Letizia Gioia Monda*

Anarchiving a Screendance Archive. Reenacting Choreographic Traces within Museo Madre

Email: danzaericerca@unibo.it

Www: https://danzaericerca.unibo.it/

Abstract

Questo saggio solleva l'attenzione sull'archivio di videodanza del Festival Internazionale Il Coreografo Elettronico custodito presso il Museo Madre di Napoli e curato in collaborazione con un team di ricercatori della Sapienza Università di Roma. Partendo dall'esplorazione del modello concettuale inscritto nel termine *oggetto coreografico* (Forsythe 2008-2018), l'articolo espone come l'archivio di Il Coreografico possa costituire un caso di studio trasversale attraverso il quale analizzare da tre diverse prospettive la crescente presenza di esposizioni coreografiche all'interno degli spazi museali. Nel corso del saggio il concetto di *anarchive* (Massumi-Manning 2016) è applicato come principio centrale della ricerca. Viene utilizzato come approccio per legare insieme le tre prospettive e spiegare come le esposizioni di oggetti coreografici all'interno di un museo siano in grado di riconfigurare nell'ambiente contemporaneo l'*empowerment* sociale.

This essay draws attention to the screendance archive of Il Coreografo Elettronico Festival stored within Museo Madre of Naples and curated in collaboration with a team of scholars from the Sapienza University of Rome. By exploring the conceptual model of the term *choreographic object* (Forsythe 2008-2018), the article explains how Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive can provide a transversal case study through which analyse the increasing presence of dance/choreographic exhibitions within museum spaces from three different perspectives. Along the paper, the concept of *anarchive* (Massumi-Manning 2016) is applied as a central principle of the research. It is used as an approach to link the three perspectives together and to explain how the exhibition of choreographic objects within museums can reconfigure the social empowerment in the contemporary environment.

* La Sapienza Università di Roma, Italia.

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Introduction

How can we reenact choreographic traces to support the reconfiguration of social empowerment in the contemporary environment?

The question mentioned above drove the development of this paper, which comes as a result of the research I am currently carrying out at the Museo Madre in Naples. My objective is to anarchive the screendance archive of Il Coreografo Elettronico, which contains the materials collected during the International Videodance Festival. Il Coreografo Elettronico Festival was founded in Naples in 1990 by Marilena Riccio as a venture of the cultural association Napolidanza[1]. It represented for twenty-one editions (the last in 2017[2]) an essential platform for sharing and recognizing the videodance culture in Italy. In 2019, the festival archive has been donated to Museo Madre directed by Laura Valente[3]. Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive approximately gathers 2000 screendance works[4] and represents an important cultural heritage. It stores several types of screendance practices because since its fifth edition (1994)[5], the festival was organized as an international competition among different categories:

A) recording of stage performance or adaptation of it in studio

B) original creation for the video

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1. Cf. Marilena Riccio, *Il Coreografo Elettronico*, in Vito Di Bernardi – Letizia Gioia Monda (a cura di), *Immaginare la danza. Corpi e visioni nell'era digitale*, Piretti, Bologna 2018, pp. 171-174.

2. The 2018 edition of Il Coreografo Elettronico, for which about 30 videos have been selected and subsequently archived together with the others, did not take place for organizational reasons.

3. Laura Valente is President of Foundation Donnaregina per le Arti Contemporanee/Museo Madre in Naples. Since 2015, she is also the Artistic Director of Il Coreografo Elettronico, International Videodance Festival.

4. These records are on Betacam, Betamax, VHS, DVD, Blu-Ray, and digital supports.

5. When Il Coreografo Elettronico Festival was founded in 1990, screendance was an unknown practice in Italy. The festival provided an important platform for sharing and recognizing videodance culture in Italy. At the beginning, the creators Marilena Riccio (former principal dancer of the Teatro di San Carlo di Napoli) and the choreographer Jean-Claude Gallotta did not have clear the potentiality of this initiative. Along the first five editions, the growing development of the event and the increasing participation of authors from all over Europe, USA, Canada, etc., drove the experts, who promoted the event as organizers and as part of the jury, to articulate the competition in the five categories. See: Elisa [Guzzo] Vaccarino, *La Musa dello schermo freddo. Videodanza, computer e robot*, Costa&Nolan, Genova 1996, pp. 175-180.

C) documentaries or movie on folk dances

D) videodance developed by digital graphic design

E) works inspired by the art field

Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive is curated by Vito Di Bernardi's team[6] following to an agreement with the Department of History Anthropology Religions Art Performance of Sapienza University of Rome. The Sapienza's team[7] analyses the archive to create new structural conditions from the original archival logic[8] in order to make its contents visible and accessible to a wider audience. The purpose of this project is to reenact the dance knowledge studying the choreographic traces collected during the festival's years. The investigation wants to create more awareness on screendance and increase its inclusion in teaching and research programs, providing contributions to enquire into dance cultural heritage. Ideally, the initiative should support the development of a history of dance that has not yet been written by designing a cross-sectoral digital platform.

As a member of Sapienza team, my work consists in studying the screendance practices as a «multimodal expression coming from a physical thinker's projection»[9] in *objects* created through the digital transcodification of the movement language. After analysing the practices, I argue that each screendance performance can be conceptualized as a choreographic object through which investigate and observe the evolution and perception of choreographic procedures long a specific time frame. In accordance with William Forsythe's approach, a choreographic object can generate new kind of knowledge by putting in relation physical phenomena; as users we can experience the kinesthetic event by interacting with those types of artefacts in a real environment. In this paper, I am going to apply the conceptual model of the *choreographic object*[10] to explain how Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive of Museo Madre can provide a transversal case study through which analyse the increasing presence of dance/choreographic exhibitions within museum spaces from three different perspectives.

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6. Since 2017, Vito Di Bernardi, Professor of History of Dance at the Sapienza University of Rome, is the director of the research university project: "Per un archivio digitale della danza. L'uso delle nuove tecnologie per conservare e trasmettere la memoria della danza. Progetto sull'archivio video del Festival Internazionale Il Coreografo Elettronico (Napoli 1991-2017)" funded by the Sapienza University of Rome in 2017 and 2018.

7. At present, Sapienza's team is composed by Vito Di Bernardi, director and supervisor of the research project; and me studying videodance works created as a form of digital choreography.

8. Until 2015, Marilena Riccio (festival founder) took care of Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive and she organized the archival logic per year according to the materials presented by the authors long the several festival editions.

9. Cf. Letizia Gioia Monda, *What we are talking about when we talk about videodance?*, in «Music in Art», vol. XLV, going to be published.

10. Long this essay, I am going to explore the double meaning inscribed in the expression "choreographic object": from the one hand, the notion developed by the choreographer William Forsythe; from the other hand the definition from anthropology and social science, who declined that expression to refer to a "boundary object", a construct that can foster interdisciplinary investigations on dance practices. See: James Leach, *Choreographic Objects*, in «Journal of Cultural Economy», vol. VII, n. 4, November 2014, pp. 458-475. See also: Scott deLahunta, *Working without an Overview*, in Sabine Gehm – Pirkko Husemann – Katharina von Wilcke (edited by), *Knowledge in Motion*, Transaction, Bielefeld 2007, p. 98.

