From score to work? Making a group, improvising a dance

by

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From score to work? Making a group, improvising a dance

submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

This project (re-) considers the authorial role in dance-making as a creative art by questioning how a dance and a group were made through practising over time with scores. The question that I have asked in conducting this research is: What is the work of scores in the creation of an improvised group dance? The research took the form of a studio exploration with a group of six dancers, including myself. This written document and the ideas it explores have come about alongside of and in a deep interrelationship with the studio practice. My questioning about how scores were working in our practising led me to question what a work was and if we were making one and how it was possible to understand our collection of individual dancers as a group from inside the participation in our practice, as well as in the way our dance could be perceived as a group dance by its witnesses.
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Introduction

My research project has been the creation of a group improvised dance through practising with scores over a significant period of time. The question that I asked in conducting my research is: What is the work of ‘scores’ in the creation of an improvised group dance? where scores are verbal propositions, usually relating to physical, bodily or movement notions such as tangling and untangling or being subject to gravity. The research took the form of a studio exploration with a group of six dancers, including myself. We practised with the scores twice a week for three years, at the completion of which time, we had a performance presentation of our group dance.

As already noted above, from the beginning of the project, our practising consisted of dancing with scores. I did not ever question whether to use scores. What I did begin to question, though, was how the scores worked in the practice. I had assumed that they had an easily perceivable effect on dancing, in the way I was using them. I soon realized, however, that this was not the case. By asking: What is a score? What does it do? How can it make a group work?, I realized that there was not a straightforward causal relationship between the way we used scores and the dancing we did when we practised with them. I had also had a broad intention to make a work with a group of dancers. In questioning what part scores played in the creation of a group work, I realised that I really knew neither what a work was nor what makes a group a group. I had accepted notions of what a contemporary
dance work is and how a group can be perceived as a group from inside practising, as well as from witnessing a group dancing in performance. My questioning about how scores were working in our practising led me to question what a work was and if we were making one, and how it was possible to understand our collection of individual dancers as a group from inside the participation in our practice, as well as in the way our dance could be perceived as a group dance by its witnesses.

My concern in this research has been about how our group dance was made. The questions I posed do not relate directly to what we made, in terms of its artistic values, nor do they directly explore, question or clarify my aesthetic interests. By concentrating on the ‘how’ of our dance, I have operated on the premise that the aesthetic emphasis of my project is assumed, rather than being unimportant. I have not questioned what dance is for me. In fact my interest in dance could be described as particular or even narrow. Rather than challenging that interest, I have used it as a constant against which to make more visible the ‘how’ processes. In questioning how our dance was made, I have been able put aside the most apparent and perhaps most often-emphasized concerns of creative artists in order to lay bare aspects about the making of a dance which I had, before this project, given little thought to. Previously, instead of asking what a score did, I had worked to find the ‘right’ scores. Instead of asking what a work was, I had put much energy into making a ‘good’ work. Gathering an interesting group of dancers and helping them to be part of producing a dance which fulfilled certain values had greater emphasis than considering what the group really was and meant and how it might make a dance. I had not been attentive to these ‘how’ considerations before this project and bringing them to the forefront of my research has allowed me to understand that whether they are assumed, ignored or deeply questioned, such considerations are at the heart of dance-making.

This project also questions the authorial role in dance-making. As Laurence Louppe argues, the question of authorship has been central to modern dance as the first appearance of an individualized, rather than social, dance and hence as a modern art. Despite ‘the death of the author’ in other arts during
the twentieth century, the idea of an author is still important for contemporary dance because this was previously denied for so long. But Louppe also comments that, in France at least in the 1980s, authorship risked being reduced to a ‘brand’ as choreographers assembled spectacles rather than created their ‘texts’ in the bodies of the dancers. ‘The body eclectic’ is a term used by Dena Davida in discussing similar developments in North America; and a choreographic model used frequently and currently in Australian contemporary dance is one in which dancers create the movement for dances which are directed by choreographers. In these instances, the role of the choreographer is to devise the theme of a work and to ‘knit’ together the movement that has been created by the dancers. In her article, Body for Hire: The State of Dance in Australia, Amanda Card describes this model in which, choreographers employ dancers who are skilled at both executing and generating movement, and set them ‘tasks’ in which they create the dancing content of a dance. The dancers in this model are responsible for the devising of movement which becomes part of a work that bears the choreographer’s name, if not her movement signature.

Experiments with different modes of authorship have been significant in the field of improvisation. In Sharing the Dance: Contact Improvisation and American Culture Cynthia Novack writes that Steve Paxton was looking for a way out of the conventional modern dance model of leadership. And although Louppe writes: ‘Very few moments in the history of contemporary dance have questioned the status and function of the unique choreographer’ she notes that one of these ‘moments’ was in the formative years of the Grand Union in New York, and particularly in a dance initiated by Yvonne Rainer named Continuous Project-Altered Daily or CP-AD. CP-AD was a group improvised dance in which performers had direct agency in creation of the dance. Rainer’s interest and struggle lay in her questioning about democracy and hierarchy. With CP-AD Rainer experimented with the freedom of choice of the performers and grappled with her own ambivalence about ‘…freedom and limits…’

Just as in CP-AD, my project, through its set-up of a group of dancers improvising together repeatedly over time, allowed the questioning of the role
of the author to be worked through, through the experience of dancing. Rather than arising from a position that challenges hierarchy, (which was particularly relevant in New York in the early 1970s), however, my interest in imagining, allowing and practising the diffusion of the authorship of our dance lay in seeking to understand how dancing bodies, and the interactions that arise from practising together, can be the primary sites at which the dance becomes itself.

The practising of dancing with scores, by individuals dancing and watching each other dance, allowed the dancing to become a group dance over time. By exploring the roles of scores and how the scores allowed us to dance as a group, I will suggest how we were able to arrive at performing a group dance in which all of the participants shared in the becoming of a group ‘style’ without our explicitly defining or aiming for that style.

Working through questions of how the dance was made, what the role of the scores were, and where the authorship lay in that making took place very much within the studio practice. In Practice as Research, Barbara Bolt uses the term ‘materialising practices’ to suggest how an emerging creative process can allow the development of an artist’s practice when it exists alongside an exegetical research component. This new knowledge, found through practising, could then be applied outside the personal:

Rather than operating as a solipsistic reflection on one’s own practice, the particular situated knowledge that emerges through the research process has the potential to be generalized so that it sets wobbling the existing paradigms operating in a discipline.9

My project ‘set wobbling’ my own assumptions about what was taking place in the making of a dance. Over the three years, an understanding crystallized for me that an emphasis on naming and discussing or debating authorship roles obscures the other important active elements and processes potentially at work in any dance practice.
In order to question the authorial role in the making of the dance, I needed to be willing to step aside from an assumed role of a choreographer; or at least from my perception of what choreographing a dance might mean. I needed to be willing to let go of any desire I might have had to make a ‘work’ which might sit alongside other ‘works’ I or others have made and to understand that even if I did not perceive it as such, it may still well have been perceived by its witnesses as an object in a market and subject to their ‘taste’. Louppe writes that the work of the choreographer is to ‘…invent a body (or at least to elicit from already worked and conscious bodies a corporeity that is consonant with her/his project).’

By removing myself from the role of the choreographer, either as a maker of movement and the creator of bodies, or as the director of the assemblage of movement generated by dancers, I have questioned roles and processes often assumed both by participants in dance making and its witnesses in the ‘market’.

It is important to state that in questioning the authorship of what has been created, I am not suggesting that I did not drive this research project. Nor am I suggesting that the practising methods or even the kind of dancing that took place were anything other than those which have arisen from my own creative interests. My being a dancing participant was a fundamental aspect of this creative process. My aesthetic preferences and my ability to articulate them lay in the physical history and understandings in my body and in the scores I chose to share with the group. The physical ideas which circulated, came from a way of practising which involved all of the dancers both dancing and watching. I did not ‘step outside’ the creative process in order to evaluate it or to shape it for presentation. I was part of the emerging ‘group’ and so part of the work. As stated above, my ‘values’ in dancing could be considered to be narrow and this project reflects those values. Rather than challenging those values, the questioning which emerged in this project, particularly about the work of scores in the creation of a group dance, came into play at the subtle level of the transmission of information between bodies, at the incremental shifts which are barely discernable against a constant sameness, and the becoming of a group and a dance which were unforeseen and non-deliberate. I set up and facilitated the practising that six dancers participated in over the three years, based on my own experience and preferences.
The dancers had roles which are different to those in choreographic processes in which the authorial role is more defined. They ‘produced’ movement. In a ‘set’ dance, the dancers’ responsibility lies in the refinement of the execution of given, learned and defined movements. In dances in which the named choreographer does not define the intended corporeal values, the dancer’s role may include finding solutions to movement tasks. In this research the agency and autonomy of the dancers was accepted. I did not directly ask the dancers to do certain things but rather used our practising with scores as the guide or the ‘situation’ or game or as focusing awareness or attentiveness to enable the creation of the dance over time. John Cage describes a composer as ‘the organizer of sound’\textsuperscript{11}. As the initiator of this project I considered myself to be the organizer of movement not in the sense that I decided what the movement was or even when it would happen, but in the sense that I created the framework, that is the way of practising, over time, that allowed the dance to be created.

One of the important strategies that I devised was to structure our group practice, including our performance, as one of dancing solos. Throughout the project the practising group and the group dance consisted of individuals dancing solos. I chose for the practising/dance to consist of solos for two reasons: The first is that at the heart of my creative interest is the generation of movement. All of our scores related to or enabled attentiveness to one’s own dancing and dancing body, rather than creating movement in relation to what another dancer might be doing or might have done. The second reason is that in order to allow the practising itself to be the site at which the dance was created, intentional relationships between dancers needed to be overshadowed, ignored or avoided. It was possible to consider the authorship as taking place through and in between the dancing bodies because there was not a need, either as individuals or as a group, to fulfill an authorship ‘obligation’ by making a group dance, in the present, in response to that which was taking place outside one’s own body.

This written document and the ideas it explores have come about alongside of and in a deep interrelationship with the studio practice. I did not know what
our group dance would be when I began working in the studio. I did not have any pre-planned outcomes or even hopes for the dance to be something in particular. I have approached the written document in much the same way. I have found, considered and sometimes discarded ideas through reading which have been allowed to affect and be affected by our studio practice. Just as the dance we presented was the place we arrived at in our practising, in the present, to be witnessed by our audience, I consider this written document to be the place I have arrived at through practising writing and thinking, with the support of the theoretical ideas and thinking of others which I have sought in order to understand, and to question, knowledge which had its origins in our studio practice. Key ideas and theory have come from various dance improvisation practitioners including Deborah Hay, Simone Forti and Lisa Nelson. I have also used: theory on notational scores for art from Nelson Goodman; ideas on image in relation to bodily organization from Isabelle Ginot, Shaun Gallagher and Elizabeth Dempster; critical approaches to the ‘author’ and the ‘work’ from Roland Barthes, and Michel Foucault; theories in the discussion of our group including habitus from Pierre Bourdieu and prestigious imitation from Marcel Mauss; and philosophical questions which have related to the whole project from Laurence Louppe and Hannah Arendt.

I will proceed with the discussion by looking in the following three chapters at the three interlinked questions which arose from our studio exploration. In asking each of the three questions: What is a score?, What is a work? And what makes our group a group?, I will use existing ideas to inform the way each of the questions can be opened up and discussed in the context of my practice and dance-making in this project. I have chosen to present my exploration of the three questions, each in a chapter, in an order which is linear in that the second and the third, the work and the group chapters respectively, continue on from discussions in the previous chapters. The ideas in each of the chapters are interrelated since they have come from and have come to affect my studio practice. My questioning of how an improvised, group, dance work was made by individuals practising together over time, with scores, has revealed implicit processes which, although rarely attended to consciously, are significant in dance creation and in the
realization of aesthetic values. This project as an exploration of my practice, that is as an exploration of the way that all of the individuals participated in practising with scores over time, has enabled my arrival at an understanding of both how our group dance came to be and how practising over time can support the incremental shifts of dancing bodies both as individuals and as part of a group.
Methodology and methods

The question which has been the primary focus of this research project: What is the work of scores in the creation of an improvised group dance?, is about how the dance was created. The insights that have emerged have come out of the practice in which a group of six dancers participated, and the dance which we performed. They have also come from the thinking, reading and writing which was interlinked with the dancing and includes this document. The question itself arose from our dancing practice. It is this method of questioning ideas and information as they became available to be discovered, which has formed my approach to the whole project. The methodology or what I have come to think of as how I came to understand what I did about making our dance, emerged along with the project. As we practiced, over time, in the studio, I ‘tried on’ various examples and existing thinking about methodological approaches. Two of those ideas or approaches: practice as research and improvisation, I will elaborate on below, because they have affected my thinking and understanding and therefore influenced our dancing and our dance. Two processes have repeatedly come to my attention, mostly because they existed in all parts of the project; in our dancing and my writing, in the way we used scores, the way our dance became what it was, and how the gathering of individuals became our group. The first process is practising over time. The second is participating and observing or, as I have mostly thought of it, dancing and watching. It is through arriving at the recognition of the constancy of these
two processes, that I have been able explore how the scores worked to make our group work. The three questions, which I have asked in this document are interrelated. The elements which support that interrelationship are practising over time, and dancing and watching.

**Practice as Research**

‘Practice as research’ suggests a ‘relationship of research between theory and practice’. PARIP, (Practice as Research in Performance) was a five-year project at the University of Bristol, UK, which examined the academic research context for performance-based art-forms. One fundamental question which was considered in the project was: What is a practice that is also research or vice versa? In the introduction to her book, *Practice as Research* (2010), Estelle Barrett suggests that research based in artistic practice allows the possibility for new knowledge to be generated which is personal and can be of benefit to individual artists as well as having the possibility to reveal and be applicable to knowledge in cultural, social and philosophical contexts. According to the PARIP experts, in order for creative practice to be considered as research it needs to have a definite ‘research imperative’ and it needs to be contributing to new knowledge and insights. My project qualifies as research in two ways. The first is that it was open-ended or experimental rather than outcome focused and it has revealed important dance-making processes and ways of conducting those processes that have not often been questioned. The second is that it was not conceived according to the conventions of creation in the dance field. It is the dancing which came from practising with ‘scores’ which I was interested in being visible in the performance of the work. I have examined our practising as a group, and where and how the use of scores came into play in that practice.

Susan Melrose, Professor in Performance Arts at Middlesex University, who was part of the PARIP group, has written, among other things, about expertise in relation to performance research. She describes herself as an ‘expert spectator’ and makes a distinction between expert spectators and creative practitioners participating in research in an academic context. Creative practitioners are not only experts in their own areas of performance making but they are able to further their knowledge through continuing to
experiment in their practice. The understandings which are able to be found, the insight into one’s own creative practice, the possibilities to follow ‘creative-instincts’ in order to create, exist only in the participation in one’s own creative practice. To undertake research in creative practice is to undertake research in one’s own creative practice. Susan Melrose writes that the discoveries made ‘... are entirely-specific to expert practitioner undertakings, in terms both of positioning and of the times of making; they are incommensurable with, and are unavailable, as such, to expert spectating.’\(^{15}\) Although I can refer to the dance-making of others from my experiences in participation, in reading about and in witnessing the dance making and performance of others, I can only undertake practice as research in my own practice.

If participating in creative-practice research is about the research within one’s own creative practice, then the necessary reading and writing which also emerges as a practice forms part of that research. The reading and writing that I undertook began with the written experiences of dance improvisation practitioners and allowing those ideas to influence my perception of what was taking place in my own studio practice. Over time I began to read more about ideas which exist outside of dance, such as those of Hannah Arendt and Pierre Bourdieu, which came to influence how I perceived our studio practice both in writing about it and in participating in it. I did not really write as part of my studio practice. All of my working through, all of my discovering, and all of my watching took place in my body and through dancing. The memories, the record of my experiences existed in my body’s history. In this research situation, however, writing became important. I needed to find a way use the ideas of others to question, support or understand my own ideas. Alongside our dancing practice, I began to develop a practice of writing. It was similar to the way we were practising dancing in that I didn’t have a planned outcome and I was discovering how to go about writing as I participated in it over time.

In 2006 I participated in a movement laboratory with Rosalind Crisp and writer/academic Isabelle Ginot. Ginot gave us writing tasks to do while watching someone dance\(^{16}\). Watching others dance to fulfill these writing scores had an effect on the way I was watching. The scores ranged from
things such as *tracing the pathway of one body part through the space* to *writing what the body isn't doing*. These exercises allowed me to think about watching dancing in new ways. Before I participated in the lab, I had not written in this way in my practice and even though I have considered using these kinds of methods since, it feels like I would be participating in someone else’s practice, not my own. Watching to write is a very different way of watching to the way we watched in my project. We watched each other both to witness the dancer and to allow her dancing to become part of our body’s experience of dancing so it could affect our dancing. To watch in order to write would not allow us this kind of absorption.

What I know about dance comes almost entirely from dancing, from making dance, from being in the dances of others, from teaching and from being taught. My knowledge acquisition has taken place in the studio. My understandings have come about from being physically involved in dancing. When I watch a dance I watch it from the point of view of a dancer; I imagine dancing that dance with my own body. I understand the movement that is taking place physically, through my body’s experience. When I read about dance, I imagine seeing it, I imagine making it, I imagine dancing it. My relationship to writing by practitioners is as another practitioner. I cannot be, to use Melrose’s term, an ‘expert-spectator’ because my dancing knowledge comes first from participating in it and from my own practice. Reading about or watching dance feeds back into my own dancing and dance making.

**Improvisation**

Our dance was improvised and all of the dancing we did in practising was improvised. However, this research project, as I have come to understand it, was not research into improvisation as such. Neither was it research to discover what dance is for me or to question my aesthetic interests. I did not put a particular emphasis on questioning or discovering what improvisation means for me as a dance maker and how that affects what kind of dance I make. In undertaking my research, the fact that my dance was improvised was a given and an unchanging fact, the constancy of which allowed me to ask the questions that I did. Nevertheless, the improvised nature of the project did affect many aspects of it. The way we practised was a function of
Improvisation in dance performance as I have come to understand it is the impulsive creation of movement and relationships in space. It demands that the performers make decisions regarding their dancing in the moment. They could be decisions about what to do and how to do it, decisions to direct one’s attention receptively or to control it willfully, they could be about which part of the body to be most aware of, how much force to use, whether to follow an impulse or interrupt momentum. Improvisation relies on the physical and dancing history of the dancer. The techniques and understandings which already exist in the body are present and available to be drawn upon. Improvisation is a combination of the known and the unknown. The known includes a range of factors such as the context of the performance, the ‘score’ or framework within which the improvisation occurs and ‘an individual body’s predisposition to move in patterns of impulses established and made routine through training in a particular dance tradition’. At the heart of my studio practice was practising improvisation with scores. Improvising with scores over time led to the becoming of the group which made our work.

Contemporary dance improvisation, practised for performance, rather than as simply one aspect in a creative process or a workshop, began to exist in the 1960s. The New York based Judson Dance Theater (1962-1964), among others, began experimenting with performed improvisation using structural ideas borrowed from jazz music. The shared knowledge of harmonic, melodic and rhythmic principles is used by jazz musicians as the constraints within which a certain freedom can be explored. Trisha Brown, one of the Judson DanceTheater members, describes how she was using structures that had a relationship to jazz music for her dance improvisations:

In the beginning you have a set structure...you can only walk forward, you cannot use your voice or you have to do 195 gestures before you hit the wall at the other end of that room, that is improvisation within
set boundaries. That is the principle, for example, behind jazz. The musicians may improvise, but they have a limitation in the structure just as improvisation in dance does.\textsuperscript{20}

The use of structures as boundaries to work within is similar to the way I used scores. Scores can be the structure for a performance as described by Brown or they can be the support or guidelines in practising to tune the body and the dancing in a particular way. They can also invite the body to deal with new situations. The details in or attentiveness to movement organization might imply and create the form in which they exist and vice versa. A structure like Brown’s \textit{195 gestures} will also heavily influence the possibilities for movement. A score such as \textit{every ending is a new beginning} could be considered both in relation to each small movement in the body, as well as in a way which affects how a dance is considered structurally over a span of time. Improvising with a score in this way does not need to be seen as the seeking of a ‘solution’ in dancing. Rather, improvising with scores is an ongoing structure for questioning both the dancing history in the body and the noticing that dancing with those scores allows.

\textbf{Practising over time}

Over the time of this project, I have come to use the term practice, rather than rehearsal, to describe the sessions in which we gathered together and danced. Although I did not decide at any particular point that practice was a more suitable term, its use came about because it is really what we were doing in the studio. The thinking about our dancing sessions as practising seems significant for me in that it suggests important values regarding the way our dance came into existence. The word practising has the feel of being ongoing for me, as though we were taking part in dancing in the present, rather than looking to the future and to a future which would have an end, as in the way rehearsals are a path leading to a final performance. Practising also implies, for me, that we took part in a shared experience of dancing and that we were moving through that experience together. Rather than myself as the choreographer, in the conventional sense of the word, explicitly directing and defining the dancing that took place, in practising together, each dancer was involved in not only her own
dancing/improvising/composing but in the contributing to the always emerging group dance.

It is rare in the contemporary dance field, currently, for a single dance to be created over such a long period of continuous time, with the same group of dancers. During our practice sessions, it seemed that time had a certain uniqueness in the way it passed. It didn’t feel faster or slower than the time in the rest of my life but perhaps because we practised in the same way in every session, it felt like we were at times reliving moments over and over. In *The Dance of Life*, Edward Hall suggests there are many ways of perceiving time passing; many more than the often described experiences of time speeding up or dragging relative to what Hall terms ‘clock time’.\(^{21}\) The reliving of those moments both in time and in our dancing allowed the possibility for sharing and for the becoming of our dance. It also allowed for the recognition of change. Changes in our dancing were neither imposed nor specifically aimed or planned for, they were not the result of explicit direction. They came from our practising over time. Hall writes about time being the essence of awareness.\(^{22}\) Changes were discernable for the dancers constantly engaged in the sameness of our practising, because we were reliving the same or similar dancing moments over and over.

**Participation and observation (dancing and watching)**

I decided to participate in and observe the dance-making itself rather than make it from the ‘outside’. The reasons for this were that I felt that the richest source of information I had about dancing existed in my body, and it was best shared with the means of my body. I was also interested in each dancer finding her own dance in our group’s dance and although I did not clearly understand how that would work at the beginning of the project, the best approach seemed to be that all members of the group, including me, should participate in practising in the same way. In searching for a way of understanding what was taking place in my project, I read various ethnographic texts which I found relevant and applicable to my way of thinking about my practice. Paul Stoller, for example, advocates a kind of ethnography which allows the senses other than sight to be part of gathering and communicating understandings.
If we learn to “read” and “write” in a manner similar to the way the painter paints, we may be able to sensualise prose which represents others so that our books become the study of human being as well as human behavior.23

There is a particular challenge in finding a way to write about and examine experiences that are embodied. Sally Ann Ness writes about the difficulty of finding a way for her notes from a dancing experience in South East Asia to be written into an ethnographic text without losing the essence of that experience. She describes her notes as ‘subjective, spontaneous, private’24 and as including ‘failures of objectivity’25. She does not want the published writing that they will become to ‘dent, mask, sacrifice or replace notework, but to enliven it’26. This is important to me, too. I thought that I could find a way to ‘examine’ as an ethnographer, what it was we were doing in the studio and, in undertaking that examination, allow myself greater understanding of what was taking place and the effects of all of the complicated goings on.

As much as I felt interested in the writing of these authors, however, I have come to understand that to use an ethnographic framework to ‘examine’ my project was not the approach that was most aligned with the way in which I was actually taking part in my research. To apply an ethnographic approach to my research felt like I was imposing a way of thinking about what we were doing in the studio which could mask what was really taking place. I had made a choice not to impose an already planned process or the expectation of a pre-conceived ‘work’ on my studio research and so I came to understand that just as I had allowed the dance to be made by the practising of the group through time, I also needed to let the way we practised inform me about itself.

The two activities which continuously existed in our practice were dancing and watching each other dance. We danced to practise dancing and we watched both to allow the dancer to practise being watched and to engage in the sharing amongst all the participants of each person’s dancing experience. Dancing and watching did not take place only in our practising: in the
performance we presented at the end of the project, each member of the
group took part in both dancing and watching as part of the performance. In
the project as a whole, my separate roles involved participating in the studio
practice and the reading, writing and thinking which I have undertaken
outside of the studio. Although those two roles are not simply dancing and
watching, they could be described as participating and observing where
observation included reflection, imagining, the seeking and thinking about
knowledge to augment and challenge that observation, and writing. In all of
the situations described, dancing and watching are discrete activities and yet
they are so interlinked that one would have been senseless without the other.

