

University of Theatre and Film, DLA School

THE BODY'S TEXT

Propositions of the DLA These by

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University of Theatre and Film; Budapest (Hungary); 2014

Propositions of the These

The main questions of the DLA these are:

- is it possible to verbalize what a moving body says;
- what kind of experimenting in anthropology, philosophy, psychology, sociology, aesthetics and theatre- or dance theoretics has been done up until now in this matter;
- how to apply these definitions of body-text in investigating certain phases of dance history: how does the dancer's body "speak" in divers eras, styles or genres;
- is it possible to find the essential differences between statements, descriptions, analyses and theories expressed by a theoretic observer and the live experience of the creator / performer?

The structure of the these:

1. Introduction:

- a) – sketch of the task: planning the experiment of comparing carefully selected theoretic material on the subject to the practical (own) experiences of a dancer: to be the first such one in Hungary;
- b) – outlines the working process: the methods of research of sources and its results, as well as the direction of my analysing strategy.

2. The Body

- a) – the chapter first investigates the body's own capacities and forms of expression without performing yet, using results of anthropologic, philosophic, psychological and other theoretic researches
- b) – the following question is: the interpretation of the body on stage, the "meaning" of its performance without words. We get some focus on abstraction and mimesis in dance, and, the problem of investigating movement *outside of* the commonly accepted meanings of the every-day "body-language";
- c) – the last part of the chapter analyses the psychological and sociological aspects of the audience's reception of bodies on stage.

This is the chapter I used most references in, as I decided to build up my own questions and answers on to the base of severe scientific results.

3. The Dancing Body

- a) – discusses the dancer's special relationship to gravity: dance is a special way of balancing and changing weight, with essential focus on the centre of gravity and breathing mechanisms. Energy plays the leading part in all this: its quality determines the effect of the performed movement.
- b) – following subject is about the qualities of moving besides "immobility" as the concentration before starting to move; treating the subject in divers aspects, with a short view to distant cultures and eras as well.
- c) – the last part of the chapter treats body-knowledge: the necessity of possessing body-technique, the characteristics of acquiring movement, and the relation between body and the techniques and methods to approach it;
- d) – finishing by pointing out the importance of the right balance between technique and intuition, the necessity to get to the point of "forgetting knowledge" for the moment of creation or performing.

4. Creating Dance

- a) – Observing the possibilities of movement initiation, first this chapter researches the very moment of the birth of a movement, what is not else than improvisation itself;
- b) – fixing the improvised movement is composition, and following this path we discover divers forms of it, starting by creation with a plot, continued by applied choreography and dance pure, based on music alone, dealing also with dance without sound accompany or using words, verbal means on stage.

These two chapters – besides using a wide range of serious international references -, use personal experiences of dancers and dance teachers worldwide. I'm also leaning on my own dancer/teacher experiences as well as my theoretical studies in various fields.

5. Interpretation through Certain Stages of Dance History

Interpretation of "movement-text" based on results of previous chapters:

- a) - roots in the Greek culture;
- b) – movement-text of European ballet theatre from the 17th to the 20th century;
- c) - change of the theatrical approach at the turn of 19th-20th centuries and its effect to the movement on dance stage (dance-theatre, physical theatre);

- d) – François Delsarte's analysing method as the theoretic base of 20th century's professional modern dance;
- e) – line-up of American and European "modern", "postmodern" and "contemporary" dance waves.

In this chapter I've been helped not only by references and analyses of aesthetics but also my own practice in theoretic work or writings, as well as my dance teaching, it all helped me to line up the historical material, to analyse movement and to verbalise the experienced movement.

6. The Present (-as much as it may be seen here and now)

Looking through the process of alteration of movement / dance / theatre vocabulary experienced in the last 10-15 years: it is a mainly unifying international trend of a fusion of divers art forms.

In this chapter I'm using mainly my own experiences and views. By acting this way, I'm on one side the active creator / teacher / performer / of dance and the other side the theoretic expert and writer disposing over serious international connections. Having gathered experiences from these positions, I make here an attempt to reveal inferences; to insert present discoveries to already available information, and to reveal indispensable connections between paradigms following each other or existing next to each other.

7. Thoughts of the creator/performer of movement

- a) – the chapter approaches the conditions of self-analysis, pointing to the rarity of creator / performer dancer reflecting on and verbalizing their own artistic activity;
- b) – clarifying the expression "dance-intelligence": *"the dancer sensually understands what's going on"...*

In this short chapter my references come exclusively from the dancer's world, besides my own experiences and material of my psychological studies.

