘corpus vile’, a person or thing fit only to be the object of an experiment; literally ‘worthless body’.

‘further down the spiral’: Nine Inch Nails ‘remix EP’ title (tvt/interscope records, 1995). Also, thinking of the metaphor for depression, and the spiralling double helix of DNA.
Part 2: Crack in the World

Canto 1: Into the Void.

'Crack in the World': The title of a film directed by Andrew Marton (1965) in which scientists unleash apocalyptic chaos on the Earth after trying to use the power of the planet's core.

'Into the Void': Nine Inch Nails song title on The Fragile (nothing/inter scope records, 1999).

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'a mysterious flame': See Z §§125-6.

'the ends of fossilised forelimbs': Inspired by Dante, Inferno, Canto XIII.

'empty tubes': See CV 13e: MS 153a 12v “It is humiliating having to present oneself as an empty tube only inflated by the mind” ["Es ist beschämend sich als leerer Schlauch zeigen zu müssen der nur vom Geist aufgeblasen"].

'the hollow': A Perfect Circle song title on Mer de Noms (Virgin Records, 2000).

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'Ermy sucks in / the sound': See Koestler 1975: 199; “life sucks information from the environment as it feeds on its substances and synthesises its energies”.


'from fly / to human': See Ridley 1999: 179.

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awakening / from his / stunning slumber': See Dante 1949: 91.

'The limitlessness / of [...] in complete / darkness': PR §224 and Z §616 “Die Grenzenlosigkeit des Gesichtraumes ist am klarsten, wenn wir nichts sehen bei vollständiger Dunkelheit”.

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'with wither'd eyes': Inspired by line from Tool song 'Third Eye' on Ænima (Volcano, 1996): “And wiping the webs and the dew from my withered eye”.

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'protean / protagonists': Purely alliterative, then I read Hutcheon: “Here the only wholeness attained is that of the media monster the public makes of the protean protagonist” (1989: 109).
'dah dit dit dit dit [...] dah dah dit dit': You can work it out with a little knowledge of the Morse code.

'constant data / nonstop / enveloping': See McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 111.

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'Who / is / speaking / here / with / this / mouth?': OC §244 "Wer spricht hier mit diesem Munde?"

'The other speak': See PO 228 [LPE 283].

'But how do [...] experience of / speaking?': PO 228.

'I have / consciousnessless': A play on Wittgenstein's RPP I §938.

'I have a body': OC §244 "Ich habe einen Körper".

'Is this body my body?': PI §411 "Ist dieser Körper mein Körper?"

'I cannot / describe / the feeling / of the / movement': See, for example, PI 185-6e, RPP I §§385ff. and PO 204, also see Koestler 1975: 287-8.

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'With a clean [...] arch of the arm': Inspired by the experience in 1999 of having electrodes attached to my right arm, and the control by the machine of my limb.

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Canto 2: Describing the Neu Baud-y.

'Baud-y': Baud "(pronounced 'bod')" (Hale 1996: 41); according to Wired Style, "a speed of data transmission. [...It was] originally a unit of telegraph signaling speed - the number of wave cycles per second" (Hale 1996: 40). One unit interval per second of electronic code equals one baud, although "modern higher-speed modems pump more than 1 bit per transition, so 600 baud could equal 1,200 bps" (Hale 1996: 41).

'Ermy, Orpheus and Wittgenstein have become an alphabet': "A succession of fragmented bits having no real meaning except what we read into them" (McLuhan and Powers 1989: 131).

'A primordial Alphabet soup': The letters A, C, G, T and U: the initials of the five bases in DNA and RNA—adenine, cytosine, guanine and thymine in DNA, with uracil replacing thymine in RNA.

'The world is now Them': See Kroker and Kroker 1996: 139.

'movements form Their mode of Communication': This is the crux of the thesis. This statement encapsulates a number of problems and issues. It can be demonstrated by running a number of arguments simultaneously:
Movements are pre-lingual. Physical actions and behaviour (including crying and other non-lingual verbalisations) are independent of language, but this does not mean that they are devoid of meaning. They can all be expressive. But certain acts are expressive only

in reflective interpretation on the part of some observer [...] Emotional discharge is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of expression [...] There is no expression without excitement, without turmoil [...] What is sometimes called an act of self-expression might better be termed one of self-exposure; it discloses character—or lack of character—to others. In itself, it is only a spewing forth.

(Dewey 1938: 61-2)

Language, in which our meanings almost exclusively arise in consciousness, is but a form—a highly specialised form—of gesture [...] consciousness of meaning is so bound up with self-consciousness [...] Thus the consciousness of meaning at least at this stage is a consciousness of one's own attitudes of response as they answer to, control, and interpret the gestures of others.

(Mead in Thayer 1982: 349)

Some people, suffering from deafferentation, have to compensate for their lack of unconscious body language. They devise and learn a small range of hand and arm gestures, which they use "to deceive others into reacting in terms of an unconscious language: it is an act in more than one sense" (Cole and Paillard 1998: 260).

The Problems of Understanding Physical 'Utterances':

A friend was visiting his grandchildren and his little granddaughter asked: "Have you brought your 'Smile' with you, Grandad?"
He said: "Of course, I've got a smile for you any time." She said: "No, not that," and put her fingers up to her face.
She was asking if he'd brought his camera.

P Thorpe, Leeds

(Thorpe 1999: 39)

If I was talking to you, conversing verbally in certain (con)texts, I would know that you have understood by what you say and do in response to my utterances, which have a propositional content (see Wittgenstein PI §§152-5 and 363). When I use movement (dance) and gesture, how do I know if I have conveyed the meaning I intend for you to understand? Conversely, how do you know if you have understood the meaning that I am intending? (There are a number of considerations here which have been glossed over; for example, see Schulte 1993: 42.) But this is not about communication in a social context: dance is an artistic/aesthetic expression. The first of Mead's three elements of consciousness: social situation, is not wholly appropriate. The other two: the relationship between the stimulation and the response and the feel of one's attitudes, in this case but not in all artistic communications or expressions, have some bearing (See Mead 1910). Mead argues, that if a gesture has an "idea behind it and it arouses that idea in the other individual, then we have a significant symbol" (Mead 1934: 45).
Because the objects of art are expressive, they communicate. I do not say that communication to others is the intent of an artist. But it is the consequence of his work—which indeed lives only in communication when it operates in the experience of others. If the artist desires to communicate a special message, he thereby tends to limit the expressiveness of his work to others—whether he wishes to communicate a moral lesson or a sense of his own cleverness. Indifference to response of the immediate audience is a necessary trait of all artists that have something new to say. But they are animated by a deep conviction that since they can only say what they have to say, the trouble is not with their work but those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not. Communicability has nothing to do with popularity.  
(Dewey 1958: 104; italics in original)

Asses have ears as well as pitchers. Children, and even the densest minds, hear and understand many a word and hint which the speaker supposed would pass unheeded.  
(Brewer 1978: 69)

Ass- eared [...] Apollo and Pan had a contest, and chose Midas to decide which was the better musician. Midas gave sentence in favour of Pan; and Apollo, in disgust, changed his ears into those of an ass.  
(Brewer 1978: 70)

Balaam. Matter kept in type for filling up odd spaces in periodicals. These are generally refuse bits—the words of an oaf, who talks like “Balaam’s ass.” (Numb. xxii. 30.)  
(Brewer 1978: 88)
Generally speaking, the relation between the gaze and what one wishes to see involves a lure. The subject is presented as other than he is, and what one shows him is not what he wishes to see. It is in this way that the eye may function as objet a, that is to say at the level of the lack (− Δ).

(Lacan 1998: 104)

SYNCRETISE

The Lure

As a dancer I try to make you listen to my body. But meaning as we know it in language is ill-suited to being conveyed through gesture. The gesture is linked to the meaning, but it has encoded it, hidden it in a maze of metaphor. A gesture can have meaning – it can be a symbolic act – but the gesture is not always transparent, the meaning not always apparent. For Lacan, the (terminal) moment of seeing "enables us to distinguish between a gesture and an act" (1998: 114). It is temporal and its signification is inscribed behind it. It is reliant on a spectator, on the presence of the gaze, the eye that kills the gesture – stops it dead.

The evil eye is the fascinum [bewitching], it is that which has the effect of arresting movement and literally, of killing life [...] The moment of seeing can intervene here only as a suture, a conjunction of the imaginary and the symbolic, and it is taken up again in a dialectic [...] forward movement, which is concluded in the fascinum.

(Lacan 1998: 118; italics in original)

My pauses, the breaks in my movement are not punctuation – they are an invocation against the evil eye. The power relationships ebb and flow. I have an evil eye also. The gaze moves from me to you, the audience, and back again. As my body language fails me, I lose your gaze – the very thing that kills me also keeps me alive. I die.

CRISIS

The Seizure

As a dancer I try to make you listen to my body. My movements, at once "natural" and "un-natural", are transformed into conveyances, receptacles of meaning. My act(ion/ivity)es are the materials from which I create my art—"Only where material is employed as media is there expression and art" (Dewey 1958: 63). Expressive acts can be either artificial, artful or a[esthetic]. The difference is superficial/surface and intentional.

The act of expression that constitutes a work of art is a construction in time, not an instantaneous emission. [...] It means that the expression of the self in and through a medium, constituting the work of art, is itself a prolonged interaction of something issuing from the self with objective conditions, a process in which both of them acquire a form and order they did not at first possess.

(Dewey 1958: 65; italics in original)

My full body, the total organism that is me, my whole being is involved. I am not simply a reflecting mirror, but "an organized body of activities" (Dewey 1958: 256). And the eye is only part of the whole organism: the causal aid, the "through" (Dewey 1958: 123; italics in original), to my perception and production of qualities and meanings—the "total organic resonance" (Dewey 1958: 122).
'Gases Are solid': The word 'gas' is derived from the Greek word khaos, atmosphere. 'Chaos': complete disorder; utter confusion; the disordered formless matter supposed to have existed before the ordered universe; an obsolete word for abyss.

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'There is no CenTre': McLuhan and Powers suggest that Culture becomes organized like an electric circuit: each point in the net is as central as the next. Electronic man loses touch with the concept of a ruling center as well as the restraints of social rules based on interconnection.

1989: 92

'bodies flow from one To The nexT': As with the notion of there being no centre,

'inTerConneCtivTy: hUmAniTy invisible And divisible': For Sartre the body is the in-itself as inhaled. The body is not merely matter added to consciousness, nor is the body an obstacle to consciousness. Rather, the human reality [...] is simultaneously, totally consciousness and body.

Catalano 1980: 169

'The GhosT in The mAChine': Gilbert Ryle's deliberately abusive term for what he calls 'The Official Doctrine' "about the nature and place of minds [...] which hails chiefly from Descartes" (1949: 13). He draws our attention to the absurdities in this dogma: My destructive purpose is to show that a family of radical category-mistakes is the source of the double-life theory. The representation of a person as a ghost mysteriously ensconced in a machine derives from this argument. Because, as is true, a person's thinking, feeling and purposive doing cannot be described solely in the idioms of physics, chemistry and physiology, therefore they must be described in counterpart idioms.