The improvisational nature of the project affected our dancing participation in
it. We were generating the movement we were executing and that supported
an attentiveness to our bodily activity including a noticing of the way we were
dancing, usually in relation to a score, and at times, a deliberateness in our
compositional choices. Laura Cull describes the way participation took place
in the ‘Activities’ of Allan Kaprow. Participation is described as a site for
‘embodied thought’\(^{27}\). Many of the ‘Activities’ included everyday actions
which were designed to be executed in such a way that they encouraged an
attentiveness to them which may have been absent in the way they were
executed in ‘real life’. The way we participated (danced) in our practising,
using scores, also induced a particular attentiveness. Although we were not
executing everyday activities, the use of scores supported an attentiveness
to dancing which came from our bodies’ histories and, without that particular
attentiveness, could easily have passed through our bodies mostly
unnoticed. Cull also writes how the way participants participated in Kaprow’s
‘Activities’ affected how the elements were made in terms of their authorship:
‘…the authoritative role of the artist in constituting the nature of the work has
been reduced to a minimum and the creative or determining role of the
participants has been increased as much as possible\(^{28}\). This describes what
took place in my project also. The making of our dance came from the
attentiveness in practising of the individuals, rather than a dance being ‘made
on’ them from an outside authorial position.
It is also true though that the dancing participation or the dancing of the group could not have made the dance without the practice being equally full of watching. Even though the purpose of watching was not to provoke a resolution in each participant to dance in a certain way, it allowed the sharing of the ‘embodied thought’ which could become part of the dancing of the watchers over time. As with our dancing, I did not explicitly prescribe a mode of watching. The way we watched underwent a process of change over time which, like our dancing, was discernable against the sameness of the structure within which we watched. The way we watched each other dance within our practising was with our bodies as Merleau-Ponty describes in that what we were able to experience in watching each other, was informed by the taking part of our own bodies in dancing experiences.\textsuperscript{29} We were sharing the same information and practice. Our watching was also somewhat discrete as an activity since we were not using that watching to enable us to deliberately emulate what we had witnessed in another’s dancing. Our watching was an allowing of the dancing of another to both affect and be affected by our own dancing understanding yet it also existed separately from our participating in dancing. D.W Harding describes observation which may be full of thrill or horror or some other kind of empathy but which nevertheless remains detached. However, even though there is no direct response in that way of watching, an individual would still ‘…assess the event in light of all the interests, desires, sentiments and ideals that they can relate to…’\textsuperscript{30}

We did not dance and watch at the same time. This separation of the two was quite particular in the way we practised. In taking part in dancing and watching separately, we were involved in two activities at different times which were, separately, part of the practising that made our dance. In dancing we were absorbed in the present of our experiences. We were attentive to the dancing that was taking place in our bodies, very often in relation to a score. Our attentiveness in our dancing was to our own bodies, and included the noticing of our dancing history as it arose in our bodies and what that dancing ‘meant’ in that dancing moment. In dancing we were (deliberately) attentive to our own body and dancing rather than having a need to also be attentive to dancers whom we were dancing alongside. In watching, in onlooking, we were absorbed in the dancing of others. That that
watching affected our own dancing I have no doubt. Our watching was our
opportunity to receive and/or share the ‘embodied thought’ which would allow
the coming in to existence of our group dance.

The two methods, practising over time, and dancing and watching, as they
consistently existed throughout the period of my project are important not
only because they helped me to understand how our practising (as a group)
made our dance and our group but because they are the common threads
which provide a link between my three questions about the scores, the work
and the group. The way I have come to understand what I have about my
project is to allow the two significant and constant aspects of my practice,
practising over time, and dancing and watching, to be present in the way I
have thought, read and written this document.
What’s the score?

The following discussion explores existing literature about scores in art theory, in the writings of dance and movement practitioners discussing their processes, and as they are used by somatic practitioners. It looks at what scores are and what they can be; how they work on the body and how they can work in the creation of dance. This discussion helps me to define the work of scores in this research project by comparing the theory and writing about scores to the way we used them in our practising. The scores that we used in my project were verbal propositions. Following on from using the theory of Nelson Goodman as a starting point, I have particularly concentrated on the use of verbal scores by dance and improvisation practitioners and by somatic practitioners in order to interrogate my own use of verbal scores. Throughout this chapter, and in the chapters following, I will use scores from our practising as examples. The example scores are some of many that we used during the three-year period of the project. All of the scores are listed in the appendix at the conclusion of the document. The examples I use were chosen for various reasons: some felt very ‘supportive’ as we danced with them and we used them repeatedly; some seemed problematic in that the ‘meaning’ of them in dancing was difficult to find; some had a varied ‘meaning’ in the group; some affected shifts or challenges in the dancing of one or more members of the group; some we came back to again and again because we enjoyed the attentiveness to our dancing that they seemed to enable.
Nelson Goodman and scores

In his book, *Languages of Art*, Nelson Goodman discusses the concept of scores as linked to the idea of a stable, repeatable work, and in terms of his distinction between autographic and allographic works of art. Goodman describes a painting as being autographic.\(^{31}\) It has been painted by one artist and cannot be reproduced unless it is forged. A print made from a plate by an etcher is also autographic even though there can be varying numbers of prints made. The work is always that of the original artist. A piece of music is not autographic, however. According to Goodman it is allographic. It may be written by a composer but it could be interpreted in performance by a different artist: the performer. Gérard Genette, referring to Goodman notes that the categorisation of a work as autographic or allographic is affected by both how it is produced and whether it can be reproduced: ‘…in certain arts, [autographic] the notion of authenticity is meaningful, and is defined by a work’s history of production, while it is meaningless in others, [allographic] in which all correct copies of a work constitute so many valid instances of it’\(^{32}\). A dance which has been created by a choreographer is similar to a composed piece of music in that it may be performed by different dancers. In a group improvised dance the questions of whether a dance is autographic or allographic and of the author are even more complicated\(^ {33}\). In discussing the importance and significance of a score for a work of art, Goodman suggests that a score could easily be dismissed as not being of any use once a performance is complete. ‘But to take notation as nothing, therefore but a practical aid to production is to miss its fundamental and theoretical role’\(^ {34}\). A score, according to Goodman, is the means by which a work can be authoritatively identified from performance to performance. A score might also have a more ‘exciting’ function such as aiding composition but its primary role is to identify a work. A score from Goodman’s point of view must be part of a notational system. There are five requirements in order for a system to be notational: there are two syntactic requirements and three semantic requirements. In summary, a symbol in a notational system must be interchangeable with another without upsetting the syntax of that notation. Here a note in a musical score is a very good example. If one note in a score were changed with another, it would make no difference syntactically, unlike
the effect of changing two words in a sentence. Semantically, a symbol, or character must be unambiguous and not have a crossover with the meaning of another character. If these requirements are to be complied with, verbal languages (English for example), whether they are written or used verbally, are unsuitable for use as scores. This is because, as they are used in their discursive form, they don’t fulfill the syntactical and semantic requirements.

Scores for particular art forms

Music
A music score is an example of a system that complies with Goodman’s requirements in enough instances for it to be described as a notational system. (There is no example that is perfect). There are some instances in music scores that could be problematic, according to Goodman, and they are of interest to me. Some music scores, particularly from the Baroque period, are written with ‘figured bass’ sections allowing a performer to add embellishments on a simple bass line, or to play it as it is written. It is not the possibility for the embellishments that is problematic but rather the possibility that the embellishments may or may not occur. As Goodman explains, ‘…a system that permits alternative use of figured-bass and specific notation, without rigidly prescribing the choice in every case, materially violates the conditions upon notational systems.’35 A similar problem is that of the ‘free cadenza’ where the performer may have a section in which they can display their virtuosity either by following the score or by improvising; even making rhythmic choices. The problem for Goodman is not that the improvisation takes place, but that there is no way of knowing which choice will be made and therefore if the performance is a true performance of that work. ‘…the one in use must be designated and adhered to if identification of work from performance to performance is to be ensured.’36

The verbal language which is used in musical scores to indicate tempi is not notational. ‘Apparently almost any word may be used to indicate pace and mood.’37 It is the possibility for the meaning of words to be ‘interpretable’ which disallows them from being notational. Goodman describes the tempo words as being ‘auxiliary instructions’ which could affect the mood but not the identity of a work. Given that music scores are actually in use, Goodman
sees them as being as close as possible to an example of a working score as there could be. There are numerous music scores, however, that are not notational. John Cage devised a framework for a music work, with dots and straight lines in a square, for determining timbre, duration, amplitude and succession. This system is not ‘notational’. The symbols are widely interpretable and there is no way based on the sound of the music, of determining whether a performance is a performance of this work.\textsuperscript{38} Cage also used the Chinese \textit{I-Ching (Book of Changes)} for composing music. The \textit{I-Ching} involves throwing three coins six times to yield a series of charts. The charts related to tempi, durations, dynamics, sounds or ‘superpositions’.\textsuperscript{39} These charts enabled a complex map or score for the creation not the (re) production of a work.

\textit{Dance}

In examining scores for dance, Goodman looks particularly at Labanotation. Labanotation is a system which was devised by Rudolf Laban and was created to define, describe, and record movement. It utilizes a staff similar to that in musical notation, and uses shapes with degrees of shading to denote parts of the body, directions, magnitudes, facings and quantities. Labanotation ‘tries to record every aspect of motion as precisely as possible.’\textsuperscript{40} In instructions for writing Labanotation, Jane Marriet and Muriel Topaz write:

\begin{quote}

The whole purpose of notation is to convey movement to the reader clearly, simply and directly. The writer must choose to combine the symbols that most clearly reflect the \textit{gestalt} of the movement, ie what the movement is ‘about’.\textsuperscript{41}

\end{quote}

Goodman regards Labanotation as an example of a notation that complies with his semantic and syntactical requirements very well: ‘..about as well as does ordinary musical notation’\textsuperscript{42}. Yet Labanotation is not widely used in dance. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, since 1976 when Goodman wrote \textit{Languages of Art}, the use of video has become far more prevalent in the recording of dance, both as archival material but also in terms of having a plan from which to learn, re-learn or teach a work. A generation of dancers
before me learnt Labanotation as part of their tertiary study of dance. By the
time I reached that study, the teaching of Labanotation had been mostly
abandoned. The use of video was so widespread, the laborious teaching
and learning of notation was no longer practical. A video camera is present at
some point in almost every choreographic process. Is the video recording of
a work a score then, according to Goodman? It is perhaps possible to use a
video recording to reproduce or define a performance of a work, but is it like
a sketch of a painting; a work itself rather than a score for a work?

Music notation is still widely used despite audio recording being just as
accessible as video recording. In order to use an audio recording as a plan
for a work, one would need to listen and learn the work, as one needs to in
dance. But a written score is able to be read while the artist is playing the
music, unlike in dance. Amongst other things, having a score in music
alleviates the need for a work to be ‘learnt’ before it can be performed. A
score, for dance, in the sense that Goodman is defining it (as a notation),
needs to be learnt or absorbed into the body in order to be danced. It cannot
sit outside the body or the instrument, as a musical score can, and still be
utilized in performance. Mark Franko describes choreography as being a
combination of notation and the (creation of a) dance which takes place in
the present of its performance43. He suggests too that modern dance-makers
are less likely to use notation because of their interest in that presentness of
a dance in performance. ‘Modern dancers have entertained a mystique of
presentness that has made them mistrust visual archiving.’44 Ballet’s
Benesh Notation comes close to complying with Goodman’s conditions for a
score because the dancers can fairly easily recognize ballet steps and
positions from the notation itself. It is designed for ballet and can speak
directly to the dancer’s trained body.

Labanotation does not seem to be able to substitute for the live transmission
of (a) dance. In 1988, a graduate of the Laban Institute offered to translate a
work of Deborah Hay’s into Labanotation. The graduate handed Hay a copy
of the translation (presumably translated from video) one month later.45 The
translation failed to be an authoritative record of the work for two reasons.
The first is that there were critical gaps in the translation because the
notation system did not have a way of denoting some of the movement executed. The second is that the dance was improvised and therefore to ‘learn’ and reproduce it from the notation would not be dancing it as it was created to be danced. It was not the steps or the particular movements, or the notation of them, which authoritatively defined the work, rather it was the practice which supported it as well as the (interpretable) structure or score. The presence of the performer could not be reduced to ‘movements’.

This exploration of Nelson Goodman’s work has led me to question whether the use of the word ‘score’ is appropriate in the context in which I am using it. Scores, in Goodman’s terms can’t stand for an improvised dance. As described by Danielle Goldman, the fact that ‘…systems of notation can never adequately capture the complexity of an improvised performance….’ applies particularly to dance.46 The verbal scores that we used in my project do not represent a ‘work’ which was created, neither can they, in isolation, shed light on the practising that took place in the studio. My use of the word ‘score’, though, is not a term that I decided upon; rather it is a ‘traditional’ word which I have learnt to use from working in practical dance situations, particularly in dance improvisation.

This document includes an appendix listing all of the scores we found, made and used throughout the three years of the project. They were written down so they could be remembered; so they could be revisited. I have included them in this document as a record and to help elucidate the studio practice. By including them in their written form, it is possible that they could be perceived as a fixed truth, as standing for the dancing we did or even for the ‘work’ we made. This is not the case. It is not possible to record the scores with the intention of remembering them or using them as examples in order to write about my studio research, without them losing the presentness with which we used them while dancing. The way we used the scores, the way the scores worked in the making of our dance was always in the verbal form and always in relation to dancing in the present.
In the following pages I will discuss the way verbal scores are and have been used by dance, movement, somatic and therapeutic practitioners before looking more closely at how we used scores in my project.

The use of scores by performers of dance improvisation

Background to using scores

My introduction to the use of scores in dance improvisation was in the studio, in the workshops and choreographic processes of improvisation practitioners. I have encountered the use of scores (and scores with other names such as plan, question, inspiration, (state of) play, structure, framework, libretto, (set of) tools, game (rules), substructure), in a range of contexts from the generation of movement material to the support of performance. I have experienced many different dance makers putting scores to different uses such as when they were used to generate movement or when they were used to suggest or define an approach to the act of performing.

I began work as a dancer in companies performing ‘set’ or choreographed movement and using improvisation as a tool for creating that movement. I gradually became more exposed to improvisation for performance and had my first opportunity to perform in an improvised work by Ros Warby in 2001 while working with Dance Works. Working with Warby gave me a new perception of improvisation. It was much more than a tool for creating ‘interesting’ or virtuosic movement; it could be a way of noticing and exploring the many experiences of a dancing body both in private and in performance. This approach allowed me to start to leave behind the ‘valuing’ of certain types of movement such as the shapes and virtuosic steps of ballet, and to begin to find an interest in a wider range of possibilities.

Warby had, in the preceding year, been working with American artist Deborah Hay, a relationship which she still maintains. She had been attending Hay’s ‘Solo Commissioning’ projects. In these projects, a group of dancers participate in a ten-day intensive workshop in which they learn a solo, created by Hay. The participants are able to go on and perform that solo in the contexts of their own choice but they must first have practised for three months. Deborah’s choreography is articulated by a series of
instructions and spatial pathways. Often these instructions are nonsensical and apparently impossible to execute, such as ‘take six steps into the light without taking a step’. The moment of negotiating the impossibility of the task is witnessed by the audience. They are able to see the ‘working-through’ of a performance problem in real time even though they don’t know what that problem is. This approach puts the performer in a situation in which their attentiveness is focused in the unfolding of their performance in the present.

Soon after working with Warby, I travelled to New York and Europe. I attended workshops with several improvisation practitioners including KJ Holmes who is a dancer, poet and singer based in New York. She has an interest in a broad range of somatic practices including Ideokinesis, Alexander Technique and Body-Mind Centering. She has many years experience as an improviser having worked with Simone Forti, Lisa Nelson and Steve Paxton. In participating in Holmes’ workshops, I became aware of the way a long history in improvisation in New York allowed her dancing to be assured and supported. I hadn’t experienced that kind of deep feeling of implicit knowledge in the way improvisation was communicated about, particularly not in Australia. In Holmes’ workshop, I was first introduced to Steve Paxton’s small dance. The idea of the small dance resonated with me and I subsequently discovered that it was an idea that had been adopted, taught and utilized by improvisers, particularly contact improvisers, all over the world.

My most recent and long-standing relationship with an improvisation practitioner was with Rosalind Crisp. Crisp is an Australian who is now based in Europe and divides her time between performing, developing new work and teaching workshops. Her influence on my practice has been significant. Over a period of a few years, I was involved in a project with Crisp, which she named the ‘d a n s e’ project. Through practising, a group of choreographic principles were developed by Crisp, which guide the way an improvising dancer generates movement. ‘Movements may come from any part of the body, at any speed or level, with any force or direction, for any duration, … at any time. It is about dancing.’ These choreographic principles are assimilated into the body through practising with them. ‘The choreographic
practice focuses on the making of movement, rendering visible the constant
decision-making of the dancer. When I was practising with Crisp, she did
not name the choreographic principles, or any verbal propositions
with which we were dancing, scores. These principles arose from dancing
and were used both to describe what might have been taking place while
dancing, and to suggest possibilities relating to how one might be attentive,
while dancing. Crisp avoided labeling these verbal tools as scores as she
also avoids naming the dances that she makes ‘improvisation’ even though
the ‘choreography’ is taking place in the present during performance.
Avoiding the labels of ‘score’ and ‘improvisation’ allows Crisp to discover and
re-discover what her practice is and what it is becoming without herself, or
anyone else settling on how the use of particular terms might determine what
a dance is or could be.

In contrast to Crisp’s approach, I deliberately decided to use the term ‘score’
for the verbal propositions we used while practising. I used the term score for
the words and sets of words conveyed verbally that we used to both offer
possibilities while dancing and to share our experiences of dancing with other
members of the group. By labeling them as scores, I aimed to have a
consistency in the way that I perceived what they might be and in doing so
begin to understand how they might be significant in the way we were
practising. I did not think that they needed to be ‘scores’ as I had experienced
them in the past in the practice of others, nor did I use my reading of
Goodman’s theory about scores to decide what my scores should be. I did,
however, use my emerging understanding of how verbal scores might work
for others in various practices to ask again and again what scores were in my
project, how we were using them, and how they were working in the creation
of the group dance.

Scores in the dance field
Through reviewing written texts which are either interviews, or by dancers
writing about their own work, I have come to understand the range of types
and uses of scores for dance improvisation. There are as many ways of
using scores as there are choreographic processes. Rather than
guaranteeing or stabilizing a work as Goodman suggests, each user of what
are called scores in dance improvisation finds her own use and meaning for them. Certainly that has been my experience of coming to terms with using scores in my own practice. Kent de Spain has observed that ‘...if you want to understand how something as subjective as improvisation really works, you need to ask improvisers; they are the “authorities” in the field.’

I would also suggest that even within my own practice, I can only be an ‘authority’ of my own experience of scores. The other dancers in my project no doubt each had their understanding; I did not explicitly discuss with the dancers what exactly they should do with the scores or even suggest that they might have a formative effect on our dancing.

In performing improvised dance, there is a difference between, on the one hand, not knowing while dancing what movement or impulse or relationship will come next, and on the other, searching for that movement. If I am able to allow myself to be comfortable with not knowing what comes next, I am able to be open to possibilities which arise in my (kinaesthetic) imagination. If I am pre-planning or anticipating or searching for the next movement, the possibilities are less. Scores support me to allow myself to not know what comes next: they are a prop, a ruse, a pretence which, while giving me the illusion of ‘knowing’ in my dancing, allow me to not know. Thus while scores are usually in the form of a verbal or visual statement their role is to ‘act’ rather than to define.

The use of a score to support the possibility of not knowing seems to be shared by other dance improvisers. Yvonne Meier describes the use of scores in her work,

I was watching myself all the time. So you take a score and your mind gets relief. You’re only busy with that score. Of course then you’re using the score, the score enters your body, so you have the score work your dance, make your dance.

It is as though a score is allowed to have authority within the process in its own right interacting with the physical history in the body which also has its authority.
Mark Tompkins says, ‘We can allow ourselves to do anything because at the same time, we’re supported’. It is this existence of a structure or score which allows him to dance in the way he does. In describing what that score could be, he says,

It’s a line in space, a change in the light, the body falling…It’s a lot of off balance, being off center, the sensation inside an articulation, the speed at which I come near somebody, or at which I go away. These are very physical situations, I can see them and I can touch them.

A score could be almost anything. Using scores is a combination of what it manifestly proposes and how it is allowed or employed to influence, affect, notice or feed the dancing which comes while using it.

Steve Paxton’s small dance, which, as mentioned above, I first encountered in a workshop taught by KJ Holmes, is an example of a verbally conveyed score that has been shared and communicated between and by a large number of people reaching far beyond Paxton’s initial devising and use of it. Described by Sally Banes in *Terpsichore in Sneakers* as a ‘…a warm up done while standing…sensing gravity and becoming aware of one’s breathing, peripheral vision and balance…’, the small dance as a verbal score is at once a physical instruction and an invitation to be attentive to the (dancing) body. In a transcription of the verbal sharing of information in a series of classes taught by Paxton in 1977, he describes the small dance, also named the stand as ‘continuing to perceive mass and gravity as you move’. To perceive ones own mass in relation to gravity is both personal and changeable. I could be attentive to my mass and gravity while dancing on numerous occasions and perceive it differently, slightly or significantly, every time. As Paxton suggested to the participants in his class, that perception is ‘…always new but so ancient…’. The invitation implied in the small dance shared between many dancers over many years is a suggestion for possibility as well as an instruction but not a means to achieve something particular.
In an interview in 1994, nearly twenty years after the transcribed workshops, Paxton describes the small dance:

Tuned to gravity, reflexes arrange our skeletons, aligning weights and proportions to maintain our stand. Noticing the Small Dance gives the mind a way to tune to the speed of reflex.\(^{60}\)

This more recent description of the small dance by Paxton is refined, as though he has shared it often in the intervening years. It is not, however, significantly different from the proposition he conveyed in the earlier workshop. The small dance is a way of perceiving and being attentive to the body: 'feel the play of rush and pause of the small dance...its always there...'.\(^{61}\) Its openness allows it to be a tool which can continually be revisited by a dancing body that is becoming in its present.

**Score versus open improvisation**

Some practitioners communicate about their work in terms of ‘open’ or ‘closed’ scores. An open improvisation might be one without any score at all. There may be a group of dancers who have worked/performed/improvised together many times and so they deliberately leave the work open to let their familiarity with each other be the score. Or perhaps they have had no experience with each other but are interested to see what would happen if they leave the possibilities very open. Anna Halprin felt liberated by working out that she could vary her work in terms of how ‘open’ or ‘closed’ the scores were. She even gave some of her scores a number from one to ten with the most open being one. One of the purposes that served was to let the dancers know what to expect. In a very open score, giving it a number closer to one could signify ‘Please don’t expect to be told what to do’.\(^{62}\) In working in this way, Halprin would have been able to vary her relationship to the dances she created (or within one dance) in terms of her specific direction of what the dancers were to do as well as varying the possibility for the dancers to have agency in the creation.

Solo improviser Suzanne Cotto describes starting from ‘zero’ where she has no plan; she has not prepared anything. Yet as soon as she begins to
perform, in fact even before she begins, memory and impressions arise for her which influence her performance. These described impressions seem to be physical as well as imagined memories. The physical history in her body has come about through her dancing history and through her practice. By practising with a particular thought or intention even if that intention is just to dance, the body is becoming tuned with that intention. In improvising, parts of that history will arise whether they are searched for or hoped for, whether they are noticed when they arise. In performance, even if there is no planned score, such as in Cotto’s ‘zero’, the score is that there is no score, and the dancing from practising, even if that too comes from the score no score, will be the dancing which is performed.

Even if an improvisation is very ‘open’ there will be understandings between participants, histories of shared knowledge, similar bodily experiences or even just active senses which act like scores. Acknowledged or not, these implicit scores affect the action during improvising. An open improvisation, in a group dance, also seems to bring with it a shared responsibility for the real-time creation of the work. As well as dancing as an individual, each member is jointly responsible for what unfolds between them. They will be attentive not only to what is taking place in their own bodies but to what is taking place in the bodies of others, in the space, how the venue and/or the set-up of the situation effects them, and then make decisions based on those elements.

Dancing solo and dancing in groups
It seems that scores for solo and scores for group work are very different. In making decisions about dancing solo there are the movement choices to consider, spatial choices, rhythm to name a few. In dancing in a group improvised dance, another consideration is the relationship between the dancers. All of the other considerations will be affected by the relationship between the dancers: as Simone Forti puts it ‘…human problems interweave with choreographic problems’. In making group work Dana Reitz talks about how to make the dance which she has made as a solo, work as a group dance, ‘…it’s been a matter of trying to find out how to be individuals in that space, tuned in to each other’. In my project, all of the scores we used were for a soloist and did not relate to the action of the group. The possibility for us
to be a group existed in the dancing we came to share through practising together over time, and in the way our dancing was perceived by its witnesses.

Our scores
The scores we used came into being through dancing. I would describe them as physical where physical related to the body itself or a part of it; or the body in space or time. Most of the scores we used were about things a body could do in space and/or time (falling, tossing, riding) and how those things could be done (accelerating, interrupted). I planned each session by choosing a particular ‘theme’, such as falling to begin or encompass our explorations and we usually used the theme at the start of each session. Some themes we used for many sessions in a row, others we used only once. To find scores within a theme in order to share them, I would dance. If I began dancing with the theme falling, I might notice several things which were taking place in my dancing, for example, the relationship between falling and speed, allowing and inhibiting falls and falling as beginning. I would then suggest those scores for a starting point for the first warm-up dance of the session. Although I began the process of finding scores each session by introducing the initial theme and scores, once we began, the finding and sharing of scores became the realm of the whole group. I did not explicitly state that the scores should be of this physical type that I was myself, using nor were any scores ever rejected. However, the type of scores and the way I went about finding them quickly came to be used by all of the members of the group.

