

## Dance and Philosophy

In *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* (2005), Thai dancer-choreographer Pichet Klunchun and French choreographer Jérôme Bel sit on stage, a few meters apart, facing one another. Bel opens his laptop and begins to question Klunchun about who he is, what kind of dance he practices and the wider cultural and historical significance of the traditional Thai dance-drama form of *khon*. Klunchun answers calmly and succinctly, periodically rising from his chair to demonstrate movement: he embodies each of the four *khon* character types (woman, man, demon and monkey), shows a dance of the demon inciting the king to fight, dances the grief of a fallen warrior's widow and teaches Bel part of another female dance. Throughout the first half of the show, it is Bel who asks the questions, sometimes querying or critically commenting on Klunchun's verbal or danced responses, playing the naïve Westerner who tries and often struggles to understand a practice and a mindset that emerges from a context very different from that of contemporary France. Approximately midway through the performance, the tables turn as Klunchun becomes the interviewer, criticizing Bel for his reluctance to dance and acting similarly bemused at aspects of Bel's art and lifestyle. Bel does in the end demonstrate passages from prior choreography: the moment he tries to include in all of his works when the performer stands still, looking directly at different members of the audience; the dance to David Bowie's track "Let's Dance" from *The Show Must Go On* (2001); and the on-stage "deaths" from both *Nom donné par l'auteur* (1994) and *The Show*, singing along quietly to Roberta Flack's "Killing Me Softly" as he collapses to lie motionless on the ground. Across the work as a whole, the two protagonists establish a relationship of mutual acknowledgment and sympathy. Each addresses with humour and irony the

barriers to understanding the other, and there are moments of more profound emotional connection. But the dialogue is also sometimes tense, uncomfortable and revealing of a cultural chasm or fundamental inequality. Differences are highlighted and reflected upon, but not necessarily reconciled.

This is not an essay about this work, which has already been analyzed insightfully by a number of dance scholars (for example Burt 2017; Foster 2011a, 2011b; Hardt 2011; Kwan 2014; Tompa 2014). Rather, I invoke it here initially as an allegorical figure of the relationship between dance and philosophy. These often appear as discrete, very different practices, distanced from, but in dialogue with, one another. Thomas DeFrantz, for example, describes them as ‘odd bedfellows’, urging their fundamental discontinuity: philosophy, he says, universalizes and ignores physicality, where dance emphasizes the particular (2007: 189). More recently, the title of an essay by Bojana Cvejić (‘From Odd Encounters to a Prospective Confluence: Dance-Philosophy’) suggests both the infrequency and weirdness of interactions to date, the essay itself noting ‘the difficulty in the rapport between the practice of dance and the abstract reflection of thought’ (2015b: 8). The twists and turns of the conversation between dance and philosophy have (as with Klunchun and Bel) sometimes enabled a degree of mutual understanding, allowing both parties to reflect on their practices, underpinning beliefs and cultural assumptions. But the interaction has also generated friction. Just as some dance scholars perceive *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* as re-asserting colonialist and orientalist attitudes (Burt 2017; Foster 2011a; Kwan 2014), some recent writing worries about philosophy performing gestures of authority in interaction with performance, reaffirming the enduring uneven and exploitative power relation between the two (Cull 2014, Cull Ó Maoilearca 2017).

In what follows, I will challenge both the idea that dance and philosophy are an odd couple, and the perceived imperialism of philosophy in relation to dance, pushing to and beyond the limits of the parallel with *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*. My aim here is to map some of the numerous sites of past interaction between dance and philosophy, showing how they provide resources to address questions that arise or continue to arise in current dance practice and research (and practice-as-research). There is a long-standing view that philosophy has neglected dance (Levin 1977; Pouillaude 2017 [2009]<sup>1</sup>; Sheets-Johnstone 2005; Sparshott 1988; Van Camp 2014 [1981]), which persists even though there is more dance philosophical literature than is typically recognized (Van Camp 1996; Conroy 2012). Unfortunately, this trope of neglect often combines with assertions that the dance-philosophy conjunction is odd, to imply that existing work is marginal, even insignificant (De Frantz, indeed, calls it a ‘tiny literature’). It is as if the territory of dance philosophical enquiry needs to be carved out afresh each time it is broached. Here, by contrast, I will explore how existing work might be further mined and extended, and how tensions between philosophical approaches might themselves provoke productive reflection on the premises and assumptions of dance research. I will focus selectively on aspects of Anglo-American and European philosophy, but this is not to claim that these *should* take priority over other traditions, nor that other European, non-Western and Southern traditions do not provide still further resources that speak to philosophical curiosity about dance. Indeed, I return below to questions around generalizability and positionality, not least through continued discussion of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*. In what follows, this becomes not just an allegorical figure through which to model the dance-philosophy relation, but a case that illustrates the value and interest of continued

philosophical engagement with/in dance. This is not chapter about this work, then, so much as one that uses it as a springboard for curiosity about how philosophy thinks through dance and dance through philosophy.

### **Philosophical Aesthetics and Philosophy as Therapy**

*Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, like much of Bel's choreography, challenges preconceptions about what dance is and questions what can be considered to be dance. The work explores two rather different visions of dance as a practice, explicitly reflecting on the clash between them: Klunchun's commitment to a traditional practice which values precision, technical control and clarity of characterization and narrative contrasts with Bel's cultivated pedestrianism, anti-theatricality and refusal to represent. But, aside from the work's explicit thematic, much of its stage action is quite static, involving the protagonists in more talking than dancing; this is highly unusual for *khon*, where (as Klunchun points out) dancers never speak, whilst Western theatre dance is also conventionally conceived as non-verbal. Moreover, what movement content there is in *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* is cited from the *khon* repertoire or from past choreography by Bel. So the work is not about movement originality or invention in any conventional sense. Indeed, the piece arguably disrupts the ontological imbrication of dance and movement that André Lepecki (2006) argues is central to the modern project, by presenting stillnesses, pauses and fragmentation of choreographic flow. Likewise, it seems to stage a kind of rupture in the bind between the body and movement, displacing and distancing what physically transpires from the act of self-expression (Cvejić 2015a). In challenging preconceptions about what dance is or should be, the work asks the

question ‘am I dance?’. Bel himself seems to answer ‘no’ (but probably with tongue-in-cheek) when he tells Klunchun he is identified as a choreographer but is ‘not a real one’ because he’s not at all good at creating dances and movement. Similarly the French term *non-danse* is sometimes applied to the work of Bel and his peers (Frétard 2004). Yet what transpires here makes sense in relation to dance traditions and dance concerns, even as it may overturn some conventions. And, for all of the conversation’s apparent spontaneity and artlessness, this is a carefully choreographed and crafted show which relies on the dance expertise of both protagonists.