Ryle 1949: 19-20

However, Arthur Danto writes: the mind/body problem is solved by the recognition that, as embodied—or, if you prefer, as enminded—the body has just the attributes the mind has, so the mind/body relationship is just the mind/mind relationship. The real problem is the body/body relationship, that between the minded body and the mindless one, to which I am, to which we each are, bound certainly and united but not, perhaps, tightly bound and united. Descartes's model, in any case, is remarkably different from that attributed to him a generation ago by Gilbert Ryle in the spirit of metaphysical caricature, as of a ghost in a machine. The mind, construed as embodied—as enfleshed—might perhaps stand to the body as a statue does to the bronze that is its material cause, or as a picture stands to the pigment it gives form to—or as signified stands to signifier, in the idiom of Saussure. And to the degree that 'inside' and 'outside' have application at all, it is the mind that is outside, in the sense that it is what is presented to the world. But in fact the structure of geometrical relationships ought to be dropped altogether, as leading us into disfiguring metaphors, and the connection between the two bodies addressed in the spirit of awaiting a model rather than beginning with one.

1999: 197; italics in original

See also Koestler 1975: 202ff.

'mUTATinG': Metaphormosis.

'biTloss': Wired Style.

The loss of bits, or data, from a transmission. Also used colloquially to mean loss of memory or information.

Hale 1996: 41
'dAnCer: you TrAnsmUTATion of All GoinG-by inTo GoinG': Rilke 1946: 123.

'The mirror of The soUl CrACked': The use of the mirror as a metaphor is too widespread to begin to describe here. However, the use of it in describing the development of the psyche is pertinent.

In [Lacan's] view, the oedipal child enters a world of 'signs' which convey to him the meanings of self, gender and the body, just as he is similarly confronted by language and grammar which he must assimilate in order to become part of the linguistic community [...] He described three developmental stages: first, a primordial period of unconscious infantile 'desire'; then the world of 'the imaginary' emerging from the 'mirror stage' in which the child first confronts his image and narcissistically and therefore incorrectly, assumes this to be his true self; and finally the 'symbolic order', arising through the contact with language, the 'no(m) du père'.

(Bateman and Holmes 1995: 14-5)

Jacques Lacan writes:

We have only to understand the mirror stage as an identification, in the full sense that analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image - whose predestination to this phase-effect is sufficiently indicated by the use, in analytic theory, of the ancient term image.

(1977: 2; italics in original)

'A jUmble of frAGmenTs': Laing writes,

The more he [the 'self-conscious' person] keeps his 'true self' in hiding, concealed, unseen, and the more he presents to others a false front, the more compulsive this false presentation of himself becomes. He appears to be extremely narcissistic and exhibitionistic [...] Here the 'self' has become an invisible transcendent entity, known only to itself. The body in action is no longer the expression of the self. The self is not actualized in and through the body. It is distinct and dissociated.

(1965: 114)

'AwAiTinG de-frAGmenTATion': Like this thesis. What would it be like if human beings were able to defragment their 'memory'? We would not talk of 'memory' and 'memories' in the same way. Our whole conceptual foundation for 'remembering' would be different.
'He is the imagination of himself': Inspired by comedian Bill Hicks speaking at the beginning of 'Third Eye' by Tool (Ænima, Volcano 1996).

Here is a special magic which imagination works. It does not only project symbols, but finds them in the world.
(Roszak 1973: 368; italics in original)

Imagination: the ability to produce novel ideas (novel to the thinker) that are not based directly on memory, although there is usually some level of experience involved. "The term idea, form, is visually based, coming from the same root as the Latin video, to see, and such English derivatives as vision, visible, or videotape" (Ong 1982: 80). The imagination, as Wills (1995) implies, can be a powerful controlling device. The imagination allows individuals to create reasons why others should do as they want—religion is this exemplified to the extreme. Imagination is the seedbed of the human (hyper)world.

"Imagination is that ratio among the perceptions and faculties which exists when they are not embedded or outered in material technologies" (McLuhan 1962: 265).

See Wittgenstein PO 131: "imagination is not like a painted portrait or plastic model, but a complicated pattern made up of heterogeneous elements: words and pictures".

'He is not just in the story—he is the story': See Z §233.

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The Ballad of the Head of Orpheus.

'The Ballad of the Head of Orpheus': See Milton, Lycidas, ll.58-63:

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

'Cast about in chaotic entropy': "Entropy is the tendency of things to degenerate to increasing levels of complexity and/or chaos" (Pearce 1997: 280). "Now entropy ('transformed energy') is the name for degraded energy which has been dissipated by friction and other wasteful processes into the random motion of molecules, and which cannot be retrieved [...] entropy is a measure of energy waste, of order degraded into disorder" (Koestler 1975: 199). Koestler continues to describe 'negative entropy' (the building-up of complex systems out of disordered, simple elements), and equating entropy with 'noise' as used by communications theorists.
Ermy's Fit.

Ermy’s Fit: See Milton, Paradise Lost, III, ll.600-5

That stone, or like to that, which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drained through a limbic to his native form.

The play on Hermes name for ‘Ermy’ should be obvious by this point. Hermes, son of Zeus and Maia was, in one of his incarnations, the conductor of souls (Psychopompus) into the underworld. The name’s etymology, as described in Guirand (1968), is uncertain: just in the Greek it could be related to a word that conveys movement, a stone or rock, or the verb ‘to protect’.

‘like vapour or a breath of autumn’: Possibly from Homer, in Guirand 1968: 124.

‘Ermy feels nothing [...] skin have dissipated’: Stelarc has written that “As interface, the skin is inadequate” (Stelarc in Richard, Klanten and Heidenreich 1998: 70). And earlier in 1921, in reference to tactile pictures, Marinetti wrote that “Human beings speak to each other with their mouths and eyes, but cannot reach a point of true sincerity because of the insensitivity of their skin which is still a mediocre conductor of thought” (see Tisdall and Bozzolla 1993: 198). But touch is still a primary sense in perceiving the world and others. Damasio describes the importance of the skin in neural representations of the body, and as “an interface turned both to the organism’s interior and to the environment with which the organism interacts” (1995: 231). (Damasio talks of skin as the “body boundary” (1995: 231). Merleau-Ponty (1962: 98) refers to “The outline of my body [as] a frontier which ordinary spatial relations do not cross,” and goes on to discuss ‘body image’.) As Clark writes in reference to Mackay’s touch experiments in the 1960s: “We use touch to explore surfaces [...] so as to probe and reprobe the local environment [this view] extends quite naturally to vision and to perception in general” (1998: 30; italics in original). Indeed, Dennett writes that Our senses of taste and smell are yoked together phenomenologically, and so are our senses of touch and kinesthesia [...] We ‘feel’ things by touching them, grabbing them.

(1993: 46-7)

[NB Dennett is not referring to synaesthesia]

Other writers talk of the nature of touch and how we use it to shape our worlds in our minds. But there seems to be a difference in touching objects and touching other people, even touching ourselves throws up a barrage of thought. When I touch my left hand with my right hand, as Merleau-Ponty debates, which hand is touching which? (See for a further and fuller explanation Merleau-Ponty 1962. Also, this is similar to what Sartre described in Being and Nothingness: “when I touch my leg with my finger, I realize that my leg is touched [...] To touch and to be touched, to feel that one is touching and to feel that one is touched” (1969: 304.) If my hand is directed to touch my other hand by someone else who can then feel my hand with their own, without actually touching it, what sense can be made of this? If one of my hands is a machine, a robot hand, what happens then? It is all well and good for Stelarc to control the movement of his Third Hand, but how does the Hand’s ‘experience’ affect him? If my skin begins to be replaced by new materials or has extensions added to it, will my sense of touch be modified too? And how will my brain cope with this change? Robots are already learning to touch and develop “a kind of robot version of the kinesthetic sense” (Clark 1998: 19). (For more on Robots and Tactility see Webster 1988 and Rosheim 1994, as examples. Clark has a chapter entitled ‘Evolving Robots’ (1998: 87-102.) For them, as for us, the world and their position in it will form as they evolve. There is 2-way
feedback, as Damasio (1995) describes, between the evolving body and evolving mind. 
He also writes

In the beginning, there was no touching, or seeing, or hearing, or moving along by itself. There was, rather a feeling of the body as it touched, or saw, or heard, or moved.

(Damasio 1995: 232; italics in original)

'a visceral brain': An old name for the limbic system, see Koestler 1975: 283; although not used here in this sense exactly.

'Ermy is not dead, but he knows not that he is alive': "The unembodied self becomes hyper-conscious" (Laing 1965: 69).

'Ermy is a photon': See Deutsch 1997: 35ff. The other descriptions of Ermy are based on representations of Hermes.

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The Jigsaw Puzzle.

'The Jigsaw Puzzle': Wittgenstein writes,

And now we observe a phenomenon, - which we might interpret as the expression of the experience: seeing a figure now this way now that. Now we shew them, e.g., a puzzle picture. They find the solution; and the they say something, point to something, draw something etc., and we can teach them our expression: 'Now I always see the picture this way.'

(RPP I §99)

Wittgenstein makes a number of references to jigsaw puzzles (puzzle pictures) in his writings. It seemed apt. As it did to write it as a detective story, given Wittgenstein's penchant for the genre. This start to a story also touches on a whole range of Wittgensteinian issues concerning faces (and drawings of), expressions, meanings and seeing and seeing-as. The following section of poetry was discarded and was intended to raise some Wittgensteinian questions about seeing and meaning (it draws the example of the tree from Wittgenstein's On Certainty (1969), although he uses it in other collections of writings too):
'Tell me what you see there,' Wittgenstein said, pointing to an object Ermy could see some way in the distance and dead ahead.

'Well, it's far off, but I think it's a tree,' Ermy replied, confused by the request, 'but I can't really say with certainty.'

'And now,' said the first, 'a little test. If you had never seen a tree before, how would what you can see now be expressed?'

'I don’t know. It might depend on whether I have seen anything that looks something like it, and then I’d link them together.'

'Would your new word then have the same meaning as my word for ‘tree’? And how can you tell exactly to what I was just pointing?'

Have you just had a different visual experience to me? Or does it not matter that you lack the concept at all?'

And so it ends, rather abruptly, with Wittgenstein posing the problem of linguistic concepts and sensory experience. What is intriguing about the notions of seeing and what Wittgenstein called seeing-as are how they have a bearing on the role and value of artistic activities and human interaction with them. I say ‘interaction’ because of the connectivity of human beings with the objects of art, even when those objects are difficult to place in a physical relationship with other things. This is meant to imply and not imply at the same time, that the meanings and interpretations of a work of art are inextricably bound up with the material of the work of art. It is akin to asking the problematic question: where are the artistic qualities of any work of art? A novel in book-form is an object, but the object itself is not the work of art. A movement in a dance piece is not an object, although it is the work of art, not the body on which it is performed (although we may judge the body, and the book-as-object come to think of it, to have aesthetic and artistic merit). And what happens when the movement is not on a physical human body, but some abstracted version of the body – a film or video screen, a virtual avatar? They are all still open to seeing and seeing-as, and still ‘in some respects I stand towards [them] as I do a human [being]’ (PI 194e). But, just as it is desirable to avoid any suggestion that there is an artistic essence, or something that makes art art, any suggestion that when we see a work of art it somehow generates an individual, internal interpretation or meaning should be avoided too.