We sometimes found scores through experiencing dancing as I have described above and at other times we watched each other dance and found short verbal phrases to describe what we saw. These descriptions could be literal, for example, riding momentum or more poetic such as touch and go. The scores that came from watching were sometimes given back to the same dancer and other times passed on to another. Just like the small dance, our scores could be both a physical instruction and an invitation to be attentive. The physical instruction was not an instruction to do something in particular but rather an instruction to play with what those words could mean in the body. A score such as allowing and inhibiting falls could be used in such a
way that movement was generated from using the score as an instruction; falls may have consciously been allowed or inhibited. It could also have been used as an opportunity to notice, when dancing, whether and how falling was allowed or inhibited.

I wrote most scores down, particularly so I would have a record of them. We would often use the recorded list to choose one or two scores from with which to solo, sometimes using an often used and familiar score, at other times choosing scores which we found sticky or frustrating only to find how fruitful they could be. When performing, it was open which scores we would use, how many scores we used and how long we would use them for. Some dancers liked to ask another to select a few scores for them from the list; others liked to pick one or more depending on how they felt. The scores were always available to enable dancing rather than to determine it.

**Images working on the body**

*Images and somatic practices*

Scores may do more than provide an excuse or a structure for open-ended improvisation, as important as that might be. Scores may be suggesting to the dancer that they do something in particular such as move in a particular way or with a certain way of being attentive to their dancing. Elizabeth Dempster talks about image-based movement education such as Ideokinesis, and Alexander Technique as using the idea that there is an interrelationship between ‘mind’ and ‘body’, between thought and action. ‘This premise is supported by recognition of the ability of a mental image to generate motor response and concomitant kinaesthetic feedback’. Dempster describes an active and a receptive mode in the participation in directed imagery situations. The integrated engagement of both the active and the receptive (but not passive) modes of consciousness supports motor learning. Anatomical images are used to support a movement response in the body. Rather than directing a particular image, an image is ‘allowed’, the ‘…active focus is relaxed and the thought is allowed to drop into the unconscious’. This receiving or allowing of the image often takes place with the body in stillness. The ‘allowing’ of the image can help the information in it to be embodied and inform the imagined action through the neuromuscular
pathways. It can lead to a new bodily experience even though no visible movement has occurred. The repeated use of an image or series of images helps to deepen and process the kinesthetic understanding which the images allow, and the possibility to notice and consolidate changes in the body. The transformation of the image into moving is a process which also needs to be 'allowed'. The transformation takes place at a neuromuscular level, that is, the process in which information is sent to the muscles from the brain via the neurons, and this supports noticeable changes in movement ease and balance in the musculoskeletal system.

Dempster writes that the reason for using imaging when still is in part because, when the use of the imagination increases, activity usually drops off.\(^69\) The images can then be taken into movement by using simple, well-known, developmental actions such as rolling and crawling to start off with and then gradually moving in a more complex way. It is also possible to understand the image kinesthetically before beginning to move. This is based on a person’s existing kinesthetic memory which could be incited with the introduction of an image and then integrated with the new sensations that moving with the image brings about. In our practice, there was little use of scores while our bodies were in stillness. In using a score we began with dancing and continued to dance to find out what that score ‘meant’ in our bodies. We did not use scores with an intention to deliberately change or shape our dancing.

Bodily images can be used choreographically as well as for kinaesthetic education. Dempster writes, ‘...thoughts and images, anatomical or otherwise can take form in the body, and by extension, in choreographic works\(^70\). In interviewing Joan Skinner about her Releasing Technique, Dempster asked how the images from the improvisation practice related to the dancing in the performance. ‘So the image was the bridge?’ Skinner replied: ‘The image, focused on during performance became the bridge, because that’s the way they work in class\(^71\). The image formed the ‘bridge’ from practising to performing. It allowed dancers to retain the active essence of their practising, and was useful particularly because that dancing from practising can change significantly in the presence of an audience.
Isabelle Ginot has written about the ‘body image’ and the ‘body schema’ from the model by Shaun Gallagher as a way of considering the ‘Awareness Through Movement’ (ATM) lessons used in the Feldenkrais method. The body image and the body schema are two separate levels of the body, which interact with one another. The body image comes from a complex set of conscious experiences such as attitudes and beliefs and mental representations. ‘Thus the body image involves a reflective intentionality’ and it comes in to play in the active learning of new motor patterns. The body image is made up of three aspects: the body percept, the body concept and the body affect. The body schema on the other hand involves ‘pre-conscious, sub-personal processes that play a dynamic role in governing posture and movement.’ The maintenance of posture and the everyday moving of an adult body is accomplished through its body schema. The templates for action of the body schema form the background for conscious actions. These accomplishments of the body schema are non-conscious and so difficult to describe or directly effect. There are three main aspects of the body schema, namely, habitual movements, postural information and sensorial communication.

Body image and body schema have different relationships to space. Body image is concerned only with one’s own body, whereas body schema integrates us with surrounding aspects of space that affect movement, such as doorways or objects directly relating to movement, such as tools. Body image and body schema are both continually re-adjusting rather than being fixed. They are also constantly interacting and affecting one another. ‘…certain functions or actions integrated by body schema may migrate to body image (by way of awareness…) just as vice versa (by way of learning and integrating new motor schemas)’. During improvisation, the interrelationship between the body schema and the body image is at play. While the embodied history and memory, the body schema of the dancer, is allowing and supporting the dancing, the body image, is feeding into that dancing through the conscious enacting and decision-making stimulated by impulses, by physical situations (such as falling), by memories and by
scores. Both the body schema and the body image are in constant communication and adjustment; they are not fixed.

Ginot describes how the Feldenkrais ATM works in terms of body image and body schema. A Feldenkrais ATM has a ‘movement theme’ at the basis of its structure such as walking, rolling or moving from lying to sitting.\(^6\) The aim is to ‘improve’ this action. The practitioner gives verbal instructions while avoiding physical demonstration. The participants follow the instructions using their existing movement experience and their conceptual understanding of what is being said. The practitioner repeats, rephrases and enriches the instructions and the participants repeat the action many times. The information given by the practitioner might at various times, throughout the giving of the instructions, include information about the starting position for the movement, what the movement is (for example turning head to the right), where the attention could or should be brought to and particular information which relates to the Feldenkrais method or to anatomical or physiological knowledge.

At the conclusion of an ATM lesson, a participant may experience a noticeable change in their body such as in standing, walking or moving. Part of this change may be conscious and describable, such as a shift in the feeling of where weight is falling, and part of it may be less describable. The change has taken place in both the body schema, (the part not available to conscious words) and the body image, (the conscious part). If the change in the body persists, becomes habitual, then the participants will, over time, stop noticing it. Then it will be part of the body schema. The possibility for the body schema and the body image to be in interaction in the ATM lesson exists not just through the words that are used in the instructions during the ATM, but in the opportunity for the participant to repeat the action many times with instructions which are varied and offer different types of information about the action they relate to. This brings to the surface the kind of interaction between the body schema and the body image which is not usually noticed in everyday activities. Feldenkrais ATMs are able to support a change in the body schema for example in posture or perceptual possibilities.
by working with the body image through repetition with instructions, promoting attentiveness to new areas and movement qualities.

**Our practising with scores**

In order to discuss the work of scores in our practising and how that work relates to Goodman’s ideas, instructions and images in somatic practices such as Ideokinesis and Feldenkrais, and the use of scores by other improvisation practitioners, I will briefly describe what took place in our practice sessions. Over the period of my project, we followed the same structure in each practice session, twice a week for three years.

We began with a ‘solo warm up’ in which we spent 10-15 minutes dancing by ourselves without being watched, to prepare our bodies for dancing both through gradually working through the body’s needs in a more general sense and through entering in to ‘this body now’.77 Before we began the solo warm-up, I introduced a score, which we usually continued to explore for the rest of the session. An example is *the body in the intangible space*. When I suggested that score I also elaborated by offering a group of related scores: *the body inhabiting the space, the body taking up space, the body moving through space, the body in space, the space around the body, the space inside the body, the trace the body leaves behind in the space, the effort it takes to move through space, being still in the space, the space left behind.* The use of the score in the solo warm-up allowed both a starting point for dancing and an entry in to being attentive to our bodies and dancing. We began in stillness. Sometimes the score would be a way to start moving. For example in using *being still in the space* and *the effort it takes to move through the space*, I could begin in stillness and then begin to introduce moving by noticing the effort required to move certain body parts in certain ways. From lying, I could draw my leg up to stand on my foot and then allow the knee to tip off and allow the leg to fall. In using *the trace the body leaves behind in the space*, I could begin to move without planning what that movement would be and use that score to notice what was taking place in the way my body parts moved through the space. There was no imperative to use all of the scores introduced, or even one of them. They may have been a starting point for an exploration which could take off on its own trajectory.
After our solo warm up, we usually had a quick discussion for about five minutes to share anything of interest which we had noticed while we were dancing. Dancing with the score *the body in the intangible space*, a dancer might have begun to notice the way her body parts were moving through the air and then started to perceive that the air was thick and required effort to pass through. This might have brought her to play between the amount of force she was using to move, either generated from her own body or by being subject to gravity, and how that force affected the moving of her body through the intangible space. A clear progression of experiences such as the one described may have been shared but often too, a dancer described an experience which was less easy to put into words. We then broke into couples or trios to begin an exercise which touch as a method for offering sensory information. We followed on from the initial score. To continue with the same example, after warming up with the consideration of intangible space, we used the touch to explore the moving of the body in space. The toucher approached their touching with the idea that their bodily contact should suggest a moving in space of the part of the body that they were touching. The person touching did not touch with an expectation that something particular would result from her touch. The touched person was under no obligation other than to receive that touch and be receptive to its possibilities, in her body. Having just been active in her solo warm up, her receptivity may have been coloured by the dancing and noticing, she had just been doing. She may have experienced something, such as the perception of the weight and effort used in moving through the space, which informed or affected her receiving of touch. When the touching began, the touched person remained still and usually had her eyes closed. After a period of time and when she was ready, she began to move. Her movements usually started as small movements which would gradually increase in range and complexity. The toucher continued to touch but gradually reduced the touches and eventually became a witness through watching only. From being an active toucher, usually with a score, the touching person became the watcher, her watching affected by her physical experience of touching with a score and the witnessing of how that touching may have been perceivable in the dancing she was watching. Once the touching ceased, the dancing
person had a bit more time (a minute or two) to explore what was taking place in her body. After she finished dancing, the two had a chance to discuss their experience, with the person who had just danced talking first. The practice of one-on-one, such as I have described, also exists in somatic practices such as Feldenkrais and Ideokinesis. The giving, receiving and sharing of information such as through touch, scores and images in this way allows there to be play between the body image and the body schema, between receiving and being active with questions which do not require an ‘answer’ but can be worked through in the body.

The next part of the practice session involved more dancing and watching. The way we structured this varied but it always involved an opportunity to dance oneself and watch another solo dancer several times in fairly short bursts, (two or three minutes). In the example I am using, we danced for three minutes one at a time, going through the group three times. The score was to see what was of interest in our bodies, both in dancing and in watching from the practise we had already done, and also to dance in the residue left in the space by the person who had danced immediately before us. The quick and repeating changes between dancing and watching were to allow each dancer to continue to discover what today’s dancing was with the same or changing scores while at the same time being refreshed by the sharing of information which witnessing another dancer allowed. The score of dancing in the residue left by the previous dancer was, as with all of our scores, available to dance with in whichever way each dancer ‘found’ in using it in that moment. It could be used in an intentional way such as following one of the pathways in the space the previous dancer had travelled or in a more receptive way such as being attentive to the possibility that some aspect, such as a facing or rhythm, of the previous dancer’s dance could be echoed (unintentionally) in our own.

The final part of the session was a solo for each dancer. We sometimes soloed by ourselves and at other times had two solos going concurrently. The solo usually lasted ten minutes, although it was sometimes shorter or longer, often depending on how much time we had left in the session (usually three hours). Sometimes we had a very specific new score such as the
composition of a dance in the moment, sometimes we just used the solo to relive our dancing interests from the session. A score such as *the composition of a dance in the moment*, could have been used to start to consider our dance as a whole as well as being immersed in the detail of each moment. After the practising we would already have taken part in, each dancer may have been attentive to a few areas of interest, such as the pathways of movement in the moving of body parts through space, present in our bodies. The *composition of a dance in the moment* may have allowed those areas of interest to be part of a whole in which we were noticing and perhaps choosing to repeat, modify or become aware of different aspects of dancing in relation to one or more scores.

*How is the dance written by the scores?*

The scores were not designed to have a particular effect or to make particular changes in anyone’s dancing. When we began practising, I thought that I would shape the dance, not through explicitly directing the dancing which was to take place, but through the use of scores, which were designed to result in a certain way of dancing. The more we practised, the clearer it became to me that not only were the scores not directly shaping the dancing, but that I did not want them to do so. The possibility to have this insight existed in the fact that I was a participant in the project. Through my own dancing I came to understand that the relationship between the scores and my own dancing was not causal. A score did not induce me to dance in a certain way, nor did it remind me of the way I had danced if I had used the same score previously. A score was not a map for what to do, nor could it authoritatively define a dance or a work from one instance of it to the next, in the way Goodman discusses.

The scores were not causal, nor did the dancing represent the scores. Representation could be described as something which stands for something else. A painting is often described as representing its subject, regardless of how much it actually resembles it. According to Nelson Goodman, a picture needs to do more than resemble something to represent it. It needs to be a symbol of it, ‘to stand for it to refer to it to denote it’⁷⁸. To represent something is not a matter of copying it but ‘conveying’ it. We did not think
about or aim for our dancing to convey the scores. I had no interest in our
dancing standing for or referring to the scores in a way which would be able
to be apprehended by our witnesses. Not only were we not aiming to convey
the scores, we were not aiming to convey anything specific that could be
made into a verbal statement. The recognition of an object which is
represented will depend on both the aspects about that object which the
viewer has previously noticed as well as how that viewer is used to seeing
that object depicted. Similarly, it may be that our audience perceived we were
‘expressing’ something but again this was not our intention. Our practising
and our scores did not deal with feelings or emotions. It may be that dancing
duced emotions to arise but we did not aim to make them visible, (though
nor would we necessarily hide them). Something being expressed that our
audience may have perceived, would have come from their own experiences
both directly, and by the ways in which they had previously experienced
feelings being expressed.

Exemplification is another often used method of symbolization in art.
Goodman describes exemplification as being ‘possession plus reference’79. A
work of art will relate to that which it is exemplifying by both having properties
of that thing and referring to it. A painting that exemplifies ‘red’ is both red
and refers to the colour red. A dance that exemplifies ‘fast’ is both fast and
refers to the nature of being fast. It may be that there are only one or some
properties of a complex idea or object which are being exemplified. The ‘fast’
may be the chosen aspect of something more complicated such as
acceleration and deceleration, which is being exemplified. Perhaps in
improvising dance, choosing what aspect of an idea or a score to exemplify is
not as clear as thinking and deciding and then acting. The choice may be
blurred, not consciously decided, or may be a bodily response to the
perceived meaning of a score. Exemplification may also be of ideas that are
non-verbal, that is, not concepts. Symbols from other systems, gestural,
sound, pictorial, diagrammatic and movement may all be exemplified.
Goodman writes that ‘…points of contact with language are enough to set the
direction.’80 Exemplification of the scores is, in some instances a good way to
describe what took place, although that was not necessarily our intention in
dancing with scores. If I use the example of falling, holding, reaching, riding,
it is likely that falling, holding, reaching and riding would have taken place at least at some point in the dancing with that score. By both having properties of those actions and referring to them, and exploring the physical implications of those actions in different movements and body parts, the dance may have been exemplifying them. Our dancing with scores did not effect a simple causal relationship yet there is no doubt that, at times, there would have been an aspect of a score, such as falling, which became physically manifest in our dancing with that score. We quite often talked about what a score might ‘mean’ in our bodies or dancing at a particular time. ‘Meaning’ seemed to be a good word to use because it allowed us to discover, through dancing what the relationship between the score and the dancing could be without the expectation that the score was commanding us. Falling could be discovered to ‘mean’ the whole body falling; it could be the dropping of one body part; it could be standing still and feeling the affect of gravity while using the structure of the body to resist it; it could be the momentum sent somewhere else in the body after an initial fall. These examples are all of conscious perceptions or deliberate actions which may take place while dancing with a score. There are many more non-conscious actions which may have taken place as a result of patterning or bodily habits, still in relation to the score. As Goodman suggests, exemplification is potentially much more complex than its starting point of a word or a perceived meaning of a word. In our practising, the staring point of a score, the whisper of something, which we thought we might know or have an association with, allowed us to enter in to dancing, into an unstable situation and find, in our bodies, what that dance could be.

The possibility to dance while ‘not knowing’ existed in our way of dancing with scores. We were using scores while not having an expectation of anything particular, or anything at all, being produced. The suggestion of Yvonne Meier’s, of letting the score work the dance, describes the constant possibility for the score to be part of our dancing without the obligation for it to inform it, or for the dancing to represent it. We talked about having a ‘light hold’ on the relationship between the score and the dancing. That hold could be tightened in times of need, that is, it could be consciously referred to, to initiate, adjust or affect the dancing in some way. At times the hold would
Scores and images working on our bodies

As I have suggested, we were not representing the scores in our dancing or aiming to convey certain aesthetic ideas or values by our use of them. I have also said that I was not aiming for the scores to have a direct, specific affect on our bodies or dancing. In Ideokinesis and in other somatic practices, the use of images which are physical or anatomical, support the imagining or re-imagining relationships within the body, in order to renew or clarify corporeal understanding or to adjust alignment and movement. As Dempster also notes, those bodily images can be and often are used in movement and dance creation.81 An example of using an image to bring about dancing is described by Joan Skinner:

Starting out with the breath; the breath moves very much like the sea, it ebbs and flows like the sea, the sea of breath and the whole self can melt into the breath and float in it. Then the bones begin to soften, as they are floating they soften into sea sponges….So this becomes the dance, the dance of the bones floating as soft, moist warm sea sponges.82

This image is of a kind which Skinner calls an ‘image action’. Such images are designed to encompass the whole body and it is the image that brings about the moving. The dancers ‘…just totally blend with the image and become the image.’83 Another kind of image Skinner uses is one for releasing a high level of energy. An example of this is the whole body being transformed in to ‘serpentine spines’: ‘Serpentine energy releases its power - no warning!’84 Skinner argues that the two kinds of images can make changes to body texture and energy that are quite specific. Although they are open to many interpretations and do not necessarily prescribe the movement which will result from dancing with them, they would certainly have a particular affect and have been conceived for that purpose. As previously mentioned, I began using scores in improvising because of my experience in the improvisation practices of others. Looking back, I believe I thought that I
was using scores in my dancing in a similar way to the way images are used in work such as Joan Skinner’s, or in Ideokinesis, even though that was not really my reason for using scores. I have participated in a range of somatic practices as a student, working in dance companies and in workshops and I feel familiar with the use of images in this way. Also, because I use scores that are related to physical experiences and the body rather than emotional or psychological scores, it makes sense that I would use the scores to directly affect our bodies and our dancing. Now I realize that although at times our scores did have a direct effect on our body texture, states, energy, and at times our dancing was exemplifying the scores, the relationship between our scores and our dancing was less direct, more tenuous and less easy to map than the use of images intended to directly affect the body. The role of the scores was more about a way of being attentive to what was happening in the body and perhaps a way to harness or perceive a will to dance than a way of generating movement.

In Ideokinesis and other bodily practices, as already noted, much of the initial encounter with an image takes place with the body in stillness. In stillness, or as motor activity is less, the use of the imagination can increase. Also in stillness, an image which is aiming to support something specific, such as efficient moving, cannot be undermined by bodily habits which counteract that efficiency and which come into play or reaffirm themselves as such as we move. In my project, most of the use of scores took place when we were moving. Even when being touched by another dancer, that touch often involved the moving of our body for us. Rather than using a score to change or replace movement habits, such as the image in ideokinesis, we used scores to notice our habits, to embellish our habits or to intermingle with our habits. We did not need to be still to allow for our imagination to be activated and then inform our moving, but rather our imagination was activated by the moving our bodies already knew, being perceived through the frame of the score. When we were being touched, our bodies, or parts of them would be moved for us in a way which may not have been part of our habitual moving. At those times, the scores which were either for the way we were being touched, or for how we would receive the touch allowed us to feel our body moving, in relation to a score without having generated that movement. We
were not using scores to think ahead about how we might move or change our moving but rather to interact with our moving while it was happening. In somatic practices there is often repetition of descriptions or instructions while the body is receptive to this information. Rather than repetition, we used the constancy of moving and perceiving moving while allowing the possibility to notice rather than desiring an effect. The very participation in our dancing, with scores, supported a particular attentiveness which made our dancing all it needed to be and all we hoped it would be in that moment.

Considering the interrelationship between the body image and body schema, as described above, is useful in understanding some of the work of the scores in our practising. The body schema was our dancing habits, the dancing our bodies already knew. Our conscious connection to a score could be said to involve our body image. That conscious connection allowed us to notice how our habitual dancing related to the score we were using. At times that connection helped us change the way we were dancing in some way, to adjust it or to notice what we weren’t doing. Using the example from above, falling, holding, reaching, riding, we could have started dancing with a very general kind of ‘feel’ of embodying the score. Not necessarily doing each of those actions or even exemplifying them but maybe starting with the kind of momentum which would allow the possibility of them. From here, dancing in a way which mostly came from our body schema, we may have started to notice some or all of these actions taking place in our bodies. It may have been that in one movement all of those actions took place; one part of the body held, say the pelvis, while the rest of the body reached, generated momentum, rode and then fell. Or perhaps over a period of several seconds, all of those actions involving the whole body took place. From noticing, which the score allowed us, we might have moved on to adjust a movement, repeat a movement to feel that sensation more deeply, or we might have tried to find other movements which evoked the sensation which we were beginning to understand as the ‘meaning’ of the score that day.

Scores speak to the body image itself in dialogue with the body schema. Conversely the dancing that our bodies already knew, induced conscious thought to occur in relation to the scores, which in turn adjusted our dancing
habits. The adjustments that took place, because of their being non-deliberate, were both subtle and perhaps slow to take affect. We did not deliberately change our body schema in the way Ginot describes that Feldenkrais ATMs may. Rather, we allowed the interaction between our body image and body schema, which resulted from dancing with scores, to slowly adjust our body schema over time. They were not conscious changes but changes which took place because of the interaction of the conscious with the non-conscious and it was only possible for them to take place over time. One of the dancers in our group talked about experiencing a ‘gap’ between the score and her dancing which stretched and shrunk even while she danced. She noticed that she could be quite conscious of the score and that her ‘gap’ was how close she felt her dancing was to what she imagined dancing that score was. The size of the gap changed both as a result of deliberate choices as well as the allowing of the dancing to be what it was and noticing how close that dancing was to the score. She felt no compulsion to have the gap close but was comfortable with letting it stretch and shrink throughout her dancing.

The score and the group
For a period of about four weeks, we explored our understanding and experience of ‘dynamics’ in our dancing. We practised with many scores which I felt would direct our attention to the dynamics in our dancing. When I planned this exploration, my first thought was about what ‘dynamics’ actually means; what the word dynamic means and how I understand dynamics as they pertain to my own dancing. For me, noticing dynamics is noticing the range of energy and force in my dancing, whether that energy is generated from my body, or I am subject to it (such as through gravity). ‘Dynamics’ is a very commonly used term in contemporary dance but I have been in many situations in which the term ‘dynamics’ is used without it being qualified or explained. I assumed that the dancers would have their own personal understanding of dynamics. Again I will use the term in the way I had come to use it through participating in dance and attempt to explore or understand what it might mean in the way we used it our practice. I looked up ‘dynamic’ in the Chambers Dictionary (1988) so that we could start with a shared definition.
Initially I suggested physically exploring scores such as using a high dynamic (which is probably really a high level of energy), a low one and the in-between possibilities. What constituted a particular dynamic in our bodies? Could a dynamic be high while the body was moving slowly? Did having a high dynamic mean we needed to have high muscle tone? What was the relationship between dynamic and rhythm? Very soon after I had suggested these scores and we began to explore them in our bodies, it became clear to me that we did, in fact all have a very different understanding of what the term ‘dynamics’ meant. That is, what our dancing understanding of it was. One dancer described her experience of a high dynamic always being accompanied by a high level of muscle tone. When she tried to separate the two, she felt that she could not understand (in her body) what a dynamic was any more. Another dancer had a way of dancing which she associated with high dynamic. This way of dancing included the use of momentum which she built up in her own body by winding it up, and also by using the potential that gravity offered her. She felt that if she was not dancing in this particular way, she wasn’t using a high level of dynamic.