What audiences think *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* is will affect the nature of their interpretation of it. And, in posing questions about its own identification, the work raises a wider issue of what, if anything, distinguishes dance from other practices and things. This is an issue addressed not just by Lepecki and Cvejć, but also in earlier philosophical work on dance, like the exchange between Monroe Beardsley, Noël Carroll and Sally Banes (Beardsley 1982; Carroll and Banes 1982; see also Davies 2011). They explore and develop the argument that there is nothing that intrinsically characterizes dance as distinct from other kinds of movement. Rather any movement can be framed as dance, either by a specific mode of performance (as Beardsley suggests) or by the way it is presented or intended to be seen by its audience (Carroll and Banes’s view). Beardsley’s account of dance performance as ‘superfluity of expressiveness’ is challenged by Carroll and Banes who comment on the ordinariness of performers’ movement in task dances like Yvonne Rainer’s *Room Service* (1963). But their insights are also relevant beyond that case to more recent work. *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* is dance not because it contains sequences of movement that are obviously dancing, but because of the context

of interpretation in which it is seen. A similar point is made by Graham McFee (1992), who objects to the characterization of dance as movement or as aestheticized movement. Neither idea is informative about the nature of dance, claims McFee, which should rather be thought of as action intended to be seen as dance, or under dance-art concepts.

McFee adopts more broadly a Wittgensteinian approach to the dance concept, resisting the idea that a definition is needed to identify a given object as a dance, and acknowledging, with David Best, that ‘the demand for a definition is often in effect a demand for distorting oversimplicity’ (Best 1978: 19). Extending Wittgenstein’s (1958) discussion of games, there are no necessary and sufficient conditions for something being a dance: that is, no set of manifest features that all dance works share in virtue of being dance. Some neo-Wittgensteinian philosophers hold that definition of complex terms like ‘art’ and ‘dance’ is logically impossible, because they are open, indefinitely extendible concepts (Kennick 1958; Weitz 1956): on this view, dances are identified as such thanks to resemblances with some other dances, but there is no central set of characteristics that all dances share. Alternatively, in line with a case argued by both Betty Redfern (1983) and McFee (1992), the intentions embodied in the making of work and its institutional positioning are what make something dance. So Bel and Klunchun’s intention to make choreography or something that speaks to a dance context makes it appropriate to respond to this piece as a dance work. Institutional context, then, is not just a question of where the work is shown, who commissions, funds and reviews it. It matters (also) that the work is intended to relate to, comment on or react against other things within the tradition of dance as an art form.

These writings by Best, Redfern and McFee are contexted by a wider literature produced at a historical moment of frequent interaction between art form specialists and philosophers. In the United Kingdom in the 1970s and 1980s, several philosophers participated in dance and dance education conferences, producing journal articles and books which proved influential on dance scholars (for example, Best 1974a, 1985; Redfern 1982 [1973], 1983).<sup>2</sup> Much of this literature aims to rationalize and justify the place of dance in school and university curricula, arguing explicitly for the cognitive value of engagement with dance: that the practice of dance itself is thoughtful, even rational, and that performing, choreography and appreciation are ways of developing skills and intellectual as well as physical capacities difficult to acquire in other ways (see, for example, Best 1984b; Carr 1978, 1984a, 1984b; and Redfern 1982 [1973]). Given the growth of dance and dance studies within the academy since the 1980s (O'Shea 2010), it is tempting to assume that this battle for recognition of their intellectual interest, integrity and rigour is largely won. Yet recent concentration on STEM subjects in political discourse and education policy has eroded arts teaching in schools, and resulted in the denigration of subjects like dance and drama as 'soft', in other words as incapable of providing students with necessary or desirable cognitive skills (Paton 2004; Brewin 2016). This climate also threatens dance scholarship and university dance curricula. The topics that exercised Best, Redfern and their colleagues, then, remain live.

Yet changes in the philosophical orientation of dance research as a field have contributed to a contemporary neglect of this literature, although it speaks to a range of philosophical issues raised by and in recent practice. If context counts more than intrinsic features of movement material in identifying something as dance, for example, then this

connects to a broader challenge to aestheticism in which contemporary ‘conceptual’ choreography also participates. A work like *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* calls on its viewers to move past the aesthetic appreciation of honed bodies performing virtuosic movement (although the work also provides opportunities for that kind of appreciation) and to grasp that dance does more than merely offer a fulfilling aesthetic experience. Best’s analysis of the difference between aesthetic and artistic appreciation (developed by McFee in, for example, 2005), argues explicitly against the tradition of philosophical aesthetics that focuses on beauty and aesthetic judgment as key to evaluation of art. Artistic appreciation is not properly concerned (only) with the sensuous surface of a given work, but depends upon seeing the work as contextualized artistic action, related to existing traditions, concepts and categories of art (McFee 2005; Redfern 1983; Walton 1970). An understanding of the context in which art practice develops and knowledge of the art form is essential to perception of its artistic properties. This is amply and humorously illustrated in *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, as the dancing of both Klunchun and Bel acquires new properties, new significance for the viewing partner, once its background ideas have been made explicit.

According to Best, Redfern and McFee, the capacity to embody meaning is a distinguishing feature of dance, along with the other arts, but in contrast to aesthetic sports such as gymnastics. Meaning is something embodied in the particular form of the dance in a unique way: ‘*what is said about life in a work is inseparable from that particular work*’ (Best 2004 [1982]: 168). In other words, the specific insights of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* cannot be adequately expressed via other media (including words), but can only be properly grasped through experience of the work in performance. Dance



is no mere vehicle for messages or ideas that could be communicated otherwise. In the United Kingdom of the 1970s and 1980s, this concern with the specificity and non-translatability of dance contributed to the educational rationale for its inclusion in the curriculum: if it could say and teach things that other arts and forms of physical education could not, then dance should not be excluded in favour of music or drama, nor subsumed into a generic ‘creative arts’ experience. But the concern also connects to much more recent claims about dance practice itself expressing problems rather than being a vehicle for communication of pre-existing ideas (Cvejić 2015a; see also below). Although the emphasis on medium specificity rubs against recent claims about the boundaries between art forms being dissolved, it does help explain the radicalism of so-called *non-danse as dance*: it can only be understood as rejecting one vision of dance to propose another if understood in terms of the dance medium.