The term ‘work of art’ now promotes discomfort. Wittgenstein writes: “The work of art compels us – as one might say – to see it in the right perspective” (CV 7e: MS 109 28). Wittgenstein himself was unsure about the word ‘right’ in this context, and to say that the artwork in itself does the compelling is also somehow wrong, but to talk of any intention on anything’s or anyone’s part is also mistaken. And let us not forget that we do not see everything as art. Indeed, we do not see everything as something. To take an example from Wittgenstein, when one sees a knife and fork, what does one see it as? He writes: “One doesn’t ‘take’ what one knows as the cutlery at a meal for cutlery” (PI 195). But, one might see the pattern on the fork’s handle as flowers and judge it to be artistic. Does one see the fork now as a work of art, even though one uses it as any other fork? Can one see it as anything but a fork? The object doesn’t change in any way, so what does? Wittgenstein refers to the experience of “noticing an aspect” (PI 193) when we see something now as one thing, then as another even though the thing we see has not changed in form. Why is this all so problematic? Wittgenstein suggests that the
question whether what is involved is a seeing or an act of interpreting arises because an interpretation becomes an expression of experience. And the interpretation is not an indirect description; no, it is the primary expression of the experience.

(RPP I §20)

In his book The power of Babel, Michel Pierssens writes:

For us, everything always begins...with a sudden break which announces itself... as the epiphany of a new structure in the movement of an instantaneous revelation. A new meaning presents itself in a total rearrangement of everything we thought we knew

(1980: 35)

What Pierssens is suggesting is that when we experience a work of art and find in it meaning (or should that be meaningfulness?), we have an epiphany. Perhaps. This may happen very rarely to the average person, that they have a sudden and great revelation about a work of art. And what does this revelation consist of? Koestler writes,

Routine thinking involves a single matrix, artistic experience always involves more than one. Rhythm and metre, rhyme and euphony, are not artificial ornaments of language, but combinations of contemporary, sophisticated frames of reference, with archaic and emotionally more powerful games of the mind. The same is true of poetic imagery: visual thinking is in earlier form of mental activity than thinking in verbal concepts; we dream mostly in pictures. In other words, creative activity always implies a temporary regression to these archaic levels, while a simultaneous process goes on in parallel on the highest, most articulate and critical level: the poet is like a skin-diver with a breathing tube [...] the poet's voice is bi-vocal, as he bisociates sound and meaning.

(1975: 194-5)

('bisociation' is Koestler's term for "sudden leaps of creative imagination", 1975: 181)

In 'Ecclesiastes', Solomon asks us:

Who is like the wise man? And who knows the interpretation of a thing? A man's wisdom makes his face shine, and the hardship of his face is changed.

(The Bible, Ecclesiastes 8:1)

Who indeed does know the interpretation of a thing? What is this supposed to mean? It is so opaque that it cannot be seen through. It reads as though it were a Zen koan—a statement designed to prompt the pupil to look at things in a new way, from a different angle. Is being wise the ability to know an interpretation? We can know what interpretations someone else might have given to something—if they tell us in some way—but we do not just know interpretations, we make them, we give them; an interpretation comes into being when we interact with, respond to or simply react to a thing. What our reaction to a thing? It can be one of many examples. What does it suggest when someone says "I am responding to a painting, to a story, to a piece of music"? Are they giving an answer to the questions that it poses? What if these questions are rhetorical? Are the answers a waste of time? Can anyone enter into a dialogue with any of these things? Isn't a picture or a story an inanimate thing, something inert, incapable of interaction? But we sometimes say that a picture or story was brought to life What does this mean? It is used to describe our living experience of a piece of art that in some way inspired us—not to say that the thing literally came to life. If a work of art, whatever it is, is lifeless, it does not inspire us to continue our experience of it; it is boring, not dead (cf. Z §834). But what about a piece of music, can this be called a thing? The word piece implies a bit of something—a piece of cake is a tangible object which I can say exists in my larder, but where does a piece of music exist? Is it in the manuscript? Is it the original recording? Is it on the CD or DVD? And these assume that the music has been in some way recorded—what about when it is experienced being played live? In all of these cases a human being senses what might be called sound
waves against the eardrum mediated via the auditory nerves to the brain where it is heard as music. Whatever interpretation there may be related to the sound comes not with the vibrations or electrochemical impulses. It occurs imperceptibly after these events, as though alongside these events (see Z §165). Humans see, humans hear, humans feel, humans taste, humans smell and humans interpret these sensations all in one go, as it were (to put it crudely): "It is wrong to call understanding a process that accompanies hearing" (Wittgenstein Z §163). A work of art fuses seeing with seeing and hearing with hearing and so on (cf. RPP I §436 "The theme and the language are in reciprocal action"; and CV 60e M5 132 59 "The theme interacts with language"). This too, is the object of the koan, according to Suzuki and the Zen Buddhists: to synthesize the dualism of the senses, to experience enlightenment, to attain satori. But to say that there is a dualism of the senses, or even to talk of fusion, is a mistake in a way, because we don't experience them as unlinked. Or do we? The late 19th and early 20th Century writer, Raymond Roussel experienced enlightenment: "the moment in which he discovers the truth of his destiny in a total fusion of his body with that of writing" (Pierssens 1980: 37). But what do you we expect of a romantic nineteen year old? Just because a poet (or a philosopher, or a psychologist, or a scientist) says something, that doesn't make it right, or a measure of everyone's experience, or anything more than a description using metaphor and allegory.

'a solitary piece of jigsaw puzzle': If anybody is interested, the piece of the jigsaw puzzle that the Detective finds and describes is a fragment from a picture by Gustav Klimt. Painted in 1904-5, the portrait in oils is of Margaret(e) Stonborough-Wittgenstein, Ludwig's sister (called Gretl by the family), for her wedding. Wittgenstein's father, Karl, was a great patron and collector of the arts, supporting Klimt on a number of occasions. Ludwig knew the painting, it had hung in the family home briefly before being rejected by its subject, although his views on it are not clear. Gretl was a big influence of Ludwig, being very intellectual herself and well-read and opinionated on matters of religion and science. Ludwig designed a house and its fittings for his sister Gretl between 1925 and 1928 (the building still stands on Kundmanngasse in Vienna).

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Part 3: Android

Canto 1: In the midst of death...

'Android': Title of a film directed by Aaron Lipstadt (1982). The temptation was resisted to call this section 'Cyborg' (also the title of a film). On the website entitled Cyborgs - Humans and Technology, Jeff Deaner (1999) writes

> Webster's New World Dictionary, Third Edition defines a cyborg as '[cy[borg (sél'borg); contraction of ‘cybernetic organism’] a hypothetical human being modified for life in a hostile or alien environment by the substitution of artificial organs and other body parts.' After reading that definition I've decided that the dictionary definition is not always applicable.

This is quite right. The word 'cyborg' should only be viewed in family resemblance terms. There are as many notions of what a cyborg is, or could be, as there are people who think about cyborgs. Clynes' and Kline's 1960 article 'Cyborgs and Space' was the first to include a definition based on a potential practical application beyond the Earth's atmosphere:

For the exogenously extended organizational complex functioning as an integrated homeostatic system unconsciously, we propose the term "Cyborg." The Cyborg deliberately incorporates exogenous components extending the self-regulatory control function of the organism in order to adapt it to new environments [...] The purpose of the Cyborg, as well as his own homeostatic systems, is to provide an organizational system in which such robot-like problems are taken care of automatically and unconsciously, leaving man free to
explore, to create, to think, and to feel.

(reprinted in Gray 1995: 30-1)

To restate the history of the term and the literature surrounding it is not possible here (see Gray 1995 for a more detailed account). As Haraway (in Gray 1995: 373) remarks "Cyborgs do not stay still"—that is to say that they have changed, and keep changing, in concept and form. From the use of a tool or a pair of spectacles through prosthetic limbs to more specialised medical equipment, it is argued that humans have been and are cyborgs, in prototype at the very least (see Chislenko 1995, for a less-than-serious account of the cyborgization of humans). It is no longer acceptable to refer unquestioningly to the mind-body split, especially as now we are looking at a new division: body-machine. "We might also speak of a human/machine compression, this compression signifying a new qualitative leap in the evolutionary process, as some researchers have suggested, Moravec (1988) and Ursua (1988) [...] among others" as Figueroa-Sarriera (in Gray 1995: 129) writes.

However, it still seems too Cartesian to define this duality in such a way that it can be argued that never the twain shall meet. Some bodies rely on a direct link with technology from dialysis machines and iron lungs to pacemakers, cochlea implants and other internal devices. These latter aids cannot even be seen, and like our own organs exist purely for the sake of continuing the existence of the body as a whole. And this body is 'only' a transitory environment for genes (for an expansion on this argument see, for example, Dawkins 1996: 177). *Cyborg* is not just a term to define an entity of both human and machine 'parentage'; it has also been used as a metaphor to describe the relationship (of individuals and of society) to technology. In the Metabody text 'Roborg: Myths, Robots and Procreation', J.J. Cook (1997) writes:

> the cyborg, [has] become elemental to the metaphorical map of our world. The objectified machinic and cybernetic body, augmented, transparent, implanted and analysed, is more easily incorporated into the body of the subject-machine as cyborg, and avatar/golem, its digital equivalent.

In the overall picture of human reality at the end of the Twentieth Century, the cyborg has a special place for writers of fiction, science and cultural theory. To say, "we are all cyborgs" (Haraway 1991: 150), is to imply many things, not least of all that our bodies are not all that they seem. The evolutionary path is being diverted as far as humans are concerned. But what about the evolution of machines? Manuel de Landa writes

> If we disregard for a moment the fact that robotic intelligence will probably not follow the anthropomorphic line of development prepared for it by science fiction, we may without much difficulty imagine a future generation of killer robots dedicated to understanding their historical origins. We may even imagine specialized 'robot historians' committed to tracing the various technological lineages that gave rise to their species.

(1991: 2-3)

Dawkins asks,

> Could it be that one far-off day intelligent computers will speculate about their own lost origins? [...] Will a robotic Cairns-Smith write a book called Electronic Takeover?

(1996: 158)

It could be said that human beings are not the final, once-and-for-all, dominant species on the planet, but that we are merely a stepping stone, a future missing link, and the writers of our own heroic downfall. Our tragic flaw? Perhaps it will be our inability to adapt 'psychologically' beyond our physical limitations, or 'psychologically' when we do go beyond our physical limitations. Until now we have prided ourselves on our capacity to command adverse conditions, and on our attempts to improve on the natural world. Our natural environment frequently gets the better of us, often through its sheer unpredictability and brute force, yet we still try to overcome it by inventing,
new devices to improve our chances for survival. The more advanced the devices, seemingly the less control we have over them. Nature, Dyson, suspects, "is on the side of the machines" (1997: ix). We live in a technocratic world, where to understand technology confers power. Gray, Mentor and Figueroa-Sarriera write that we certainly all live in a 'cyborg society' [...] Cyborg society also refers to the full range of intimate organic-machinic relations.