This is one example of many which came up, in which our verbal descriptions of our experiences of using scores differed greatly. In instances such as these, I did not feel a need to reconcile the information so we all had the same understanding. Nor was I interested in directing which of the experiences was preferable or most aligned with my artistic interests. Instead I used these situations to allow us to hear, see and feel how other members of the group apprehended information and used the scores with the intention that our experiences individually might become broader (through seeing and sensing what dynamics meant to others) and become more mutual over time, not because we worked towards sharing the understanding of scores with each other but because we somehow ‘agreed’ to share our dancing without consciously changing our own perceptions.

The fact that we were unable to come to a common understanding of what the term ‘dynamic’ was in our bodies and yet to each dancer it did mean something, demonstrated two things for me. The first was that it didn’t really
matter what the dancing was that resulted from using a particular score. The possibility to re-negotiate our relationships as individuals with levels of speed, energy etc as mentioned above, was much more important than the particular dancing which was taking place as a result of using a particular score. This is not to say the dancing was unimportant, it was the most important aspect of the project, but that by using a particular set of terms, or a particular score, I did not expect that a certain ‘way’ of dancing would follow.

The other was that our use of words in scores, or our specific use of language was only one of the ways we communicated about our dancing. Watching and touching each other and the use of tacit understandings about dancing which were never brought into language played a significant role in our communication. Words were one layer of a complex system of communication which developed within the group, enabled by the starting point of scores. This communication came both from experiences we brought to the group and from the discoveries we made while dancing together.

The agency of the dancers
The use of scores in the way I have described enabled the authorship of our group dance to be dispersed amongst the individuals. Goodman describes a painting as autographic due to it being painted by one artist and it being created in one stage. A work of traditional classical music using a notational score is allographic seeing as it comes into existence in two stages: it is created by its composer and then interpreted in performance by musicians. A score, according to Goodman can be what authenticates an allographic work. An autographic work does not need a score. It is its own authentication since it is not interpreted. The question of the author of our dance is complicated. The scores, rather than allowing the dance to be authenticated, allowed the agency of all of the members of the group in its creation, not merely its interpretation. The scores, had a different dancing ‘meaning’ and effect for each dancer. Practising with scores over time supported the individual dancing of each member of the group. Scores had short-term effects on body image and long term effects on body schema. Implicit changes took place in an individual dancer’s dancing while they were dancing with scores,
participating in the practice of the group. Those changes in the dancing of individuals were also changes which over time, allowed them to become part of the emerging group.

*Scores mediating between the bodies of the dancers*

Up until this point, I have mostly been describing how we danced with the scores as individuals. While it is important to think about and describe how I have come to understand what has taken place, it is only one part of the picture of our practising and on its own does not encompass the work of the scores in creating the group dance. Our dancing and our dancing with scores became what it was over time because of the way we were dancing with scores as a group. As well as being significant in the way we danced with them, the scores mediated between the dancers and the use of scores structured our group.

In our practice, communication included dancing and watching each other dance, touch, and verbal communication. In all of this communication, scores were the point around which the conveying and receiving of information took place. The scores allowed us to have a common spoken language to depart from; a starting point for conceptual communication which took place otherwise mostly through our bodies (‘embodied thought’). We agreed that we didn’t always mean or understand the same things when we used the same scores. The real understanding of what a score ‘meant’ for another member of the group was found in our witnessing of their dancing. Just as we all shared open-endedly, the same scores in dancing, we also shared them in watching. In practising with scores over time, in dancing with them and in watching them being danced with, we became a group who shared a group dance.
What is a work?

In engaging in this research project, practising with one particular set of ideas over a significant period of time, my aim was to question my assumptions about how I would make a work, rather than simply making one. At the conclusion of the practice period, I presented a group dance for examination, and shared it with members of the public. Did I present a work? Over the period of the project I have come to (re) consider the notion of a work both through my attentive participation in the group practice and through my writing and imagining as an onlooker. In the following chapter, I will discuss the conventional perception of a contemporary dance ‘work’ and explore whether what was taking place in our practising was the creating of a work.

In contemporary dance, the term ‘work’, as a noun, is used frequently to describe the performance that is witnessed by an audience. At the beginning of a choreographic process, a choreographer sets out with the aim of making a work, which will be the ‘product’ of that process. The presentation of a contemporary dance to the public is often called a work. In *Poetics of Contemporary Dance*, Laurence Louppe questions the idea of an art-work and specifically the idea of ‘work’ in contemporary dance. She refers to Roland Barthes in suggesting that a contemporary dance work is considered a work not because of what it is intrinsically but because of its relationship to its ‘origins’86: ‘…it is now determined not so much by its engendering as by its external form…its characteristics, where it locates itself (which takes us back
A work is an object which can be identified as a work (such as suggested by Goodman), because it has a defined relationship not only to its author but to existing 'works' both in the present and from which it may be considered to be canonically derived. A work may be considered to be placed in the 'market', that is, perceived by its audience to be one of many consumable objects which are of the same category (a contemporary dance performance). That work is, by being viewed by the public, subjected to a judgement of 'taste' which is relative to other works in the 'market' rather than only to itself. A 'work' is a single entity which a score, as described by Goodman, can stand for. That 'work' can be repeated and is guaranteed by its score. I have suggested that the scores I am using are scores which, although not complying with Goodman's definition of scores, and having little to do with standing for a repeatable entity, are integral to the making of our dancing and our dance. The following discussion explores what a work is or more specifically, whether in conducting my research, I created a work and if so what the relationship was of the scores as we used them, to that work and its making.

In *From Work to Text*, Barthes, discussing literary works, suggests the need to question the notion of a work because of changes in the understanding of language brought on by developments in disciplines such as linguistics, anthropology and psychoanalysis. He suggests that a 'work' is something which is fixed and that the 'text' which may or may not be part of a work is not a discrete object that may be known but a slippery, playful, multitude of meanings. Text is 'experienced only in an activity of production' and across several works. Barthes writes that a work 'closes in on a signified'. The work functions as a determinable representation of information for which there is evidence or as the true meaning of something which must be discovered or revealed. Text in contrast, defers signification infinitely and relies, instead, on 'a serial movement of disconnections, overlappings, variations'. It could be that the text, in the case of my project, is not comparable to 'the dance' but the dancing. The dancing textualises, in Barthes sense, the verbal score or statement. It can show how it only 'means' in an 'activity of production' or doing. Dancing in the present is the site at which 'meaning' in relation to scores is discovered and experienced. The
meaning exists only in the present and it is not a universal meaning nor even one which can be known by another. It is woven from the meanings attributed to it by the dancers and its audience. A score has a different effect as each individual dances with it and at each revisitation of that score. Just as Barthes’ ‘text’ has meaning or signification which is constantly deferred and plural in nature, so does our dancing with scores.

Our dancing can also be compared to Barthes’ ‘text’ in the way that the dancing is generated without explicit coordination from or by an author or ‘father’ choreographer. It continues to ‘belong’ to each individual dancer even as it is presented to the public in what might traditionally be considered the ‘work’. Barthes writes that a work is attributable to a ‘father’ and that, ‘As for the text, it reads without the inscription of the father’\textsuperscript{92}. I would not say that the inscription of the ‘father’ is not present in each individual’s dancing. I was the instigator and organiser of the project and its continuing existence was driven by me. There was also a non-conscious appropriation of some of the ‘ways’ of dancing of each other through watching each other in our shared practice. But I believe as Barthes writes, each dancer’s dancing ‘reads’ as its own dance, as its own solo, as it exists within the group dance. It is ‘read’ by many readers: myself as its organizer, each of the dancers, each of its witnesses and each reader of this document.

Our use of scores allowed the authorship to be dispersed among the individuals and the practising of our group. Barthes writes that the interpretation of a score such as one by a performer in a music work, in the way Goodman describes an allographic work, has changed from merely adding expression, to become a role in which the performer is co-author\textsuperscript{93}. This description is similar to the way that scores are a part of our practice. Louppe writes that in the 1980s in France certain conceptual dance ‘works’ were deemed to have an ‘auteur’ as in the cinema, whose cinematic creations were aimed at preferencing ‘what the director has to say’ in order to free themselves from the commercial constraints of their industry\textsuperscript{94}. The ‘auteurs’ of dance, however, gathered together elements of dance to create spectacle rather than ‘writing’ a dance. The ‘choreographic signature’ became of importance in the defining the ‘work’ but only as a kind of label. I
will discuss the question of the authorial positioning in our group dance in more detail when I consider the notion of what the group is in the following chapter, however it is important to mention here that in exploring what a work is, that the question of authorship is critical.

If, as Barthes suggests, a work is a fixed object, then perhaps a dance work can only be considered a work if it is defined by one of Goodman’s scores; it is the same, as defined by its score, from performance to performance. The way we used scores guaranteed not a ‘work’ in a fixed and complete state, but that the dancers would create the dance both individually and together in the present. The ephemeral nature of a dance is what defines it as itself in any live performance and particularly one that is becoming what it is while it is being watched. Louppe writes, ‘Dance is not for nothing the privileged site of an impossible return, in the sense that movement continually opens to the immediacy of its own presence.’ Rather than the ephemeral nature of a dance being a curse, linking it to the inevitability that it is lost as a work once the performance of it has ended, it is that very loss of it which allows it to ‘shine’ before its moment of disappearance. It is possible for an audience to witness something in its creation and its ‘destruction’ in the same moment. The way we practised with scores took into account the momentary existence that our dance would have in performance. We did not need to define what our ‘work’ would be in a fixed state. We could practise and know that our practising would allow our dancing, our text to be witnessed as our ‘activity of production’ of dancing with scores.

This project
There are several aspects of my research project which have made it unlike any other choreographic project I have undertaken. The first is its duration. By the completion of the period of research, I had been working on the same practice with (mostly) the same group of dancers for three years. Over that period, only one dancer left the group and one joined us. In many ways it was like working with a formal company of dancers. The main difference being that in such a company it would rarely occur that only one ‘work’ would be created in this length of time.
My previous experiences of making dance have included both projects which I have initiated, and commissions from institutions and dance companies. The projects which I have initiated have involved writing grant proposals and acquittals and have resulted in public performance outcomes. In writing grant proposals, I have stated the plans for the work including such aspects of it as what its intention would be and how I would go about creating it. In creating works for commissions, I have been very aware of the need to fulfil a stateable purpose. At times that purpose has been a learning experience for the students/dancers on whom I was creating the work and at other times the work was also for a particular audience, such as secondary school students.

In this research project, my concerns, my working was framed differently. Although I presented a dance in order to be examined, I didn’t really know what that dance would be when I began the project. I was interested in discovering the possibilities for the dance from within practising, from within dancing. I wanted to place the emphasis of my research on investigating a creative process and to discover, indirectly, in practising, how my aesthetic interests were at work. It was possible to allow the working process itself to be the creator of the group dance. This is different from explicitly choreographing a dance and it is also different from directing the dancers’ creation of movement as a solution to ‘tasks’ or ‘problems’ as an auteur might. Improvisation may be used as a ‘tool’ in the creation of a fixed ‘work’ but I was interested in improvisation being the ‘process’ in which dancers participated and from which they created both the ‘group’ and the dance; not as an intentional ‘product’ but as a textualisation of attentiveness from practising with scores.

In creating ‘work’ which is to be placed in the ‘market’ to sit alongside other ‘works’ of its kind, there is often an ‘undesirable partner’. Louppe, describes this ‘undesirable partner’ who exists in the form of an ‘inner spectator’ judging the piece during its making ‘in the name of (ever changing) public opinion’. I have experienced the presence of this ‘inner spectator’ in many ways while creating dances. It could be during the creation of movement phrases (the spectator in this instance could be the dancers who will perform the movement), in shaping the form of the work or even in making decisions
about costumes or lighting. In this project, however, I did not have an imagined audience. I was aware of the prospect of the entire project being examined but I experienced this as an awareness of a judgment or assessment which was different from that of a conventional public, as it sat outside the need to form an opinion based on ‘taste’. It is possible that in having no ‘inner spectator’ there is the danger of the creative process being reduced to a narcissistic one which communicates little to others. Working as I was, however, in the situation in which the group and the contribution of the members of the group were paramount, alleviated this risk. I was free to explore a practice which I felt was uninhibited in the sense of not explicitly imposing its aesthetic values. The most powerful aspect for me was the possibility to present the research in a way which gave most preference to the dancing that came about through practising. It was a way of giving as little emphasis as possible to the creation and presentation of a dance ‘work’ in its traditionally understood form. By this I don’t mean that the experience of the audience as an audience was noticeably different. They sat in seats and watched a presentation in which dancers danced for a period of time under lights in costumes, (of sorts), etc. What I mean is that we did not spend time in the studio consistently working towards the building of a work. We did not have a period of practising and developing skills and then, when that period felt complete, turn our attention towards the ‘setting’ of the work. We were continually practising and it was the practice that we showed to the public (and the examiners) albeit framed by lighting, dance clothes chosen for the occasion and the presence of that public.

The reading and writing which is also part of the research project seemed very often to mirror or open up that which took place in the studio in the same time period. For several weeks we were dancing predominantly on the floor. This was a deliberate choice which I had made in order to open up our perspective (literally) in our dancing. During this time I was also reading Louppe’s writing about space. I came across the following passage, which seemed to drive directly into what we had been discovering in our bodies.

What is important is to see how the body, as the ascending-descending vector, links sky and earth in a double and concomitant
experience of high and low. In these ascending-descending spaces, verticality is not truly strong unless it allows what might cause us to lose it to oscillate.99

I read this passage out during one practice session and we allowed the consideration of it to sit in with other scores we were using in our dancing that day. I did not use it as a directive or as an answer to questions that had been arising in our bodies, but as a possibility to add to the mix of information (corporeal and conceptual) that we were already working with. The effect that reading out the passage had was not significant. I believe some of the dancers saw it as a poetic touching on some common information we were uncovering with our bodies. Others may have just seen it as a few more words to add to those we had been using. Even though the introduction of this passage did not have a definable effect on our practising or dancing, my choice to do so is significant in suggesting how this project was different to any other I have undertaken. The use of written text from outside my studio practice was unprecedented. I felt able to and interested in offering it to the group for two reasons. The first is that I have not ever taken part in the kind of extensive reading, writing and thinking outside of but alongside my studio practice as I have in this project. The possibility to come across writing which not only resonated with me but had the potential to become part of the way we understood our dancing enlivened the relationship between our dancing and my reading. Secondly, both the period of time over which the project took place and our way of practising which did not have a defined end ‘product’ as its goal, meant that I was free to introduce this writing when I came across it without fear that it would either take up valuable time which would be better used ‘producing’ something, or deflect us from a path which had already been determined. When I first read the passage by Louppe, I was very touched by it and felt that it described beautifully my experience of the relationship between dancing standing, and on the floor. I did not feel dismayed, though, that the other dancers seemed not to share my enthusiasm for it. I considered it to be much the same as a score (which is what it was) in that I didn’t feel a need for it to have a direct affect on our dancing. It became part of our practice alongside all of the other scores and therefore shared not only through the introduction of it as words but in the
way it may have touched the dancing of each of us, as it was perceived (perhaps non-consciously) through watching.

My understanding of my project was clarified and affirmed by David Bohm’s discussion of what he calls a ‘dialogue’ which is a possibility for people to communicate without there being an agenda or a hierarchy. He described it as ‘...a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us. This will make possible a flow of meaning in the whole group out of which may emerge some new understanding.’ Bohm’s idea is that there is an ‘empty space’ in the dialogue and the participants are not obliged to do anything or come to any conclusions. There may be a purpose or a starting point for the dialogue (Bohm gives the example of wanting the ‘human race to survive’) but it is not necessary to find the solution. In fact there is no one true solution to such a problem, rather the problem exists in order to induce communication. That induction of communication, which has no anticipated outcome, is comparable to the possibilities in dancing which our use of scores allowed.

Not having an ‘agenda’ allows there to be no need for a particular outcome at the conclusion of the dialogue. ‘As soon as we try to accomplish a useful purpose or goal, we will have an assumption behind it as to what is useful, and that assumption is going to limit us.’ Similarly, if I had approached my project with the aim of making a ‘work’, or, more specifically having a pre-planned idea of what the work or even a ‘work’ might be, I would have limited the possibility for genuine research. The way we practised allowed a ‘dialogue’ which continued each time we met. Not having a planned ‘work’ that we are aiming for allowed for the communication through dancing in the group, to have its own life or ‘flow’. There was no agenda or aim in terms of what we must have achieved by the end of a period of time. This allowed the continued preferencing of the practice, the dancing, the weaving of an open ‘text’ as Barthes describes it, or ‘dialogue’ itself.

The dance that we performed existed in the dialogue between the individuals in the group. It was not the outcome or the results of having been practising but the dialogue itself at that moment in time which was the dance that we
performed. The possibility for it to be performed existed in the significant period of practice and in its being placed in a context for it to be witnessed by an audience. The visible and apprehendable dance was the dancing that came from a shared understanding, built through the practising with scores. Laurence Louppe writes,

The dance company is the scene of tensional development par excellence. The ‘work of dance’ is to organize this scene. And what is more to render it still active and readable as such at the moment of performance.104

The dialogue was the condition for the ‘tensional development’. The dialogue was in the play which was at the edges of what we knew and what we didn’t know; between what our bodies remembered and their relishing of experiencing movement for the first time. This dancing play was possible because of the interactions in the group, between myself as the organiser of the project and the dancers and between all of us sharing our dancing and watching. The mechanism which allowed the sharing to exist was our use of scores as a point around which to communicate in dancing, watching, touching and speaking.

Each member of the group had agency in the creation of our dance. The dancers were not instruments or material which I used to shape my planned ‘product’, instead each dancer came to the project as full agents in the creative process. By participating in the project, the dancers agreed to its conditions which included their active involvement in a creative process which was open-ended. I learned over time that each dancer was making her own use of the scores: one dancer may have used a score such as many rhythms to notice how, over a period of time dancing, her dancing visited and was affected by many rhythms, sometimes one at a time, sometimes many at once. Another dancer may have ‘heard’ imagined rhythms and allowed them to describe her dancing to herself aurally. By dancing and watching each other dancing, regardless of whether we knew how each other made use of scores or even what scores we were using, we shared our practice. Each dancer came to the group with her own ‘aura’. I did not aim to shape those
auras into something else, something known, but rather allow them to remain part of the dancing of each dancer as she had agency in the making of the group dance, both in practising and in the present of performing. (I will discuss the 'aura' further in Chapter Five)

My interest in exploring what it might mean to create a group dance using scores rather than a solo, lay in the possibility for the dancing of each dancer, to allow her be perceivable as a soloist as well as a member of the group. Each dancer had her own dancing history which existed within her own body. Each dancer had her own rhythms, shapes, relationships with forces and weight and way of perceiving herself in space which I found remarkable to witness. On one hand I was working with dancers and not hoping for any dance in particular but on the other hand I was aware that witnesses to our dance would see it as a coherent event. In the past, in both making and watching dance I have often thought that the dance that is seen by any individual watching it may not always be viewed in the way its maker intended to be. I am not an ‘expert spectator’ but rather I view dance from within my own experience of being a dancer and a dance maker. I have often found myself watching what is of interest to me rather than, for example, the whole of the action that is taking place. I might become interested in a particular dancer and follow her without actively watching the dancers around her. In the interest of being sympathetic with the maker of a dance, I might try to watch a dance as a whole or even try to understand how its maker might have planned for it to be watched. If I ‘allow’ my watching, though, rather than deliberately directing it, my experience of witnessing it, my watching, follows a path determined by what becomes interesting to me in the present. My dancing experience may inform or alter the way I watch a dance but people who are not dancers would also view a dance in a way which comes from their own experiences. Goodman writes:

What will deceive me into supposing that an object of a given kind is before me depends upon what I have noticed about such objects, and this in turn is affected by the way I am used to seeing them depicted.¹⁰⁵
In making my dance, I decided I would try to avoid imagining how it would or should be perceived but rather think about its creation with an understanding and an expectation that each member of the audience would have their own experience of watching it. Each person who watched it would have found different parts of it to be of interest at different times. Sometimes one dancer and particular aspects of her dancing would have dominated a witness’s apprehension of the dance, while at other times it may have been aspects of the dance such as spatial relationships, a general perception of rhythm, the contrast between the action of two dancers or levels of force or energy which would have been at the forefront of their watching. Our practising particularly involved the practising of dancing with very little consideration of how the dance would exist or be perceived as a whole unity as it was witnessed. I did not view the aspects of our dance which made it perceivable as a unity unimportant but rather decided that by not considering it in our practising, I was allowing it to be watched by each individual in a way which was particular to them.

**Intention**

In offering a dance to be witnessed, as well as having an understanding of how my choices in the creative process affected the way it could be apprehended, I needed to understand what its intention was. I allowed my immersion in the practice over time to help me to come to an understanding of what the intention of our dance might be rather than beginning the project with a clear idea of what it was or would come to be. The intention of our dance came from my interest in creating dance, it came from practising and it came from the dancers in the group. Our dance was not ‘about’ anything, it did not have a story or a message. I was not aiming to use particular techniques, technologies or the results of collaborations with artists from other art-forms. It existed in the dancing just as the intention or meaning exists in Barthes’ ‘text’. Also, as in ‘text’ where the meaning is forever deferred, the intention or the meaning in our dancing was plural, slippery and ever-changing.

In Goodman’s discussion about the ways in which different art works might be understood in terms of how they relate to ‘the world’, he includes the idea
of exemplification. As discussed earlier, for Goodman, a work of art will relate to that which it is exemplifying both by having properties of that thing and by referring to it. A building in this way could be designed to ‘refer explicitly to certain properties of its structure’. This exemplification or way of meaning in the work, also applies to our dancing. I aimed for our dancing to be what the audience encountered. As an example Goodman writes about an architectural work which makes visible the ‘build of the building’. I endeavoured to make visible the dancing of the dance. As mentioned earlier, exemplification also exists in the way we used scores. John Cage describes his use of exemplification in presenting both music works and lectures. ‘My intention has been, often, to say what I had to say in a way that would exemplify it; that would conceivably permit the listener to experience what I had to say rather than just hear about it.’ The meaning exists not only in the content of the work but also in how the work has been created and how it is presented.

The intention of our dance was (in) its composition. Composition existed in a single moment, it existed for individuals and for the whole group through space and time, ’…composition in any art form and especially in dance, comes out of a mysterious visible or invisible, network of necessary relations and intensities.’ The composition of our dance was in three separate but simultaneously existing aspects of it. The first was in the bodies of the dancers. The composition was all of the layers of physical experience and knowing we found through dancing, watching and touching each other with scores. The dancing ideas which we experienced and witnessed again and again in the studio, such as the inevitability of our bodies being subject to gravity, were available to be apprehended by the witnesses of our performance. ‘The text of a work…. is borne firstly in the body of the performer.’ That which we knew, learnt, found and remembered was in our bodies. Each body, each dancer was different. We all had individual dancing experiences before taking part in this project. ‘Composing…is an exercise which begins from the personal invention of a movement or personal cultivation of a gesture or motif…’ We composed our bodies in the dancing we did with scores and in how that dancing stirred the interrelationship between our body images and our body schemas. (See below)
The second aspect of our dance in which composition existed was in the solo dance which each dancer created in real time. We often used the score, a composition, of a dance, in the moment. We used that score to consider each moment of dancing to be part of the whole dance. We usually used it towards the end of a practice session. We usually spent time earlier in the session working with a particular physical idea, such as falling. Adding that score to what was already in our bodies that day brought to our awareness the possibility that each movement or set of movements was part of a whole and that whole was available to be witnessed by an observer. The third was in the complete ‘event’ that was witnessed by our audience. As mentioned above, I was aware, while we were practising, that our dance could be available to be apprehended by each individual audience member depending on her experiences and interests both past and in the moment she was witnessing our dancing. Louppe writes:

The work of compositional legibility in dance is directed essentially towards arousing the intimate adhering of the ‘partners’ in the work (the performers and the spectators who are also ‘interprètes’), to participate in the interpretation…of a coherent artistic object…The work of the spectator is to accept, to enter into the paths of this legibility.\(^{113}\)

The dance that each audience member watched was being composed in real time by both the dancing soloist and the witnesses themselves as they apprehended bodies which had been composed through practising over time with scores.

**The human condition**

The ideas of labour, work and action have given me insight into the processes which took place in our period of practising. In her book *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt describes the essence of human existence, the *vita activa*, as being made up of three parts, labor, work and action. Labour could be described as repetitive physical activities whose purpose it is to sustain life; ‘Labour is the activity which corresponds to the
biological process of the human body...". Work is the means by which the artificial world in which we live is produced. It involves the use of the hands to create artifacts which are 'distinctly different from all natural surroundings'.

Action is the interaction between people, in both speaking and interacting physically, in a social way, and where that acting and speaking is its own purpose. In my project, labour, work and action were all at play simultaneously. I will re-consider the distinctions between them in order to use them to discuss how the participation of individuals as agents brought about the creation of a 'work' of which they were all part. The questioning of our practice and our 'work', by viewing it in terms of Arendt's *vita activa* offers me an opportunity to view it from the point of view of looking at a group of people gathering together to work cooperatively to arrive at a previously undetermined place at the end of a period of time. In other words the ideas of labour, work and action are ideas which help to de-centre my thinking about how a dance might be made.