The British literature from the 1970s and 1980s envisages philosophy playing a clarifying, even therapeutic, role, enabling a critical analysis of language used in relation to dance and exposition of the underlying assumptions of dance practice and education. Redfern, for example, writes of philosophy being ‘an activity of criticism and clarification . . . of assistance . . . in attempts to discern problems of meaning, to make clear what it is we are talking about, and to reveal assumptions and presuppositions which may underlie what we and others say’ (Redfern 1982 [1973]: ix).<sup>3</sup> From a contemporary perspective, this may seem to adopt a hierarchical or transcendent view that dance needs the help of philosophy or that ‘the truth of the nature of performance can only be revealed by philosophy from an avowed position outside of it’ (Cull 2014: 20). As such it contrasts with other approaches in which the philosophy is thought to emerge

‘from the practice’. Yet arguably, philosophical aesthetics’ focus on dance appreciation (its values, basis and processes within the tradition of Western art dance) acknowledges dance spectatorship, education and scholarship as practices too, offering a valuable counterpart to performer and choreographer perspectives. This is philosophical work which addresses wider questions of to whom dance speaks and how, questions which also remain live, indeed are increasingly pressing in the multifaceted, multicultural and global sphere in which the various forms of dance now operate.

### **Phenomenology and the Dancer’s Voice**

Nonetheless, a contrasting focus on the embodied experience of the dancer has drawn a number of dance scholars (who are or were also practitioners) to phenomenology. Indeed, according to Ann Cooper Albright, ‘phenomenology has replaced aesthetics as the philosophical discourse of choice for dance studies’ (2011: 8). Phenomenology, at least as it is employed in dance studies, offers a way to articulate lived experience, via a first-person descriptive method, which reveals the ways in which embodied consciousness actively constitutes and constructs its world. Perhaps the first-person narratives of Klunchun and Bel in *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* offer a performative analogue, revealing how they make sense of their own and others’ dance activity, and how they construct their own selves in relation to the wider worlds in which they are immersed.

Adaptations of phenomenological philosophy to dance typically take one of two forms. On the one hand, phenomenology is treated as a method for first-person description of dance, key elements of which are the effort to suspend preconceptions and pre-judgments, bracketing the ‘natural attitude’ or everyday ways of apprehending the

world that assume its objectivity or mind-independence. This bracketing enables defamiliarization and fresh appraisal, like the way that the confrontation between Klunchun's and Bel's practices relativizes both. Drawing on elements of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (2015 [1966]), Sondra Fraleigh (1987) and Susan Kozel (2007), for example, employ techniques of eidetic reduction and imaginative variation to reveal essential features of dance experience. But sometimes, instead of employing phenomenological methods, dance writing focuses on the *insights* of phenomenological philosophers such as Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre and (particularly) Maurice Merleau-Ponty, elaborating the *content* of their claims in the dance context. For example, Merleau-Ponty discusses the reciprocity of the experience between self and other, positing an intercorporeal domain and a reversibility that helps articulate the connection between dancer and audience member (Carr 2013). Or Merleau-Ponty's notions of perception, subjectivity and intersubjectivity are used to elucidate how understanding of self and other in somatic practice can foster ethical relationships (Rouhiainen 2008). Both arguments might be applied, for example, to Klunchun's and Bel's interactions with one another and with their audience. More broadly, phenomenological insights are co-opted to the project of revealing dance as a privileged site of corporeal existence. Here, then, philosophy is not so much therapeutic intervention, but an aid to disclosing and articulating something that seems already to be known and developed through dance practice.

Both forms of dance phenomenology (which sometimes combine) tend to emphasize the intrinsic interest and value of dancing. They enable dancers to verbalize the rich textures of somatic experience and assert the importance of that experience for

theoretical discussion and research (for example, Rouhiainen 2008; Williamson 2016). Phenomenology provides an ‘embodied approach to the construction of meaning’ which allows the scholar ‘to describe concrete lived human life, without forcing it through a methodological framework, or reducing it to a series of inner psychic experiences or conceptual abstractions’, and offers researchers and students a way to ‘integrate their own experiences in their academic work’ (Kozel 2007: 2, 5). Likewise, Cooper-Albright highlights the congruity between phenomenology and dance practice in an autobiographical account of her relationship with this philosophical approach: ‘[m]y desire was not to dismiss critical theory per se, but to try and uncover the theories implicit in the work I was witnessing . . . I wanted to give the experience of dancing its own intellectual credibility’ (2011: 13). Phenomenology thus becomes a means to reconcile and equalize the odd couple of dance and philosophy.

Orienting phenomenological dance scholarship around dancing and the dancer’s experience, rather than (say) choreography or viewing, is not inevitable. A phenomenology of dance appreciation or interpretation could examine the underlying structures of perceptual and cognitive engagement of an audience with dance (Pakes 2011): how, for example, the viewer makes sense of the sequence of visual and auditory impressions offered by *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, and can conceptualize this sequence as a single performance; or, indeed, as one iteration of a dance *work*, an object (unlike the performance event) not itself given sensuously. Likewise, as just suggested, phenomenology could elucidate how the embodied being of the audience member comes to relate to, or empathize with, that of Klunchun and Bel. But the dancing *participant’s* experience is the key focus of most phenomenological dance studies, with this

philosophical approach responding to the scholar's willingness to be 'corporeally saturated' by the dancing being analyzed (Cooper-Albright 2011: 13).