The first perspective examines the performative aspects of choreographic objects within museums. Through this perspective, the choreographic object is meant as potential tool to have access to the knowledge coming from the kinesthetic experience.

The second perspective concerns how Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive, intended as an archive composed by choreographic objects, can provide a research instrument to reenact the traces of choreographic thinking among the years.

The third point of view proposes to observe how research on the screendance archive can reactivate the process of writing choreography, by using the archive itself as a source of choreographic exhibitions where its objects are designed to support the development of new dance literature.

Thanks to the application of the concept of *anarchive*, these three perspectives are linked together in the speculation. As a central principle of the research presented here, through the concept of anarchive I am going to explain how the exhibition of choreographic objects within museums can reconfigure the social empowerment in the contemporary environment. *The Anarchive concept* has been theorised by the Senselab of Montreal, which is directed by the choreographer Erin Manning and the philosopher Brain Massumi. It is an approach that aims at giving value to the *pure feeling*[11], which we, as users, perceive on the edge of performance. In 2016, the Senselab's scholars began to wonder on a series of questions after the event *Distributing the Insensible*[12]:

- What is felt matters even if it does not actually register?

- How can we give a value to what is not possible to archive?

From this issue, the SenseLab defined some principles for the anarchive practice[13]. The declination of the anarchive notion, coming from both artistic practice and archival theory[14], places itself in an oblique position toward the traditional archival logics. Literally, it means «*an*-archival because it leaves behind the classical archival principles of order, accessibility, and tangibility in favor of regeneration, submediality, and embodied memory»[15]. As Brian Massumi explained: «the anarchive is a technique for making research-creation a process-making engine. Many products are produced, but they are not the

11. I refer to the concept of *pure feeling* developed by the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, cf. A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, Free Press, New York 1978.

12. More details about this event can be found at the following link: http://senselab.ca/wp2/immediations/upcoming-distributing-the-insensible-dec-10-20-2016/ (accessed 4/10/2020).

13. Those principles are published in the book: Andrew Murphie (edited by), *Go-to How To Book of Anarchiving*, The Senselab, Montreal 2016.

14. Recently, Timmy De Leat pointed out how the term "anarchive" has been applied occasionally in the critical discourse on the archive to foster new ways of exploring the archival logics in contemporary dance field. For example, the media scholar Wolfgang Ernst is recognized as one of the first who proposed the term to reflect on the impact digitization had on the archiving practice. Cf. Timmy De Leat, *The Anarchive of Contemporary Dance. Toward a topographic understanding of choreography*, in Helen Thomas – Stacey Prickett (edited by), *The Routledge Companion to Dance Studies*, Routledge, Abingdon 2019, pp. 177-190.

15. *Ivi*, p. 178.

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product. They are the visible indexing of the process's repeated taking-effect: they embody its traces»[16]. Along this paper and in accordance to that, I am going to argue how the anarchive of Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive may serve a double purpose. Firstly, it can open new perspectives to read dance knowledge; moreover, it can reconfigure the social empowerment of dance culture in the contemporary environment.

Choreographic Objects in a Museum Space

The enthusiasm for exhibiting choreography[17] within museums is not a new phenomenon. The practice finds its roots in the Thirties and it is later developed in the Sixties and Seventies. Then, it has been successfully recognized in the contemporary age as the initiative announced by Boris Charmatz with the Musée de la danse[18]. The potential subversion of the historical hierarchy between visual arts and performing arts is one of the most relevant aspects of this increasing presence of dance inside museum spaces. Such a phenomenon has helped to shed light on how choreographic practices have changed during the last century. It focuses on the distinction between the abstract manifestations of choreographic ideas and the acknowledgment of their historical forms of representations, or of what, according to William Forsythe, we could name "the choreography of dance"[19]. Indeed, Forsythe explained the nature of this transformation in his essay *Choreographic Objects*[20]. Within the mentioned publication, he describes a choreographic object as:

> a categorizing tool that can help identify sites within which to locate the understanding of potential organization and instigation of action-based knowledge. With this tool, the proliferation of choreographic thinking across wider domain of arts practice can be thrown into relief[21].

This concept offers an important strategy to support, in the movement analysis, the understanding of those forms of choreography coming from the interaction between real and virtual spaces. What Forsythe's essay highlighted is the result of a path from Rudolf von Laban to the more contemporary

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16. Brian Massumi, *Working Principles*, in Andrew Murphie (edited by), *Go-to How To Book of Anarchiving*, cit., p. 7.

17. Cf. Kirsten Maar, *Exhibiting Choreography*, in Maren Butte *et al.* (edited by), *Assigne and Arrange. Methodologies of Presentation in Art and Dance*, Sternberg, Berlin 2014, pp. 94-11.

18. Cf. Boris Charmatz, *Manifesto for a Dancing Museum*, online: www.museedeladanse.org/fr/articles/manifeste-pour-un-musee-de-la-danse (accessed 11/11/2020).

19. William Forsythe, *Choreographic Objects*, in Markus Weisbeck (edited by), *William Forsythe, Suspense*, JRP|Ringier, Zürich 2008, pp. 4-5.

20. The essay *Choreographic Objects* has been published the first time in 2008 in the book *William Forsythe. Suspense*, cit. Afterward, Forsythe edited the essay in accordance with the evolution of his practice of choreography. The last version appeared in Louise Neri – Eva Respini (edited by), *William Forsythe: Choreographic Objects*, Del Monico Books, Boston 2018. The aforementioned book was published in occasion of the exhibition "William Forsythe: Choreographic Objects" held at The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston in Boston.

21. William Forsythe, *Choreographic Objects*, in Louise Neri – Eva Respini (edited by), *William Forsythe: Choreographic Objects*, cit., p. 49.

conceptual distinction between dance and choreography. In his book *Choreutics*, by explaining his *space instruction*, Laban claimed:

> Movement is, so to speak, living architecture – living in the sense of changing emplacements as well as changing cohesion. The architecture is created by human movements and is made up of pathways tracing shapes in space which we may call *trace-forms*[22].

My analysis starts from Laban because I argue the publication of the *Labanotation* (or Kinéto-graphie) proposed a model, a score[23] «to dwell on the moving body that exposes the real, material, yet abstract complexity of the world»[24] in a graphic form. This type of "choreographic writing"[25] allowed us to have access to symbolic choreographic traces of social, cultural, political, anthropological conceptions of the movement related to a specific historical period. Since then, the notion of choreography expanded, and we observed several declinations of "making-choreography" codified according to specific creative technologies applied to meta-represent the experience of being in movement[26]. In this respect, we observed the development of expressions such as chronophotography, screendance, dance and choreographic installations. Moreover, the digitization of performances allowed by the technological progress has led the production of new virtual materials.

Therefore, from the same matrix (the movement experience) we watched the use of other tools besides the dancing body in the choreographic practices. I am talking about those «inherited beautiful forms of eternal value»[27] like language, history, communication, and other media such as cinematic technologies, music and digital devices, driving the development of *lived abstractions*[28].