**Labouring**

Labour, according to Hannah Arendt, is the repetitive physical activity which has no obvious resulting product, but which ties humans to their physical existence and sustains their life as such:

> It is indeed the mark of all labouring that it leaves nothing behind, that the result of its effort is almost as quickly consumed as the effort is spent. And yet this effort, despite its futility, is born of a great urgency and motivated by a more powerful drive than anything else, because life itself depends on it.

There is something of labouring in dance practice: a repetitious and simple use of energy seeming to sustain one as a dancer in the never-ending practice of dancing itself. A comparison of our practising with Arendt’s labour is useful because both labouring and our practising exist out of necessity while from the outside, at least, appearing to be futile. Labour is bound with the physical existence of humans, our practising, our continual and repetitive immersion of ourselves in dancing was what defined us as dancers in this project. There was certainly a purpose to this repetitive practice. Its purpose...
was not to ‘produce’ anything, however, or even to come to know anything in particular but rather to immerse ourselves in the noticing of notions, possibilities and attentiveness to our dancing and our dancing bodies by using scores. ‘…the labouring activity itself… possesses indeed a ‘productivity’ of its own no matter how futile and non-durable its products may be. This productivity does not lie in any of labour’s products but in the human ‘power’…’\textsuperscript{117} The nature of our practice was that it was ongoing and open ended and also that participation in it was a bodily participation that required a continual expenditure of energy which, while it did not produce anything, allowed each individual to continue to participate in the practice. Dancing is an opportunity to assert being an alive body. In labouring at dancing we used and reused energy that did not run out. The scores were a simple structure for continually reentering the use of energy which was our dancing. The attentiveness to our dancing which our use of scores supported allowed us to revisit our dancing time and time again. The scores allowed each new session of practice to be a new experience, even while we were dancing with the same structure. In dancing with the score, \textit{being subject to gravity}, I was allowing the feeling of falling to affect my movement when I found myself in stillness. Through not moving for a time, I began to understand the feeling of being subject to gravity in the way in which the body is not moving but still labouring, that is resisting gravity in standing vertically. Although I did not deliberately remember that feeling in order to revisit it, the physical experience became part of what my body ‘knew’ and arose unlooked for to be re-lived in my dancing. Each session of participating in practising involved some kind of experience (more or less significant or describable), which had the possibility of being re-lived. Our practising was ‘…primarily concerned with the means of its own reproduction…’\textsuperscript{118} as is labouring where those ‘means’ were the whisper of knowing which enlivened the continuing participation in our practice. The potential which was gained from this repeated physical practice was not finite. There was no point at which the practise was complete and unnecessary. More labour could always have been of use. ‘But the effort of labor never frees the labouring animal from repeating it over and over again…’\textsuperscript{119} Our practising didn’t have an end point at which we knew all that we needed to know to be ‘prepared’ for performing, after which no practising was necessary. When we performed our group
dance, for the public at the conclusion of the project, it was our labouring in that present which they witnessed as well as a product of our ‘work’.

Work
Distinct from labour, ‘work’ is the fabrication of something, the creation of a product to exist in the artificial world of humans. That product is not immediately consumable; it is durable. According to Arendt, humans work to create things: ‘works and deeds and words’ \(^{120}\), which are immortal, even though, or because, we are not immortal, and that is what makes us different from other animals. \(^{121}\) According to Arendt, an object created through work exists as a constant object which does not change once it has been created. This is in contrast to humans who are constantly changing. ‘In other words, against the subjectivity of men stands the objectivity of the man-made…’ \(^{122}\)

The object as it exists in time is the result of work as measured against the ever-changing person. In my project, Arendt’s concept of working needs to be refined. There was not a time when we produced something that was durable or that will last, yet the movement which we danced as we were being witnessed by another, was a moment of dance even as it was disappearing. The product of ‘work’ was not an object. It could, however, be considered to be the fabrication of bodies through practising with scores; the work was woven into our bodies. The work took place in real-time as observed by its witnesses. Our dance(ing) was not an object, (as in the way Barthes describes a work), which remains as an artefact of our working but it will exist in the experience and perhaps the memories and bodies of our witnesses. Arendt makes a special case for art which she acknowledges may not be as permanent or durable as other objects but is still the result of working.

It is as though worldly stability had become transparent in the permanence of art, so that a premonition of immortality, not the immortality of the soul or of life but something immortal achieved by mortal hands, has become tangibly present to shine and be seen, to sound and be heard, to speak and be read. \(^{123}\)
Our practising had the qualities of labouring. The labouring process was undertaken with the intention of an artist to create. Our working took place with a view to public performance. According to Arendt, something which comes into existence through work can only be considered as such as it appears in public. The viewing of something as the product of working is imposed on it as an object, subject to the ‘...ever-changing relativity of exchange between members of society.’ As we laboured in practising dancing with scores, we repeatedly opened possibilities to continue practising. When we presented our dance (practising) to an audience, they witnessed the working of our dancing on our bodies to ‘produce’ the dance as it came into existence and then disappeared.

In order to create a work, according to Arendt, a fabricator uses a model or plan. This model may be tangible or it may be in the imagination of the worker. ‘In either case, what guides the work of fabrication is outside the fabricator...’ This model, which guides the work is similar to a score in our practice in the way that it was the plan from which we began in order to create the dance. Although our scores may have affected the dancing which took place, however, they did not prescribe it. The scores existed as part of a structure in which the practising with them allowed the fabrication of a body dancing. Each single score at each time of dancing had its own relationship with the dancer and the dancing she did. A score was not a plan or model which we could follow or fulfil to make a dance. We did not depart from a score to arrive, through working, at a completed work but rather worked with the score in the present moment of the performance of the dance in order to create the body; ‘...movement makes the body at each instant’. Our structure of practising with scores, our repetitive labour and its open-ended conditions ‘produced’ not a durable object but a momentary exchange between ourselves as we used scores to work with our bodies and each member of our audience who perceived that dancing moment through the eyes of their own experiences.

Action
As well as labouring and working in our practising dancing, we were participating in action, where action, according to Arendt, is not instrumental
but rather a non deliberate yet unavoidable part of the interactions between individuals. Arendt writes that ‘Human plurality, the basic condition of both action and speech has the twofold character of equality and distinction.’ Each human is distinct from all others and it is this distinction that creates the need for acting and speech. If each person were the same, they would not need ‘action’ in order to understand one another.

In acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world... It can be hidden only in complete silence and perfect passivity, but its disclosure can almost never be achieved as a willful purpose.

Action for us was in the relationship between the dancers in our practising. The action between us allowed us to practise being who we were as dancers in a way that wouldn’t exist without the presence of each other. Acting and speaking, in our practice involved many interactions which existed outside verbal communication. As well as speaking, we danced for, touched and watched each other. Some of our communication was deliberate such as one dancer giving a score to another to dance with, or one dancer touching another using a particular score. Other interactions would have been less deliberate such as the (possibly non-conscious) recognition of a movement danced by another body which might have come from a rhythm which had begun in the body of a third dancer. The possibility to come to understand what our dancing with scores was and ‘meant’ existed in our interactions with each other, ‘... to be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act.’ It is only because of my relationship with the dancers in the practice, and the relationships between all of us, that anything at all took place. Real relationships and interactions within the practice allowed for discoveries and questioning, which would not have arisen without the group. Misunderstandings, interpretations of communication, the way one body explored an idea or danced with a score in a way which was different to another, could help us to perceive our dancing and the dancing of each other in ways we could not have planned or even been conscious of, in the present, or on reflection. ‘Being seen and being heard by others derive their
significance from the fact that everybody sees and hears from a different position.¹³⁰ In dancing and watching each other and in being watched, we shared what our bodies knew and what they were experiencing, we were affected by each other’s dancing even though those effects were neither planned nor even noticeable. The dancing knowing we shared did not need to be deliberate nor specifically directed, the sharing did not need to take place with an aim for commonality to become part of the group’s interactions which in their non-causal way, made our dance.

Each participant in my project was an agent in the creation of the group. By participating alongside and in interactions with the other members of the group, each individual, through her actions was part of the ‘story’ of the making of our dance. Even though each member understood what it might mean to ‘act’, the results of her actions could neither be planned nor even known to her. Action is not the willful doing which is associated with the deliberate making of ‘work’, but rather the disclosing of the distinctness of an individual, the results of which are open ended. Just as each dancer in my project had agency in her participation in our practice, an individual, according to Arendt, is the agent in her own appearance. That appearance does not have a known result or effect: ‘…the stories, the results of action and speech, reveal an agent but this agent is not an author or producer…nobody is its author.’¹³¹ In acting in my project each dancer was an agent in the open-ended interactions of our practising.

Considering our practising through the lens of Arendt’s *Human Condition* has shifted the terms of dance-making away from more conventional conceptualizing. I have come to regard our practising as preferencing the activities in which we participated over individualized roles such as that of the choreographer or dancer. As we acted, worked and laboured, we were taking part in corporeal processes as we shared in our dancing present. Our ‘capacity to act’ existed in a willingness of each member of the group to reveal her distinctness which was disclosed not willfully but as she acted while laboring and working as part of the practising with scores of our group. The use of scores allowed us to continually re-enter in to bodily experiences
which were the means of their own reproduction as we labored again and again as individuals sharing our dancing practice.

I was aiming for our practice to be visible in the way that what we did in the studio, was what we did for the public, while acknowledging that having an audience has a significant effect on dancing. The dancing discoveries which we were able to make in the studio such as ‘working through’ a moment of indecision or confusion often helped us to understand a problem with more clarity. An example of this is practising with the score of noticing small movements of body parts through space, and then coming to the understanding that the emphasis in my dancing had become less about generating movement, and more about allowing the movements through space to generate that movement for me. Coming to an understanding such as this is not necessarily arrived at and then available to be returned to in another dancing session. Even if the score is the same, it is often necessary to re-discover what it ‘means’ in movement on a new dancing day. Not only are discoveries such as this interesting to experience in dancing, they are often interesting to witness, as is the dancing which takes place immediately after a problem has been ‘worked through’. I aimed for discoveries such as these to be available to be apprehended by our audience. In experiencing a discovery it often felt like going through something (a question, or a moment of working) and coming out the other side. It was not so much a struggle or a lack of being sure that I was interested in the audience witnessing, but rather the possibility that passing through a moment of not being sure allowed.

In performing our dance, in making our practising available to be seen we were ‘appearing’ for our audience through action. Although our action was seen by others, as we were allowing our witnesses to observe the ‘work’ of the fabrication of our bodies, that work was available to be seen rather than being deliberately ‘displayed’. In Being Watched by Carrie Lambert-Beatty, a book about the work of Yvonne Rainer, the author writes about Rainer’s work, Trio A. Although Rainer in 1966 had written that she would like to avoid ‘exhibition-like’ presentation of her dance, Lambert –Beatty perceived that there was a difference between not liking spectacle and not being interested in performing at all. She described the way of presenting
Trio A as being in ‘...the space between interest in performative communication and resistance to exhibition, between body and beholder.’\(^{134}\) This in-between space is a good way to describe my own preference. I was not interested in displaying our dance to the audience in a way which aimed for a single or particular apprehension of a fixed ‘work’ to take place. In making visible the dancing of our dance, that is our practising dancing, I wanted the audience to experience the dance that she/he perceived in the present of her watching.

**Audience**

In each practice session we appeared, ‘acting’, through dancing and being watched. The public performance of our dance was what could be described as a different level of ‘acting’. Over the time of the project we became very accustomed to being watched by the members of our group. When the time came to perform, even though it was our practising that we were making available to be seen, the presence of an audience meant that we were performing our practice, rather than merely practising. As well as defining a performance as a performance, the existence of an audience affects the dancing of dancers. There is a relationship between the performers and their witnesses which defines them as performers in that moment. Stuart Grant writes:

\[
\text{Audience offers completion to the performance which it guarantees.}
\]
\[
\text{Performance as the showing-to which brings forth, requires Audience for its verification...A given performance belongs-to its audience, is given by its audience as the performance it is.}\(^{135}\)
\]

In the moment we were being witnessed by our audience, we were performing for them. In that performing lay all of our practising, all of our working as defined by Arendt to become what it was in that moment. We had, in every session, practised being watched, had practised performing. In the presence of our audience, appearing in performance, we revealed ourselves as dancers and so revealed our dance. ‘Only the actors and speakers who re-enact the story’s plot can convey the full meaning not so much of the story itself but of the “heros” who reveal themselves in it.’\(^{136}\) If a dance has been
written' before its performance, that is, it is choreographed or 'set' then the revealing of the 'hero' or the distinctness of the human who is dancing would take place when the dancers re-enact the ‘story’ while they are appearing in public. In the case of my project, the fact that we were improvising meant we were not re-enacting a choreographed dance. However, by appearing in the presence of the public the revealing of the distinctness or ‘hero’ of each dancer while we were working, dancing with scores, was our dance as it was being fabricated and witnessed. The presence of the audience allowed that appearing, the story of which could never be known by us, its actors.

The relationship between performers and an audience exists in a way in which the audience is ‘engaged in a kind of doing’. We know and perceive information about the world because of our experience of living in that world in our body. Merleau-Ponty writes, ‘Quality, light, colour, depth, which are there before us, are there only because they awaken an echo in our bodies and because the body welcomes them.’ Our bodies allow us to apprehend what we see from a kind of physical knowing. John Martin describes an ‘inner mimicry’ which is a sympathetic bodily response to the movement and experiences of others. “We shall cease to be mere spectators and become participants in the movement that is presented to us, and though to all outward appearances we shall be sitting quietly in our chairs, we shall nevertheless be dancing synthetically with all our musculature.” Our watching in our practice allowed us to witness a dance which entered our bodies without the need for it to be deliberately inscribed there. Similarly, our audience witnessed the ‘work’ that was the fabrication of our dancing bodies and therefore our dance but their watching our dance also worked on them, both in the possibility for them to have a sympathetic bodily response and also in their perceiving of it as a dance.

Making the dance

I approached the structure of the dance as though we were all dancing solos. In dancing our own dance within the group dance, we thought of ourselves always as dancing a solo. We were not aiming to respond to each other or the group dance as a whole, and each ‘decision’ we made was about our solo dance rather than the group dance. (I will discuss this in more detail in
the following chapter). We did not share responsibility to make the dance together but instead allowed our shared practice to make the dance. Just as the ‘appearing’ in public in Arendt’s action reveals an individual, the dancing of a solo for each member of our group allowed us to be revealed as an individual dancer. We were all members of the group and participants in the group dance but we were also able to appear as individuals as we danced our solo within the group.

The ‘cohesion’ or groupness in the dance, came not from decisions made about a ‘group dance’ while dancing but from practising together over a period of time. Rather than having a structure which overlayed the work and made it what it was, or even scores which defined the structure of the dance such as responding to other dancers in particular ways, I aimed for the range of states that individual soloists visited over a period of time, to create the structure of the dance and imagined that each audience member would have their own experience of the dance as they allowed their gaze to be choreographed by the action in the space.

Just as our practising was filled with watching and dancing, so was our performing. Fairly early in the period of the project, we began to have times of dancing in which we could enter and leave the space as we chose. In using the idea that we were dancing solos, a choice to enter or leave the space came from choosing to enter or leave dancing as a soloist, rather than because of the existing action in the space. In practising, when we were not dancing, we would always be watching. From the very beginning, there was a clear distinction between our watching and our dancing even though I did not ever explicitly decide that this would be the case. This may have come from our practice, very early on, of dancing solos. It also came from there being no need (or interest) to watch each other while we were dancing given that we did not need to feel responsible for creating the group dance by responding to others, consciously using their dancing to define our own at that moment, while we were dancing. A couple of times we invited friends to watch our dancing so we could practise performing. On these as on other occasions, there was no ‘front’. In entering and leaving the space, we could watch from anywhere on the edge of the space. In one practise session we had a
witness present when we were doing a ‘group dance’ and she introduced a question about when we were performing and when we were watching: if we could be seen in the space while we were on the edge but in the sight of a viewer, were we still performing? That then led to the question of the audience’s role in the dance if they were able to be watched by other audience members. These questions provoked much thought and exploration in our practising and they finally led me to come to understand that I was more interested in making the dancing from our practising available to be watched than defining how we would watch as watchers or performers, what the boundary was between performing and not performing, and how we might make the intention of performing or not perceptible to the audience. This led me to the decision that we should just present the dance as we had mostly practised it. There would be one, clearly defined ‘front’ and when we entered the space we were dancing, and when we left it we were watching. I have no doubt that some members of the audience may have perceived us as still performing, even while we were watching and that there may have been other questions about our shift from dancing to watching in their full view but it was a decision which allowed us, as performers to be sure about what we were doing when.

At the end of 2010, we had a showing of our group dance to practise performing for a group of invited witnesses and to gain a sense of how it was possible to perceive the dancing we were doing. The presentation was the same in structure as the final presentation we gave for my examination apart from one aspect. We had the possibility for any dancer to enter or exit the space whenever she chose except when she was the only dancer dancing. The space was not to be left empty. I was very keen for the choice of any dancer to enter or exit the space to be related to her own dancing solo. That is, she would enter when she wanted to begin dancing and leave when she wanted to finish dancing. The problem with this structure was that there were external considerations which were difficult to ignore and these sometimes affected decisions which should only have been about whether to dance. We found that we were being considerate of each other. If one dancer was in the space by herself, we would leave her there for a while in order to let her ‘solo’, or we would enter to allow her to leave if it appeared to us that she
was becoming tired or losing focus. We noted that a range of numbers of dancers in the space allowed for shifts in the watching of the dance, so we deliberately allowed them to happen. I found that we were doing exactly what I had decided I didn’t want and that was to take a shared responsibility for the overall creation of a group dance, rather than to let the structure of it become what it would be through the dancing of solos. We talked about this extensively and we resolved to try to make decisions based only on our own interest in dancing, but I found that this consideration and need to contribute to the dance as a whole were too difficult to resist. Instead, I created a simple structure (or score) which I hoped would alleviate our problem. The structure was that there could be six dancers in the space (all of us), four dancers in the space, three and one but not two and not five. The space could not be left empty. Each dancer had the equal responsibility to make changes and to enter or exit when needed to comply with the structure. This last part we added after several weeks of practice when it became clear that some of us were more inclined to comply and others were more likely to effect change. We still had the problem of allowing or rescuing a ‘solo’ dancer but I believe we became better at letting our own dancing interest be the preference after many weeks of practising the structure. The (score for the) structure had another benefit whose possibility I was mindful of when we first began to practise it and that was the way changes could indeed refresh the viewing of the dance from the audience’s point of view. There was the possibility for the dancers who were in the space, or the number of dancers to completely change as a result of one entrance or exit from one dancer.

In lighting our dance for its performance, I wanted to find a way to keep the conditions of our practice, to allow the dancing to be seen and to, at times refresh the watching for the audience. I wanted the lights to be able to deepen our own perception of the dancing we had been practising and to have them support our performance of our dance. In describing the experience of having rehearsed a dance and then dancing it under lights in performance, Randy Martin writes,

The more strongly the space is carved by lights, the more intense the dancer’s disturbance of the space. The outer disturbance reverberates
within the dancer’s body and draws the dancer ever more deeply inside the kinetic life of the performance.\textsuperscript{141}

Stage lights affect dancing. In travelling in and out of their intense beams, the sense of performing, and in the case of our dance the generation of movement material while being witnessed can be heightened. The lighting also helped us to ‘match’ the sense of occasion brought on by the audience and support us in our feeling of performing our practising. The lighting helped to provide that sense of occasion but they also needed to allow us to move how and where in the space we chose to, without restricting us in any way. Tom Salisbury created a rig and a whole series of different lighting states that also left the whole space available to be danced in. The states were entered into the lighting board in a random configuration. In operating the lighting, Tom improvised when he would make a change and how long the cross-fade would be. In dancing we aimed to continue to work on dancing our solos without consciously taking the changes of the lighting in to account. The lighting did help us feel the sense of occasion of performing. When we first practised with them, they also probably affected our dancing choices because even though Tom had built lighting states which made dancers in all areas of the performing space visible, it felt as though, in some of the states, that may not have been the case. We had several practises with the lighting before we had an audience, however, and we were able to see, when we were watching and not dancing, that it really was possible to dance anywhere in the space and be seen. Having several practices with the lights without an audience gave us enough time to begin to feel that being lit was part of our practising dancing without us becoming so used to them that they no longer provided us with a sense of occasion.

**Did we make a work?**

The practising with scores that we undertook in my project allowed all of the participating individuals to be attentive to our dancing in a way that supported an immersion in a practice which was open-ended. The project was different to any other I have instigated or even been involved in for several reasons, all of which were in some way associated both with the allowing of the practice in and of itself to be the main emphasis of it, and that practice not
having a ‘work’ as an object as its ultimate goal. Each member of the group was an agent in her own dancing participation in the project. Each time a dancer danced with a score she found her own meaning and way of noticing in her dancing in that present. The repeated re-visiting of our practice structure, of which scores were a significant part, allowed the continued reproducing of that practising (labouring) without the need to ‘arrive’ at a hoped-for outcome.

The answer to my question of whether I made a ‘work’ is not definitive. If a work is a fixed object, defined as repeatable by its score or forever tied to its single author or ‘father’ with a closed meaning, then I did not either aim to ‘produce’ or participate in the performance of a ‘work’. Our dancing with scores had infinitely deferred meaning in terms of the dancing it instigated; each dancer dancing with a score and each revisitation of a score was an opportunity for a new attentiveness to dancing with that score. Our dancing was textualised as an ‘activity of production’ in which that activity, dancing with scores, was the producer of a body dancing as it was witnessed by its observers. There was not a single author of our dance, rather each dancer was an agent in the creation of a ‘story’ which was continually being composed both in and between our bodies and those of the audience. Our participation in the ‘doing’ of Arendt’s labour, work and action displaces the idea of a work as an object; the object upon which Goodman bases his argument of the work of notational scores.

Nevertheless, we did appear for our audience. After three years of practising we invited an audience to witness our dancing with scores as we appeared and revealed our ‘hero’, our dancing, which was our dance in that moment. We danced under lights and we participated in the structure for performing which aimed to make our practising visible. I had not planned that our audience would observe a ‘work’ which was a single entity, created to sit alongside other works of contemporary dance, to be viewed according to the ‘taste’ of its observer, yet by placing it in the context of a public performance, it is possible that that is how it was perceived. Rather than aiming for our dance to be a closed, single event, that could only be experienced in the way I had planned it to be experienced, our dance was available to be
apprehended from the point of view of each single audience member. Given that each witness of our dance observed it from within her own expectations, experience and interests, its status as a ‘work’ or not existed in the way with which each individual witnessed it.
Creating a group

In my discussion so far I have assumed that we did, in fact, constitute a group throughout the project and that the event we performed appeared to be that of a group performing. I will now return to the question of whether we were a group and if so what made our group a group. I avoided making choreographic decisions or choices about the ‘work’ as a complete event and I was not aiming for a ‘sameness’ in the way we all danced but rather allowed the possibility to support each dancing soloist to find her dance in her own body, to allow her to dance her body’s dance and to have agency in the shared creation of the dance while dancing with others. I wanted our group dance to have a kind of ‘cohesion’ but I have found it difficult to pin down what that cohesion meant for me. I had a notion that we could come to a shared way of dancing which would allow the ‘groupness’ of our group dance, our cohesion, but that the ‘groupness’ was explicit neither in the way it came about nor in the way it was possible to perceive it. Our practising was a group of individuals dancing with scores over time. Within our practising we used scores to dance with while being watched, in order to watch each other and for touching each other. These elements of our practising were part of the becoming of the fabric of our group. I will discuss how this was the case. I will also use ideas including Pierre Bourdieu’s ‘habitus’, Marcel Mauss’ ‘prestigious imitation’, Walter Ong’s ‘oral community’ and Foucault’s questioning of authorship in order to question the notion of our group both in
terms of how we practised and the role of the participants in the making of our dance.

**The becoming of style**

The ‘groupness’ of our dance existed in part in its dancing style, but how did this style come about? Laurence Louppe, referring to Laban, writes of an individual’s ‘style’ being our uniquely recognizable way of relating to others and the world. ‘Our daily movements and our treatment of proximal space allow the qualitative preferences to appear which not only constitute our relation to the world but more importantly give it an aura.’

Hubert Godard describes this ‘aura’ as being a combination of the ‘pre-movement’ and gesture. The ‘pre-movement’ is the organization which the body, subject to its history and gravity, makes before any movement takes place. It ‘…determines the state of tension in the body and defines the quality, the specific colour of each gesture.’ A dancer’s dancing history and the way she responds in a sensorial way to a physical situation creates a ‘…“postural muscularity” that will accompany and support, or belie, any conscious gestures.’ Any gesture or movement executed is the way it is, not just from the form or quality of the actual movement, but also because of the complex and hidden organization (such as that of the body schema) which occurs in order for it to take place. This combination of pre-movement and visible movement is particular to each individual. Louppe describes it as a ‘…shimmering that rises from its body and its movements…’ The idea of each body having its own ‘shimmering’ describes something of the way I understood the dancers being both unique in their style and recognizably dancing as part of the group.