This can imply that viewing experience, insofar as it is discussed at all, should be immersive and kinaesthetically engaged rather than detached: Sheets-Johnstone, for example, suggests that the task of both dancer and audience member is sustaining the illusion of virtual force through pre-reflective attunement to dance motion; in the same way as the dancer may shatter that illusion by reflecting on what she is doing, becoming aware of individual movements and the process of their execution, so the audience can break the continuity, 'interrupt the flow and fragmentize [the phenomenon's] inherent totality such that "lived experience" is not achieved' (2015 [1966]: 30-31). These ideas seem more relevant to immersive or illusionistic dances than conceptual choreography in the mould of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, whose ironic mode and political discomfiture (quite deliberately) disrupts the dancers' and audience's absorption in it. Indeed Sheets-Johnstone herself acknowledges (2015: xxxii) the basis of her early work in historical modern dance rather than postmodern practice that eschewed symbolic illusion and formal continuity. Yet these sorts of phenomenological formulations tend to render the very notion of 'lived experience' normatively value laden. The term comes to encapsulate the rich field of somatic sensation that we should strive but do sometimes fail to reach. It is no longer merely a way to designate phenomenology's focus on the 'feel' of experience from the inside (as distinct from, say, metaphysical or conceptual issues), however that changes depending on our position and the mode of givenness of the dance in question (Pakes 2011). Emphasis on the subject's presence to itself in the experience of movement, as well as the normative and universalist tenor of (some)

phenomenological discourse, renders it ripe for poststructuralist critique. Developed through introspection, such description apparently assumes the existence of a unified human subject capable both of relatively unconstrained intentional action, and of observing and knowing itself in the process of so acting. Yet poststructuralism (especially the work of Jacques Derrida) offers a critique of the metaphysics of (self-)presence, whilst also emphasizing the historical constitution of the subject through language and discourse. Similarly to Klunchun and Bel, who, for all their apparent honesty, spontaneity and openness, are arguably transparent to neither themselves nor the audience, consciousness cannot reach the ideal of self-knowledge that phenomenology apparently promises. Indeed, Derrida's critique seems to threaten the starting premise of phenomenology, also explicitly rejected by Michel Foucault, who objects to how phenomenology 'gives absolute priority to the observing subject, which attributes a constituent role to an act, which places its own point of view at the origin of all historicity' (1973: xiv; see also Ness 2011). The problem with phenomenology of dance in the context of postmodern and postcolonial critiques of universalism is that 'the realm of subjectivity is no longer taken to furnish a ground of knowledge adequate in itself [since] the subject is a false universal' (Rothfield 2005: 43).

Philipa Rothfield articulates a common concern about phenomenology's scope for differentiation of experience in terms of how it is shaped by culture, history and discourse. As highlighted above, an important element of phenomenological method is its claim to bracket or suspend presuppositions and prejudgments about the analyzed phenomenon. Yet critical theory tends to question the very possibility of such bracketing and to emphasize how one's perspective is in large part determined by one's inscription

in a particular historical moment and socio-cultural structure. As *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* reveals, the positionality of Klunchun and Bel respectively is not like a set of clothes that can be temporarily discarded in order for them to see themselves and the world differently. Rather the way each constructs the world is deeply determined by culture and historicity. More generally, that raises the question of whether there are any essences of dance to be uncovered through phenomenological enquiry, if dance experience is historically conditioned and socially constructed ‘all the way down’.

However, does acknowledging cultural difference necessarily imply that philosophy should not aspire to generality? Arguably, the kinds of insights generated through phenomenology properly concern a level of enquiry that cuts through applications to specific cultural and historical moments (see Pakes 2011; Sheets-Johnstone 2015). The structures phenomenology is trying to elucidate are those whereby Klunchun, Bel or any human consciousness can make sense of their own movement as their own, of themselves as continuous beings, identifying specific objectivities and other agents in the stream of experiences. The emphasis here, then, is not on historical or cultural differences but on what unites us as participants in consciousness. As such, the generality of phenomenology’s concerns aligns with a large number of philosophical topics within philosophy of mind, language, metaphysics and ethics, as well as aesthetics, which are essentially general issues. For example, the question of how consciousness is related to the physical being of humans (and other animals) is a general one, and solutions seem likely to be similarly general, not subject to qualification depending on cultural group at the metaphysical level, even if the body is experienced differently across various cultures and practices. Whilst it is true that the mind-body problem arises within

a specific cultural and philosophical tradition (and the issue looks different from, or simply does not arise for, other perspectives), this does not mean that the question as such, or the generality of its implications, dissolves. Indeed, the degree to which questions of cultural difference affect the premises and nature of such general enquiry is itself open to philosophical debate.

### **Poststructuralism, Philosophy and Politics**

*Pichet Klunchun and Myself* of course engages very directly with the politics of cultural difference, tackling the task of intercultural performance in an unusual way: ‘it does not try to stitch together two disparate art forms; instead it allows these two forms to remain side by side – at some distance from each other’ (Kwan 2014: 191). But although SanSan Kwan and others (notably Foster 2011a and Burt 2017) acknowledge the humorous and unpretentious way in which the work tackles the theme of difference, they read the piece as ultimately reinforcing rather than challenging inequality and orientalism. These readings are enabled by conceptual frameworks with roots in poststructuralist philosophy, which has profoundly impacted dance and dance studies since ideas from (predominantly) French philosophy, literary theory and linguistics began to be absorbed within the field from the 1980s onwards.

Foucault’s writing, for example, accorded the body new importance in cultural history, via a discussion of the disciplinary regimes and institutions that have historically organized the body (prisons, schools, the workplace, for example). Foucault’s concern with discipline and the docile body of modern Western society has proved particularly fertile as a way to scrutinize the kinds of subjects produced by dance training. As ‘the



most blatant and unarguable instance of the disciplined body' (Bryson 1997: 56), the dancer's embodied subjectivity is inscribed with socio-cultural as well as aesthetic values, through daily participation in technique classes in particular. Drawing on Foucauldian concepts, these processes of body construction have been analyzed in a range of dance contexts (see, for example, Foster 1997 and Ritenburg 2010). But they can also be read back off bodies in performance.<sup>4</sup> The bodies of both Klunchun and Bel, for example, inscribe social, cultural, historical and colonial values in contrasting ways and the protagonists also explicate that difference through verbal accounts of their training histories. In contrast to Klunchun whose liveness, flexibility and superlative technical control is very visible in his performance, Bel adopts a resolutely anti-technical, pedestrian physical persona throughout the performance, even when dancing: the quiet internalized focus and resolutely unshowy dance to David Bowie's "Let's Dance" is that of someone dancing only for their own enjoyment in a disco or club, for example. Yet Susan Foster suggests that Bel's 'arduous cultivation of the pedestrian' is itself a form of bodily discipline, here employed in the service of a wider artistic project: '[t]he labor [Bel] puts into fashioning a body that appears to reside outside the boundaries of representation must go unacknowledged in order for the claim that his movement exists outside of representation to be persuasive' (2011a: 201). That claim, on Foster's reading, is the mechanism whereby Bel ultimately asserts the superiority of his Western avant-garde experimentalism over Klunchun's commitment to Thai tradition, 'reinvigorat[ing] the first world's heritage of privilege based in colonial histories and the stereotypes that enable colonization' (Foster 2011a: 202-3; see also Burt 2017).