8. Self-contemplation as mean of research

Discussing the paradox of the creator/performer being the same person as the observer; this time the focus is on my own person as observer;

- a) – I built up an order of logic leading me through the describing of my own dance as a stage-event, from "inside". It starts with the objective facts of the performance

and which can be known before it happens, advancing towards the more personal and to those which can only be perceived during performing;

- b) – I'm describing my encounter with diverse styles, techniques and genres along my own dancer's career, viewed from the aspect of diversity of "body text" in different circumstances and contexts;

9. Analyses

I'm analysing five chosen extracts of my own performing career (illustrated with pictures and movies), following my order of logic in describing them, mentioned above under point a) ;

- I'm analysing the movements of a one and half minute short extract, chosen of one of the five examples, using Delsarte's movement analysis principles.

10. Conclusion

Summing up the results as well as the lacking of results of this work: I succeeded in getting deeper and having cleaner pictures in "reading" and verbalizing movement. Still a few questions remained to be answered. Amongst them those which could probably never be completely captured: the understanding of the exact momentum of creation, catching and being able to verbalize the exact meaning of every second of the human movement-performance.

Preliminaries of the present DLA These are as follows:

1.) My whole professional path as background:

Katalin Lőrinc (born 1957.09.26: Budapest /H)

1977: Graduates at the Hungarian Dance Academy as a ballet dancer

1977/78: Studies at „MUDRA”: of Maurice Béjart, Brussels (B)

1978-81: Dances at the Cullberg Ballet, Stockholm (S)

meanwhile studies at the London School of Contemporary Dance's

evening school (Graham technique)

1981-84: Dances and choreographies at Ballet Sophianae, Pécs (H)

„ Starts teaching Graham technique there

1984-88: Dances at Tanztheater Wien (Liz King), Vienna (A)

1988 - Freelance dancer, teacher, choreographer and play-director in diverse cities, theatres, schools, companies in Hungary

1989-91: Teacher contract at the Conservatoire de la Ville de Luxembourg (L)

1992-96: Directs dance- and theatre repertoire at Petőfi Színház, Veszprém (H)

1996-: Leads the Modern Dance Teaching Studies Section at the Hungarian Dance Academy, Budapest (as of 2008: BA and MA levels)

1997: Graduates at the Bálint György Journalist Academy; specializing as cultural journalist

2001- : Regular teacher at the Hungarian Dance Academy / Budapest

2005-: Regular teacher at the Contemporary Dance Academy / Budapest

2001-2006: Head of dance department at the Dance and Art School Győr

2006-: Dancer and actress at the „Fortedanse” Company, Budapest Compagnie Pál Frenák Budapest/ Paris; Company Gergye Krisztián Budapest

2007-: responsible of the modern/contemporary branch of the BA and MA teachers education at Hungarian Dance Academy

2008-: member of Board for Science and Researches at Hungarian dance Academy

2009-10: Head of the Professional Education at the Hungarian Dance Academy

2010-: Head of Movement Department at the University of Theatre, Film and Television, Budapest

Member of diverse boards; (a.o: 2002-2004: president of the Dance Community of the Hungarian Cultural Fund, 1993-: Member of committee of Budapest City Council's Theatre Fund)

Prizes: 1992: „Niveau”-price for teaching

1997: Hungarian Republic's Award

1999: Harangozó-Price (Hungary's highest dance award)

Publication:

1978-: critical journalism in cultural (dance, theatre) periodicals

2002: Book and video: "Training in Martha Graham's Style" (Publisher: Hungarian Dance Academy)

2007: „Following Martha Graham's Footpath" (Publisher: Planétás, Budapest 2007, second edition: MTF Budapest 2012)

Languages spoken: English (with certificate B2), German, French, Swedish (with certificate C), some Italian.

2.) The previous theoretic works leading to the present DLA these have been :

Lecture demonstrations at:

Scientific Conferences at The Hungarian Dance Academy, Budapest:

- 8th of November 2007.

"Opportunities of Creativity in Classical ballet Education"

- 6th of November. 2009.

"Possible Use of Non-verbal Communication in the Situation of Teaching"

- 12 of November 2011.

"Relation between Drama-text and Body-text on Dance Stages of the Past and the Present"

- 9th of November 2013.

"Relation between the Creator's Intention and the Acceptation"

Katalin Lőrinc

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