

DD

Dorvillier and Zeena Parkins

Fragments / Empty Spaces

Zeena Parkins: Why these rooms, this light, why empty ?

DD Dorvillier: The studio is the space where we limit the amount of outside feedback in order to focus on the work. This room keeps us out of time. This space is always there. The light moves through the space all day. The light reminds me that time is passing. By the time the sun is spilling over the walls, we have already finished half a day's work, and it's time to check in and see if we are on track with the schedule. The sun asserts its power by announcing the time passing. Our work largely involves the subdividing, parsing out, organizing, splitting, doubling, dominating, racing against... time. Struggling with time.

ZP: Why was the first movement so slow to make ?

DD: It took nearly six weeks to complete the transposition of the first movement into dance. It's 12 minutes long. Of course we worked on other parts too, but the bulk of our day was dedicated to reaching the end of Movement 1. It's as if we have been taking whole days and compressing them into this one 12 minute long segment, like a small marble statue carved over years from an ambiguously shaped mass of marble, slowly revealing its details, still embedded in this shapeless rock, appearing to emerge from it. The struggle with time is a practical one. Each new day we work on Movement 1, that's one more day of value added to the piece. It's the only way I can accept it. If I regret how long it takes to make the piece, it's a waste of energy. It's simply what it takes.

ZP: How do you identify a "quality" ? What connects the quality of the choreography to the quality of the musical composition ?

DD: Describe the "space" of Movement 1. Metaphors, poetry, architecture, paintings,

utility, emotion, politics, cinema, history, languages, texture, color. Define the space of the music.

ZP: Tell me more about the empty spaces. What does it lead you to ?

DD: Limited space full of potential. Emptiness = potential = concentration and focus. In the morning it's a bit dark and we leave the fluorescent lights off. As we begin working we turn on the overhead lights, become more focused on the execution of movements, their precision, their directionality, my choreographic intentions, mingling with their physical ones. By the afternoon the light from outside is streaming across the walls, threatening to cut the day shorter.

ZP: Different spaces have different qualities, different movements have different qualities, different movements have different protocols for language, each one is its own universe, in terms of its hierarchy and its internal relationships... this is what creates the contrasts and differences between the movements. How do you identify a "quality" ? What connects the quality of the choreography to the quality of the musical composition ?

DD: Quality is about something that's not quantifiable. You can't measure it.

ZP: Yeah, but you can name it can't you?... Bernstein calls his music "durable" long lasting, everlasting. A durable good that does not wear out. Durability, an economical term.

DD: We will never know more than we know when we listen to the music, dance it, and attempt to reconcile the differences.

It's clear that it's art and it's clear that the process has an effect on us, that it's "artful" that it does something to us