Also in a high-tech culture it "is not clear who makes and who is made in the relation between human and machine" (Haraway 1991: 177). It is not now wholly nature that determines our life, but technology, our relationships with machines. Take for example this recent description of how technology will have an impact on humans:

The prevalence of highly intelligent visual navigation devices for the blind, speech-to-print displays for the deaf, nerve stimulation and orthotic prosthetics for the physically disabled, and a variety of neural implant technologies, has eliminated the handicaps associated with most disabilities.

Kurzweil (1999b: 2)

If an approximate date were to be put on the above prediction, what might it be? Ray Kurzweil, "the world's leading authority on artificial intelligence" (1999b: flyleaf) estimates 2029.

Kevin Warwick, "the world's leading expert in cybernetics" (1997: flyleaf), claims "that it is possible for machines to take over from humans" (1997: 8; italics in original). This seems like a far-fetched prophesy, and is based on an assumption that machines can and will develop 'intelligence' and 'consciousness'. (Both of these terms carry a great weight of explanations, theories and beliefs as to how they are defined, measured and quantified.) Warwick imagines that it is feasible for machines to have developed intelligence equivalent to or more than that of humans by 2050. Moravec predicts that this will be the case sometime in the 2020s. Kurzweil concurs that by 2029 machines will "claim to be conscious" (1999b: ix), and by 2099 there will "no longer [be] any clear distinction between humans and computers" (1999b: x), in terms of what we know of as the 'mind'.

As a metaphor, the cyborg helps us start to cross the psychological border between machines and us. Physically the border is becoming increasingly blurred. Despite this, it is often hard to imagine where or when there will be no border at all - TOTAL FUSION. For writers such as Moravec, in the near future "the biological body assumes a character fundamentally scatological and disposable" (in Gray, 1995:132), and the mind can be uploaded into an entirely inorganic simulated neural network. Now, instead of the gene, it is the meme that carries the meaning of existence. This moves us close to "a reformulation of Cartesian dualism" (Figueroa-Sarriera in Gray, 1995:133), or as Figueroa-Sarriera suggests, the Platonic view of the mind and body: Plato saw the body as made from the four elements - earth, water, fire and air - and a soul (see, for example, Melling 1987: 69-74 and 152-3; Philebus, and principally Phaedo, are the works in which Plato argues for the external from the body and immortal existence of the soul). The mind in these terms is and can be separated from the body. As Damasio describes (1995: 249-50), this was Descartes' biggest error. If by the end of the next century "most conscious entities [do] not have a permanent physical presence" (Kurzweil 1999b: x), this would change the value and meaning of any act that is now purely physical; it might become purely metaphorical to refer to 'dance'. Even now the word is used to describe mental acts of thought processing and argument formulation. The copy on the back of Andy Clark's book Being there: putting brain, body, and world together again (1998) is an example: "Brain, body, and world are united in a complex dance of circular causation and extended computational activity".

Following the example of Antonio Damasio (1995), the replacement of the body in the functioning of the brain and in emotional response, is an important argument against
"brain in a vat" and total consciousness uploading theories. Basically, Damasio argues, "our minds would not be the way they are if it were not for the interplay of body and brain during evolution, during individual development, and at the current moment" (1995:xvi). The brain is seen as connected to the body proper to form "an indissociable organism" (1995:xvi), and the mind is affected by the body's interaction with the external environment through the sense organs. Damasio simply describes how the brain has evolved in such a way that its perception of the body proper from moment to moment is now a background process (see 1995: 233-4). However, the brain that "exists now is dominated by non-body images" (1995: 234), but with the body still providing essential information for the conscious brain.

Charlie Laughlin offers an argument against Moravec's view of the future. Through the application of biogenetic structural theory, which is "an exploration of a perspective that integrates the anthropology of human culture with the study of the human brain" (Laughlin 1996a), Laughlin makes the fundamental assumption that human consciousness and culture are functions of the nervous system. This perspective requires us to pay particular attention to the physiology and engineering of the cyborg, and to watch carefully the impact of technology upon the structure and function of the mind and the body. For instance, there cannot be a cyborg without solving the direct brain-machine interface problem. Interfacing is difficult enough when dealing with the replacement of limbs with prosthetic devices, but it becomes exceedingly complicated when it involves direct brain to computer interfacing. Cyborg consciousness is not now, nor will it ever be, a simple matter of 'downloading' human consciousness out of a brain and into a machine.

(1996b; emphasis in original)

These are sobering words for anyone who considers becoming a cyborg capable of machine-based self-consciousness in the near future. For the time-being, perhaps, we can concentrate on those aspects of cyborg technology which are already in use and determine how these new tools can help us create new cultural products (as Tim Oren writes, "Technologists Should Be Listening to Artists", in Laurel 1990: 479). The limitations and frustrations presented to us by the basic nature of the tools should help us look for creative possibilities to increase their potential. David Tomas writes: "Perhaps an art of the cybernetic automaton is nothing more than this [based on a Nietzschean argument] 'art' of balancing between a past history of the body and the future of a different kind of body" (in Gray 1995: 265). In his chapter 'Art, Psychasthenic Assimilation, and the Cybernetic Automaton', Tomas (in Gray, 1995: 260) favours "Beaune's term 'cybernetic automaton' to describe the type of hybrid organic/machinic entity" that appears in a performed installation. "An installed and performed cybernetic automaton is thus a kind of transparent representational interface and threshold between an organic world and the world of machines" (Gray 1995: 260-1; italics in original).

Following this brief excursion into human-machine relations, which serves merely to demonstrate the range of material on the matter, David J. Hess in The Cyborg Handbook (Gray 1995: 373) gives a description of the 'cyborg' that will suffice as a definition: "any identity between machine and human or any conflation of the machine/human boundary".
'In the midst of death': Play on the line "In the midst of life we are in death" from The Book of Common Prayer (from "The Order for the Burial of the Dead"). See also CV 44e: MS 12777v. Page 208

'spirit ditch': Title of song by Sparklehorse on Vivadixiesubmarinetransmissionplot (Capitol Records, 1995).

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'nerves of nylon and steel': Based on a line from a Bauhaus song, 'Nerves' on In the Flat Field (4AD, 1980).

'And so, one dead, the other powerless to be born': Play on a line by Matthew Arnold (1950: 302; first published in Fraser’s Magazine, April 1855), The Grand Chartreuse, 1.85.

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Canto 2: Meccanik Dancing.

'Meccanik Dancing': XTC song title on Go 2 (Virgin Records, 1978). This thesis originally focused on what was termed 'the cyborg dancer'. Early text read:


Imagine a race of sentient hermaphroditic animals that live in tandem with quasi-intelligent machines. They have only one eye and ear[] spatial awareness is reduced and limited to mono-directional perception> The right hand has only four functional digits[,] the left is a withered simulacrum of a hand> Legs are distorted and swollen[;] movement is slow and jerky> Most of the nutritional sustenance is derived from pre-digested food matter to aid assimilation[;] colostomy bags siphon off the waste> They live amidst the discarded components of technological equipment/ no longer required in the creatures' cohabiters/ the computers> The brains of these organisms are highly specialised/ all extraneous cerebral activities have been made obsolete/ or are downloaded from the computers' memory banks> Neural sensations are controlled exogenously/ and pumped directly into the brain[,] the world is seen/ felt/ smelt/ tasted and explored virtually> And why not?> The real world is an unpleasant place to visit/ a landfill site of global proportions> >>

For me, the use of technology in creating and then presenting performance is to expand the possibilities of the body and the ways in which the audience can participate in the theatrical event. I am interested in the use of technology to transfer movement from one person to another person because it is direct and not open to (human) mistakes and variations. If a body transmits a sequence of movements via an electrical interface, it is controllable and directional. The choreographer can get it into someone else's body without having to rely on verbal description or ostensive means. The only meanings that are then open to interpretation are those given to the dance by the audience as they watch. The dancer also becomes like the audience—free to place whatever interpretation onto the movement that they come up with, without having to worry about whether they are "expressing" what the choreographer intends. But what to call this new performer?

For simplicity's sake, the name 'cyborg dancer' will be used to describe the range of possibilities in technologically extended and augmented performers. The cyborg dancer is a future possibility. The cyborg dancer will come to be recognised through its use of prothetic and robotic extensions; in-built motion sensing capabilities; input-output devices for connecting up to other cyborgs and machines proper; increased muscular
power and precision; a downloadable kinaesthetic memory; new vocabularies of
movement to convey information to new digital audiences; a potentially limitless range of
'body'-types; and the ability to withstand new environments such as space beyond the
earth's atmosphere à la Clynes' and Kline's original. There is no wish to dispense with
the physical performer, or to concentrate for any length of time on virtual applications.
This is about performance in real time and space. The body, 'the meat', is not yet fully
obsolete—only partially so. The cyborg has not yet taken over the planet, yet it is finding
form more rapidly as technology advances. The human senses are still stimulated, in the
main, by 'real' stimuli. In the sphere of dance, the eyes, long since assisted in seeing by
lenses, are the main link between the performers and the spectators. Up until recently to
be an audience member at a dance event, from a live performance, to watching a video-
dance, including the new virtual and cyber-dances, has been essentially a visual
experience. It is fine for the average person, able to view dance, but what about the
visually impaired? Where does the dance exist for them? It doesn't. A sighted reader of a
dance is also a physical reader, but so is a blind person a potential physical reader of the
dance. Blind people can use dance, contact improvisation is a good example, to interact
corporeally with other people and feel sensations beyond their normal realm of
experience, which can only be seen as beneficial to their overall well-being [...]

Through cyborg and other technologies the body can begin to re-invent itself to meet the
demands of the new information technologies. What are the implications for dancers,
choreographers and audience members of these new technologies?

Just as our relationship with our environment is being transformed through technology,
the relationship between the performer and the performance space is changing. With
developments such as the Intelligent Stage at Arizona State University, the performer can
now act as a 'trigger' for sound, staging and lighting effects by moving through invisible
sensors, for example, a video-based system that detects movement through specific areas
or follows the colours of a performer's costume. The performer can also have a different
method of controlling their environment through using a range of sensors actually
attached to their body or clothing. These might be in the form of proximity sensors or
muscle activity sensors [...]

Lighting and music, traditionally run from the theatre's control box, can now,
thanks to technology borrowed from medicine, be shaped by brain wave patterns,
blood pressure and each and every movement. The dancer as manager of his stage
environment — artist's dream or aesthetic bluff?
(Anon. 1997: 7)

[...] Susan Kozel and Kirk Woolford's performance installation Figments — a live
intervention (1999), previewed in Chichester [...] uses ultra-sonic motion capture to
create the animated image of the body viewed on screens in the performance space and in
television goggles worn by the performer. These projections allow the performer to dance
with an abstract representation of their own movement, drawing whatever inspiration they
want from the lines and dots before them. In this case the projection can be said to have a
direct link with the performer, in a way that a more filmic projection might not.