As Jenevive Nykolak points out, dancing and choreographic exhibitions made their entrance in the museum spaces «through a broad embrace of multimedia programming accompanied by a heterogeneous rhetorical focus on liveliness»[29]. In this revolution, the impact of William Forsythe's approach

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22. Rudolf von Laban, *Choreutics*, annotated and edited by Lisa Ullmann, Macdonald and Evans, London 1966, p. 5. My emphasis.

23. Cf. Letizia Gioia Monda, *Lo score: un algoritmo per investigare la body knowledge*, in «Danza e ricerca. Laboratorio di studi, scritture e visioni», numero speciale *La danza nei dottorati di ricerca italiani: metodologie, saperi, storie. Giornate di studio*, a cura di Stefania Onesti e Giulia Taddeo, n. 6, marzo 2015, pp. 133-146.

24. Mark Franko, *Museum Artifact Act*, in Noémie Solomon (edited by), *Danse: An Anthology*, les presses du réel, Dijon 2014, p. 251.

25. As Noémie Solomon pointed out: «"Écriture chorégraphique" is another expression often used in French dance literature to designate processes of composition while alluding to the writing metaphor. This of course evokes the score, and further the activity of reading as integral to the making and perceiving of a dance performance» (Noémie Solomon, *Introduction*, in Id. (edited by), *Danse: An Anthology*, cit., p. 19).

26. Cf. Letizia Gioia Monda, *Dall'oggetto coreografico ai digital dance score. Le metafore della creatività per studiare l'intelligenza coreografica*, in «Biblioteca Teatrale», numero monografico *L'opera coreografica e i suoi processi creativi*, a cura di Vito Di Bernardi, n. 134, luglio-novembre 2020, pp. 233-257.

27. Bojana Cvejić, *The End with Judgement by Way of Clarification*, in Noémie Solomon (edited by), *Danse: An Anthology*, cit., pp. 145-157.

28. Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event,* MIT Press, Massacchuttets 2011, p. 17.

29. Jenevive Nykolak, *On Moving and Touching: From Kineticism to Dance in the Museum*, in «Art Journal», vol. LXXVIII, n. 4, 2019, pp. 38-57.

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was crucial, particularly in 1990, when the architect Daniel Libeskind[30] invited him to participate in the project *The Book of Groningen* in Netherlands. During this experience, Forsythe recognized how «the mechanics of choreographic strategy could effectively be demonstrated in adjacent domains and other media besides the human body»[31]. For thirty years he experimented with the production of several types of choreographic objects, from performative architecture to choreographic installations, from pedagogical digital devices to dance for camera, and to virtual choreographic objects. In this way, he proved a considerable range of possibilities in which choreographic thinking can occur[32]. The exhibition for *The Fact of Matter,* which took place in October 2015 at the Museum für Modern Kunst of Frankfurt am Main[33] can be considered emblematic of this research process. In the gallery spaces, Forsythe organized the performance of eleven choreographic objects to demonstrate the dialectic resources coming from his choreographic practice:

> The objects instigate processes in the body that instrumentalize the body's readiness to provide input for our heuristically driven, predictive faculties, which work incessantly to secure for us a higher probability of preferred physical and mental outcomes. A principal feature of the choreographic object is that the preferred outcome is a form of knowledge production for whoever engages with it, engendering an acute awareness of the self within specific action schemata[34].

This affirmation allows us to understand a key aspect of choreographic exhibitions placed within museums in our times. More specifically, it illuminates the fact that who is dancing in the gallery spaces is at the same time a spectator[35], who reads through his/her physical experience the choreographic score. According to that, I argue the new forms of abstract choreography work on the users' body by reactivating their pure feeling[36] and revealing the invisible network that connects all of us in a social (real) environment, to re-establish the sense of belonging to a community[37]. In this speculation, it is crucial to take into consideration how the installations of choreographic objects and dance exhibitions in museums also emerge as a solution to digitization, since the experimentations of the graphical turn[38]

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30. About the artistic collaboration between Forsythe and Libeskind, Patricia Baudoin and Heidi Gilpin already wrote in 1989 the essay, *Proliferation and Perfect Disorder: William Forsythe and the Architecture of Disappearance*, in Marinella Guatterini (a cura di), *William Forsythe Festival di Reggio Emilia*, Reggio Emilia 1989, vol. II, pp. 73-79.

31. William Forsythe in dialogue with Louise Neri, *Unhoused and Unsustainable: Choreography in and beyond dance*, in Louise Neri – Eva Respini (edited by), *William Forsythe: Choreographic Objects*, cit., p. 32.

32. From a personal conversation with Dana Caspersen, collaborator of William Forsythe as performer and creator at Ballet Frankfurt and the Forsythe Company for 28 years. Frankfurt am Main, February 2015.

33. Cf. Susanne Gaensheimer – Mario Kramer (edited by), *William Forsythe. The Fact of Matter*, Museum für Modern Kunst, Frankfurt am Main, Kerber Verlag, Bielefeld/Berlin 2016.

34. William Forsythe in dialogue with Louise Neri, *Unhoused and Unsustainable*, cit., p. 49.

35. Cf. Stephanie Rosenthal, *Choreographing You Choreographies in the Visual Arts*, in Id. (edited by), *Move. Choreographing You. Art and Dance Since the 1960s*, MIT Press, Massachusetts 2010, pp. 8-21.

36. Cf. Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, cit.

37. Cf. Nicholas Humphrey, *Seeing red: a study in consciousness*, Harvard University Press, New York 2006.

38. I am talking about the development of graphical interfaces that aimed at making sensitive the interaction between the human body and the digital devices. Cf. Mark B. N. Hansen, *Bodies in Code. Interfaces with Digital Media*, Routledge, Abdingdon 2006.

impacted our communication systems determining the establishment of the *associative space*[39] as an environment for the social interaction. As Claire Bishop pointed out:

> The migration of the performing arts to the museum and gallery should therefore be read not (just) as a cynical attempt on the part of museums to attract audiences, but as a direct consequence of the white cube and the black box changing under the pressure of new technology and eventually converging to produce a hybrid apparatus[40].

Migrations

The inclusion of digital technologies in everyday life induced the development of "an objective world"[41]. The unity of self progressively became a set of data, numbers, lines, computationally distant from our physical feeling[42]. This condition caused the evanescence of the organic body, its "idealization" and "doubling", since today what appears is how we are existing in an associative space. Because of the digitization, our presence migrated from the body to our "avatars" (virtual forms of presence), and this event drove us to program our consciousness on the connectivity between real and virtual environments[43]. Before the advent of digital technologies, the identity of a subject was based on the "mutual gazing"[44] with others, and the theater space was recognized as a privileged site for the social encounter. Otherwise, today, we can notice a sleepwalking of our species that is rampant in a world where the use of smartphone and digital devices changed our understanding of social cognition in terms of time, space and matter of interaction. For the purpose of triggering the spectator's attention and increasing its participation in the event, choreographic exhibitions inside museum spaces are recognized by the artists as a plan of action to re-activate the audience's curiosity[45]. They work by creating a hyperbole in the spectator's psycho-physical perception, expanding the sensorial experience of "living"

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39. The term "associative space" has been coined by the Italian philosopher Pietro Montani to intend the environment coming from the encounter between real and virtual world. Cf. Pietro Montani, *Tecnologie della sensibilità. Estetica e immaginazione interattiva*, Raffaello Cortina, Milano 2014, p. 36.