The ‘style’ of dance could be considered the aspect of it which is most immediately apprehended by its witnesses. Louppe writes:

> It is specifically through style, that is, the gamut of its colours as relational preferences towards the world that the dancer assures a transmission between the choreographic statement and the sensibility of the spectator.147
The witnesses experience of a dance is a perception which includes a visual absorption or recognition and a bodily encounter which is informed by the watcher’s own physical history. The recognition or sharing of bodily knowing in my project was from body to body, rather than through a set of ambiguous words. Scores were crucial in the sharing of our group’s corporeal experience, not because they directly informed each dancer about how to dance but because they were the mechanism that allowed each dancer to enter in to the group dance through her own dancing. My own dancing/improvising ‘style’ includes a combination of a particular rhythm, weight and an interruption of pathways which otherwise would have sequenced through the body. One dancer in the group, after watching me, said that she was trying to ‘understand’ my rhythm. She said she found it difficult to describe but that it was full of ‘falling’. To try to describe the improvised dance of another is not only very difficult but would be to attempt reduce the dancing to generalities of words which could not replace the physical effect of ‘style’. Louppe’s use of the word ‘shimmering’ alludes to something which is difficult to pin down. Our ‘style’ was indescribable; it came from our bodies and could only truly be experienced by watching it. A ‘way’ of dancing was just like a ‘way’ of touching or watching which is recognizable yet not replaceable with words.

One aspect of our emerging shared style, which seemed to be apparent to our dance’s witnesses was our rhythm. On more than one occasion, during our three-year practice period, people whom we had invited to watch us dance recounted their observation of a persistent rhythm in the dancing of the group, even if the speed and the dynamics of our dancing varied. It is possible that our way of being attentive to the dancing emerging non-consciously from our body schemas, while working consciously with scores, was a sort of shared mode of attentiveness which affected our rhythm. In The Dance of Life, Edward Hall suggests that ‘interlocking rhythms’ exist in all interpersonal relationships. In dancing, that rhythm of interpersonal relationships would become more visible, particularly in a dance such as ours in which the rhythm is found and expressed through the dancing of each individual as it comes to life, rather than being imposed by the requirements of ‘set’ movement material. We were practising in a way which was shared, in
the group, through dancing and watching but we were not explicitly exchanging, teaching or learning movement. Given Hall’s suggestion that there is a rhythm which exists in all interpersonal relationships, the coming into existence of a shared rhythm over the time of our practising was the evidence of our having become a group. It was not really until the existence of a shared rhythm was suggested to us by observers of our dancing that we were even aware that it existed. Our sharing of rhythm was almost exclusively non-conscious but it must have given our dancing a feeling of ‘groupness’ without our having deliberately made that the case, or having surrendered our individual way of dancing to become the group.

Although it may not be possible to definitively describe the ‘style’ of our improvised dance, I do believe that each dancer’s dancing was shared and adopted, at least in part, by the other bodies. The way this sharing took place was through using scores in dancing, watching, touching and receiving touch together as a group over a period of time. I will explore the way we came to share our dancing by looking at two ideas: one is Marcel Mauss’ idea of ‘prestigious imitation’ and the other is Pierre Bourdieu’s ‘habitus’. These two ideas are not unrelated.

Prestigious imitation
In creating this dance, my starting point was my own dancing. Our group dance felt full of my body’s rhythm. My dancing rhythm became, over time, the dancing rhythm of the group. My moving and my approach to it come from my body and it is with my body that I shared my dancing interests. My dancing style was dominant in the group, particularly in the earlier stages of the project, although I did not explicitly ask the dancers to try to move the way I do. If there is a hierarchical structure in a group; choreographer and dancers; teacher and students; or even a range of experiences, then perhaps there would be a clear, conscious choice being made to adopt the movements of the most experienced dancer(s). In my project, the change was subtler than that. It could be described as an unintentional appropriating of another’s movement as a result of a shared physical existence and experience, rather than any real ‘choice’. Marcel Mauss describes how a child will imitate the successful actions of someone who has authority over
her or in whom she has confidence: ‘What takes place is a prestigious imitation’\textsuperscript{149}. Rather than deliberately copying the actions of someone in authority, in the case of my project, me, the dancers came to imitate aspects of my ‘way’ of dancing which, over time, became part of their own way of dancing. Similarly in describing the repeated viewing of some film footage of a group of children in a playground, Edward Hall recounts the discovery that a kind of ‘group cohesion’ came from one child whose rhythm brought synchrony to those with whom she interacted.\textsuperscript{150} He concluded that in moving from group to group of children, she brought each group in ‘sync not only with each other but with her.’\textsuperscript{151} It is clear that the children were not choosing to adopt the rhythm of the girl but her proximity and other aspects of her demeanor must have induced them to non-consciously time to her rhythm.

After I had become aware of the possibility for ‘prestigious imitation’ to affect the adoption of my movement style by the other participating dancers, I made a conscious decision to allow it to do so. Even though I often emphasized my interest in each dancer finding her own dancing meaning in the various scores, we did, as a group, discuss the possibility of the existence of ‘prestigious imitation’ in the way we were interacting in our dancing practice.

In agreeing to participate in my project and in so doing, accepting the conditions of the project, the dancers were agreeing to subject their dancing wills to my dancing interests. There was never explicit discussion about what kind of movement might have been acceptable or preferable yet there was an arrival of a ‘knowing’ of what that kind of movement might be, based on the kind of dancing that I did. In light of my interest in all of the movement we did having the same ‘value’, I was questioned (by an observer) whether if someone were to do gymnastics or tumbling, and somehow value it in the same way as movement which was less virtuosic, that would be acceptable? If the answer was “no” then perhaps I do not truly value all movement in the same way. I have come to understand that the answer to that question is that, in my project, a dancer would not have executed that kind of virtuosic movement. The movement that all of us did was defined by my own dancing.
Each dancer came to the group with her own dancing history. This history informed the way each of us danced. By deliberately sharing our histories, through dancing, watching, touching and communicating verbally, rather than through teaching each other ‘steps’, we formed a common dancing experience.\(^{152}\) This shared dancing allowed what we were doing to be a group dance; more than individual solos. Louppe proposes a process whereby ‘…from body to body, from consciousness to consciousness questions and responses will be sent as so many furtive shimmerings’.\(^{153}\) Over time, and towards the end of the period of practice, ‘prestigious imitation' became more of an exchange. My dancing was questioned and challenged by the dancing of the other members of the group. My dancing was affected by the dancing of other individuals. We began to ‘know’ in our bodies what the dance was or might be and delved deep into our bodies to find how what we already knew could be refreshed and questioned. There were many complex interactions which took place over the time of the project. Practising over a long period of time meant that, although the practice remained stable, each individual’s relationship with it and therefore with the group changed and fluctuated. We all shared the same scores and there is no doubt that they had the possibility to affect our dancing in a unifying way.

*Our dancing habitus*

Bourdieu’s social theory of ‘habitus’ sheds light on the way our practising, over time, produced our group dance; Bourdieu writes that,

The structures of a particular type of environment...produce *habitus*, systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures…and representations which can be objectively “regulated” and “regular” without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor.\(^{154}\)
In interacting over time, supported by our regular practising which included our use of common scores, a small community was formed which allowed our group habitus to develop. There were implicit ‘conventions’ which were being adhered to, not so much because there were known and understood social or aesthetic limits or expectations, but because the same dancers were gathering, consistently over time, to dance together. The dancing practices which were taking place, and the communication in which we took part, structured the way we interacted with each other. The concept of ‘habitus’ helps to explain and reveal the progressions in the group interactions over time, including the operations of individual members who were both affected and affective in their participation in the group in space and time.\textsuperscript{155} We had a group ‘habitus’ because of our gathering together to work in a regular and regulated way which, for much of the time, excluded the explicit input of and interactions with people outside the group.

Tacit understandings built over time became ways of sharing our dancing experiences and ways of moving. An example is our use of touch. As I have discussed we often set up a situation in which one person was touching and the other was (initially) a receptive, touched body. We had a score for touching, which usually related to other physical ideas we were exploring. One score that we used was \textit{experimenting with weight in touch}: how much weight the person touching gave, taking the weight of a part of the body, changing the weight given over time, experimenting with the speed at which we gave and took weight. There was sometimes a score for the way the receiver might attend to the touch. She may have imagined how the touching person was giving her weight, she might have had her attention particularly on the physical sensation of being touched. After a while of being touched, this person began to move, perhaps in response to the touch, the memory of it, or the kinaesthetic effect it generated. Using scores such as the one mentioned for touching and responding to touch could give rise to many possibilities in both touching and dancing. The scores were quite broad but although it was not my explicit intention, there was a certain way, which is difficult to accurately describe in words, but involved a rhythm, a gentleness and a sort of unwanted tenderness, in which we were all touching each other and responding to the touch. I believe that it was the group dancing ‘habitus’
which perpetuated this ‘way’. We were not responding to rules but rather to a bodily experience of being touched in that way, which was then reinforced by continuing to touch in the way we had experienced being touched. I had noticed that this ‘way’ was coming about and became aware that I could take steps to change it, either explicitly or through my own touch but I decided that the allowing of this ‘habitus’ had the possibility to support a shared physical experience which could, in turn, support the possibility for cohesion in the dancing of all of us. The collective orchestration of the ‘habitus’ rather than being directly overseen by the conductor (or choreographer) is another way in which the position of author/choreographer in the process and in the group was dispersed even despite ‘prestigious imitation’. I, too, was structured by the habitus which I did not create.

The way we did things was a function of the conditions that produced that ‘way’ but those very conditions were produced by our past practices. The way of touching did not begin in my project. Our history, our experiences, what we already believed was the ‘meaning’ of how we touched each other were the conditions in which we acted in touching each other. Each time we gave or received touch in our group, we continued along the path towards what became our ‘way’ of touching, but not because we were intentionally creating that path. Bourdieu writes that ‘the habitus is the source of these series of moves which are objectively organized as strategies without being the product of a genuine strategic intention…’156. A specific, conscious intention may have an effect but that is only secondary to the effect of the structuring structures which are already in place. Using rules in the present, such as suggesting something should be done in a certain way, are partially effective against a future outcome which is determined by the conditions in which the action takes place. The scores we used could be thought of as being like strategies allowing the dancers to be agents as well as being members of the group that was effected by the conditions in which it existed. Our scores were a kind of proposition that we used to be attentive to our dancing. They didn’t tell us what to do however, and each dancer could use them strategically for her own investigation. However, the objective conditions were formative of our group. Although the possibility always existed to make individual choices in our dancing, there was much more in
our dancing than only those individual choices. Our structuring structures, our habitus was also part of the forming of our group.

When we presented our dance to the public, particularly because during our performance we were both dancing and watching, we were able to see the dance which our practising made. It was possible to observe a shared way of dancing in our group dance. During our period of practice, however, we could neither describe nor fully understand what our group dance was and we could not determine what it would be, even had we wanted to. Just as Arendt suggests that we can never know what the full implications of our ‘deeds’ will be, Bourdieu writes that it is because subjects do not know what they are doing, or what effect each action will have that those actions have ‘…more meaning than they know.’ 157 Because we did not plan what our dance would become, that is, we allowed the not knowing to be present in our practising, the possibility to find shared meaning, implicitly rather than explicitly, in our shared dancing, existed. We did not rush towards a hoped-for dance but rather over time allowed the common understanding, which came from not knowing, to be in the group dance that we arrived at, at the end of our period of practice.

As well as not having planned what our dance would be, I did not know what would make our group a group. Even now, although I have said that we performed a group dance, the definitive aspects of our ‘groupness’ are elusive. At times in watching, we would see two dancers move together in a way which seemed complementary, at other times, in dancing, the feeling of dancing just like another member of the group would rise up in us. We also had our unintentional yet inescapable shared rhythm. But the real ‘groupness’ was perhaps less and more than those things. It was not reducible to a few moments of recognition, it was ever-present, and it was not completely knowable. ‘…the habitus makes coherence and necessity out of accident and contingency…’ 158 It could be said that the ‘groupness’ that was available to be seen by our audience lay in our dancing habitus, in our practising. It was also in the audience’s composing of the dance while they watched it. The event which each audience member witnessed, unique as it
was as their own experience of it in the present, apprehended through their past experiences, was composed in their watching of it as a group dance.

Just as I did not plan what our dance would be at the beginning of my project, I did not go about planning practice sessions with the idea that Bordieu’s habitus would or could be used to describe the way our practising ‘produced’ our group dance. Using Bourdieu’s habitus has allowed me to ‘make strange’ our practising which gave me the opportunity to think about it in a way that only existing within it, in the studio would not. Rather than thinking about our dance in terms of what I already knew, I have been able to think about it in terms of what I didn’t know. One of the ideas which Bourdieu explores in *An Outline of a Theory of Practice* is the ethnographic re-thinking of the exchange of gifts which had previously been analysed by Marcel Mauss and Levi-Strauss\(^{159}\). In a society in which the exchange of money is not dominant, the exchange of gifts, which could be goods but could also be services, favours or even murders and revenge murders, defines social relationships. To enter into a community, is to enter in to the ongoing exchange of gifts which define the ongoing relationships in the group. Each dancer in my project participated in the community, in the group by participating in the giving and receiving of a gift which was, in our group dancing and watching. It is easy to assume that the participation in dancing and watching in the practice sessions of a dance project is a given, and so it is, but if I question that assumption by comparing it to the gift exchange, that participation seems more than just doing what is expected of one. It is more like a continuous renewing of a willingness to be part of that community. In every session, each dancer performed, in some form, a solo for other members of the group. Particularly because those solos were improvised, and therefore involved the generation of movement while being witnessed, they meant the giving of oneself, the giving of one’s own dancing to its witnesses to create reciprocal experiences. Each dancer was the agent of her own participation in the group. The watchers were required (through tacit agreement) to be active, attentive receivers of the dancing (gift). There were very few occasions in the three-year period in which dancers declined to dance a solo. On those occasions, even though there was always the option not to participate, it felt, in that moment, as though the project would fail.
Being part of the group, the dancing community, included a willingness to enter in to the exchange of dancing and watching. The group, which was a result of ongoing participation by its members, enabled its structuring structures, its habitus to allow the becoming of the shared style in which existed the ‘groupness’ of our group dance.

In entering willingly into participation in the exchange of dancing and watching, each dancer became part of the dancing community that was created in the process undertaken in my research project. As I have already described, we came to practise, over time, in such a way that the structure of each session was essentially the same. Our way of practising existed in the consistency of the use of scores in activities such as our solo warm up, touching and being touched, and repeatedly dancing for and watching each other. Equally as significant, was the way we communicated. All of our communication was either verbal or through dancing, touching and watching. No writing took place other than when I recorded scores in order to remember them. Other than an initial informal chat at the beginning of each session, we spent little time discussing anything other than what was taking place within the practice. The participation by each individual in the project involved an immersion in the present of each session including a willingness to communicate corporeally. We were much like an oral society such as Walter Ong describes it in that we were reliant on verbal, rather than written language for communication (as well as information passed directly from body to body)\(^{160}\). We were a kind of an oral society when we gathered together to practise. More specifically we were a dancing society. We were a particular community which gathered to participate in my research project, and such as we were, we were our own dancing community.

There was no archive of our practising, no record of having learnt or practised anything to which we could refer back. If we were creating ‘choreography’ the movement material which was ‘written’ learnt and remembered would have served as a record of our practice and what we had come to ‘know’. We were not creating ‘set’ movement material which needed to be learnt and repeated, but I was interested in the accumulation of information in our bodies. This information or dancing experience was laid
down in the body as movements or patterning that were repeated over and over again. Our use of scores provided the occasion for both repetition and for new information or new forms or objects of awareness consonant with my desire for both cohesion and heterogeneity. We did not deliberately repeat the same movements, but repetition was supported by our body schema and the attentiveness to our own movements through our use of scores. Walter Ong writes that ‘Heavy patterning and communal fixed formulas serve some of the purposes of writing…’\(^{161}\) It was the combination of repeated dancing and watching and being watched which supported our bodies in knowing and therefore remembering. ‘Since in a primary oral culture conceptualized knowledge that is not repeated aloud soon vanishes, oral societies must invest great energy in over and over again what has been learned arduously over the ages…’\(^{162}\) Scores provided the means for our continual reinvestment of energy into our practising; what I have suggested could be called our laboring. Our practice was the participation in repeated activities by a group of people, an oral community, and in this way our dancing activities were subject to change as well as staying the same. Practising or laboring in our cyclical way, rather than in the more linear way of the creation of a set choreography enabled us to continually re-enter our dancing with scores and to (re)discover our dancing experiences.

One exercise which we often used was that of a witness watching a soloist dance, usually with what had come to her attention from how that soloist had warmed-up, for a period of time, and then giving the soloist another score but which came from the witnesses observation of that dance. The dancer then immediately used the new score to dance with again. Examples of these scores are, *surprising cross-body relationship* and *searching and allowing*. This strategy was judged both to feed an outside observation in to the soloist’s dance as well as to offer an opportunity to deepen her exploration of the dance. What I observed was that there were very few instances in which the dancers, could remember what the score was in terms of its precise wording after they had finished dancing. Even though it usually seemed evident that the dancers were using the scores they had been given: they so quickly found a bodily experience of them that the words, which supported or catalysed this exploration, became inconsequential. In other exercises in
which the exploration began with worded scores rather than dancing, it was more likely that the specific wording would be remembered. When the scores were ‘found’ (albeit by a witness) from out of a period of dancing they became of only limited use; much less use than the bodily knowledge and experience. It is not that the worded scores were not useful or important rather that they were not merely words. They had an incredibly strong association with dancing. Their ‘meaning’ existed only in dancing. This exercise and other versions of it were used very often in our practising. The reason I am choosing to describe it here is to demonstrate how we used scores as part of the continual cycle of dancing and watching, and how that cycle was part of the forming of our group. Sometimes, in witnessing a dancer dancing while knowing the score she was dancing with, we observed what we might have anticipated we would observe; sometimes we were surprised or maybe even confused. If I am watching a dance in a situation in which I will be required, at its conclusion, to speak about what I have observed (such as in the situation of offering feedback to a student or peer), I am conscious in that watching of having to find words to describe my experience of it. I feel a need for the words to reflect what I have observed as accurately as possible. In my project, the way we used scores felt removed from that situation of having to find words which were a ‘true’ representation of our observation of the dancing we had watched. Just as a score that we used while dancing could be a way to be attentive to what we were doing rather than an instruction requiring a result, the finding of a score while observing another dancer dance was a possibility to reflect back to the dancer an impression of their dancing which came from our apprehension of it in that present, of which the words were the verbally communicable but not only part and neither definitive nor necessarily true. Having the scores allowed a directing of our attentiveness that allowed the cyclical sharing of experiences through dancing and watching. This sharing of experiences was instrumental in the forming of our group. The words although not even necessarily representative of what was really taking place, supported the continuous re-investment in our laboring of the experiences we had in dancing for and watching each other. Words become meaningful because of the situations in which they are lived. Each dancer, either dancing or watching found a meaning for a word as a score or part of one in the present
in which she experienced it. A dancer and her observer had a shared experience of a word even though their perceived 'meaning' of it in dancing was likely to be different.

In participating in the exercise mentioned above in which the witness gave a score back to the dancer from observing her dance, there were various experiences of the members of the group. One dancer felt that she could have anticipated the score that she was given which was *place to hang and swing from* and that it was a very accurate description of what she was doing. When she danced again with it, she felt very limited by the score because not only had she already just danced in that way, but now her use of the score made her feel that she was only allowed to do that and nothing else. In her experience, her agency had been removed by the public description of how she had been dancing. The possibility for a changing, private exploration for a way to dance had been replaced by what she perceived as the definitive relationship between the words of the score and her dancing. Another dancer had a completely different experience. By being given a score, *continuous flow of accented interruptions* which described, at least in part, what she had already been doing, she felt that somehow her dancing had been endorsed and that allowed her not only to explore more deeply what she had been doing, but that the words also gave her more to find because there was something particular that she could be attentive to in all of her moving. A third dancer felt that she could have a very light hold (figuratively) on the score, which was *a small sigh, a large journey, wiggle wiggle*, and that she could continue dancing and just notice when she happened to pass through a part of the score in her dancing. The setup of our practising with scores allowed for the privacy or agency of each dancer even while she was appearing in dancing for the other members of the group. As well as intensely private moments of finding a way of dancing with a score, even while being witnessed, there was non-direct homogenizing of the group taking place because of our descriptions of our experiences of dancing with scores, either found or given, as well as because our continual witnessing of others dancing with scores.
As in the example of our coming to understand that the word ‘dynamics’ was different for each member of the group in terms of how it related to our dancing, it was not really possible to understand what a score meant in dancing for someone else. Of course there were sometimes representations or exemplifications of a word, such as the example small sigh but they were only a very small part of the dancing which took place. Much of it had a complex, indirect relationship to the words. In watching and knowing what a score was, I could sometimes see what I perceived to be a relationship between the dancing and the score but, often, I couldn’t. The meaning in dancing of a score was for each dancer to work out in the present moment of her dancing. I could only really know how my own perception of my dancing from within it, related to a score. In a three minute dance I would feel that I drifted in relation to a score. I noticed very linear connections in my body to the words, I noticed pathways in space which began with a linear connection and travelled until they built momentum only to be interrupted by a fall, a swing of an arm which came from habitual patterning, or a deliberate rhythmic shift. And then I arrived back at the score again, not because I had consciously decided to follow the score but instead my body had a memory of a state, or place in the space which it led me to return to. The effect of a score, the effect of the words in a score was unpredictable because when dancing one is always considering an idea from a point of view that is constantly changing.

Ong writes: ‘Oral cultures of course have no dictionaries and few semantic discrepancies. The meaning of each word is controlled by…the real life situations in which the word is used here and now. The oral mind is uninterested in definitions.’ In using words to describe movements and in using scores, the dictionary meaning of a word was irrelevant. The meaning of a word was found in our bodies, in the history of our dancing, as in the way we all ‘understood’ the term dynamics in a different way, and in the dancing experience we came to share together. The fact that I found a dictionary definition for dynamic was irrelevant for most of the dancers. What ‘dynamic’ meant for them was how they understood it in their bodies. When we returned to use the term dynamic after our first use of it, the question of its ‘meaning’ came up every time. Each person’s dancing experience of
'dynamic' seemed to be much stronger than the dictionary definition I had given them. The introduction of the dictionary definition had served not to clarify but rather to confuse us. It questioned a meaning which we already had in our bodies. In order to shift or perhaps broaden the understanding of a word such as dynamic, the information needed to be found in dancing or perhaps in watching the ‘dynamic’ in the dance of other members of the group.

Words acquire their meanings only from their always insistent actual habitat which is not as in a dictionary, simply other words but also includes gestures, vocal inflections, facial expressions... Word meanings come continuously out of the present, though past meanings of course have shaped the present meaning in many varied ways...  

Our individual, existing understanding of ‘dynamics’ in dancing came from our previous dancing experiences of the use of that word. Over the weeks in which we explored dynamics, we added to our own histories a current understanding which was both personal and shared.

Nelson Goodman’s definition of notational scores includes the requirement that they are syntactically and semantically unambiguous, and examples of scores which are close to fitting his requirements for an ideal score, such as a music score and Labanotation, require the thinking and conduct of practice in a literate way. In order to use one of these types of scores, one must be able to read them. In order to create, one must be able to write them. In *Orality and Literacy*, Ong writes about oral poets who used a range of frameworks within which to present poems and stories on repeated occasions which were, although the same story, not identical in a verbatim way. ‘The oral poet had an abundant repertoire of epithets diversified enough to provide an epithet for any metrical exigency that might arise as he stitched his story together-differently at each telling’  

We used scores in a similar way. They were a trigger for a memory which existed in the body rather than an external, unambiguous representation of the work that allows the performance to be as close to identical as possible each time it is presented.
Ong also writes about how in thinking in a deeply literate way, the hearing or the thinking of a word will bring in to the brain a visual image which, rather than being just the sound of the word or connected to the meaning of it, is an image of the written word itself.

A literate person, asked to think of the word ‘nevertheless’, will normally...have some image, at least vague, of the spelled-out word and be quite unable ever to think of the word ‘nevertheless’ for, let us say, 60 seconds without adverting to any lettering but only to the sound.166

A musician who is given a musical score (as defined by Goodman) of a piece which has already been composed would be given that score written on a piece of paper. In order to perform the work, that musician must convert the visual into sound. In sharing words in my practice, especially those that were scores or part of them, it was a sensorial apprehension of the ‘meaning’ of words which could be communicated both through touch and through watching as well as through the verbal. When we used the word ‘dynamics’ associated with our dancing, I did not have a visual picture of the word in my head. Instead the word conjured up an imagination of dancing. It might have been a visual image of myself or others dancing, or it might have been a sensorial imagining of remembered or anticipated dancing. The meaning of a word or a score was ‘found’ in our bodies while dancing. Through dancing and watching, sharing verbally and physically the way we came to understand a word, a score and our dancing with it each day, the fabric of our group emerged. Because each of us also had the agency to find the meaning of scores and words in scores in her own dancing, our group and our dance were also heterogeneous.