Having experienced this piece as both audience member and dancer, the relationship
between the projected image and the dance was clearer for me when I was performing.
The image was anthropomorphised and made personal to me, as I looked for links
between the abstract lines and my movements. I performed a duct with the image, taking
some of my impetus from the angles, positions and speed of the on-screen graphics, either
to echo it or to cut across what I interpreted the image to be suggesting in a juxtaposition
of slow and fast, smooth and staccato. When the image was in the television goggles, the
emphasis of the performance changed and became a more personalised dance still. There
was even less awareness of the audience, despite their being only a matter of feet away,
and whichever way I moved, I was still able to see the computer image before my eyes.
Spatial awareness and my relationship with the room changed (the sense of up and down
was lessened too, although (the floor remained a reminder of where I was); as I tipped my
head in all directions, trying to escape the image almost, I became internalised. The
encumbrance and awkwardness forced on me by the fixtures and the wiring of the ultra-
sound equipment, and the costume of a heavy knotted-rope skirt, acted as a yoke to my
awareness, an extra part of my body over which I had little actual control, like a limb
devoid of blood.

To an observer my movements might seem limited, but once these limitations are known,
a vocabulary and range of movements becomes a natural part of the performance. The
cables aren't an augmentation to assist my movement in a mechanical way, but they are
an extension of me and one which feeds me information from which I can derive artistic
stimulation and an altered sense of what my body can and cannot do. With the feedback
from the images I found myself wanting to take up positions and move in ways that I
would not have found without them. Again, the audience soon adapts to my strange ways
of moving; aware that I am a human being yet somehow different. I am many things at
one time, generating an almost infinite number of possible meanings.

To the audience, I am different and other, yet familiar and safe. I am not intending to
foreground this difference: it just happens. I am not intent on provoking specific
meanings: they either occur to the audience or they don't. There is no language: only
abstract movements in a space made strange by my presence. The role of the visual sense
is central not only to the audience, more aptly spectators, observers, viewers; but also to
the performer who would be missing out on the most apparent raison d'etre of the piece:
to see the representation of them and to interact with it. The audience of Figments (and
other pieces like it) is watching the process of the dancer creating the dance. The
accidents and faltering movements as the dancer finds their feet, as it were, are the
important parts of the piece: they alert us to the fact that it is being made there and then,
unrehearsed and not complete (but not any less because of it).

The Russian Viktor Shklovsky wrote in 1917 that
Art exists to help us to recover the sensation of life, to make the stone stony. The
end of art is to give a sensation of the object as seen, not as recognised. The
technique of art is to make things 'unfamiliar', to make forms obscure, so as to
increase the difficulty and duration of perception. The act of perception in art is an
end in itself and must be prolonged. In art, it is our experience of the process of
construction that counts, not the finished product.

(in Watney 1982: 161)

It takes time, as Shklovsky argues, to recognise something in the dance to which we can
ascribe meaning. Of course, Shklovsky is talking of the "poetic" arts and his views on art
and perception are "rooted in a fundamentally bourgeois abstraction of 'thought' from
the rest of material life, with a strongly idealist emphasis on the determining primacy of
ideas" (Watney 1982: 173), but the quote is relevant because, to appreciate the
strangeness and art inherent in this piece it is necessary both to separate and combine that
which we 'recognise' – the human dancer – and that which we don't—the technological
extensions, the costume, the projected image and the movements themselves. This is
primarily achieved visually.

David Tomas writes:

performed installations use a human body, but restructure its presence in such
a way as to reduce it to the status of a mere component in an economy of
artifacts and environment. The human body is transformed, under these
circumstances, into an unusual entity since its new spatial position, its site
specificity or 'installed' sense of situated and objectified self, is the direct product
of this economy [...]. A performed installation can therefore be considered,
from the point of view of its systemic powers of representational/perceptual
transformation, as well as through its power to separate body and consciousness, to
function as a special kind of mimetically integrated technology – ultimately, a complicated imaging system through which a living human body is radically refashioned.

(in Gray 1995: 257-8; emphasis in original)

I reject the strict assertion that vision is all that is necessary to understand a performance. Even in the act of 'seeing' there are other processes at play:

To make sense of what you're seeing [...] you sometimes need to know what the eyes register, what you're touching, your relation to gravity and motion, and the position of your joints. What we call 'seeing' involves all this, and dramatically illustrates the relationship between perception and the whole body.

(Leonard 1981: 41)

Similarly, as Janet Adshead reminds us, in Wittgensteinian terms, making sense of a dance requires, then, that an interpretation is made, derived from a rigorous description of the movement and supported by additional knowledge of the context in which the dance exists [... Adshead et al's] premise is that a satisfactory analysis which starts from the dance has yet to be fully worked out.

(1988: 13)

In the Metabody text 'Animorphosis' Jeffrey Cook (1997) writes:

Art is also about transformation; through artifice and association of body, materials and spaces, through bodies moving in space and time on stages and screens, through the experiences of the audience, and all the so-called "bodies of the text" in the wider sense. And the body, like art, can stand for more than itself, rather than just standing in for something else; the star, the politician, the soldier, the worker and boss, the scientist, the artist. Such extended bodies stand for; the ideal life, the body politic, the state, the corporation, science, and art, self-similar with the individuals that make them up, a fractal flesh that binds, the waves of associations rippling outwards and inwards in a metasocial orchestration of knowledge and society.

An early proponent of technology in performance, The Bauhaus School of Weimar Germany succeeded [see Schlemmer's article 'Man and Art Figure' in Schlemmer et al 1979: 15-46. For a general introduction to the Bauhaus see Goldberg 1988 and Whitford 1984], according to Birringer, in concentrating the viewer's perception, in an unfamiliar way, on the kinesthetic apprehension of movement and image […] the performer becomes aware of an altered, redesigned body topography (her/his perceived body), and the viewer becomes aware of the deformation of sentience, familiar physiology, and movement connotations.

(1998: 45-6)

Through this verfremdungseffekt [translates approximately into 'Alienation Effect': a device for preventing an audience's simple identification with the characters on stage. See Brecht 1978: "The artist's object is to appear strange and even surprising to the audience" (1978: 92)], the concepts of self, body, reality and meaning are explored and open for debate, where they were once "conventionally implicit" and somewhat unchallenged by the majority. In the same way, as The Cyborg Handbook tells us:

Cyborgs also remind us that we are always embodied, but that the ways we are embodied aren't simple […] some of us may feel like 'cogs' in a machine, but we are really bodies hooked into machines, and bodies linked to other bodies by machines.

(Gray, Mentor and Figueroa-Sarricra in Gray 1995: 6)
The American artist Gene Cooper demonstrates how our bodies are no longer separate from our technological environment. He mediates the environment for an audience by connecting his body to weather tracking systems and computers which then transfer information about thunderstorms to electrical nerve stimulators. If we can view our body as an object and an instrument with an interlocking relationship with the world and other objects in it, we must then begin to alter what we view as us, the parts of our body. [The idea of the body as an 'instrument' is wide-reaching and used as a metaphor by writers such as Sartre. He posits that our bodies are themselves, in fact, objects: "the discovery of my body as an object is indeed a revelation of its being" (1969: 305). Cf. Wittgenstein and words as instruments; see Hunter 1990.] Lupton writes:

Grosz (1994: 80) notes that inanimate objects, when touched or on the body for long enough, become extensions of the body image and sensation. They become psychically invested into the self; indeed, she argues, '[i]t is only insofar as the object ceases to remain an object and becomes a medium, a vehicle for impressions and expression, that it can be used as an instrument or tool'...they may become 'intermediate' or 'midway between the inanimate and bodily' (Grosz, 1994: 81).

(1995: 98-9)

Some years after the Bauhaus, Artaud in his manifestos for a Theatre of Cruelty proposed the use of puppets and other extensions to create a cathartic and socio-political theatre that connects to the audience in an almost physical sense, using lighting, movement, sounds and voice to convey symbolic meaning: "In our present degenerative state, metaphysics must be made to enter the mind through the body" said Artaud in his First Manifesto (1977: 77). He also wrote that "Direct contact will be established between the audience and the show, between actors and audience" (1977: 74), by having a new type of performance space in which the audience is in the midst of the action. However, despite Artaud, Grotowski and others, in most contemporary Western theatrical performances the relationship between the performer and audience remains fundamentally the same as it has been for many years—one party acts, the other reacts somewhat passively at a discrete distance—but some artists are looking for new ways in which to prompt a more active audience [...]

(presented on the 2nd May 2000; adapted 2001)

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'... encloses her and she envelops him': Cf. Milton, L'Allegro, ll.146-51:

That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.

Macquarrie discusses the role of the sexual act "whereby two persons interpenetrate each other's existences in innumerable ways and are involved in a 'total contact'" (1972: 117). Through sharing of the "climactic 'ecstasis'" (Macquarrie 1972: 117), two beings attempt "a total sharing of being" (Macquarrie 1972: 116). Now with concepts such as Cybersex we must consider ecstasis through ectasis. See Heim's "The Erotic Ontology of Cyberspace" (1993: 82-108; also in Benedikt 1991), and Margulis and Sagan: "If orgasm is the experience of a wave of pleasure passing through the individual body, related through reproduction to gradient reduction [Margulis' and Sagan's theory of sex includes a discussion of the Second Law of Thermodynamics], so the pleasure of electronically linking to distant others expands the gradient-reducing and reproductive activities of collective bodies" (1997: 222).
‘dancing like a chequered shade’: Paraphrase of Milton, L’Allegro, 1.96.

‘nanomachines’: See Drexler 1986 and Drexler et al 1991; “An artificial molecular machine of the sort made by molecular engineering” (Drexler et al 1991: 295). This being a mythological investigation into the future (if that is not an oxymoron), the notion that self-replicating machines and assemblers at the molecular or atomic level is used without question. However, this is not to suggest that Drexler and other writers on nanotechnologies have proffered a watertight case for such phenomena. As Lyle Burkhead in Nanotechnology without Genies writes:

to create a universal assembler, you have to do everything the biologists have to [...] plus design a new kind of replicating entity, and all the necessary atomic machinery. After you have designed the new atomic machinery -- which is going to be as complex as biochemistry -- you still have a long, long way to go

(1999; emphasis in original)

Canto 3: Unholy Communion.

‘And as his growth slows, so does his dance’: Baudrillard writes,

Communication is too slow; it is an effect of slowness, working through contact and speech. Looking is much faster; it is the medium of the media, the most rapid one. Everything must come into play instantaneously. We never communicate. In the to-and-fro of communication, the instantaneousness of looking, light and seduction is already lost.

But against the acceleration of networks and circuits, we will also look for slowness — not the nostalgic slowness of the mind, but insoluble immobility, the slower than slow: inertia and silence, inertia insoluble by effort, silence insoluble by dialogue. There is a secret here too.