These interpretations of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* exemplify how applications of poststructuralist philosophy politicize dance discourse and analysis. Poststructuralism also re-reads philosophy itself in Nietzschean terms of relations of power. Derrida's attack on logocentrism, or the dominance of the (spoken) word in conceptualizations of thought and reason in the history of Western philosophy, particularly post-Enlightenment, continues to resonate in dance, as does his critique of the binary oppositions dominating 'traditional' philosophy. Derrida and others (for example, Said 2003 [1978]; Grosz 1994) argue that one term of any binary is always privileged over the other term, which is subordinated and repressed; thus philosophy's perceived privileging of mind over body, speech over writing, language over embodiment, male over female, is treated as a historical phenomenon ripe for challenge. At the macro-level, this helps carve out a place for dance within the academic landscape from which it was (in the West) traditionally excluded. At the micro-level, identifying and critiquing binaries becomes one process of dance analysis, evident in Foster's discussion of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*: '[t]acitly invoking the distinction between "traditional" and "experimental" conceptions of choreography', she claims, the dialogue in this work 'reaffirms and reinvigorates hierarchies of civilization implemented in Europe's colonization of the world' and rehearses also gender divisions; 'tradition is aligned with the feminine and experimentation with the masculine, thereby securing for Bel a masculine dominance and superiority in the world of dance' (2011a: 197). For Ramsay Burt, similarly, 'the difference between East and West in *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* rehearses and reinforces a binary trope that is ideologically created within Orientalist discourse' in the

sense that ‘Klunchun is made to carry the burden of representing the exotic oriental other’ (2017: 154).

Foster’s reading of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* itself is arguably in a lineage of *textual* analyses of dances which become possible with the development of poststructuralist dance theory (Foster 1986; Franko 1993; Goellner and Murphy 1995; Pakes 2001). Drawing on the work of Derrida and Roland Barthes, writers like Foster (1986) and Janet Adshead-Lansdale (1999) treat dances as texts, opening them to scrutiny in terms of meanings beyond the artist’s horizon. Barthes’ essay ‘The Death of the Author’ (and its companion piece ‘From Work to Text’) is one source of a widespread avowed anti-intentionalism in dance theory,<sup>5</sup> which implies either greater creativity on the part of the spectator or a greater susceptibility of her interpretations to commitments born of a particular historical, socio-cultural and theoretical position. The textual analysis of dance, then, also links with increasing critical attention to the positioning of the viewer and with the critique of dance representation in which analyses like those of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, discussed above, participate. And the idea of dance as text also implies a political critique of the notion of the artist as author, controlling consciousness or genius, a notion inherited from the modern Western tradition of thinking about art. That notion has come under increasing attack in dance practice and writing that wants to overturn the regime of control and ownership with which authorship is typically associated (see, for example, Bel’s *Xavier Le Roy* 2000; Cvejić 2015a; Lepecki 2006 and 2010). One issue of contention in the analyses of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, for instance, is the way its title, in first person mode, positions Bel as creator, despite the dialogic nature of the dance (Kwan 2014) and ‘presupposes [Bel’s] privileged vantage

point' (Burt 2017: 152). Foster is similarly critical of Bel's underlying commitment to 'a conception of dance as a single-authored creation that attempts to present a unique vision to its viewers' (Foster 2011a: 203).

A valuable lesson of the poststructuralist 'theoretical revolution' has been the importance of a more profoundly reflexive engagement with one's position as a researcher: the need to recognize and acknowledge that writing on dance, like any other form of research, always comes from a particular perspective which inevitably influences the conclusions drawn. These insights may not be unique to critical theory: they are also developed in dance anthropology and ethnography as well as other domains of philosophy, for example Nagel (1989). But the positive ethical significance of a concern with 'positionality' is clear. It is anti-exclusionary, politically astute in its attitudes to knowledge production, and seeks in some way to acknowledge and redress the wrongs of colonialist, patriarchal and postcolonial oppression. There remain genuine philosophical questions about the extent to which the substance of a philosophical argument is or is not *determined* by the philosopher's ethnicity, gender or sexuality, however, and about the extent to which perceptions, conceptual frameworks and values might be shared, not only across individuals but also across cultural groups.

Perhaps because of a lack of critical engagement with certain tenets of poststructuralist thought, dance studies seems to date to have largely avoided these general questions. Sally Ann Ness comments on the absorption of Foucault's work within dance studies, noting an 'absence of any heated, dance-centred critical response to at least the early Foucault' (2011: 21). There is arguably a comparable lack of critical contestation of other poststructuralist concepts too: that Western thought is logocentric,

that binaries inevitably repress one of their terms, that the author is dead, that the modern subject or self is a historical construct constituted by the discourses of bourgeois capitalism and (latterly) neoliberalism. Yet all of these claims might be disputed, and in various ways. Arguments from philosophical authority remain prevalent in some dance theoretical writing and militate against its development as critical philosophy: as Jon Erickson puts it, ‘the magic of invoking a relatively small number of the right names interminably repeated, with minor variations’ (2001, 145). The radical critical dimension of poststructuralist theory has tended to get diluted as it has entered the mainstream, also arguably isolating philosophical discussion in dance from debates within other kinds of philosophy (even whilst it aligns dance studies more squarely with literary, cultural and performance studies which share a poststructuralist framework). There remains a significant disconnect, not to say antagonism, between these fields and much work that finds its disciplinary home in philosophy (even those quarters of the discipline focused mainly on ‘continental’ philosophy).

### **Analytic Engagements**

A case in point would be the lack of sustained dialogue between poststructuralist dance theory and analytic philosophy on questions of ontology and identity. Dance is unlike some other art forms (painting or carved sculpture, for example) in not (typically) producing works that are (or are embodied in) physical objects. Rather, it (typically) generates performance events. But although some performances are one-off, others are grouped with similar events as performances *of* a given dance or dance work: the apparently spontaneous dialogue of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* has been performed over

a hundred times in numerous different venues (Kwan 2014). So what is *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* when conceived as this repeatable work, rather than as a performance event? Having never seen the work live, I am relying on a video recording of one performance to make claims about it. Am I then talking about the same thing as Foster, Burt and Kwan (for example)? And does the work depend on documentation not just for its analysis but in order to continue to exist as a work? Is this work archived in the bodies of its protagonists even if all recordings are destroyed? These sorts of questions are raised by dance and performance scholars interested in ephemerality, disappearance and the body as archive (Lepecki 2010; Phelan 1993; Reason 2006). But they have also been extensively debated within analytic philosophy of dance, but without much explicit interaction between these two traditions of scholarship.