40. Claire Bishop, *Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone: Dance Exhibitions and Audience Attention*, in «The Drama Review», vol. LXII, n. 2, Summer 2018, p. 31.

41. Vito Di Bernardi, *Corpi e visioni nell'era digitale*, in Vito Di Bernardi – Letizia Gioia Monda (a cura di), *Immaginare la danza*, cit., p. 6.

42. Cf. Stamatia Portanova, *Moving without a Body. Digital Philosophy and Choreographic Thoughts*, MIT Press, Massachusetts 2013.

43. Cf. Letizia Gioia Monda, *Il processo di digitalizzazione del pensiero coreografico. Analisi e lettura di "Using the Sky – An Exploration of Deborah Hay's solo No Time to Fly" (Motion Bank Digital Dance Score)*, in Vito Di Bernardi – Letizia Gioia Monda (a cura di), *Immaginare la danza*, cit., pp. 143-157.

44. With respect for this argumentation. I use the term *mutual gaze* to refer to the performance *The Artist is Present* by Marina Abramovic, who worked with the audience on the re-establishment of eye contact we lose nowadays in the social interaction. This dance exhibition was performed at The Museum of Modern Art of New York in 2010. See also: Jannifer Harris, *Embodiment in the Museum – What is a Museum?*, in «ICOFOM Study Series», n. 43b, 2015, pp. 101-115.

45. Cf. Erin Brannigan – Hannah Mathews, *Performance, Choreography, and the Gallery: Materiality, Attention, Agency, Sensation, and Instability*, in «Performance Paradigm», n. 13, 2017, pp. 1-6.

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the performative event[46]. As Franz Anton Cramer writes:

> Transforming "bodily facts" of performance into media other than performance creates the ontological opacity of the exhibit. This opacity points much more to the potential to conceal than to the exteriorization of reality. The experiential intimacy sought by the Dancing Museum neutralizes the dialectics of negativity as absent and positivity as visible. In its place, experience becomes the central parameter: the issue in the paradigm of the museum is not to fixate dance to its promise as a metaphysical resource of organicity and singularity. Quite to the contrary, it is the body's potential to radically experience its own outside and thereby transform experience into artifact[47].

Also, Libeskind claimed that choreographic objects are «uninteresting residues of the participatory experience, emblem of the reality which goes into their making»[48]. Therefore, they should be understood as *dispositif*[49], «conditions set up by choreographic works as well as the heterogeneous assemblage they perform»[50], able to produce new forms of knowledge and body awareness.

The investigations carried within the artistic field underlined how the concept of a choreographic body[51], meant as an archive of the experience of being in movement, inspired the research on the choreographic object as a system for renovating the spectator's attention, motivating his physical social interaction throughout a powerful sensorial experience.

In following Claire Bishop's argumentation, the term "migrations" is used in this paragraph to propose a parallelism in order to make visible how the increasing presence of dance and choreographic exhibitions within museums happened as the direct consequence of the digitization processes that affected global communication strategies. As long as the human presence migrated from the organic bodies to the virtual personifications (objects), the choreographic thinking migrated from the (dancing) physical body to multimodal choreographic objects. For many choreographers and artists like Yvonne Rainer, Merce Cunningham, Trisha Brown, Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, Ruth Gibson and Bruno Martelli, and many others, dance exhibitions (meant as a hybrid type of performances[52]) represented performative strategies to communicate in the digital era choreographic ideas to the audience[53]. In this

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46. Cf. Letizia Gioia Monda, *Luci ed ombre sull'uso del digitale nella danza. Dal Festival* Più che Danza! *una riflessione sulle reti sociali e le app per condividere i processi creativi coreografici*, in «SigMa Rivista di Letterature comparate, Teatro e Arti dello spettacolo», n. 3, 2019, pp. 959-981.

47. Franz Anton Cramer, *Experience as Artifact: Transformations of the Immaterial*, in «Dance Research Journal», vol. XLVI, n. 3, December 2014, p. 29.

48. Daniel Libeskind, *Architecture Intermundium*, in «Threshold», vol. IV, Spring 1988, p. 115.

49. With the term *dispositif*, I refer to the concept of "apparatus" introduced by the French philosopher Micheal Foucault, in accordance with its interpretation by Gilles Deleuze. With dispositif, Deleuze meant a creative technology able to allow the negotiation between the past and the future of the human being's living experience. In these terms, his approach deeply inspired the critical discourse about the archive and the research on innovative forms of expression based on multimedia interaction. Cf. Gilles Deleuze, *Che cos'è un dispositivo?*, Cronopio, Napoli 2007.

50. Noémie Solomon, *Introduction*, in Id. (edited by), *Dance: An Anthology*, cit., p.18.

51. Cf. Letizia Gioia Monda, *Choreographic bodies. L'esperienza della Motion Bank nel progetto multidisciplinare di Forsythe*, Dino Audino, Roma 2016.

52. Cf. Claire Bishop, *Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone*, cit., pp. 22-42.

53. William Forsythe claimed: «*Strategy is a choreographic moment*. At present, I perceive that many artists are thinking

framework, Bishop suggests looking at the museum space as a *gray zone*[54] – not entirely corresponding with the White Cube nor the Black Box – providing a new environment where the visitor can experience the connectivity with the virtual reality. The gray zone is a potential space based on the conceptual opposition between presence and absence[55], construction and deconstruction, time flow and stillness (or also suspense). It offers to the spectator/visitor an experience that enables his/her self-awareness outside of the social patterns of both, the real environment or the social networks. In a choreographic exhibition, the user is put in the condition to rediscover his/her own body feeling. In the last thirty years, there was a growing development of dance/choreographic exhibitions within museum spaces as a direct consequence of the previously mentioned condition. From the Center Pompidou in Paris to the MoMA in New York, from the Tate Modern in London to the Venice Biennale, museums took on the function of «a sort of contrapuntal musical space»[56] to play a polyphony made of kinesthetic phenomena. In this context, choreographic objects work as algorithms or diagnostic equations pushing the spectator to wonder: «How am I in the world as a body?»[57].