(1990: 8)

‘amalgam of machine and man’: Stelarc displays Moholy-Nagy’s belief that art, when combined with technology, is capable of transcending the “limits of [humans’ functional mechanism] biological capacity” (Moholy-Nagy 1969: 30). He is notable in being one of few artists, if not the only artist, to have taken the concept of cyborg to literal extremes; as Birringer puts it: “the metaphor of the cyborg [...] is actually being choreographed in Stelarc’s performances” (1998: 61 and 63).

Stelarc uses the word ‘choreography’ for defining the effects of a range of movement-inducing stimuli. He is more concerned with movement-for-movement’s-sake, or rather as an outcome, a visible effect of the processes he uses than with using the movement as a medium of expression. His performances, do however, open up a series of questions and concerns about the physical body. At a talk in Nottingham (8 March 1999), Stelarc metaphorically positioned the body between zombie and cyborg; it occupies this middle ground yet has a foot in both. We have a fear of being like a zombie, but Stelarc argues that the body now acts without free will. The body now cannot contend with the speed and other capabilities of new technology; it is obsolete. Through cyborg and other technologies the body can begin to re-invent itself to meet the demands of the new information technologies (it should be noted that Stelarc uses the term ‘the body’ when describing himself in the course of his work).

In Stelarc’s performances the parameters of the physiology and psychology of the body are broken down and expanded. He argues that the body becomes a ‘mind in the world’: an ‘absent body’ from which physicality recedes: Figueroa-Sarriera in The Cyborg Handbook writes, “With the precariousness of the physiological substrate as a
given, the disappearance of the body and the externalization of the mind are proclaimed to be inevitable phenomena in the evolutionary process" (in Gray 1995: 134; emphasis in original). Stelarc's performances can be seen as microcosmic displays of what is occurring to our everyday technologically mediated bodies. Our relationship with technology now recreates the body as a 'split body'. Bojana Kunst writes, "in contact with technology, the body becomes fragmented, endlessly fluid and loses its identity" (1997: 42). The body is now experienced "as alien to itself" (Stelarc in conversation with Robert Ayers, Ayers 1998: 9). Zebington (1997a) writes that "[i]f technology is an extension of the body, Stelarc's recent performances and metabody further the exploration of what new forms these extensions might take."

Metabody [sic] is an augmentation of the rituals of connection between the human body and technology, extended to the manipulation of digital bodily representation existing within the metaspace of local and remotely distributed computer systems [...] Metabody is an extended body and promethean paradigm: symbolic space and remote physical organism are synthesised into a form beyond either.

(Zebington 1997b)

In Stelarc's Fractal Flesh (1995) and his use of the Third Hand extension (1976 onwards), we see electrical impulses to and from Stelarc's arm, leg and abdominal muscles, with movement induced in his own limbs and his Third Hand. Voltage is squirted into his arm, in Fractal Flesh, under the remote guidance of other people connected to him via the Net. He describes this "as the DISPLACING OF MOTIONS from one Net-connected physical body to another" (Stelarc Date unknown; emphasis in original). At present there is not direct transmission from the musculature of one body to that of another, although this is, in theory, a future possibility. What is interesting here is the notion that a thinking body can transmit movements and gestures to a second body which acts "WITHOUT EXPECTATION, producing MOVEMENTS WITHOUT MEMORY" (Stelarc Date unknown; emphasis in original). A movement without memory can be taken to mean the movement of a person's body devoid of inherent, predetermined motivation (cf. Humphrey: "A movement without a motivation is unthinkable" (1959: 110). Each movement is therefore a new 'expression' (a 'non-expression' perhaps, or an expression) of volition, without the will exercising itself. The only premeditation has occurred on behalf of the recipient of the impulse given to them by a second party, external to them. Kaplan writes on Moholy-Nagy's concept of the Anonymous Hand (the removal of the artist's 'signature' and therefore "reference, author, or personality" (Kaplan 1995: 11)). In this theory we can see a "move away from the manual and personal touch and the loss of control over the hand as well as the McLuhanesque move towards technological extensions as prosthetic substitutes" (Kaplan 1995: 146).

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Part 4: Silent Running

Canto 1: An Abundance of Absence

'Silent Running': Another film (directed by Douglas Trumbull, 1971) in which a human must risk insanity in outer space to save himself.

'An Abundance of Absence': Much of this short canto is based on ideas found in Wittgenstein's Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology Volume I (1980b), e.g. RPP I §§578, 583 and 629. It suggests that the concepts of 'inner' and 'outer' are not relevant when considering the processes of thought and understanding. It raises the questions: "Does one think in words as one dances, in such a way that the movements are tied to the words? And if one does, how are these words tied to the movements?" Of course, these thoughts are not to be confused with being the meaning of the movements. The problem
of 'intention' is a common theme in the thesis and poem (see note above re. CV 67e: MS 134 106). Wittgenstein is clear on this issue: RPP I §579

'I'd like to know what he's thinking of.' But now ask yourself this - apparently irrelevant - question: 'Why does what is going on in him, in his mind, interest me at all, supposing that something is going on?' (The devil take what's going on inside him!)

(RPP I §579)

The idea that a word is bound to one meaning is also wrong, following Wittgenstein: meaning is not "a halo that the word carries round with it and retains in any sort of application" ["eine Aura, die das Wort mitbringt und in jederlei Verwendung hertübernimmt"] (1980a: 44e and 44; see CV 50e: MS 127 41v and cf. PI §97: "Thought is surrounded by a halo"). Meanings grow out of words (and, it could be said, music and movements) like oak trees out of acorns (see CV 60e: MS 132 62). Wittgenstein writes of the experience of understanding a musical phrase and asks what the expression of this understanding might be:

what does it consist in, following a musical phrase with understanding, or, playing it with understanding? Don't look inside yourself. Ask yourself rather, what makes you say that's what someone else is doing. And what prompts you to say he has a particular experience? Indeed, do we ever actually say that? Wouldn't I be more likely to say of someone else that he's having a whole host of experiences?

(CV 58e: MS 132 51)

The relationships between the feelings one gets listening to music and the feelings that accompany dance are complex yet connected, it would seem. To respond to (experience, describe and interpret) a piece of music or to a piece of dance requires a number of abilities and knowledge of what is appropriate in the given circumstances. The ambiguities of music and dance are inherent to those forms of expression and as Wittgenstein suggests in Z §§29 and 30 (see above), sometimes only the expression itself will stand as an interpretation (but this is surely not an interpretation as we understand the word in other contexts), or rather, a response in kind or as ambiguous as the initial expression. Consider the repetition of a musical (or movement) motif:

The peculiar feeling that the recurrence of a refrain gives us. I should like to make a gesture. But the gesture isn't really at all characteristic precisely of the recurrence of a refrain. Perhaps I might find that a phrase characterizes the situation better; but it too would fail to explain why the refrain strikes one as a joke, why its recurrence elicits a laugh or grin from me. If I could dance to the music, that would be my best way of expressing just how the refrain moves me. Certainly there couldn't be any better expression than that.

(RPP I §90; italics in original)

'If you were [...] they saw them?': See Z §6.

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'Is it correct [...] my psychological state'? "The human body is the best picture of the human soul" (Wittgenstein PI 178e) ["Der menschliche Körper ist das beste Bild der menschlichen Seele"]). See also RPP I §267 "The expression of soul in a face" ["Der seelenvolle Geischtsausdruck"]; CV 56e: MS 131 80 "The human being is the best picture of the human soul" ["Der Mensch ist das beste Bild der menschliven Seele"] and CV 26e: MS 156 49r "The face is the soul of the body" ["Das Gesicht ist die Seele des Körpers"]). Finch writes:

In this physiognomic conception of the human being as the one body-soul, it looks as if we actually see the soul in the expressiveness of the body. It almost seems as if Wittgenstein has reversed the ancient Aristotelian view that the soul is the form of the body, turning it into the Goethean formula that the body is the
visible expression of the soul. When we look at people in a deep enough way we actually see them as ensouled. Their postures, their walks, their expressions and gestures, their voices, clothes, etc. Sometimes in an unexpected moment, when we look deeply, or as someone passes in front of us, we may get a total sense of that person from all these bodily clues.

(1995: 142)

‘When I drum [...] music into movement?’: See CV 42e: MS 162b 59v “Piano playing, a dance of human fingers” [‘Das Klavierspielen, ein Tanz der menschlichen Finger.’]

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Canto 2: A Dance of Senses.

‘Ice pick lobotomies through the eye sockets’: See Breggin 1993: 38.

‘blindsight’s ken’: “blindsight Absence of visual awareness despite the presence of visual capacity [...] the phenomenon casts doubt on the relation usually assumed between consciousness and perception” (Hornsby in Honderich 1995: 96).

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‘But Ermy, dear depersonalised debris’: “Depersonalisation Disorder is characterized by a persistent or recurrent feeling of being detached from one’s mental processes or body that is accompanied by intact reality testing,” (American Psychiatric Association 1994: 477).

‘A new picture / at each attempt. A new image of the self’: After PI §301 “Eine Vorstellung ist kein Bild, aber ein Bild kann ihr entsprechen” [‘An image is not a picture, but a picture can correspond to it.’] and see Z §621. Or rather: “To imagine is not to picture, but we can sometimes illustrate what we imagine with a picture” (Hunter 1985: 117).

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‘Each new image [...] on a screen’: See Z §233. Lakoff has said that Humans think in terms of what are called ‘image schemas’—these are schematic spatial relations [...] Different languages organize these schemas in different ways. The schemas are embodied; they are not just disembodied symbols.

(in Brook and Boal 1995: 121; cf. Whorf 1956)

‘The human face [...] course / of passion’: Z §490 “Man könnte auch das menschliche Gesicht ein solches Bild nennen und den Verlauf der Leidenschaft durch seine Veränderungen darstellen”.

‘the perfect picture of a rose in the dark’: See PI §§514-5 and Z §250.

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‘A restless dance [...] now that side’: Dante, Inferno, Canto XIV, ll.40-1.

‘mind’s eye’: There is much written about the use of ocular metaphors to describe ‘thought processes’, for example, see Ryle 1949 and Rorty 1980.

‘all-seeing yet empty eyes’: Merleau-Ponty writes, The enigma is that my body simultaneously sees and is seen. That which looks at all things can also look at itself and recognize, in what it sees, the ‘other side’ of its power of looking. It sees itself seeing; it touches itself touching; it is visible and sensitive for itself.

(1964: 162-3)
If I think about my relationship to my sight, I realise that I can only see certain aspects of my body: those that fall in my line of vision. In dreams I am exogenous to my body, in that I appear in my dreams as a filmic representation of myself. This is interspersed with point of view shots, but from a bodiless set of eyes. On stage I imagine myself as though in a dream. I imagine that my view is like that of a camera able to take in all angles of me at one moment. I (my/self) am divorced or detached from my body. Or, rather, this is the impression/description I create to explain the processes.

