

Book Review

Dance Dramaturgy (Collecting Articles) Edited by: Pil Hansen and Darcey Callison

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Dance dramaturgy's book is a book that consists of articles based on creativity experience of choreographers. Each choreographer had written their experience and make it to be dramaturgy. Based on Pill Hansen thesis, the dramaturgy of Choreography has become a widely established practice for contemporary dance artists interested in current understandings of bodies and their potential encounters with environment, activity, spectacle, the other, lived-experience, and theatre.

Dramaturgical research focusing on these interests seamlessly merges with scholarly research in areas such as cultural memory, materiality, somatic knowledge, and performance/ choreography. New concepts to understand dramaturgy are being pursued in institutions of higher learning, in contemporary dance companies, and by independent dance artists. The book provide both of the dramaturgical practices and thinking that advance current discourse and a reflection upon those collaborations that focus on either the choreographic process or the dancing body.

In other words, the discussion evolves from the agency in which an individual dramaturg anticipates compositional motivation and knowledge, through an agency which maps points of interaction and their affect from a position in between creators, to an agency depend ipon the development off different modes of attention and awareness in the dramaturg; indeed, he or she can become a facilitator or particular way of thinking and looking at the effect and affect of interactions. Ultimately, such a focus on awareness can distribute dramaturgical agency and responsibility among collaborators and spectators, or embed it in a task based system of dance generations.

There are three chapters on this book. The first chapter is about Agency that there are three articles who written by Bojana Bauer, Andre Lepecki, Maaike Blecker. The second part that talk about Awareness also have three articles that written by Freya Vass-Rhe, Vida L. Midgelow and Pil Hansen. And the last chapter which is tells about Engagement contains of three articles that based on creativity experience of choreographers like Katherine Profeta and Thomas F. DeFrantz, Nanako Nakajima with performing koosil-ja and Bonnie Brooks.

Agency

In this articles there are some of the original experiences that spurred dramaturgs. Through an analysis of discourses produced by dramaturgs on the subject of their practice, as well as through a detailed examination of two example cases, Bauer propose a shift in orientation that locates the dramaturg as a subject in the creative process rather than a mediator at the centre of the tired theory/practice dichotomy. Initially this step introduces another dichotomy, one that opposes the subject of experience to the subject of knowledge. However, the divergence between the traditional dichotomy and the one that is initially proposed here allows me to discuss dramaturgy—and dramaturgical agency—at the level of the subject, acknowledging and challenging the generally held conception of the artist as a figure that is already deeply embedded within the theory/practice divide in the general art discourse. Dance practice has revived the theory/practice debate, and I believe that a deconstruction also allows me to depart from the tradition of philosophical discourse and instead observe the empirical transformation of the dramaturg into an essentially pragmatic figure—a subject of a certain type of action, who therefore needs to be understood in terms of the strategies and functions he/she initiates.

A dramaturg can be present in rehearsal everyday for months at a time and still persist in treating choreographic material from the distance of an observer, merely theorising it. Importantly, there are choreographers who themselves rely on exteriority to let the process unfold. Along these lines, Ivana Muller states that the 'outside eye' does not present a problem because the 'outside'. Paradoxically, and when considered on a larger scale, I propose that this flexibility of positioning has more to do with pointed us to—proximity as a metaphor—than with actual, measurable, physical presence in the process. Furthermore, this flexibility is closely related to certain structural changes in the field that have had a transverse effect on its epistemological, aesthetic, political, and labour definitions.

Awareness

The creative process and its phases are briefly described to map out the complex constellation of dramaturg, choreographer, performers, themes, ideas, materials, bodily exercises, dialogues and much more that it entails. The dramaturg, while practicing critique and analysis, is also affected by and involved in sensory, aesthetic, and emotional processes.

Important implications for dramaturgical practice is the deeper involvement of dancers in the process of creation; dancers are invited to create material and thus to share part of the conceptual and dramaturgical responsibility within a given creation. The writing of the piece (the choreographic practice) becomes the result of a shared praxis that also engages the performers. The process of creating a piece, then, can no longer be defined as one that entails work on fine details of movement and perception accomplished under the watchful eye of the choreographer; nor can choreography be conceived as an authoritative process of organising the body in predetermined movement patterns.

Instead, the dancer creates the material through a practice that is drawing upon her subjectivity and its capacity to produce singular types of attitude and behaviour. This *practice of subjectivity* is intertwined with the context of process and the conditions it proposes, not only types of bodily practices, techniques, exercises, and experiences, but equally readings, writings, film influences, image references, time spent together and so on. One of the consequences of from it, tend to morph and become incorporated into the development of the piece's overall composition. However, this incorporation remains only tendency as such an approach still marks two territories: that of the creation/studio; and that of the stage. Even though the dividing line might be fine between the two, the reality of the studio is necessarily distinct from stage reality and this separation is materialised through the structuring of the material. This means that the practice should meet the conditions of theatrical reception through the shaping of performance, in other words some form of composition that is comparable to the theatrical staging must take place. In the words some form of composition that is comparable to the theatrical staging must take place.

Engagement

Dramatugs typically shift between, combine and modify these modes, depending on the needs of individual projects. Though celebrating the adaptable nature of dramaturgical modes of engagement, our authors also offer unique examples of the memory and facilitation of dramaturgical agency and awareness that a sustained and deep rooted engagement with a specific choreographic practice can lead to within a company, between collaborators, and in relationship to audiences – all the spheres that extend the cycle of distributed dramaturgical agency.

Conclusion

All chapters this collection touch upon the interrelated concepts of agency, awareness and engagement; however, each chapter addresses these concepts differently and makes proposals that emphasise one over the others. This introduction discusses the matrix of agency, awareness, and engagement through both our authors' and others' voice from the discourse on dance dramaturgy, so that the concepts are contextualised and reflected as key concern of this book.

Ironically, the dramaturg may hold a key to solving this dilemma. His or her focus on the approaches, principles, strategies, and sociocultural implications of different projects and artists also enables the dramaturg to help extract and articulate tropes that are pursued in unique ways by choreographers and their collaborators across multiple projects. Such articulations can help feed the marketplace with something more complex and artistically relevant than icons and extend an invitation of engagement to spectators. These articulations are drawn from space between the initiating artists' discovery of artistic questions and the collaborative work through which those questions are pursued. As such, they are not anchored in, nor are they translations of, an artist's intentions; rather, they

reflect the collaborative and fully embodied thinking that takes place in a creation process. Further, these articulations do not interpret or render meaningful a performance for the audience; instead, they synthesise principles at work.

The contemporary dramaturg that I am beginning to evoke here is not an intellectual who, at a distance from the creative process, claims knowledge and objectivity while holding the emerging structures of a new work up against established and recognisable models that are celebrated in the marketplace.