Some analytic philosophy examines the relationship between work and score, both expounding and critiquing the view that notation (of various kinds) in some way anchors performance identity (Blades 2013; Conroy 2013; Goodman 1976; McFee 1992 and 2011; Pakes forthcoming; Pouillaude 2017 [2009]).<sup>6</sup> The kind of thing a dance work is, its ontological category, has also been debated: the view that the dance work is an abstract object or type, manifest in multiple possible performance tokens, in particular has been extensively discussed (Davies 2011; McFee 1992 and 2011; Pakes 2013 and forthcoming). Other ways to understand the dance work as a perduring (Alpert 2016; Conroy 2016) or fictional (Pakes 2016) entity have also received some attention, whilst analytic discussion of restaging and reconstruction (Conroy 2009; Pakes 2017) connects up with debates about reconstruction and re-enactment in dance studies (Franko 1993 and 2017; Lepecki 2010; Midgelow 2007). Yet conflict between philosophical traditions

surfaces even at the level of the language used to frame the issues. The very ideas of repeatability and identity, central to analytic discussion, are questioned by poststructuralist dance scholars keen to emphasize difference, displacement and reinvention in the re-enactment of past dance. Yet interest in repeatability, from an analytic perspective, does not signify an uncritical insistence on sameness across performances (Pakes 2017): all philosophers writing on this issue explore (often celebrate) performance variation, even whilst some focus on the challenge of explaining what remains the same. And that challenge remains pressing, given its centrality to debates about copyright (Gover 2016; Van Camp 2006, 2014 [1981]) and to issues around dancer co-authorship (Bresnahan 2014 and 2016; McFee 2011 and 2013).

As suggested earlier, increasing dominance of phenomenology and poststructuralism within the dance studies field has perhaps militated against engagement with other perspectives, despite the recent growth in analytic philosophy of dance.<sup>7</sup> This is partly because the concerns of dance studies have shifted towards themes that other traditions seem better placed to tackle (embodiment, for example, or dancer experience ‘from the inside’). But it may also indicate antipathy to the mode and focus of analytic literature, which tends not to routinely historicize arguments and which may focus elsewhere than on the socio-political and ideological implications of dance practice. An analytic philosophical approach is not intrinsically inimical to either history or politics, however. Political philosophy and ethics remain prominent within the philosophy curriculum more broadly, and some have drawn on arguments in those domains to discuss choreography: for example, to address the question of whether choreographers should be making political dance (Mullis 2015).

Many of the questions posed by analytic philosophy of art are normative in this sense: that is, they are questions about how dance *should be* made, appreciated, and understood, which might be misunderstood as authoritarian attempts by philosophers to tell dance practitioners and viewers what to do. But many ethical questions about dance have an unavoidably normative slant, for example, should the value of a dance work be judged (partly or wholly) on the basis of its moral or political content? The critiques of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* explored above argue that this work fails to assert the equality of its protagonists, or worse, that it reinforces colonial oppression and hierarchy, even as it pretends to even-handedness. Does this imply that the work would be better if it adopted a different approach to presenting the cultural contrast between Klunchun and Bel? Better in what sense? Both Foster and Burt compare and contrast this work with others (Klunchun's *About Khon* and *I Am a Demon*, as well as Akram Khan's *Zero Degrees*), judged more satisfactory than the orientalist *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*. But does moral and artistic value coincide here, and in other cases? The analytic philosophical literature explores arguments for and against various possible answers to this question. Ethicists (for example, Gaut 1998) maintain that ethical flaws are necessarily aesthetic flaws: *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* is worse *as dance* because it upholds inequality. Autonomism (for example, Anderson and Dean 1998; Bell 1969) accepts that a work can be morally troubling without its artistic value necessarily being affected: *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* may be morally objectionable yet still effective choreography. Cognitive immoralism (Kieran 2002) by contrast acknowledges that works may encourage audiences to endorse morally problematic views (for example, revelling in Bel's amusingly cavalier approach or assertion of colonialist superiority), but argues



that this ultimately enhances the work's value because it helps viewers better understand the moral issues at stake. Such debates enable engagement with ethical issues raised by dance but also reflection on the commitments of contemporary ideological dance critique.

Much hinges, in interpretation and assessment of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, on the extent to which Bel is understood to be ironizing his own position. Is his stage persona *deliberately* condescending in order to point up the dynamics of Western colonialist ideologies? Is he aware of how he appears to position Klunchun here? Is Klunchun ironically and consciously playing along with the role he is accorded? What were the dynamics of their creative collaboration in planning, and repeated performance of, this work? How we answer such questions seems crucial to interpreting the work's political significance. But this implies that the artistic intentions here (either what Klunchun and Bel thought they were doing or the viewer's hypotheses about that) makes a difference to the work's meaning. Challenging the received view that the author is dead, continuing debates within analytic philosophy about the relation between intention and meaning allow the premises of interpretation here to be interrogated: they explore, for example, the relative merits of actual intentionalism, hypothetical intentionalism and anti-intentionalism (Iseminger 1992 and 1996; McFee 2011). If we want to hold Bel responsible for expressing morally and politically problematic attitudes through this work, then we need to read the work both as his, and as conveying a particular range of meanings, even propositions, about postcoloniality. But the question of whether messages conveyed by the dance should be evaluated in terms of their truth or moral probity remains open to debate.