Wittgenstein:
   All our forms of speech are taken from ordinary, physical language and cannot be used in epistemology or phenomenology without casting a distorting light on their objects.
   (PR §57)

I see myself.
I see myself in two dimensions.
I see myself represented as a picture.
I see myself torn to pieces.
I see myself put back together.
I see myself put back together all wrong.
I see myself hiding.
I see myself obscured from view.
I see myself behind myself.
I see myself but can't see myself.
I see myself in confusion.
I see myself as a dancer.
I see myself as a cripple.
I see myself held together by metal.
I see myself held together by stitches.
I see myself falling apart.
I see myself dancing.
I see myself stationary.
I see myself still.
I see myself still dancing.
I see myself out of time.
I see myself out of step.
I see myself out of luck.
I see myself out of it all.
I see myself riding on the back of someone else.
I see myself weighed down.
I see myself able to fly.
I see myself grounded.
I see myself with the landing lights on.
I see myself with the lights off.
I see myself not at home.
I see myself in the mirror.
I see myself in my eyes.
I see myself through my eyes.
I see myself not reflected at all.
I see myself as someone else.
I see myself as you see me.
I see myself as 2-dimensional.
I see myself as two people.
I see myself see myself.
I see myself.
I see myself.

(Deveril Garraghan, text for Travelling Backwards (1998), a stage show performed in Sheffield and Leicester.)
Lacan writes

*I warm myself by warming myself* is a reference to the body as body—I feel that sensation of warmth which, from some point inside me, is diffused and locates me as body. Whereas in the *I see myself seeing myself*, there is no such sensation of being absorbed by vision.

(1998: 80; italics in original)

(Also see Wittgenstein Z §495)

Wittgenstein says that the psychological verb *to see* does not signify phenomena, but that psychologists observe the phenomena of seeing (see Wittgenstein Z §471). However, any "hope of clarifying our psychological concepts by means of scientific and experimental techniques has no tenable basis, as we know too little about the relations between the relevant concepts and techniques and are in no position to learn anything about those relations by applying these techniques" (Schulte 1993: 79). We should not be looking to experimental methods in order to clarify our concepts, Wittgenstein argues, because they are not based in anything that can be measured and quantified or viewed directly—it is how we talk about and express these processes that is more important than what actually goes on. The act of seeing encompasses a range of processes, as it were. There is a difference between my seeing and my seeing something as..., but they are inter-linked—we interpret what we see, rather than the experience of seeing, which in turn is incorrectly ascribed an interpretation: see Wittgenstein RPP I §20.

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Part 5: Fahrenheit 451

Canto 1: Ten Trenches Deep.


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'metempsychosis /and [...] bilocation': Pythagorean concepts: Pythagoras saw the soul as a harmonizing principle [...] as a fallen, polluted divinity incarcerated within the body, as in a tomb, and destined to a cycle of reincarnations (*metempsychosis*) from which it can obtain release through ritual purgation [...] Pythagoras was also said to have adopted the idea, current in Scythia and Thrace under the title of Orphism, of a process of bilocation, according to which the soul could be temporarily detached from the body.

(Grant 1989: 277)

See Z §127.

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'Plato sits, / head [...] can't be turned': Based on the Cave allegory in Plato's The Republic, Book VII.
'those trapped in eikasia': See Melling 1987: 106: "the term for the cognitive state corresponding to our apprehension of shadows and reflections, is sometimes translated 'imagination'; it means rather 'illusion', or 'conjecture', and it would not be misleading to translate it as 'fuddle'."

'of flick'ring shadows cast by hell's licking flames': See Melling 1987: 112-3.


'Reading the Socratic [...] waste of time!': CV 21e: MS 111 55
Wenn man die Sokratischen Dialoge liest, so hat man das Gefühl: welche fürchterliche Zeitvergeudung! Wozu diese Argumente die nichts beweisen & nichts klären.

'Saint Augustinus [...] say than discovering': Z §457 and Augustine Confessions, Book XII, Chapter 1.

'We are travelling [...] that is language': PI §203 "Die Sprache ist ein Labyrinth von Wegen".

'switching from analyst to analysand': The two people involved in any practice of psychoanalysis "(psych = fiction of)" (Lacan 1998: vii).

'Canto 2: Of Vision and Death.

'Of Vision and Death': Nietzschean style title. "We [McLuhan and Powers] concluded that video-related technologies might produce a form of psychological death for all mankind by separating it permanently from the natural order, the book of nature, through Narcissus-like self-involvement, a conclusion reached by McLuhan operating on three analytical levels at once: the perceptual, the historical and the analogic" (McLuhan and Powers 1989: xiii). They also state:

Video-related technologies are the critical instruments of such change [disembodied, collective]. The ultimate interactive nature of some video-related technologies will produce the dominant right-hemisphere social patterns of the next century [this century!]. For example, the new telecommunication multi-carrier corporation, dedicated solely to moving all kinds of data at the speed of light, will continually generate tailor-made products and services for individual consumers who have pre-signaled their preferences through an ongoing data base. Users will simultaneously become producers and consumers.

(McLuhan and Powers 1989: 83)
Previously McLuhan had written:

Beaudelaire's [sic] *Hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frère* is itself an image that compresses the entire process in question. It is the recognition that there is no more division between the poet and his audience, between producer and consumer. The reader puts on the audience as his corporate or tribal mask. The audience creates the author as the author shapes the awareness of the audience.

(McLuhan 1970: 138)

[Last line of Baudelaire's 'Au Lecteur' ('To the Reader'): “hypocrite reader, - my alias, - my twin” (1982: 6).]

Nicholas Mirzoeff opens his book “Modern life takes place onscreen” (1999: 1); and it could be said that by shutting our eyes, turning off the visual, for a few moments we are playing at being dead, or perhaps antenatal. What's the difference? Life onscreen is death and life at the same time; we exist and we don't exist. This is not virtual reality, but call us virtual if you want. Is this what the virtual is: being and non-being? We are in a place and a non-place, to borrow a phrase from Marc Augé, who writes: “If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place” (1995: 77-8). To talk of a virtual identity is to ascribe ourselves with a definition based on... what? All identity is in some ways virtual, or rather the inverse of virtual: it has the appearance of something, but is nothing. A televisual self, for example, is part of a complex of selves.

A body on a screen.

A human body on a screen.

A human being on a screen.

A body moving on a screen.

A human body moving on a screen.

Where is the human body on the screen?

Where is the human being on the screen?

Is the body on the screen?

Is the human being on the screen?

Where is the human body moving on the screen?

Is the body moving on the screen?

Is the human body moving on the screen?

Is the human being moving on the screen?

Where is the human being moving on the screen?

Is the human being moving on the screen?

What happens to my personality when I perform (on stage, on screen)? What do I do to the 'proper self'? Do I leave behind the normal me? The normal me: shy, quiet, cautious, stubborn, thoughtful. The normal me: gregarious, extrovert, loud, talkative, impulsive. The normal me: lazy, introspective, kind, tidy, reserved. The normal me: miserable, disorganised, slow, decisive, earnest. The normal me: the me when I'm with him. The normal me: the me when I'm with her. The normal me: the me when I'm with him. The normal me: the me when I'm with her.

"What is the normal me?"

The real me - the Real Ich? The Id? Or the Ego?

Grant Gillett writes that “even if we reject an immaterial (Cartesian) essence of 'self', we can identify the concept-using subject—a transcendental unity of apperception—at the centre of an individual mind” (1992: 202). The person in a hyperworld is the centre of their own world: this is the (I), the 'self'. It is from this vantage point that all the different forms of interpretation take place. To talk of the self of a person is a
grammatical construction. ‘Self’ is an invention dependent on who I’m with, where I am, what ‘self’ I want to present, what motivates me in a particular situation. There is no ‘proper self’. My self does not exist separate to me, my personality is not easily qualifiable (or quantifiable):
it is fractal;
fluid;
fictional.

As a boy I would spend hours in the town’s natural history museum – a prime example of Victorianism – with its mahogany cabinets and stuffed animals in life-like poses and mock environments. The snarling snow-leopard. The somnambulant bear. The extinct white rhino. All glassy-eyed and vacuous. Animals that would never have been still in life, now frozen and cast as cartoons, parodying themselves. Amid the bones and fossils, fleece, feathers and fur, I would wander, my imagination working at great speed to inject life and character into these now devitalised husks filled with horse hair and straw. The only living exhibits were the fish in the dark corridor space between the fossil and tooth room and the whale skeleton and woolly mammoth room (which also contained a working model of an early mechanical lift, I seem to recall). There was an eel, and other freshwater fishes, all lit by aquamarine strips of light in the virecent water. My favourite was the all-wise and all-knowing catfish, which for all intents and purposes could have been dead and mounted, the amount he – she? It – it moved (or rather, didn’t move). With its whiskers and beady eyes peering through the green green glass of home, it seemed as old as the hills, or at least as old as the museum itself. It had thousands of tales to tell, if it could have talked. It had seen thousands of faces, not that it could remember. It had a world the size of a television, and it resembled a test card, but to the right viewer, it was an endless run of epic films, fairy stories, soap operas and fly-on-the-wall documentaries. Despite not moving itself very much, it moved me. What a waste. It had given up. Had it once been a lively young catfish, darting through reeds after its food? Or had it always been in the tank? How had it been caught? Was it bred specially for the museum? Did it know who or what I was? Did it know who or what it was? Was it lonely? Or had it no need for company? As a romantic, I empathised with the catfish. I saw myself reflected back at me – I was there in the tank; I was the fish. No. It was just my image on the mirror-glass of the aquarium.

On the day of my seventh birthday, Jacques Lacan wrote
A certificate tells me that I was born. I repudiate this certificate: I am not a poet, but a poem. A poem that is being written, even if it looks like a subject.
(1998: viii)

I have two birth certificates. Was I born twice?

‘the Gorgon’s gaze [...] the looking glass’: The rear-view mirror is a backwards looking act. It takes us forwards but at a cost. We are always one step behind the current, the present is seen in terms more appropriate to the past.

McLuhan claims that culture works like a rear-view mirror, because new media render previous ones obsolete while taking them as their content [...]. However, Levinson is therefore claiming that the written word is not obsolete, but has been transfigured in the new medium.
(Horrocks 2000: 53 and 55)

‘the backwards glance’: See Lacan’s ‘What is a Picture?’ on the painter and the act of painting; the moment of seeing, the “terminal moment [...] which enables us to distinguish between a gesture and an act” (Lacan 1998: 114). These notes are a backward glance.
'changes our perception / alters sense ratios': McLuhan writes

The division of faculties which results from the technological dilation or externalization of one or another sense is so pervasive a feature of the past century that today we have become conscious, for the first time in history, of how these mutations of culture are initiated. Those who experience the first onset of a new technology, whether it be alphabet or radio, respond most emphatically because the new sense ratios set up at once by the technological dilation of eye or ear, present men with a surprising new "closure," or novel pattern of interplay, among all of the senses together.

(1962: 22-3)

See also McLuhan 1962: 265 and McLuhan 1967: 41

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Part 6: Futureworld

Canto 1: The Time Machine: An In(ter)vention.

'Futureworld': Film directed by Richard T. Heffron (1976), a superficial sequel to Westworld (1973), with the same conceit: robots help humans to live out their fantasies, until the robots get different ideas.

'The Time Machine: An In(ter)vention': A play on the full title of H.G. Wells' 1895 novel.

'a 'conviction' which is worn like a mask': See Nietzsche 1990: 38.