Museo Madre Mission

Museo Madre of Naples, under the direction of Laura Valente, changed its mission and increased the choreographic performative exhibitions to stimulate an impact on the social Neapolitan environment. Since 2018, we have been observing a growing inclusion of dance exhibitions in the galleries of Museo Madre. An example is the retrospective on the photographer Robert Mapplethorpe *Choreography for an Exhibition*, curated by Laura Valente and Andrea Villani[58], and organized in collaboration with Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation of New York[59]. The exciting aspect of this choreographic exhibition was the setting of multi-layered performative actions as a chance for inviting the audience to read the content of the retrospective through many choreographic perspectives and forms. In fact, for the exhibition, the museum ordered a choreography to be made by Anna Gerus on the Mapplethorpe's photographic series *White Gauze* (1984). In the creative process, the choreographer got insights from this repertory developing the piece *The Floating Grace*, then performed in the same gallery space

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strategically in terms of how their work can be read, its affect – relationally, historically. Choreography is a way to get things in motion, and artists are always trying to get people to move their minds in new directions» (William Forsythe in dialogue with Louise Neri, *Unhoused and Unsustainable*, cit., p. 42).

54. Cf. Claire Bishop, *Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone*, cit., pp. 22-42.

55. Cf. Enrico Pitozzi, *Figurazioni, uno studio sulle gradazioni di presenza*, in «Culture Teatrali», numero monografico *On Presence*, a cura di Enrico Pitozzi, n. 21, 2011, pp. 107-127.

56. William Forsythe in dialogue with Louise Neri, *Unhoused and Unsustainable*, cit., p. 32.

57. *Ibidem*.

58. Andrea Villani is the former Artistic Director of the Museo Madre.

59. Letizia Gioia Monda, *"Coreografia per una mostra", la pratica fotografica di Mapplethorpe in scena al Museo MADRE di Napoli*, in «Campadidanza Dance Magazine», 30 dicembre 2018, online: https://www.campadidanza.it/coreografia-per-una-mostra-la-pratica-fotografica-di-mapplethorpe-in-scena-al-museo-madre-di-napoli.html (accessed 12/6/2020).

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where *White Gauze* collection was exposed. This dance exhibition inspired the Ukrainian photographer and visual artist Vadim Stein's screendance, which was then projected in another moment of the same initiative[60].

Another successful project was also *Atlante del gesto_Napoli* by the well-known Italian choreographer Virgilio Sieni, who proposed in 2019 a set of dance workshops and site-specific performances made explicitly for the spaces of Museo Madre and its community. Even in this case, the action was designed to promote an experiential path for the participants in the workshops, leading them to pay attention to the body feeling and the movement language to develop a *common gesture* to shape the performative dance exhibitions consequently within the museum. Finally, the most recent intervention was *Pina Bausch. Ensembles*, a dance/choreographic exhibition dedicated to the memory of the founder of the Tanztheater Wuppertal ten years after her death. The event started with the dance performance *Moving with Pina* by and with Cristina Morganti. It ended with *Ensembles*, a screendance exhibition on Pina Bausch curated by the Pina Bausch Foundation.

At the beginning of 2020, Kathryn Weir (former director of Département du Développment Culturel du Centre Pompidou) has been appointed as the new artistic director of the Museo Madre. Weir's approach focuses on practices of inclusions to increase the exchanges with the local community and promote the experimentation of new art forms based on the hybridization of the visual and the performative. In a recent interview, Laura Valente explains her vision for Museo Madre by quoting Jette Sandahl's definition of "museum"[61]:

> Madre has to change in a democratic space and to actively collaborate with the several communities to collect, archive, interpret, exhibit, and increase the understanding of the world. In this moment, in which some models are no longer sustainable, in terms of cultural heritage, the need is to discover new strategies to integrate in the system some policies able to combine inclusion and reflection, and stimulating the education of experts, who will be the ruling class in our future. I am thinking about Museo Madre as a community: widespread, active, shared, participated[62].

By looking back at the culture of the museum[63], Museo Madre's mission seems to get closer to the models suggested by the New York MoMA's activities; hence, it embodies a creative factory where new approaches are generated to choreographically exhibit collections in order to increase the social empowerment in the contemporary environment. Laura Valente's attention on performing and researching new models of interaction within the gallery spaces gave birth to the collaboration with

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60. Cf. Vadim Stein, *The Floating Grace*, online: https://vimeo.com/397655682 (accessed 10/5/2020).

61. Jette Sandahl is currently president of the European Museum Forum.

62. Santa Nastro, *Come sarà il 2020 dei Musei? Intervista a Laura Valente, Presidente del Museo Madre*, online: https://www.artribune.com/arti-visive/arte-contemporanea/2020/01/come-sara-il-2020-dei-musei-intervista-a-laura-valente-presidente-del-museo-madre/ (accessed 20/5/2020).

63. Marcella Lista, *Play Dead/Fare il morto: danza, musei e "le arti basate sul tempo"*, in «Danza e ricerca. Laboratorio di studi, scritture, visioni», n. 9, 2017, pp. 11-35, online: https://danzaericerca.unibo.it/article/view/7671/7447 (accessed 9/11/2020)

Sapienza University of Rome, and, specifically, with Vito Di Bernardi, Professor of Dance History, with the purpose to curate the screendance archive of Il Coreografo Elettronico Festival.

Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive is a particularly interesting case study because it allows the observation of a cyclic phenomenon. In particular, the festival took place in art spaces, such as Palazzo delle Arti di Napoli (PAN), Museum Macro in Rome, and the Museo Madre itself. In these contexts, videodance works presented for the contest and outside the contest were exhibited through projections. The festival was designed according to several criteria, taking into consideration the categories of competition, the nationality of the works, the techniques applied, the authorship, etc. After twenty years, this venture occupies the museum space under another form: not as a festival but an archive of screendance works stored within the library of Museo Madre. Thanks to this transformation, it is possible today to look at the copious archive of Il Coreografo Elettronico through another perspective[64]. As Laura Valente claimed, we can observe the reinvention of an event, born as videodance Festival, which became a site where experiment and research occur on living memories[65]. This circularity allows us to reconsider the screendance filmic performance as an experience perceived "through" *objects*, in which the choreographic thinking is investigated, inscribed, and performed to exist «within a museum exhibition as part of a majestic children's event of a new productive era»[66].

In analyzing Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive as a case study, the critical aspect is to pay attention to the previously mentioned circularity, which sheds a light on the double meaning inscribed in this collection of screendance works. Firstly, the exhibition of screendance works during the festival allows us to observe their nature of choreographic objects developed by the authors with the aim of translating the kinesthetic experience through particular strategies of choreographic writing. Secondly, the choreographic objects collected into Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive are shown as *boundary objects*[67], or rather as research instruments through which investigate the traces of the choreographic thinking that drove their creation[68]. This unique articulation is what makes Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive itself a very potent tool to study the dance cultural heritage in itself inscribed. Such a peculiarity drove me to apply the anarchiving approach as a research principle to investigate Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive. This approach is just not meant as a documentation of the festival past activity; rather, it looks for choreographic-making processes that drove the development of choreographic objects and their ex-

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64. Cf. Laura Valente, *Il Coreografo Elettronico, oggi e domani*, in Vito Di Bernardi – Letizia Gioia Monda (a cura di), *Immaginare la danza*, cit., p. 175.

65. As Sherril Dodds points out screendance offers a useful model for thinking through time on the living body. Cf. Sherril Dodds, *Dance on Screen*, Palgrave, London 2001, p. 33.