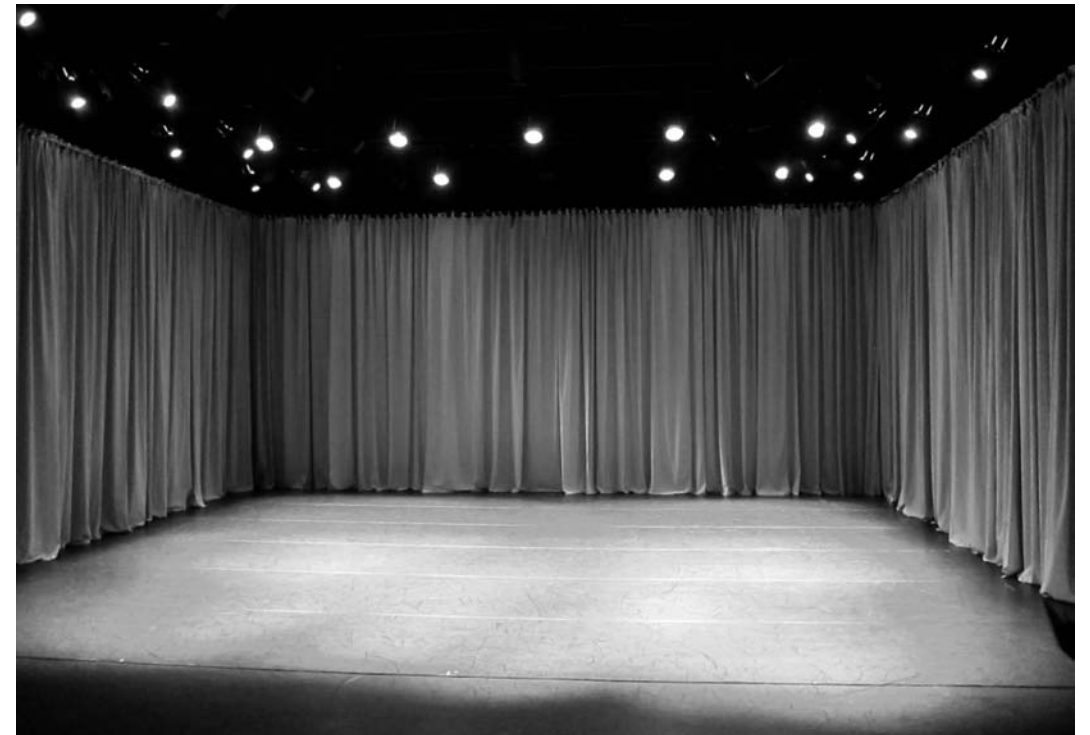
that art does to us. We are making art together. It dawns on me that were making art. That WE are making art together, even better. We can't think about it much, the dancers especially. They have to worry about counting, memorizing, execution, their bodies. But they aren't machines, nor instruments. They should not think of themselves like that even if they don't have the time to reflect on what they are doing (making art together).

Where the art, the music, the dance, begins and ends, what are its limits? This is the question. Not because it's necessary to make these things as such, not to validate them (include them) in a particular sanctioned realm or official category, one that is known, accepted... That's not the point of my question. I ask where does the dance begin and end because I suspect that once we start searching out its limits they seem to drift farther and farther out of grasp, the horizon keeps rolling out ahead, leading me to think that this dance really is permanent.

The dance we are making is part of a permanent dance. Maybe Beethoven had an idea of something like music having no end... something like life having no end... endlessness... false endings, ambiguous endings, endless endings, sudden changes, sudden continuations as if nothing had happened, disruptions, unexpected returns.

January 2012
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September 2011, STUK Leuven, Belgium
 Photo: Zeena Parkins
Danza Permanente afternoon in the Labozaal at STUK



September 2012, The Kitchen, NYC
 Photo: Zeena Parkins
 The set of *Danza Permanente* at The Kitchen

Danza Permanente (2012)

From the score of Ludwig Van Beethoven's String Quartet # 15, in A Minor, Op. 132, "Heiliger Dankgesang"

- I. Assai sostenuto
- II. Allegro ma non tanto
- III. Molto adagio
- "Heiliger Dankgesang eines Genesenen an die Gottheit in der lydischen Tonart."
- ["Canzona di ringraziamento offerta alla divinità da un guarito, in modo lidico."]
- IV. Alla Marcia, assai vivace
- V. Allegro appassionato
- Violino*: Naiara Mendioroz and Fabian Barba
- Viola*: Nuno Bizarro
- Violoncello*: Walter Dundervill
- With the voices* of Heike Liss, Jonathan Bepler and Carla Kihlstedt

Choreography and concept: DD Dorvillier
Acoustic environment, musical direction and analysis: Zeena Parkins
Created with the performers: Fabian Barba, Nuno Bizarro, Walter Dundervill, Naiara Mendioroz, and artistic advisor/rehearsal assistant, Heather Kravas
Lighting design: Thomas Dunn
Costumes: Michelle Amet
Technical director: Jeff Englander
Sound guru: Sébastien Roux
Project management: Milka Djordjevich, Colin Pitrat

The recording made in 1967 by the Quartetto Italiano was our main reference and exclusive version used during rehearsals, upon which many of the tempo and dynamic choices were based.