'the exhausted want rest, relaxation, peace, calm': Nietzsche 1968: 374.

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'Instantly is not [...] in the present': See Toffler 1971 and Gleick 2000. In the age of the "sound-bite mentality" (Gleick 2000: 97; after Steiner) few people want to have to read or watch anything longer than the equivalent of a paragraph or two. Attention spans are severely tested by protracted works of art and writing. The photographic image is a 'sound bite'. The painting is a 'sound bite'. But they allow for a quick visual processing, on the one hand, and an extended interpretation on the other. A movement phrase is a 'sound bite'. A dance piece through its totality is never seen as a whole, only as a series of 'sound bites'. The book read from cover to cover is still broken down into sections, marked by pauses, turning pages, breaks in attention and focus, straying thoughts, shifts in bodily position, sensations of temperature, pressure, irritation; the text (the reading, the watching, the hearing of the text) is bound up in the experiential qualities of the moment. We develop strategies to remove the effort of reading. We are children of Generation IndeX. We consume fat free texts; skim reading.

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'Simulacra become the real. New forms of stimulation':

The very definition of the real becomes: that of which it is possible to give an equivalent reproduction [...] At the limit of this process of reproductibility, the real is not only what can be reproduced, but that which is always already reproduced. The hyperreal.

And so: end of the real, and end of art, by total absorption one into the other? No: hyperrealism is the limit of art, and of the real, by respective exchange, on the level of the simulacrum, of the privileges and the prejudices which are their basis. The hyperreal transcends representation [...] only because it is entirely in simulation [...] Analogous to the distancing characteristic of the
dream, that makes us say that we are only dreaming; but this is only the game of
censure and of perpetuation of the dream. Hyperrealism is made an integral part
of a coded reality that it perpetuates, and for which it changes nothing.
(Baudrillard 1992: 186)

As in dreams, in hyperreality “so complicated, so irregular is the mode of
representation that it can barely be called representation anymore” (Wittgenstein CV
51e: MS 127 84r).

‘Global Amusement Arcade [...] Time is dead’: Inspired by McLuhan’s idea of the Global
Village:
Ours is a brand-new world of allatonceness. ‘Time’ has ceased, ‘space’ has
vanished. We now live in a global village...a simultaneous happening.
(McLuhan and Fiore 1967: 63)

Also see McLuhan and Powers 1989.

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Canto 2: Die unendliche Geschichte.

‘Die unendliche Geschichte’: German for ‘the neverending story’. This thesis is a
neverending thesis. It continues beyond its pages and cover, with each new reading.
The writing has reached an end by force of necessity. But even as the line is drawn at
the final printing and binding and submission, it is with a sense of incompleteness.

‘like the meaning of a word [...] each of us’: See Wittgenstein PR §§57-8.

‘a role in [...] never become it’: Cf. CV 58e: MS 132 46
[A hero looks death in the face, real death, not just a picture of death. Behaving
decently in a crisis does not mean being able to act the part of a hero well, as in
the theatre, it means rather being able to look death itself in the eye.] For an actor
may play a multitude of roles, but in the end it is after all he himself, the human
being, who has to die.

[...] Denn der Schauspieler kann eine Menge Rollen spielen, aber am Ende muß
er doch selbst als Mensch sterben.]

‘trying to become’:
‘What do we ask?’ Wendy asks.
‘Ask whatever challenges dead and thoughtless beliefs. Ask: When did we become
human beings and stop being whatever it was we were before this? Ask: What was the
specific change that made us human? [...] Ask: Having become human, what is it that
we are now doing or creating that will transform us into whatever it is that we are slated
to next become?’

(Coupland 1998: 269-70; italics in original)

Ted Polhemus in his discussion of ‘Social Bodies’ writes that, “we are faced with social
change so rapid that the physical body cannot catch up so that consonance might be
retained (or regained) and so that we might look to our bodies as a model or image by
which we as individuals might contribute to the maintenance of our social
system” (Benthall and Polhemus 1975: 31; cf. Stelarc’s assertion that “The body’s
metabolism can’t cope with the speed, power, and precision of technology” (cited in
Ayers 1998: 7)).

To what extent will our relationships with machines and computers affect the
fundamental nature of the human body in the world? How will future experiences be
different from ours? In what ways will they be mediated and processed? Will a change in the senses cause us to make new forms of art and find new ways to s(t)imulate ourselves? Will the concept of the individual become blurred as the systems for interconnectivity increase and improve? Where will one person start and another end?

We tend to think of ourselves as having boundaries, define ourselves by our borders. Physics tells us otherwise, insists we have no edges, speaks of our molecules as always in motion, constant atomic interchange, no way to distinguish a proton of yours from a proton of mine when we're making love, holding hands, passing by.

(Coleman 1997: 1)

Oliver Morton writes about Kevin Warwick's experimentation with microchip implants enabling us to interact with receiver chips in our environment, for example, to open doors, turn on lights and computers. Morton implies that they could also be used to transmit between people:

A new form of noise-free communication beckons, an unmediated communion of minds, a window to the truth of the soul. Perhaps.

(1999: 51)

It could be used to help paralysis victims to feel what movement should feel like, but Morton is more interested in its potential to be used as a mind-reading device. He writes:

Making sense of the physical sensations of our bodies—giving them meanings—requires a great deal of mental interpretation, and it seems pretty debatable whether we could interpret other people's bodily sensations with the precision needed to communicate any subtleties. You might get over this by developing special codes to carry content; but once coding becomes necessary, nervous-system-to-nervous-system telepathy is reduced to a complicated sign language.

(1999: 51)

Morton goes on to discuss, very briefly, the implications on acting and in deceiving other people, by asking "What if [...] actors were able to feel how their muscles worked in genuine displays of emotion while not being distracted or confused by any attempt to portray the emotion itself?" This would make it easier to mimic lying, he argues.

Compare this with Shoemaker 1976 and Wittgenstein, who writes that we could imagine a wireless connection between the two bodies which made one person feel pain in his head when the other had exposed his to the cold air. One might in this case argue that the pains are mine because they are felt in my head; but suppose I and someone else had a part of our bodies in common, say a hand. Imagine the nerves and tendons of my arm and A's connected to this hand by an operation. Now imagine the hand stung by a wasp. Both of us cry, contort our faces, give the same description of the pain, etc. Now are we to say we have the same pain or different ones?

(BB 54)

The philosophical investigations, the descriptions (rather than explanations; see Wittgenstein PR §1) of two people being linked together might (or often) neglect the problem that they are couched in (a) language with its complex of biases and foundations, metaphors and fictions, grammars and rules. Any 'talk' of emotions, feelings, sensations, experience while based in a 'primary' source of knowledge: perception (see Hacker 1997), must acknowledge the grammar from which it is made.
linguistic means of expression are useless for expressing 'becoming': Nietzsche WP §627. See Shand:

Nietzsche's view is that the world is a never-ending flux or becoming with no intrinsic order. The world comprises power-quanta whose entire being consists in the drive or tendency to prevail over other power-quanta. Power-quanta differ from one another entirely quantitatively, not qualitatively, and they should not be thought of as things; their entire being consists of their activity, which is their attempt to overcome and incorporate in themselves other power-quanta. Each power-quantum is the sum of its effects; it is what it does. Thus the world is a constant flux of struggle, but it is not a struggle between 'things', it merely involves a constant variation of power-quanta. We too are part of this flux. Human beings are nothing more than complex constellations of power-quanta.

(1994: 195)

'there is no [...] deed is everything': paraphrase of Nietzsche On the Genealogy of Morals, 'Good and Evil' 'Good and Bad' § 13.

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Conclusion: The Omega Man

Canto 1 and Only: First and Last and Always.

'The Omega Man': A film (directed by Boris Sagal, 1971) based on Richard Matheson's novel I Am Legend (1954; also filmed as The Last Man on Earth, 1964). This leads us back to Alpha, and the idea of the Eternal God (see The Bible Revelation 1:8 "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending")—the most basic reason or meaning; most important part — in Lacan’s construction "Objet petit a" — the little other, the lost object, the lack, a void (see Lacan 1977)—the relationship is INVERSED:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Omega</th>
<th>Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>autre</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>alpha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Human Experience/Life

'asynchronous communication': asynchronous An adjective describing an operation performed at any time and in the background, independent of other simultaneous processes. In communications, asynchronous messages can be started at any time and are marked with start and stop bits. Telephone communication is synchronous; voicemail is asynchronous.

(Hale 1996: 39)

'synecdoche': Naming the part for the whole, e.g. 'body' for person. Cf. Wittgenstein “A whole cloud of philosophy condensed into a drop of grammar" (PI 222e) and Vygotsky: Consciousness is reflected in a word as the sun in a drop of water. A word relates to consciousness as a living cell to a whole organism, as an atom relates to the universe. A word is a microcosm of human consciousness.

(1986: 256)
'From first to last, I dance':

Without words I falter and fall.

But words can fail us too.

They are not always the best way to say what we want to say.

Sometimes you cannot understand what I'm saying, or trying to say — I cannot always find the right words.

Why is that?

Perhaps I choose not to speak 'Better than what? because a quiet death is better.

— After the end, better or best. IT IS ALL THE SAME.'
Postscript: "Dance at the edge of language."

As I prepare to print my final submission I cannot help but reflect on the journey of discovery that I have been on in the last three years and three months. It has left me here in my thirty-third year looking at the world – my place in it and the way in which I want to live – from a new vantage point. It is as though I once believed that the earth was flat and have discovered that it is something different—not a finite expanse off which I will fall if I sail towards the edge, but an infinite, limitless form-without-form (not the 'not quite spherical' planet) which is constructed through a combination of experience (personal 'perception', the physical sciences) and the words we use to shape (describe, explain, narrate, make sense of – from Latin sensus, from sentire to feel) these experiences.

This thesis is the 'tip of the iceberg' of my experience; experience translated for the reader into a condensed form so that it might be re-experienced. The frustrations of research and writing; the elation at making connections between one piece of writing – one text – and another; the slow-dawning realisation that "rather than merely describing experience, metaphor is the grounding of and for experience. So, as we choose different 'poetical' metaphors and achieve new understanding, so it is revealed that metaphor is at the root of understanding".

The reader may well be confused at times by the elliptical nature of this thesis, but it is possibly in the ellipsis, the limen, where understanding comes. It is the crossing of the threshold between not-understanding and understanding.

If movements could be transferred from one human being to another using technology, the dialogue might be something like the reading of this thesis. But then again, it might not.

As you leave this thesis, this book, I would like to (re)mind you of the words Dante (Inferno, Canto III) utters to Virgil on reading the words on the lintel of the gate of Hell:
«Maestro, il senso lor me’è duro».

“Master, the sense is hard for me to understand.”
Bibliography


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[Note that there have been two major editions of *Culture and Value*: the first English version was a translation of the amended second edition of *Vermischte Bemerkungen* (Miscellaneous Remarks; first published 1977); the revised second edition of *Vermischte Bemerkungen* (1994) was published with a new English translation in 1998, and it is this version which was used, unless otherwise stated.]