66. Laura Valente*, Il Coreografo Elettronico, oggi e domani*, cit., p. 175.

67. Cf. Scott deLahunta, *Working without an Overview*, cit., p. 98.

68. Cf. James Leach, *Making Knowledge from Movement. Some Notes on the Contextual Impetus to Transmit Knowledge from Dance*, in Maaike Bleeker (edited by), *Transmission in Motion. The Technologizing of Dance*, Routledge, Abingdon 2017, pp. 141-154.

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hibitions. My aim is to find principles to reenact the traces of physical thinking which continually change the performing contexts. My purpose is to investigate the screendance creative processes and the choreographic strategies that activate the synesthetic experience on which those artifacts are based. Finally, by identifying these traces in the choreographic objects I am looking at, I hope to cast new light on some aspects of Western dance history.

Anarchive a Screendance Archive

The taxonomy of archiving came from the desire to preserve aspects of our lives as human beings through documents[69]. The purpose of archiving finds its sense in the idea of creating order in disorder, providing coherence in our *reading-the-past* ability. In being similar to choreographic bodies[70] and objects, archives are not static geometries. They regularly change the practice of anarchiving. In particular, the digitization transformed the archival logic. As Maaike Bleeker claimed, this transformation involved a shift from "archival order" to "archival dynamics":

> This is a shift from the archive as place that keeps and orders documents of events that took place at one time and in one place towards the archive as a "dynarchive" (Ernst): a place of re-generation coproduced by users. These transformations can be seen reflected in projects from the field of dance that engage with new possibilities of digital technology to store and transmit dance knowledge while at same time, dance and these projects appear most useful to think through implications and potentials of the new archival logic brought about by digitization[71].

In these terms, Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive can be considered as an *archive in motion*[72] made by choreographic objects, through which reactivate choreographic thinking traces that shaped their making. Following Massumi, the traces «are not inert but are carriers of potential. They are re-activatable, and their reactivation helps trigger a new event which continues the creative process from which they came, but in a new iteration»[73].

For Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive, I developed a methodology that mobilizes its contents. I approached the research as a user to understand through my pure feeling the logic that moved the kinesthetic experience transcodification into a screendance filmic performance. Then, I studied the

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69. Ruth Noak, *Dance/Archives/Exhibition? Moving between Words*, in Gabriele Brandstetter – Gabriele Klein (edited by), *Dance [and] Theory*, Transcript, Bielefeld 2013, p. 228.

70. With the term "choreographic bodies", I refer to aspects of the performer's bodily knowledge. By training the body-mind through a dance technique, a dancer is able to embody choreographic principles re-configuring the geometry of his/her dancing experience. This dance score is an artificial structure a creator can move/transit through. It should be meant as a technological creative tool to support the performer's self-expression by the movement language. Cf. Letizia Gioia Monda, *Choreographic bodies*, cit., pp. 24-94.

71. Maaike Bleeker, *What if This Were an Archive? Abstractions, Enactment and Human Implicatedness*, in Id. (edited by), *Transmission in Motion*, cit., p. 199.

72. Marion von Osten, *The Archive in Motion*, in Gabriele Brandstetter – Gabriele Klein (edited by), *Dance [and] Theory*, cit., pp. 231-233.

73. Brian Massumi, *Working Principles*, cit., p. 7.

system elaborated by the Italian critics and experts, who originally promoted the contest – Marilena Riccio (as founder), Elisa Guzzo Vaccarino, Vittoria Ottolenghi, and more (as part of the jury) – and structured the participation of screendance works in the five categories. By analyzing the archive catalogues and the list of the several festival edition winners, though, I discovered many details. For example, in the application, the authors could choose the category in which to compete with their works and many choreographers, who participated in the category "B" – original creation for the video – won the competition as "screendance directors". For this reason, I rather research the works as they were *objects* created as digital choreographies, thus as results of creative processes that aimed at the hybrid between dance, cinema, and digital graphic design. By shifting to the choreographic process that generated these screendance works, I could study the choreographic strategies applied by the authors to objectify the physical, kinetic, tactile, spatial and rhythmic dimension of "making-choreography" into a conceptual artefact. From this perspective, I could better inquire into both the ideologies and the processes of representation of the choreo-cinematic works. Moreover, I found a compelling approach for screendance movement analysis in the *plural authoriality*[74]. By applying this method, I understood how the several forms of negotiation between digital and organic choreographies could produce different expressions of screendance. Finally, I adopted a correct approach and point of view to analyse each specific work accurately. In the end, I identified the recurring participation of some creators at several festival editions, developing like that a transdisciplinary and diachronic research on the archived material to better understand the development of videodance.

Reenacting Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's screendance practice: a case study

The investigation performed was a precious contribution to the teaching material of the course of Digital Choreography at Sapienza University of Rome. I took advantage of the screendance works to explain how the application of new media in a choreographic making process can help to study the traces of choreographic thinking into objects. I moved around concepts, keywords, poetics, countries to visualize the connections between different expressions of choreographic thinking, and to stimulate their interpretation starting from the performance experience. An interesting case study has been the screendance practice of Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker. It is proposed here as a practical example to

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74. In my research, I recognized three recurring cases of plural authoriality in screendance work: the first is the one in which a choreographer is also the director of a work; the second is the one in which choreographer and director work in parallel; and the third is when the director is also the choreographer of a videodance filmic performance. Cf. Letizia Gioia Monda, *La negoziazione tra regia e coreografia nelle opere di videodanza. Uno studio condotto presso l'archivio del Festival Il Coreografo Elettronico*, in Luca Bandirali – Daniela Castaldo – Francesco Ceraolo (a cura di), *Re-directing. La regia nello spettacolo del XXI secolo*, Salento University Press, Lecce 2020, pp 219-225.

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explain the potential of reenacting the choreographic traces from Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive.

Precisely, De Keersmaeker's participation in Il Coreografo Elettronico Festival allows expanding the knowledge on her choreographic thinking and practice. She submitted to the contest two of her screendance works, *Counter Phrases* in 2004 and *Ma Mère l'Oye* (made in collaboration with other choreographers too[75]) in 2005, created with the filmmaker and composer Thierry De Mey.

De Keersmaeker's choreographic language has been the subject of several academic and historical books by dance scholars[76]. Moreover, the three-volume series (with DVDs contributions) titled *A Choreographer's Score* edited by Bojana Cvejić[77] are very sophisticated pedagogical tools to investigate how De Keersmaeker articulates choreographic parameters as matter of writing (*écriture*) into a score[78]. As Philippe Guisgand pointed out, De Keersmaeker's work can be studied as a puzzle based on a more or less linear system of references through which we can observe how parts of performances are transmitted to the next one:

> The temporal succession of the pieces is then disrupted by the construction of these circularities (redundancies, reminders, quotations of all kinds), revealing the choreographer's obstinacy in digging the same furrows. De Keersmaeker thus proposes a journey through a long and elastic temporality where the choreographic past and the outline of a later creation are mixed together[79].