Although there is no doubt that each of the dancers in the project, including myself, think in a ‘deeply literate’ way in many aspects of our lives, in my project, the way we came to understand words and scores such as ‘dynamic’ were removed from that usual ‘thinking’. We came to understand ‘dynamic’ in our bodies through dancing, watching and touching as a term that was
varying and slippery. It changed its meaning from body to body and in each new dancing encounter. By coming to understand (perhaps not explicitly) that it was possible for us to share a score and to share a dancing ‘meaning’ of that score without that meaning having to be explicit or even common we were able to become a group.

Watching

The group was also brought into being by our watching of each other. I approached our practice of watching with the idea that the movement information that we shared did not need to be mediated in verbal language. It could be absorbed directly into our dancing bodies. I did not imagine that the dancing we witnessed passed into our bodies’ knowing in an unambiguous way but that it was tempered by our own physical understandings and experiences. Improvisation practitioner, Lisa Nelson writes, ‘While observing, the eyes are the window to our kinesthetic sense—they take the dance in.’167 One dancer in the group described a situation in which, having just been touched by another dancer, she saw her execute a movement which she imagined could have resulted from a particular touch she had received. She thought she was able to recognize that movement because of the touch she had just been given, and she wondered whether the second dancer had just executed that movement because her touching of someone else brought it about in her own body, or whether she had touched in that way because it came from a movement experience which was familiar to her. The first dancer was not able to describe the movement in words but she could dance it for us. She believed that she would not have recognized it had it not been for the touch she had herself felt. Another dancer described a situation in which, while dancing, she momentarily felt like she was another member of the group. She believed she executed a movement which she had often seen the other do yet until that moment of executing it herself, she would not have been able to accurately reproduce it. John Martin writes that information we perceive with our senses such as through sight, hearing and touching is not only perceivable because of our own kinaesthetic experiences but that it prepares us to move ourselves: ‘...we are made aware of any object only in terms of the appropriate movement we are prepared to make in relation to it.’168 Not only was it through our watching of each other that we could
apprehend what was taking place physically in another’s body and how that might relate to our own dancing but that also, through the watching, the forming of the group was taking place. Our observing of the dancing of other members of the group was, because of our cyclical practice of dancing and watching and dancing, reflected in our own dancing in terms of how we moved in relation to it, even if that moving in relation to another’s dancing was not the result of a conscious choice.

Because we practised dancing and watching and dancing with each other over an extended period of time, we saw, when we were watching another member of the group, not only their dancing but an echo or a trace of our own dancing. We became more stylistically alike over time, as a result of our shared practising, which allowed another’s dancing to show us what our dancing may have involved. More difficult to explain, though is the feeling that the bodily apprehension of another’s dancing brought about a knowing of our own dancing. We saw what we were doing ourselves through watching each other. Our own dancing became more recognisable, more available to us through the watching of the others. Somehow, because we were not doing the same movements, this was possible. If we were dancing the same ‘set’ steps, the most accessible information for us would have been the difference between ourselves executing those steps and the execution by the person we were watching. We could gain an understanding of how another would have been negotiating a certain weight change or a pathway that their body follows, mostly when it differed to our own way of executing the movement. But because we didn’t ‘know’ the sequence of the steps in either watching or dancing, a lack of need for conscious acknowledgement of ‘steps’ allowed our bodies to find a recognition of the familiar or the remembered in what we were watching. We saw the dancing of each other from out of our own patterned bodies. That ‘seeing’ of our dancing in each other’s dancing was revisited as we danced and watched and danced again as our dancing became part of the dancing of the group.

**Being watched**

In every practice session we watched each other, that is we had the opportunity to be watched. We warmed up, as a group, without being
watched and as the practice progressed, we watched each other more. The last part of the session was always a ‘solo’ each (sometimes there was more than one person soloing at once). This was the opportunity for us to practise performing, to practise being watched. Being watched in performance, changes dancing. Carrie Lambert-Beatty quotes Yvonne Rainer saying ‘it’s impossible to behave in an everyday fashion when 100 eyes are upon you.’169 There is a particular effect which being watched has. It could be described as a thickening, a fullness, a heightened sense of clarity or a particular alertness, among many other things. In appearing, in the sense that Arendt means it, our dancing was full of possibilities that it may not have been when we were not being watched.

Every activity performed in public can attain an excellence never matched in privacy; for excellence, by definition, the presence of others is always required and this presence needs the formality of the public, constituted by one’s peers…170

Being watched by each other in our practising affected the way we danced and in doing so, affected the formation of our group.

Our group was also formed as it was being watched by our audience in two ways: Firstly, we were affected by being watched by a ‘public’ audience; a collection of witnesses who were from outside our group. As I have already suggested, in performing, we were taking part in a new level of ‘acting’ in Arendt’s terms as we appeared for our audience. This acting affected our dancing in terms of the possibility to ‘attain an excellence’ where that excellence existed in the dancing which, although becoming what it was in the present, came from our ‘way’ of dancing which had come about through practising with the group, dancing with scores. Secondly, just as our audience would have perceived our ‘work’ from both their past experiences and their experience of witnessing our dance in the present, each individual member of our audience would have observed the ‘groupness’ of our group in their own way. Our audience were forming our group in their watching of us. The shared rhythm in our dancing which I have suggested was probably from my dancing rhythm and which became part of the dancing of all of the
members of the group through ‘prestigious imitation’, was initially perceived, not by any members of our group but from outside observers describing their impression of our dance. It is possible that each audience member observed evidence of our dancing as a group such as only they could observe based on their own interest and experiences. As well as a shared rhythm, there could have been movements which looked similar. It could have been a way of falling or of using force or it could have been patterns of initiating movements from certain body parts which suggested a shared ‘style’ between two or more members of our group. By our aiming to become a group in a way which was indirect and never explicitly defined, part of our ‘groupness’ was perceivable only by our audience in the moment of our performing and their perceptual composing.

**Touch**

Our use of touch in our practising was another element in the formation of our group. We used touch to give another body information; as a way of sharing our own bodily history; and perhaps to renew the other’s sensory experience. This touching and the way it allowed us to share our experiences over the time of the project was another significant element in our interactions which contributed to the becoming of our group. We touched each other using scores. Our touch could also be thought of as scoring or marking the skin in such a way that long after the sensation of being touched had left our consciousness and conscious memories, it lived on in the experience of our bodies to remain part of what our dancing bodies knew (in our bodies’ memories).

When we were exploring the idea of ‘dynamics’, we decided to touch each other in a way which was consistent dynamically for the whole of the touching time. That is, we chose a level of energy, understanding that what that constituted would be different for each person, and attempted to stay at that level for the whole time of touching. Often when we touched, we used a range of levels of energy in much the same way that we would habitually employ a range of energy levels in dancing. In touching with an attempt at keeping a single dynamic, I became aware of how I was finding a way of understanding ‘dynamic’ in my body which I hadn’t discovered in dancing and
certainly not in thinking about dynamic. I decided I would touch my partner with a level of energy which I estimated was somewhere slightly below ‘medium’. At first I launched in to touching mostly seeing how I could employ my whole body to give the consistent level of energy through touch. By aiming for this consistency, I found I was deeply physically involved in maintaining that consistent level of energy in my own body in order to transmit it, through touch, to my partner. After a period of time, I became aware of a low, full, unchanging sound, which must have been the heating apparatus for the studio. I felt that the sound I was hearing exactly reflected my dynamic in touching, or perhaps my touching had been influenced by the sound. As I became more attuned, I heard a regular oscillating of the sound and noticed that that too was reflected in my touch; there was a consistent to-ing and fro-ing in my touch which somehow existed within my chosen dynamic. When my partner began to move, her body seemed filled with this oscillation within her dancing dynamic and she was accompanied by the heating sound which somehow represented her dancing aurally. When we talked about her experience afterwards, she said that she too had become aware of the heating sound. Neither of us had particularly noticed it before that day. The possibility for such a thorough bodily involvement in giving touch, as well as the dynamic having a fluctuation within it while somehow remaining consistent only became understandable for me through the giving of the touch and then the watching of dancing which followed that touch. I could describe in words the experience afterwards (as I am here). But the discovery of it and the tangible understanding of it both lie in my body.

The kind of touch we gave and experienced in my practice was the kind of touch which probably does not exist in this particular way, very often outside contemporary dance. It was not therapeutic as in certain somatic practices; it was not corrective or demonstrative; it was not used to emphasize a point within verbal communication; it was not the intimate touch of family or friends (although we did become very familiar with the touch of each other over time); it was not sexual; it was not the indifferent or accidental touch which might occur in crowded places. Our touch was specific and purposeful while at the same time not needing to bring about an intended effect. In his article *Hands That Don’t Want Anything (Dancing with Kirstie Simson)*, Simon Ellis
describes practising in the studio with Kirstie Simson. Simson is a contact improviser who has been practising for 30 years. ‘It is as if for Kirstie that in the simple (and often fleeting) act of physical contact we might register some of the possibilities of the moving self…’ Simson conducted an exercise with Ellis in which she asked him to move across the studio slowly while she gently laid her hands on him. The touch which Simson gave to Ellis was free from an expectation of what would result (in movement) from the touch. This description of *Hands that don’t want anything* resonates with me because it sounds very similar to the way we were approaching our touching of each other. Our touch was the possibility to offer a sensory reminder of the existence of parts of the body, how they might move, what direction/speed/intensity they might employ. It was not a direction or even a suggestion. It was a gentle reminder or the offering of a possibility to discover. It was open-ended and not part of an aim for a particular outcome, much like the way we used worded scores.

After we had been touched, we danced. The dancing which came from the touching could be very varied. The dancing could have been an exploration of the memory of the touch. It could have been a subjecting of the body to the imagined or remembered force suggested by the touch. It could be that it was not apparent that the dancing came from touch. Rather than an effort to remember the experience of the touch, it could be that the dancer allowed the residue of the effect to feed in to her dancing. Once, when I had been touched in a very direct and vigorous way, I felt that the touch had taken away the need for ‘pre-movement’ in my body. Of course, once I began dancing without the touch or support of my partner, ‘pre-movement’ would have been active in my body. My sensory perception, however was that I was able to dance without my body making allowance for what I was about to do. It was as if my movement was able to come out of ‘nowhere’. If we had an odd number in the group, two people would touch one person at once. If I was touched by one person, I was usually imagining, with the knowledge that my body has, what the body of the touching person was doing in order to touch me in that particular way. Having two people touch at the same time was so much information that it took away the body’s possibility and therefore obligation to process what the bodies were doing in touching. Having that
obligation taken away allowed the possibility to surrender to the touch without really apprehending it. It became possible to really allow the touch to go directly in to the body and to affect the dancing.

Although our touch was not causal and its receiver was free to allow it to affect her in which ever way she chose (or not), and it existed outside the explicit communication of verbal language, our touching of each other was very significant in the forming of our group. It was possible to pass an experience from one body to another at the same time that that experience was taking place, as in my example of touching with a specific dynamic. It was possible to be affected by the touch of another in a way which was unintentional, unnoticed or non deliberate but which came so directly from the touching body that parts of what that body ‘knew’ such as accents, force, rhythm or impulses were shared with the receiving body. The way our touching was part of the becoming of our ‘groupness’ was direct, because of the passing of those elements from body to body but not directed in terms either of what was shared nor what effect the touch should have. Most members of the group looked forward to the touching part of each session. That may have been the case because it was pleasant to be touched in that unwanted way. However, I also believe it was the part of each session in which experiences could be tangibly shared without having to be qualified in verbal language and those experiences were very available and so full of physical information that they could become part of our dancing in an immediate yet non-demanding way.

The author of our dance

If the aim of my project had been to create a ‘work’ in the conventional sense of it being a fixed object and if I were its choreographer, then I would have had a paternal, (such as suggested by Barthes172), relationship to it as its author. If that were the case, the question of what made our group a group would not need to be asked as the dancers would have shared, in their bodies, in their dancing, the ‘signature’ of my choreographic intention and it would be that signature that would have created the work and the group. Although I was not the author of our dance and it did not bear my signature, we were also neither a collective nor a cooperative. We did not gather
together with a mutual interest with the intention of sharing practice and/or the creation of something. This project was driven by me: it was sustained through my will and its existence lay in the undertaking of a research project. Who was the author of our dance and how did that relate to the becoming of our group?

The roles of the individuals in the group and the group as a whole went beyond composing the movement as it was being performed, and dancing the dance. The dancers, (including me), dancing their own solos as part of the shared dance, bore the responsibility and the opportunity to be the creators of the dance. Our dance, even as it was performed, was not a fixed, closed object and neither was it attributable to one author. As Foucault suggests, an individual author precedes her work. But he also argues that the ‘…word work and the unity it designates are probably as problematic as the status of the author’s individuality.’ However, within a work, there are always a ‘certain number of signs referring to its author…’ In our dance, my dancing and my rhythm were present both in my body and in the dancing of the whole group because of our shared style and also because of ‘prestigious imitation’. I was not the author of our dance, however. I did not exist before it and outside as its authority and its creator. It was not a final, closed representation of my choreographic intention. The author of our group dance was our practice, our practising over time with scores, the repeated gathering of our group to share dancing and the allowing of our shared dancing to be witnessed. The scores which included scores for dancing with, scores for touching and scores for watching were structures which were structuring and being structured by the way we practised with them. They were part of our becoming group habitus which, over time, formed our group and our dance.

In the function of an author, according to Foucault, is the ‘plurality of the self’. The “I” of the author in a single work (or series of works) could include more than one function such as the assertion of a particular will or opinion, the demonstration of an understanding or compliance to conventions, and display of a meaning or purpose. These “I”s can exist in the one work simultaneously where none of them is a real individual. In the case
of our group dance, the “I”s were many. The function of the author in our dance could have been in the way an individual was being attentive to her dancing through the use of a score. It could have been in the various ways each dancer danced using a score as she performed alongside other dancers, while a single member of our audience perceived all of the dancers as a group in the present. Our touching of each other scored our bodies over time and that may have had an effect on our dance’s composition. That effect on the composition may have been on the movement danced by a single dancing body, the dance as it was composed in space and time by individuals dancing a solo, or the dance or the ‘work’ as it was composed in its perception by a single witness. All of those composing elements of our practising including our practising while we were being witnessed in performance may have been part of the function of the author of our dance yet they may not have been consciously articulated because they existed in the bodies of the dancers, and the dance which was shared by us. They were part of the way that we practised and how we existed as individuals within that group of practising dancers. Even though the project was initiated and guided by me, the willingness to fully participate in the practising and the dance gave each dancer agency in the practice. Each dancer had her own dancing history as well as her own body, her own tendencies and her own movement interests. Through practising in the group, we shared the multiple “I”s of the function of our author which existed as a group practice over time.

Since our group dance became what it was through bodies and as a ‘habitus’, rather than through explicit decision-making and direction, we were not creating a ‘collaborative’ dance which we agreed upon through conscious, shared decision making. Nor was our dance a product of the choreographic model described by Amanda Card in which, choreographers employ dancers who create the dancing content of a dance. Since many dancers are employed on a project by project basis rather than permanently by companies, a number of particularly skilled dancers work with more than one choreographer. The result of this, as Card describes, is that the dances or aspects of the dances of different choreographers have the potential to be homogeneous because the dancers who create the movement material are the same, even if the aims and interests of the choreographers are different.
The dances do not bear the consistent signature of their named choreographer because the dance language, the dancing, has been created with the bodies of the dancers, who participate in the creative processes of a number of dance-makers. As in the model described by Card, our dancing in our dance was created by all of the dancers in the group. Our dance, however consisted of movement which was not recognizable as the dancing of individuals who took their dancing with them to whichever context they danced in. By practising over time, the dancing of all of the members of our group bore the style of that group. Even while a dancer was dancing her own dance, full of her own body’s experiences, she was dancing the dance of our group. The audience was able to witness the dance not as a final signified, not as an authored work in its definitive form but both as a subjective version of the gathered soloing bodies.

The challenges of our community
The need for the group to remain a functioning and productive community throughout the project has already been discussed, yet the continuous maintaining of that functionality was not without challenges. As mentioned previously, the project ran for three years. All of the dancers (apart from me) are in their early to mid twenties. They are all recent graduates or students. Some have struggled to embark on performance careers only to find the prospect impossible. Some have started careers outside of dance. One has begun a new non-dance related degree. All are working to support themselves. At a time in their lives which is full of decisions, new experiences, change and the beginning of adult responsibilities, I asked each dancer to commit to practising with me at least once or twice a week for three years. I did not pay the dancers for their work. Throughout the period of research, each member of the group’s relationship to the project shifted, depending both on what took place in her own life as well as how she felt about dancing in both my project and outside of it. I saw each dancer’s interest in my practice wane and be renewed and in some cases wane again. The way I set up the practice was what made it both attractive to participate in and at times a chore: namely, that I not only allowed, but expected each dancer to have agency in the creation of the dance. At times I perceived that each dancer was very happy to be an active member in the group and in all
that that demanded but especially in generating her own dance. At other times it seemed that one or all of the dancers would have liked no responsibility, no agency and would much rather have been told what and how to dance.

Although at times I felt anxious and uncomfortable about what was taking place in practices, I also came realize that these situations were just as much a part of the making of the group and our dance as the times which were enjoyable and full of ease. In order for the group to exist as a community as it did, I needed to allow the appearance in the present of each member of the group. Arendt writes: ‘It has always been a great temptation...to find a substitute for action in the hope that the realm of human affairs may escape the haphazardness and moral irresponsibility inherent in a plurality of agents.’ It would have been a less difficult task for me to direct more authoritatively the way we were practising; to be more specific about how each dancer should dance with scores and, following that, communicate, watch and touch in a more directing way. But it was in the possibility for agency, for each dancer to act in the group, that the possibility for our group dance existed. To disallow action and therefore the waning and renewing of the interest of dancers throughout the project would have been to attempt to ‘save human affairs from their frailty’. It was in this frailty and in the courage to act in our community that the willingness to dance with a score, as an individual within the group, in the present, existed.

**The practising of the group over time**

The time over which my project took place was significant in the making of a community which in turn created our dance. The repeated immersion in similar practice sessions over three years felt like strolling through a constant sameness. We were reliving the same practising with scores over and over again and yet, because it was constant, it was possible for us to notice newness, tiny changes or a new way of being attentive to both our own dancing and the dancing we witnessed in each other. We were able to relive our practising, to experience, and to allow and notice the becoming of our dance because we were participating in that practising as a group. We could
renew and refresh our understanding of our own dancing and the dancing of the group through dancing, being watched and watching over time.

The dancers were not subjected to the hierarchy of the making of a dance which existed to bear my signature. They were willing participants not just in dancing but in existing as members of a group. They laboured, worked and acted alongside each other and in the presence of one another. In participating in the project, they were not only subjected to explicit or even implicit structures, including the habitus of the group, but they were agents within those structures, active members of the group, which made the dance. People do not know the full effect that their actions have at the time of their occurrence, immediately afterwards or perhaps ever. Arendt writes that ‘...whatever the character and the content of the subsequent story may be...whether it involves many or few actors, its full meaning can reveal itself only afterwards.’ Just as each member of the group needed to be willing to dance even though she didn’t know what she would do before she did it and that not knowing was likely to be witnessed by others in the group, she needed to be willing to appear as a member of the group, to participate in the social aspects of it because those interactions were part of what made the group the group and therefore the group work. In order to remain willing and courageous enough to continue to dance and to act within the community, each member needed to trust in the knowledge that anything they did would be acceptable for the group or that if it was not acceptable, that we were able to leave it behind without rebuke or judgment by the other members of the group. ‘Only through this constant mutual release from what they do can men remain free agents, only by constant willingness to change their minds and start again can they be trusted with so great a power as that to begin something new’ It was possible for each dancer to have agency in the creation of the dance, in her own dancing because of the tacit understanding of each dancer that any way they contributed to the project was an accepted part of the practice. The dancing we did, what we said or didn’t say and how we touched another in each session all affected and became part of the happenings in the group. When we danced and watched in the community, we didn’t know what the effect of our action would be but we were free to take that action and to know that it was part of what made our group a group.
The dancers were agents in their writing of the ‘story’ of our practising, without being authors. The practice over time and the specific activities in it including dancing, touching and watching with scores was the author of our dance. There was a mutual becoming of our group and our dance.
Conclusion

In practising over time, in dancing and watching each other and in touching and being touched, scores supported an attentiveness to our dancing, which brought about the becoming of a ‘way’ of dancing that was made and shared by the group. Practising again and again within a constant structure, and with scores to focus our noticing allowed us to attend to our moving experiences, both in participating and in watching, in a way which would otherwise not have been possible. Our dance, our ‘work’ that was witnessed in performance was the dancing which our practising with scores made, as it existed in that moment, through its diffused authorship. That moment was experienced in the way that it was because of all of our past dancing experiences. It will be part of our future dancing experiences. The group, in the way we practised over time, made ‘the dance’ as it was experienced on the occasion of the performance. Not as it was planned to be, not as we can look back and determine that it was, but in the way we interacted, as individuals, gathered for a period to dance for and watch each other.

Our changing group

It was not my intention at the beginning of my project, to arrive at a way of practising which was the same each session, but that was what occurred over time. After we had spent nearly two years practising in the same way, I believed that I was beginning to understand the significance of that consistency. The agency of the dancers was enabled. I was not directly
teaching or even explicitly directing the making of the dance but felt that I had been able to set up the practice with scores which had produced the possibility of the coming into existence of our group habitus, which was allowing our style and ultimately, our group dance to emerge. Our group dance was coming into being but it was the practice that was making it rather than my explicit direction. I felt that all I had to do was to keep organizing and facilitating the practice and that the work would be where we were on the day of performance/examination. I felt pleased that, although I did not know what I was looking for, I had found what I perceived to be the key to the creation of a group dance which supported my aesthetic interests, through practising over time with scores.

In the very last months of the project, however, things began to change in a way I had not anticipated. Some of the dancers who had given a significant amount of time and energy to the project (in fact all of them did) began to seem to resent the project or lose interest in dancing in it. There were, throughout the project, times in which I had to work to sustain the commitment of the dancers, particularly because the life of the project was so long, and must have seemed even more so for the dancers who are all in their twenties and putting much of their energy into other, important, changing aspects of their lives. But this seemed to be different. Some of the dancers seemed to want more information or direction from me. I had not felt that it was necessary nor desirable to explicitly direct our warming up or dancing, and was not using scores to have a particular effect on either an individual’s dancing or that of the group. I felt that our way of practising was very well established and I imagined that the dancers did not need additional direction since they had, themselves participated in the coming into existence of the way we practised. The practice which we had established, not through planning or the projection of an idea but through practising as a group had come to ‘produce’ our dance rather than me having a direct hand in it. In spending time writing about how our consistent practice had come about and was doing the work of making the dance, I had come to believe that it was what I had said it was, and I could allow it to do its ‘work’ of making the dance, a ‘work’ that it seemed I could ‘observe’ as though it were stable.
By expecting the dancers to behave in a certain way, that is to take agency in the creation of the dance and to be active in their own improvisation and dancing experience, I had undermined my own aim, which was to not expect something specific from the dancers. At the beginning of the project I had been willing to ‘act’ in Arendt’s terms in the practice: ‘…the human ability to act- to start new unprecedented processes whose outcome remains uncertain and unprecedented….’ But as I began to believe that I knew ‘how’ the dance was being created, I began to see our practice as the single solution to that making. Although I did not have a pre-planned idea of what the dance we would perform for examination would be, I still assumed that dance needed to come into existence. Even though I did not want to have explicitly directed our dance, I organised and shaped a group practice which over time, I believed, would create our dance. When I came to believe that the practice we had was the answer, I stopped acting, that is I stopped participating in the interactions in the group in response to what was actually taking place, and instead conducted the practice sessions according to what I had decided they should be in order for the dance to be made. I could sense that this approach was not working, particularly because the dancers began to lose interest, but I failed to see a solution, because, in reflection, I believed that I had come to understand ‘how’ our dance was being made.

For a few weeks I struggled with how to deal with this new problem. My research into my creative process had led me to believe I understood what I was doing and the purpose of it and I found it very difficult to come to terms with the fact that doggedly adhering to the practice which I had thought was ‘working’, was actually contradicting the premise on which it was based. I had established a practice of not directing, not teaching, not asserting which, in its rigidity, was just as inflexible a way of creating a work as if I had stipulated every movement a dancer was to make. In order to allow the practice to be itself, I needed to continue to participate, to act as a member of the group. My reading, thinking and writing outside of my participation in the dancing sessions had led me to think I was the ‘historian’. As described by Arendt, it is an historian and not the actor who is able to see and understand the consequences of deeds and actions: ‘… the process [the actor] starts is never consummated unequivocally in one single deed or event, and its very
meaning never discloses itself to the actor but only to the backward glance of the historian who himself does not act.\textsuperscript{182} Observing and thinking about my project had led me to believe that I knew what it was and how we were creating the dance and that, after we had performed our dance, I would be able to write about what it was. Perhaps if I had stayed outside the making of the dance as an observer and ‘director’ I would be able to definitively say what it was I had made and how I had made it. Because of my choice to be an acting participant in my project, because of my interest in inserting my dancing body into the group, I needed to allow the dance to become what it was, to create itself from the conditions from which it arose, just as I needed to allow the dancers to dance their own dancing and ‘appear’ in the interactions of the group. Arendt writes that ‘…he who acts never quite knows what he is doing, that he always becomes “guilty” of consequences he never intended or even foresaw, that no matter how disastrous and unexpected the consequences of his deed he can never undo it…’\textsuperscript{183} By beginning and continuing this project, by organizing a schedule of dancing with scores I set in motion the building of a practice. While the practice was initiated by me, the dancing/dance did not ‘belong’ to me because there were five other ‘actors’, dancing individuals, who were part of the group that made the dance. My own dancing experience of our practising and our performance, the time dancing and the time thinking and reading and writing which this project has consisted of for me, has not provided me with an ‘answer’ or a final knowing but rather a possibility to be attentive to the work of practising.