## **Dance as Philosophy**

Indeed, one might argue that the issue is already being debated in *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*. This piece expresses a range of attitudes towards East-West relations and provokes its audiences to consider the dynamics of the postcolonial, global world, and their impact upon the practice of dance. So perhaps the work itself is doing philosophy, simultaneously raising and thinking through a series of metaphysical and ethical questions. As such, it would participate in a general movement towards acknowledging performance itself as a philosophical practice, evident via the ‘emerging field’ of ‘Performance Philosophy’ (Cull 2014). This field has affinities with philosophical work elsewhere: for example, philosopher of mind Alva Noë (2015) considering dance as organizational activity, and choreography as a reorganizational practice of the same species as philosophy itself; and the numerous philosophical discussions of dance as a thinking or knowledge-generative practice (for example, Boyce 2013; Montero 2016; Pakes 2003, 2004 and 2009), some linked to the development within dance scholarship of practice-as-research. Performance Philosophy pertains to performance in general, but there are parallel developments in *dance* philosophy specifically. Claire Colebrook (2005: 5), following Gilles Deleuze, proposes that the dancing body itself provides a means to re-think the real and its relation to potentiality and actuality, in what she calls ‘a real philosophy of dance or, more appropriately, a dancerly philosophy’. And Cvejić, (2015a and 2015b) identifies recent European choreography (the work of Xavier Le Roy, Jonathan Burrows, Eszter Salamon, Boris Charmatz and Mette Ingvartsen) as an encounter between dance and philosophy ‘which perhaps comes the closest to performance philosophy as its particular “dance-variant”’ (2015b: 16). Although she does

not discuss Bel, his practice has many affinities with these other artists; its philosophical dimension is examined by, for example, Lepecki (2006) and Protopapa (2013).

The term Performance Philosophy expresses a deliberate refusal to specify in advance the relationship between the two terms: at least in Laura Cull's formulation, there is no hyphen nor any link-word ('as', 'of' or 'and') between the nouns, in an effort to 'unsettle the identities' of the concepts they denote (Cull 2014: 20). Bolstered by arguments that philosophy cannot continue to be written in traditional ways (Badiou 2008; Cull 2014; Cull Ó Maoilearca 2017; Deleuze 2004 [1968]), Performance Philosophy is conceived in 'immanent' rather than 'transcendent' mode. For Cull, 'philosophy of dance' (alongside other 'philosophies of x') is typically transcendent, tending 'to reproduce hierarchical structures of thought and knowledge, [implicitly maintaining] that the truth of the nature of performance [or dance] can only be revealed by philosophy from an avowed position outside of it' (2014: 20). Philosophy, she suggests, is often applied to practice and uses dance examples merely to illustrate and reinforce ideas already mapped out conceptually in advance: the way I used *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* earlier to exemplify Foucauldian ideas about bodily discipline or phenomenological accounts of intersubjectivity perhaps furnishes useful illustration. What gets missed when philosophy is thus applied, according to Cull, is the performance as a 'source of philosophical insight in itself' which challenges our very idea of what it is or means to do philosophy (2014: 24). Likewise, Cvejić is interested in dance-philosophy (hyphenated in her formulation) as immanence, 'a vertigo that ceaselessly produces processes that interfere in one another, processes of thought, sensibility, imagination, physical movement, attention and so on, as opposed to the hierarchy of philosophical

thought transcending dance' (2015b: 16). *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, on this view, has the capacity to trouble, disrupt and reinvent philosophical thinking, exploding the philosophical parameters applied to it.

Cvejić's (2015b) essay presents the development of the conversation between dance and philosophy as a narrative of progress. She charts how that conversation moves gradually through a series of stages to the contemporary 'paradigm shift' of dance-philosophy: from the tendency of philosophers (exemplified by analytic philosophers, Cvejić claims, as well as modern dance theorists) to offer essentialist definitions of dance;<sup>8</sup> to the development of structuralist and poststructuralist-influenced readings of choreography; to recognition of the limitations of such readings and a moment when philosophical writing itself become a resource for dance makers; to, finally, the contemporary moment of dance philosophy, where the practice of the same set of dance makers is understood as itself intervening philosophically through performance. Selected contemporary works are analyzed as 'choreographing problems', in the Deleuzian sense, disrupting the relation between movement, body and subjectivity that (she argues) is conventionally assumed in dance. Cvejić's ideas are relevant also to *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, as suggested earlier, insofar as its citational mode, episodic structure and ironic displacement of its protagonists' perspectives rupture the smooth surface of dance representation and supposedly authentic self-expression. But the narrative of progress, which frames Cvejić's discussion of specific works, suggests that these cases have wider ramifications for how the artists and their audiences will be able to understand their activities in the future (see also Lepecki 2006 and 2016).

The vision of ‘traditional’ philosophy that emerges from both Cull’s and Cvejić’s writings is of a detached, authoritarian practice existing ‘outside’ dance. They object to both uncritical application of philosophical concepts in dance interpretation, and to the tendency of some philosophy to treat dance merely as metaphor, ignoring its empirical practice (see also Pouillaude 2017 [2009]). Also, some philosophers neglect actual practices and works in favour of discussing literary or cinematic treatments of dance. In all such cases, dance appears as ‘nothing more than the instrument of a philosophical exercise’ (Cvejić 2015b: 14). This critique of ‘transcendent’ approaches is valuable in raising the question of the proper relation between dance and philosophy, and in challenging the assumption that the two domains are at odds and difficult to bridge. Yet it risks misrepresenting other interactions between dance and philosophy as dominated by ‘transcendence’ and effectively superseded by Performance Philosophy or dance-philosophy. As I have explored in this chapter, however, different philosophical traditions (phenomenological, poststructuralist, analytic, and so on) offer resources to tackle different philosophical issues, which are usually questions that arise *in the practice*, conceived broadly to include viewing as well as dancing and choreography.

To use a range of philosophical strategies and tools to answer these questions or clarify their stakes is not inevitably to colonize or suppress ideas coming from dance itself. My discussion of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* from a variety of philosophical perspectives does not deny or over-ride any philosophical intervention the work itself arguably already makes concerning the ethics of intercultural performance and exchange. Indeed, those perspectives themselves assist in critically probing how *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, or any dance, does philosophy: whether it simply raises philosophical issues

or can also develop arguments or a sustained position on those questions, given the diverse ways in which the work is interpreted and evaluated. And can what a given dance says philosophically be generalized beyond this particular case to other dances and their wider socio-historical context? Would it need to be generalizable in some way to qualify as philosophical insight? These are meta-issues that it is difficult, if not impossible, for the work itself to address; issues that require conversation between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ philosophical perspectives.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has explored some of the philosophical questions raised by dance, and some of the philosophical approaches that can help to answer them. I have sought to trace different types of connection between dance and philosophy, as they are evident in past interactions between the two domains. Philosophy functions variously as therapy, as an aid to articulating embodied perspectives, as a conceptual basis for critical interpretative practice, as a set of tools with which to think through what is puzzling about dance and as one mode of enquiry that performance and choreography can themselves embody.