In her research, De Keersmaeker recognized how the application of video devices in her movement practice could provide an excellent working tool to transmit dance knowledge, keeping traces of investigation processes into choreographic intelligence. Its categorization as an experimentation into visual art is avoided. Despite that, my application of the anarchive principles subverts the distinction between performing and visual arts, while at the same time it proposes to juxtapose the linear interpretation of historical events with a transversal perspective on De Keersmaeker's work. In this speculation, her screendance's practice is meant as a parallel strategy to the choreographic writing, which she developed

75. Together with Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, the choreography was developed by Jonathan Burrows, Iris Bouche, Erna Omarsdottir, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Damien Jalet, Samir Akika, Michèle Anne De Mey, Mauco Paccagnella.

76. Cf. Marianne Van Kerkhoven and Anoek Nuyens, *Listen to the Bloody Machine Creating Kris Verdonck's End*, International Theatre and Film's Book, Utrecht School of the Arts, Amesterdam and Utrecht 2012; Marianne van Kerkhoven, *Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker*, Vlaams Theater Instituut, Brussels 1997; Philippe Guisgand, *Les fils d'un entrelacs sans fin. La danse dans l'oeuvre de Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker*, Septentrion, Villeneuve d'Ascq 2008; Philippe Guisgand, *Accords intimes. Dance et musique chez Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker*, Septentrion, Villeneuve d'Ascq 2017; Irmela Kästner – Tina Ruisinger (edited by), *Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker*, Kieser, Munich 2007.

77. Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker – Bojana Cvejić (edited by), *A Choreographer's Score: Fase, Rasas Danst Rosas, Elena's Aria, Bartók*, Rosas & Mercatorfonds, Brussels 2012; *En Atendant & Cesena: A Choreographer's Score*, Rosas & Mercatorfonds, Brussels 2013; *A Choreographer's Score: Drumming & Rain*, Rosas & Mercatorfonds, Brussels 2014.

78. Bojana Cvejić, *A Choreographer's Score. Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker*, in Maaike Bleeker (edited by), *Transmission in Motion*, cit., p. 53.

79. «La succession temporelle des pièces est alors perturbée par la construction de ces circularités (redondances, rappels, citations de toutes sortes), révélatrices d'une obstination de la chorégraphe à creuser les mêmes sillons. De Keersmaeker propose ainsi un voyage dans une temporalité longue et élastique à la fois où se mêlent passé chorégraphique et ébauche d'une création ultérieure» (Philippe Guisgand, *Les fils d'un entrelacs sans fin. La danse dans l'oeuvre de Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker*, cit., p. 13).

in order to investigate the complexity of what choreography is or might be. In starting from this point, she tested the creative tensions that can arise in the dialogue within the choreographic concept and the materialization into a choreographic object. Furthermore, she approached to the videodance practice throughout a series of *cine-choreographic operations*[80] experimented in order to document the development of her inquiry into choreography[81]. In 1988, she made her first attempt. In collaboration with the director Wolfgang Kolb[82], she produced *Hoppla!*[83], the screendance adaptation of the piece *Rosa Bartók* (1987). Later, she created in collaboration with the director Walter Verdin[84], the videodance version of the performance *Ottone, Ottone* (1988), a crucial production in De Keersmaeker's choreographic research in 1991. In looking for compositional strategies to get in dialogue music and dance she saw, on the occasion, the potential of videodance to emphasize the "dancing arias of action"[85], and recognised the chance to face her subject matter from another perspective in the *cinematographic writing*. Afterward, she directed her first screendance piece *Achterland*[86], a black and white movie, one hour long, where the camera movements were engendered by the dancers' dynamics in 1994. Within the previous experience, she observed how cinematographic writing could provide an alternative system through which objectify her interpretation of the choreographic counterpoint. Finally, she started her collaboration with the filmmaker and composer Thierry De Mey[87] in 1996, with whom she created many screendance filmic performance like *Rosas danst Rosas* (1996), *Fase* (2002), *Tippeke* (1997), *Counter Phrases* (2004), *Ma Mère l'Oye* (2004), *Prélude à la Mer* (2010).

Among the pragmatical framework, *Counter Phrases* represents an emblematic work to study the artistic relationship between De Keersmaeker and De Mey; moreover, it provides an additional contribution which is critical to contextualize De Keersmaeker's choreographic practice within the history of dance[88]. In such a work, the choreographic counterpoint between music and dance is articulated

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80. Erin Branningam claimed *cine-choreographic operations* are those «where we see choreographic elements written through by the cinematic apparatus», in Erin Braningam, *Dancefilm. Choreography and Moving Image*, Oxford University Press, New York 2011, p. 11.

81. About Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's screendance practice see also: Alessandro Amaducci, *Screendance. Sperimentazioni visive intorno al corpo tra film, video e computer grafica*, Kaplan, Torino 2020, pp. 173-178.

82. With Stefanie Bodien, Wolfgang Kolb is the artistic director of the International Dance Film Festival Brussels, *L'art difficile de filmer la danse*, which saw its first edition in 2012. Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive Project participated as partner of the 2018 edition of International Dance Film Festival Brussels, since the theme for the historical dance films program was "Italian".

83. It is possible to watch the screendance work *Hoppla!* at the following link from the online digital archive *Numeridanse*: https://www.numeridanse.tv/en/dance-videotheque/hoppla (accessed 8/10/2020).

84. Elisa [Guzzo] Vaccarino, *La Musa dello schermo freddo*, cit., p. 45.

85. *Ibidem.*

86. This screendance work has been published in the DVD published by Rosas Dance Company, *Achterland*, Europe Images International, 1994. It is possible to watch it online at the following link: http://www.ubu.com/dance/keers_achterland.html (accessed 8/10/2020).

87. Thierry De Mey is the brother of Michèle Anne De Mey, a long-term collaborator with Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker and former dancer with Rosas dance company.

88. At the following link it is possible to watch the second half of the film *Counter Phrases*: http://www.ubu.com/dance/keers_counter.html (accessed 8/10/2020).

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through an attractive rhythmic montage of the moving images. This specific choreographic object finds its roots on the stage work *(But if a look should) April Me* performed by Rosas (dance) and the Ictus Ensemble (music) for the first time in 2002. De Keersmaeker's choreographic score provided the starting point for ten danced phrases placed in different environments. The ten shorts sequences directed by De Mey supplied the musical score composition for the videodance performance, which were commissioned to ten different contemporary composers: Stefan Van Eycken, Georges Aperghis, Thierry De Mey, Robin de Raaff, Luca Francesconi, Jonathan Harvey, Magnus Lindberg, Toshio Hosokawa, Steve Reich, Fausto Romitelli. Each of them worked on one of the variations separately, after the films have been edited and merged. By watching *Counter Phrases*, it is possible to notice the synchronous relationship between dance, music, and the editing time-rhythm. According to De Keersmaeker's choreographic thinking, the screendance composition shows the modulation of an energy cycle[89]. Within the movie, such an energy cycle is materialized thanks to a harmonic spiral counterpoint mathematically organized from one visual nucleus of reference. The core is the dance vocabulary created by De Keersmaeker, which is the founding element of the original choreographic score of *(But if a look should) April Me*. The previous score motivated the making-process of the whole screendance work and gave to the artifact a circular flow dynamic. In these terms, *Counter Phrases* can be understood as a metaphor of the choreographic thinking embodied in the score. We can look at the screendance performance as an object where the choreographic intelligence is transcodificated to go to exist in another medium besides the dancing body. Furthermore, the algorithmic relation between music, dance, and moving images is translated into a living architecture by a visual strategy that allows us to perceive the emerging counterpoint. In this scenario, the dancing movement is the vehicle of this transmission since we can notice how it designs the space-time of interaction. Metaphorically, the movie action seems to suggest a journey through space inscriptions, from the geometry of the natural environments to the artificial design of the urban spaces. Such a path invites the audience to recognize the movement potential to make alive the patterns that surround us. In these terms, the work offers a contribution to acknowledge how human being's actions can impact the social environment and vice versa.