The work of our scores
The work of scores was to structure the practising of our group over a period of time in a way which unified us in dancing and allowed us to become the group which made the dance. They were the mechanism which allowed the meaning of dancing with them to be ever-changing and never shared or even defined while at the same time creating the possibility of the heading towards a common, albeit inconceivable, and never arrived at dancing experience. In one session, we did our solo warm-up with the score, \textit{rhythm, tone, speed, size}. The suggestion was to start with one word or any combination of the words and to work towards asking what, in dancing that day, the relationship was between the words either in our exemplification of them or in how they
influenced our noticing of our dancing. In my dancing, I noticed that tone, speed and size (where the ‘meaning’ of size was found in dancing but could have related to, for example, how much of the body was involved in moving or how far in space a body part moved), were interrelated. How much tone I was using could affect or be affected by how fast I executed a movement. A very small movement could be executed with very high tone and slowly, the tone and speed of that small movement could stay the same or change, if I changed its size. It seemed to me, at that time, that while a movement always had a size, a tonal level and a speed, my noticing of its rhythm came and went. It felt as though my perception of the existence of a rhythm came in waves. A rhythm, (or what I perceived as a rhythm) would arrive and affect my dancing and then dissipate. I changed my approach so that I allowed myself to be constantly aware of my rhythm. When that happened, I felt that the rhythm was defining the movement I was doing and the tone with which I was doing it defined how I was doing it. Size and speed became less noticeable and more tools for variation rather than important influences on what I was doing.

One dancer using the same score, talked about speed dominating what she did and how even when she thought about something else, such as tone, it was the speed of that tone which was the aspect of it which she noticed the most. She also noticed that she was repeatedly moving in a ‘swirling vortex’ leading with her elbow. A second dancer was noticing tone and speed and whether they were related. She also talked about size and how she didn’t often notice size in relation to her moving so she spent time trying to figure out what was significant about size. If she changed the size of a movement, did that change its significance? The first dancer said she didn’t ‘like’ scores which included size or shape and that every time those words were introduced she thought she would just do something else. We talked about why that would be the case. We thought that perhaps the ‘meaning’ of those things in our dancing was different. I talked about what size meant to me and then about shape. For me shape was not always something that I imagined visually but a place that I felt I was passing through in a moment in time. The first dancer said that my description of what a shape could be was probably what she would call a pathway. The second dancer said shape for her was a
cross between feeling a shape and a visual imagining of one. I asked, seeing as the scores had a different ‘meaning’ for each of us, what did scores do? The second dancer said that they kept her dancing ‘fresh’. The dancing she did was new every day, not because she was dancing in a different way but because the score she had today and the relationship of it to her dancing kept her ‘alive’ or present in her negotiation of it. The first dancer talked about a score being a ‘frame’ through which she could view and be attentive to her movement. Different ‘frames’ allowed her to notice her dancing in different ways.

After the above discussion had taken place, and while I was dancing after having been touched, I did a movement which was a long slow backwards turn leading with my arm. At the time I was doing the turn, I had been using, as a score, the range of rhythms in my body. I was noticing two different rhythms in my body. My arm was moving slowly through the space, leading the turn. My feet were moving very quickly, enabling the turn from underneath. After I finished dancing, the first dancer said she saw me dancing the swirling ‘vortex’ that she had been doing leading with her elbow, with my hand. I said that I was sure that I was doing a movement very similar to hers and that I had no doubt that I was repeating, that is my body was repeating what it had just seen, even though my perception of it was that I was dancing with a score about rhythm and I had no recollection of doing a similar movement to the one previously danced by the first dancer. The scores allowed us to perceive our dancing relative to them while we were doing much more than dancing with those scores. While we were active in dancing with the scores we were at the same time being affected by the dancing of the other members of the group even though we were not consciously emulating them. The scores supported practising which allowed the becoming of the group dance in a very indirect way. It was the drawing together of our attention, enabled by the scores which allowed our sharing and our observing to result in a common bodily knowing which was both indirect and unintentional but nevertheless impossible not to become part of.

The sharing of our dancing through practising with scores was only possible because of the length of time over which that practising as a community took
place. As suggested earlier, we touched each other in a particular ‘way’ and that way came about through our repeated touching of each other as it was shaped by our group habitus. After months of being touched with a score, I came to notice the possibility, while I was being touched, to allow the feeling of my body being shifted by another person, to be a new way of experiencing moving. One day while being touched I noticed that if I was able to allow the person touching me to hold and move me without my having to take any responsibility for that moving whatsoever, I could notice the experience of moving in a way in which I am unable to move by myself. I felt like I was only able to come to this understanding after us practising and touching with each other in the same way over and over again. I was able to give in to the physical possibility that someone else could move my body and I could be completely at ease with that, therefore allowing the relinquishing of my own control of my muscles. Our approach to touching each other was neither invented by me nor unique. It was similar to the approach to touching which might take place in somatic practices, improvisation, contact improvisation or choreographic workshops in many places in the world. The more experience one has with being touched in this way, the more it is possible to let go of physical holding and allow being touched to be received into the body. It would be possible to participate in many workshop situations with strangers and, depending on the experience of both the person touching and the person being touched, allow the experience of being touched to become part of what the body ‘knows’. Participating in an exchange of touch with the same people repeatedly, as we did in my project, however, had more of an (non-deliberate) effect than just becoming familiar with touching and being touched. The effect was not direct, planned or measurable, it was not anticipated by me and was really only noticeable in the moment of being touched, although it could last much longer in the body. It came from the absolute specificity of the particular people in the group and how our touching of each other and being touched became familiar and shared. It may have been possible to anticipate how I would be touched by a particular person but equally so, the degree of intimacy and familiarity supported a kind of ‘allowing’ in being touched in which I could comfortably give my body over to a new experience of the touch of another person. That giving over of my body supported an even greater noticing of how my body could move and be
moved as suggested by touch. What I noticed was that although my body or part of it may have moved in a pathway before or even many times before, it was different to the way I would have moved it myself, because it was not my muscles doing the moving and therefore the speed or accent or flow may have been different. It was effortless. In being touched, I was allowing the feeling of being moved to be absorbed by my body. I was not trying to ‘remember’ what that feeling was so I could later reproduce it. I knew that I would be unable to reproduce that effortless movement by myself so I was not aiming for the experience to become part of my dancing in a direct or causal way. Rather I was allowing the movement to become part of my body’s experience.

In one practice session we touched each other with the person touching having the score of exploring duration and discovering through touch what duration might mean in touch. We sometimes had a score for the touched dancer, which was aligned with the toucher’s score so that they were attuned in a specific way to experience the touch. On this day, the people being touched did not have a score. They were aware that the touching person was going to explore duration but knew that they themselves were not bound to work with this score. The touchers were also free to change their ‘hold’ on the score as we did in dancing. I was experiencing the touch I received in a similar way to that which I have described above. I was allowing myself to perceive touches and shifts of my body in a way in which I was noticing the newness of them for me. I became aware that I would not be able to experience this effortlessness and particular speed and accent without the other person. There was one moment in which the dancer touching me was holding my arm and lowered it to the floor at a speed which was quite fast but slower than it would have been if she had dropped it. Her touch was gentle and assured and I felt no need to activate my muscles to take responsibility for my arm. The feeling that I experienced at that moment felt very significant. It took me a while to find words to represent that experience but eventually I came to understand that it felt like my arm was falling, but at a speed which was slightly slower than it would usually fall, because of the support of my partner. I realized that my body knows very well the feeling of falling and the speed it takes, or even a fall which is slowed by my muscles. I was
experiencing something that was impossible, were I to be on my own, but by
being so accustomed to my body being sensitively handled by another
member of the group, I was able to feel what it would be like to fall more
slowly than I must really fall. As usual, from this period of touching, I began to
dance. As I began to move I was not aiming to reproduce the feeling I had
just experienced because I knew that was not possible. What I did do,
though, was to try to allow my body to know that all of the touches that it had
just received could become part of my body’s experience, which could
become part of my dancing.

A momentary arrival in the present
Scores were everything in our practice and they were nothing. Every part of
every practice session used a score. In talking about our dancing and our
watching, we recounted our experiences almost entirely in relation to scores.
But they did not have the same meaning for more than one person or even at
more than one moment. We did not use them or believe in their purpose in a
common way. Laurence Louppe writes:

> If a score in the usual sense of a notation fixes the contents,
dimensions and boundaries of a work, a score as the plan for an open
transcendence escapes both time and any territorialisation which
would define or reduce it: hence the scores that are designed or
conceived as a set of conditions of possibility.¹⁸⁴

The scores, as we used them, supported the possibility for the sharing of a
practice. They did not direct us nor did they affect any of us in the same way
in any directly causal sense. Our use of scores was never as a record of the
writing of choreography but instead they supported us in the possibilities of
our dancing whether we had a ‘tight hold’ on them or barely noticed their
affect on our noticing. Dancing with scores enabled our ‘appearing’ in our
shared practice and our communication in speaking, dancing, watching and
touching. Without doing so deliberately, each individual was disclosing her
distinctness as she ‘acted’ in our practice. That disclosure became part of the
’story’ of the whole group even though we cannot look back and see the
effects of any ‘deed’ which took place. The possibility for each dancer to find
her own ‘meaning’ in dancing with scores allowed each of us to have agency, not in the deliberate creation of a ‘work’ but in her own participation in the open ended processes that were our practising.

Practising over time with scores allowed incremental bodily and dancing changes which brought about the creation of our group, such as the non-deliberate emergence of a shared dancing rhythm. As I have already suggested, it was because of the sameness of our structure in practising over a significant period of time which allowed these changes both to take place and to be understood and felt. Without that period of time our group would not have become what it was yet in describing it here, in trying to convey in language the incremental, barely discernable becoming of the group, is to reduce it to an object which exists as a single entity without the ‘over timeness’, which made it what is was. A ‘work’ as a fixed object which exists alongside other objects created in a causal way also lacks an ‘over timeness’ perhaps in the way it is both conceived and perceived. The dance which we performed for our audience at the end of our period of practising, may have been perceived by one or many of its witnesses as a single fixed object. It is possible that its coming into existence over time was not perceivable but it was time which allowed it to be open-ended and time which allowed our dancing with scores to not need to be anything other than what it was in the present.

This project did not centre on the either/or of the dancers and the choreographer. Each dancing individual, through her participation in practising, was part of that practice, part of our group, and her dancing was part of our dance. The project did not hold the intention of defining, describing or explaining either the closed object of a work, or my particular aesthetic interests. Its emphasis was on how a gathering of dancers practising over time, with scores, to become a group has allowed the revealing of processes, which are usually implicit and how recognizing those implicit processes can help us to review and reformulate questions of authorship in contemporary dance. By ‘setting wobbling’ my perceptions about how a dance could be made and, when I thought I was sure about
what I had been doing, setting them wobbling again I was able to arrive at a real willingness to ‘not know’.

The knowledge that I have arrived at which is ‘generalisable’ reaches in two directions; deeply into the dancing body and out into the dancing landscape at large. My understanding of our use of scores as a way to be attentive to both the dancing that was familiar and the dancing that felt new as it arose in the present, and the noticing of the relationship between our ‘body image’ and our ‘body schema’, is applicable more generally as a way of understanding the use of scores which are verbal propositions. Rather than standing for or pinning down a dance, I suggest that verbal scores such as Paxton’s small dance are an invitation to dance and to notice while dancing that are renewed in every dancing present. Through our use of scores, we shared a dancing practice consisting of interactions which were neither explicit nor deliberate. It was through those interactions that our group style and our dance became what it was. The authorship of our dance was diffused because we deliberately allowed a state of ‘not knowing’. Our shared agency existed in neither an avoidance of hierarchy (such as Rainer’s CP-AD) nor a collective responsibility (such as described by Reitz). It existed in the allowing of dancing bodies, practising together, acting together, to be the site of the becoming of the group dance.

By being immersed in this project, each member of the group was part of a dynamic interchange between materials and process, between bodies and dancing. Anthropologist, Tim Ingold, writes of inhabiting ‘the open’ and that, rather than being ‘stranded on a closed surface’, it is possible to be part of and be affected by the dynamism in which a body is immersed. That dynamism in my project was in the bodies, the space, the dancing and the dancing bodies, the repetition and the time spent. We were both affecting and affected by the practice in which we were participating. Through practising we were working on the dancing which was, in turn, working on our bodies, affecting the way we were dancing and perceiving our dancing. We were also immersed in the ‘weather’ of the entire goings on, particularly the dancing of those with whom we shared the practising and the space. The weather, according to Ingold, is not an object that we are able to perceive but
an underwriter for our capacity for perception.\textsuperscript{186} ‘As the weather changes, so these capacities vary, leading us not to perceive different things but to perceive the same things differently.’\textsuperscript{187} Ingold also writes that in being immersed in the open, ‘…substances and medium are brought together in the constitution of beings that, by way of their activity, participate in the stitching of the textures of the land.’\textsuperscript{188} We were inhabiting the ‘open’ of the group in the studio in which our dancing became our dance. The becoming of our dance, rather than being planned or deliberate was stitched together through our immersion in practising with scores. The scores allowed us not to dance in a certain way nor to change our dancing but to perceive it differently each time. In this way we were existing in the fluxes of our own dancing while our capacity to perceive it was also affected.

By removing the creative process of my research project from a ‘market’ in which a ‘work’ as an object needed to be created, and by removing it from the expectations that actions and methods needed to be deliberate and causal, I was able to defer the need to know how the dance would be made. This allowed the practising and, most importantly, the dancing to be preferred. Ingold writes that to improvise is to ‘…follow the ways of the world as they open up…’\textsuperscript{189} In our practising of improvised dancing, the making of the dance was the following of the ways of our own dancing, through our use of scores as a means to attend to our perceiving of that dancing. The work of the scores, in my project, was to allow the dancing to be the author of the dance.
Appendix 1 List of scores

Following is a list of the scores we used throughout the three years of our practising. I suggested many of the scores but this list also includes the scores made by all of the dancers. Some we gave to each other, others we found from within dancing. The order of the list follows the order of my documentation of the scores, over the period. Many of the scores were revisited often. Some were used only once. We sometimes used this list to choose a score from to dance with.

Disorganised body
Noticing what's there
Fall, catch, arrest, redirect, surprise
Fold and unfold
Notice the beginnings
Extend the endings
Everything is something
Stay with that until you notice something else
Crowded body
Assembly of wills and intentions
Escaping energy or redirected energy
A pathway of small interruptions through the body
Going slowly and being in a hurry at the same time
A story of a continuous touch
Places and surfaces
Making shapes and finding shapes
Unclean beginnings
In between places
Negotiating the moment
Allow yourself to get lost
Pouring weight
The bony body
Unexpected pathways
Existence in the space
Everything starts with a fall
Second choice
The time it takes to fall
Collecting/gathering rhythms
Awakened limbs
Noticing the intricacies
Constant movement
Circular vortex
Things you notice you can change
Shortening/lengthening the places in between
Negotiating movement choices with your eyes
Make use of what becomes accessible
One thing leads into the next
When you find something, change it
Bouncing off angles
Cascading rhythms  
Connection of the body to air and gravity  
Liquid bones and strong muscles  
Flap and swing  
Folding and searching  
The spectrum between light and heavy  
The influence of the space on the body  
Sending the connection somewhere else in the body  
Accelerating and decelerating  
Towards and away  
Possibility of instability  
Things half fulfilled  
Delay the moment of knowing  
The range of speeds of being alert  
Riding the moment  
Never getting there  
Ranges of resistance  
Small things you can do with hands and feet  
Rolling and tossing  
Duration, tone, impulse  
Rough details  
Enlarging beginnings  
Extending endings  
Beginnings deciding themselves  
Incremental shifts  
Subject to gravity  
Gravity as an opportunity  
The changing nature of my relationship with gravity  
Traces through the space  
Noticing my body and being gentle  
Let the impulse direct you  
Searching for difference  
Barely noticing but never stopping  
Tossed bones  
What are you leaving behind?  
Backwards and sideways  
Where are you now?  
Which body part?  
Something circular  
Wind yourself up  
Begin things without planning them  
Notice what is behind you  
Allow the impulse to take over  
Gradually increase something  
Fall over an extended period of time  
Notice something about the space  
Travel in a diagonal  
The disorganised body dance  
Searching for dancing  
Interrupting the impulse  
Experiencing the air  
Articulate but tested
In between
Finding connections
Measuring and marking out
Touch and go
Full experience of surfaces
Swinging and arriving
Squirming, dropping, pausing
Being decisive but not invested
Using interruption to start a new course
Barley noticed beginnings
The never-ending ending
Wills in the body
What is a shape?
Falling redirected
Introspective falling
Easy momentum
A certain something
A composition of a dance in the moment
Extremities and how the affect the space
Playing with how long to stay with things
Where you are is where new things start from
Moving into a mark
Never ending impulses
Interrupting swing
Easy momentum
Barely discernable falling
Being attentive to nothing
Immovable weightlessness
Abandoned body
What is the space that you touch?
No recovery
A rush that fills the body
Never come back to stability
My body, my textures
Waiting, extending and seeing what is left behind
Multidirectional sensations
Riding and resisting
A multitude of rhythms
What is the edge? How do you change that?
Degeneration and regeneration
Finding where it fits
The rhythm you choose and the rhythm you find yourself in
The dancing body
The dancing body in space
Toss, drop, drag, push
Ease pause, wait, search
How I would like to dance today?
Something continuous
The space affecting the body
The body affecting the space
Patterns of shapes
Patterns of pathways
Succumbing to gravity
Resisting gravity
Suspending gravity
Falling, holding, reaching, riding
Planes and duration
A progression from something to something
Continuousness of pausing
Continuousness of interruptions
Continuousness of something
How long does something take?
How long is it interesting to stay somewhere?
Beginnings and successions
Unfound, undetermined
Never ending, unidentified
Anticipated, blurred
Level of deliberateness
The size of things
Twitching, prancing
Grounded falling
Rippling pathways
Surprising cross body relationship
Split sided patterning
Lolling body continuously supported
Searching and allowing
Notice the making of shapes
What is the journey between two extreme points?
Searching but never arriving
Sensing and dissolving shapes
Shapes left behind by pathways
Sensing difference between defined and undefined shapes
Hard to find, easy to forget
The significance of seeing and not seeing
The space around and the space inside the body
The body affecting the space, the space affecting the body
The body inhabiting the space
The body as space
The trace the body leaves behind in the space
Leave a space behind
Pathway of sensorial attention
Pathway of sequentially
Pathway of pauses
Pathway of forces
Isolated pathway
A multitude of pathways
The tangible space
The touch of the space
Smallest and largest and all the things in between
Dancing through time
Dancing within time
Continuing, recovering, interrupting
Fighting gravity
Utilising gravity
Towards and away
A shape that never arrives
Always on the way to somewhere else
Noticing and continuing
Continuousness and interruption of flow
Projection of energy
Deliberate or unexpected interruption of flow
The dance you desire to do
At what speed do you…?
Continuous flow of accented interruptions
Places to hang or swing through
A small sigh, a large journey, wiggle, wiggle
Sequencing through rigid and loose parts of a whole
Energy surges from underneath, tentative details on top
Spiralling ribcage directs the sight
Overlapping and stopping extended limbs
Where?
Building in dynamic potential
Stopping and starting
Tangling and untangling
Once you’ve identified the tone, change it
Things that follow other things, things that are unexpected
Failing to fulfil
Adjusting the space
Duration of...
How long will you be there?
Something sequential, something abandoned
To find the end and start again
What is leading this?
Traversing degrees of thickness and support in the air
The central force
Undulating
Searching for the end point
Pathways along flow
Movement to generate travel
Shapes that fall
Rhythms that dissolve
The things that happen along the way
Leaving before arriving
Shifting, reminding, noticing
Everything, nothing and bits and pieces of something
What, when, how do you see?
A moment in time, a part of a whole
The dance you make, the dance you find
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Notes

2 Dena Davida, "Dancing the Body Eclectic," Contact Quarterly 17, no. 2 (1992).
5 Louppe, Poetics of Contemporary Dance, p.179.
7 Ibid., p.206.
8 Ibid.
10 Louppe, Poetics of Contemporary Dance, p.178.
15 Ibid.
16 Rosalind Crisp and Isabel Ginot, 2006.)
19 Ibid., p.4.
22 Ibid., p.134.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.


Gérard Genette, The Work of Art: Immanence and Transcendence, trans. G.M. Goshgarian (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), p.16. Gérard Genette, referring to the work of Goodman describes how an autographic work is often produced in one stage, such as a painting and an allographic work is produced in two stages, such as a musical composition. In the case of allographic work, the score, produced in the first stage stands for the work produced in the second and ‘...and the act of writing, printing or performing a text or score is for its part an autographic art, whose usually multiple products are physical objects...’ (1997:17) In the case of an improvised, group dance, the score is not created by one author in a(n autographic) way so that it guarantees what the work that it stands for will be. The site at which the ‘creation’ is taking place, rather than in the instance of the single author conceiving the score, occurs as the dancers dance with the scores. This allographic work is produced in two stages but seeing as it is created in its second stage, rather than being interpreted, the authors of it are not one but many.


Ibid., p.183.

Ibid., p.184.

Ibid., p.185.

Ibid., p.189.

Cage, Silence, p.58.


Ibid.: p.327.

Deborah Hay, My Body, the Buddhist (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1997), p.27.


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49 Ibid.: p.87.
50 Agnes Benoit, ed. On the Edge (Belgium: Contredanse, 1997), p.89.
52 Ibid.
56 Ibid., p.227.
57 Banes, Terpsichore in Sneakers, p.66.
59 Ibid.
63 Benoit, ed. On the Edge, p.105.
64 Ibid., p.165.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.: p.15.
72 Isabelle Ginot, "Body Schema and Body Image: At the Crossroads of Somatics and Social Work," Journal of Somatic Studies Forthcoming (2011). The terms body image and body schema as am using them in this document relate particularly to the use of them by Ginot as she refers to Gallagher.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
77 The idea for the ‘solo warm up’ comes from a workshop at Movement Research in New York in 2004 with improviser, David Beadle.
78 Goodman, Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols, p.5.
79 Ibid., p.52.
‘Tacit knowledge’ could be described as knowing which is not able to be explicitly described as coming from a certain source nor as having been learnt directly. Michael Polanyi writes of tactily knowing how to ride a bicycle: ‘I both know how to carry out these performances as a whole and also how to carry out the elementary acts which constitute them, though I cannot tell what these acts are. This is due to the fact that I am only subsidiarily aware of these things and our subsidiary awareness of a thing may not suffice to make it identifiable.’ (1961:142)


Louppe, Poetics of Contemporary Dance, p.232.
116 Ibid., p.87.
117 Ibid., p.88.
118 Ibid.
119 Ibid., p.102.
120 Ibid., p.19.
121 Ibid.
122 Ibid., p.137.
123 Ibid., p.168.
124 Ibid., p.164.
125 Ibid., p.140.
126 Louppe, *Poetics of Contemporary Dance*, p.43. Louppe quoting Hubert Godard
128 Ibid., p.174.
129 Ibid., p.188.
130 Ibid., p.57.
131 Ibid., p.184.
133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
140 Ibid., p.53.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid.
147 Ibid., p.92.
150 Hall, *The Dance of Life: The Other Dimension of Time*, p.169.
151 Ibid.
152 ....the self's body is constructed through the apprehension of the other's'Louppe, *Poetics of Contemporary Dance*, p.47.
153 Ibid., p.181.

156 Bourdieu, Outline of a Theory of Practice., p.73.

157 Ibid., p.79.

158 Ibid., p.87.

159 Ibid., p.6.


161 Ibid., p.38.

162 Ibid., p.41.

163 Ibid., p.46.

164 Ibid., p.47.

165 Ibid., 21.

166 Ibid., p.12.


168 Martin, Introduction to the Dance, p.42.


170 Arendt, The Human Condition, p.49.

171 Simon Ellis, "Hands That Don't Want Anything (Dancing with Kirstie Simson)" in Re-Searching Dance: International Conference on Dance Research (New Delhi2009).


174 Ibid., p.215.

175 Ibid.

176 Card, "Body for Hire?: The State of Dance in Australia."

177 Arendt, The Human Condition, p.220.

178 Ibid., p.230.

179 Ibid., p.192.

180 Ibid., p.240.

181 Ibid., p.231.

182 Ibid., p.233.

183 Ibid.

184 Louppe, Poetics of Contemporary Dance, p.249-50.


186 Ibid., p.131.

187 Ibid.

188 Ibid., p.121.

189 Ibid., p.216.