The chapter highlights tensions and disagreements between philosophical approaches, some of which are superficial, others more deep-rooted. Sometimes, despite different starting points, there is convergence over common themes: the relative importance of the aesthetic to dance value and meaning, for example, which is critically examined by both philosophical aesthetics and contemporary ‘conceptual’ choreography. At other times, conflict is more fundamental, concerning basic metaphysical or epistemological commitments, or the very conception of what philosophy is, can do or

should be: for example, the tensions between phenomenology and poststructuralism over the humanist subject as the locus of philosophical knowledge; or the default realism of most analytic philosophy in contrast to the continental tradition's 'theses to the effect that consciousness and reality are interconnected at a fundamental level' (Cazeaux 2000: xiii); or, again, the Wittgensteinian notion of philosophy as therapy versus Performance Philosophy's antipathy to 'traditional' philosophy exerting authority over, by thinking *about*, performance. But the process shows, at least, the frequency and multifariousness of mutual engagements between dance and philosophy, cutting through the idea that their encounters are odd.

I began by invoking *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* as an allegorical figure of the dance-philosophy relation. About fifteen minutes from the end of the work, Bel demonstrates his slow collapse to the floor to "Killing me softly," extracted from his work *The Show Must Go On*. The scene proves unexpectedly affecting for Klunchun, who explains how it reminds him of the death of his paralyzed mother. Bel comments on being pleased at the reaction: it chimes with his aims to allow the viewer space to reflect as his own authorial voice fades ('that's for you to think, to feel about what is your relation with death, because I cannot say anything, you know: this is so private, personal, intimate . . .'). This is a raw moment of mutual understanding and sympathy between Klunchun and Bel, also moving for the audience, especially as a culmination of the slow self-exposition and exchange of views that has occupied the rest of the conversation. Yet the work does not end on this note: there follows a conversation about nudity in performance, in which Klunchun refuses to watch Bel strip and the significance of his nakedness is contrasted with that of workers in Bangkok bars frequented by tourists. The

cultural gulf between Klunchun and Bel opens up again, as the unequal, exploitative relation between West and East encroaches on their encounter as individuals.

Dance and philosophy have different disciplinary histories. Sometimes these converge, as I have illustrated here. Sometimes they pull apart insofar as the concerns dominating those disciplines are distinct from, or at odds with, one another. But dance and philosophy do not need to be similar in order to talk productively to one another. Moments of connection and self-reflective awareness can open up through the encounter of their differences, and because each can speak to the questions and curiosity of the other.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Frédéric Pouillaude (2017 [2009]) argues that the exclusion of dance from the philosophical canon has become a ‘transcendental absencing’ that shapes the very possibility of dance being discussed philosophically on a par with other arts, and in terms of the categories applicable to them. Whatever this may tell us about the history of a particular tradition in philosophy and its image of dance, however, it does not follow that dance is absent from all traditions or from contemporary writing, as Pouillaude himself recognizes. Dance’s absence from philosophy, then, is not transcendental in the sense of ineluctable.

<sup>2</sup> The *Perspectives* series instituted by the journal *Research in Dance Education* in 2003 offers a snapshot of this literature, with five of the six essays re-published in the series



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being by philosophers: Redfern (2003 [1975] and 2007 [1982]); Best (2004 [1982]); Gordon Curl (2005 [1982]); and Louis Arnaud Reid (2009 [1969]). They are selected for republication because they are ‘either of historical interest per se, or the issues addressed are so fundamental they remain relevant today, even though the context of education and dance education may have changed with the passage of time’ (Chapman and Rolfe 2003: 184).

<sup>3</sup> The influence of the later Wittgenstein and his therapeutic notion of philosophy is evident here: ‘The work of the philosopher consists in marshalling reminders for a particular purpose’ (Wittgenstein 1958 [1953]: §127). ‘A philosophical problem has the form: “I don’t know my way about,”’ (Wittgenstein 1958 [1953]: §123) and the aim of philosophy should be ‘to show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle’ (Wittgenstein 1958 [1953]: §309; see also Peterman (1992)). Best, Redfern and McFee also build on a number of Wittgenstein’s substantive insights: not just about clarification of complex, ‘open’ and non-definable concepts, but also about the impossibility of a private language (for example, Best 1974a); and about the relationship between mind and body, intention and action, and the importance of refusing to understand that relationship as one which pits an inner, logically private, mental realm essentially against external and observable behaviour (Best 1974a; Redfern 1982 [1973]).

<sup>4</sup> Some choreography arguably also has resistive potential, embodying Foucauldian critique: William Forsythe’s work, for example, is examined by both Franko (2011) and

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Hammond (2013) in Foucauldian terms as challenging the institution of ballet and hegemonic structures of the society in which it operates.

<sup>5</sup> Another source is New Criticism, particularly W. K. Wimsatt's and Monroe C. Beardsley's (1946) essay 'The Intentional Fallacy' (influential also on analytic philosophy of art; see Lamarque 2013).

<sup>6</sup> Although Pouillaude's work generally comes from a continental philosophical perspective, he offers an extended critical commentary on Goodman (1976) and tackles a number of issues that are also topics of concern within the analytic ontological literature.

<sup>7</sup> This growth is evident in an increased number of symposia, conferences and publications: for example, panels and papers on philosophy of dance at the conferences of the American Society for Aesthetics and the British Society of Aesthetics; dedicated philosophy of dance conferences with an analytic presence held by various institutions (the universities of Brighton, Nancy, Roehampton, Ghent, Leeds and Texas State); and an expanded range of print and online publications on philosophy of dance (Beauquel and Pouivet 2010; Bunker, Pakes and Rowell 2013; Conroy and Van Camp 2013; McFee 1999; see also Bresnahan 2015). Such work draws variously on earlier philosophical writing about dance, including Best, Carr and Redfern, but also Susanne Langer, Nelson Goodman, Joseph Margolis, Selma Jeanne Cohen, Julie Van Camp, Francis Sparshott, David Michael Levin, Roger Copeland and Curtis Carter. Already this suggests the trickiness of the label 'analytic', given the variety of reference points of these

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philosophers (Cassirer's symbolism, Pragmatism, Sartrean phenomenology and later Wittgensteinianism, for example).

<sup>8</sup> This misrepresents the position(s) of analytic philosophy. As discussed earlier, Best, Redfern and McFee all take issue with the idea that dance can be defined in terms of essential features; and in any case there is not much writing in this tradition which engages with the task of defining dance at all, although the literature on defining art is extensive (for an overview, see Adajian (2012)). This literature critiques and offers numerous alternatives to the kind of essentialist definition of art focused on manifest features that is also Cvejić's target.

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