The cinematographic writing supports the "narration" of the mentioned concept because De Mey defines a system to enact the choreographic thinking leading like that the screendance idea-logic. He questions the opposites by applying the split-screen technique to stimulate the development of an immersive performative context for the spectator. The alignment of close-ups and medium shot in the same frame drives the audience to read how the bodies symmetries can reflect those of the surrounding environment[90]. Moreover, we could argue that De Mey's cinematographic writing, applied as choreo-

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89. Cf. Philippe Guisgand, *Intervista ad Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker*, L'Epos, Palermo 2008.

90. Lucy Fine Donaldson based on Laban's movement analysis her investigation on the viewer's filmic experience. In her theory, the alignment in one of the three stages forming the basis of our engagement with the action expressed by the

graphic strategy in the screendance composition, allows us to follow the traces of the somatic experience from which the dance score was originated.

In analyzing the artistic collaboration between De Mey and De Keersmaeker, the practice of an-archiving Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive helps to acknowledge the impact this screendance experi-ence had on the following work *Ma Mère l'Oye*. By observing De Mey's search for a system of writing able to objectify the counterpoint between choreographic bodies' subjectivities and the multiplicity of the natural environment geometries, we can notice his challenge to find a way to inscribe the musicality given by the somatosensorial dancing dimension into the videodance filmic performance[91]. Through Il Coreografo Elettronico Archive, we can also better contextualize these experimentations within the de-velopment of the screendance practice in Belgium. For example, it can be compared De Keersmaeker's experience with the one of other Belgian choreographers and filmmakers, such as Wim Vandekeybus − who won Il Coreografo Elettronico Award in 2007 with the movie *Here After* −, or with other pro-ductions coming from similar artistic collaboration as *Derrière elle* made by the Belgian composer and filmmaker Thomas Turine and the choreographer Natalia Sardi, winners of Il Coreografo Elettronico contest in 2009. The horizontal and vertical connections allow us to expand the understanding of dance history, by designing renovated interdisciplinary constellations that can have an important impact on teaching and research programs, as much as in the development of exhibition itineraries.

As I argued above, the museum space can provide an expanding dimension through which play new strategies for writing a history of dance that has not yet been written. Museo Madre represents a unique case in its genre because the circularity of the phenomenon we observed with Il Coreo-grafo Elettronico − from a screendance festival placed within museums to a screendance archive stored within a museum – shows the opportunity to identify its nature of *dynarchive* which is able to generate renovated dance knowledge each time the anarchive technique is performed. A step forward can be proposed if we considered Museo Madre itself as a "dispositif", a heterotopic space inclined to activate potential fields of action. Ideally, exhibitions of videodance within the gallery spaces could provide a double purpose: it can open new perspectives to read dance knowledge; moreover, it can improve the social empowerment of dance culture. Therefore, the installations of a set of choreographic objects organized according to several parameters − like authors, countries, subjects, periods, type of exper-imentations, digital technologies applied, relation with other artistic disciplines etc. which are based on the anarchive practice − may support the development of a new dance literature[92]. Consequently,

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moving images. The alignment helps to qualify the spectator's access at the performer's somatic experience, further indicating how involved we might be with a performance: spatially, emotionally, and physically. Cf. Lucy Fine Donaldson, *Effort and Empathy: Engaging with Film Performance*, in Dee Reynolds – Matthew Reason (edited by), *Kinesthetic Empathy in Creative and Cultural Practices*, Intellect, Chicago 2012, pp. 139-174.

91. See my analysis of *Ma Mère l'Oye* in Letizia Gioia Monda, *What We Are Talking about when We Talk about Videodance?*, cit.

92. Rebecca Groves – Norah Zuniga Shaw – Scott DeLahunta, *Talking about Scores: William Forsythe's Vision for a New*

the choreographic exhibition of the screendance archive may provide an innovative model of writing and disseminating dance history stimulating its inclusion in the social environment at the same level of other forms of art. In the end, the collaboration between Museo Madre and Sapienza University of Rome should be interpreted as a chance to reshape the organization of choreographic knowledge into the gallery spaces, providing new plans of action for supporting the visualization of passages of thoughts and choreographic procedures throughout historical periods. Scholars and curators should gather from this research a different attention and should look for new methodologies to exploit the vital potential for choreographic traces contrapuntal reading to reenact into choreographic exhibitions. In short, dance and choreography exhibited within a museum can transport dance culture heritage in a renewed state of social relevance.

Visions

If dancing can exist in other domains besides the body, the history of dance can be shaped through different apparatus besides the books. The digitization stimulated intellectuals and artists to develop new strategies to communicate the knowledge coming from human being's kinesthetic experience. Such an approach drives the development of multimodal objects meant as models to have access at the choreographic intelligence. In this scenario, the choreographic objects can be understood as potential working tools to transmit dance knowledge. By being placed within a museum, a choreographic object can activate new conditions to experience and embody the traces of the choreographic thinking long the history.

Furthermore, a screendance archive such as that of Il Coreografo Elettronico can enlarge the understanding of the history of dance thanks to the reenactment of the choreographic traces inscribed in its artifacts. In allowing the screendance archive to speak to the audience, the performance must be supported by a research-practice to make visible the knowledge coming from the participatory experience produced by an invisible dance. Therefore, the process of reenactment and the design of a gray zone to exhibit the screendance archive include the results of an investigation capable of justifying the tasks and the behavioral rules that the spectator has to follow within the museum space. He/she should be enabled to perceive the sense of a choreographic exhibition, which might be a conceptual, historical, or phenomenological path.

The process can allow us to find ourselves back, in our body, in our history, in our culture, and can reconfigure our social position by making us feel connected again in the same environment. Furthermore, it may lead to the development of a new, digitally structured, system of archiving, which

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Form of »Dance Literature«, in Sabine Gehm – Pirkko Husemann – Katharina von Wilcke (edited by), *Knowledge in Motion*, cit., pp. 91-100.

could make us visualize different aspects of specific choreographic thinking in relation to the historical heritage and other fields of studies within the choreographic-thinking process of digitization itself. Ideally, the whole process may produce an interactive conceptual map to stimulate the users to digitally practice the anarchiving process by connecting domains of knowledge, sources, and metaphoric solutions to the enigma of the human being's experience in movement.

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