

Dive

into a Step

— Katerina Andreou

When Alice (in Wonderland) passes through the mirror, she leaves her world behind and preserves it at the same time, the views coexist because there is no other time, just another perception of the time that passes and runs differently, depending on the point of view adopted. We lay our eyes on one aspect of the world, without forgetting that there are a multitude of others. And as soon as we are focused on one moment, in the next one we are aware of the change of the angle we observe from, of the infinite diversity of the universe's aspects.

Tatjana Barazon¹

My name is Katerina.
It is also Sarah, Heather, Jennifer, Judith, Peter, DD and none of these at the same time. I exist in 2013, in 2014, and somewhere between 1990 and 2004. I am an animal, a dog, a bull, a skunk, but most of the time I gallop as a horse.

I am a cartoon, a silent super hero, a loud princess on that heel, Franz in *Bande à part* (Band of Outsiders), a Japanese schoolgirl, a wrestler. I am an animated metronome, a floating dress, one part of an infinite line, an arc or a circle. I have a tight lower back, heavy jump, overstretched legs, flexible torso, jerky arms, strict look, tightly tied hair, great ballon, quick feet, lazy shoulders, delicate musicality, coordination problems, balance issues, well controlled twist. I am split in two, in three, four, five, six counts, seven steps and three figures. I am Alice. I passed through the mirror when I started working on *A catalogue of steps*. I will not vanish in the chaos of this Wonderland. Where is my mind? Where is your mind? Where is the dance? I want to think about a threshold of perception on which I stand that folds time to unfold new experiences. Video as a tool: watch the original piece, fragment it and learn the movement in question. Appropriation requires a movement toward another world; understand the other's body, its sensibility, its quality, its tonicity, and its imaginary stimulations. Doing this, I am already a step away from my own body, a step behind the mirror, deconstructing my own a priori and negotiating another way of doing things. There is no such thing as a pure reenactment, or a simple interpretation of interpretation of a role; there is another and I, here and there, now and then, a frictional co-presence of bodies, images and identities.

All these histories and processes constitute a background, which I do not share with my spectator. She watches me, here and now, dancing a fragment extracted and divorced from its own body and context. But I have already seen too much, I have seen the whole before the part, the context and the content, the other's body with its face and voice in the original piece. My experience is already contaminated

by images, identities and scenarios. I can see behind the screen, into the depth of the projector, but the spectator cannot. The challenge is to dance the fragments in the present, and not let them get stuck in their past. To emancipate choreography from history.

A thin line on which I balance appears. This line is the threshold created between narratives that are hidden inside the fragment, narratives that can be projected because of the new context, the line between the original intention of choreography, and my intention of the moment. The threshold between multiple points of view, different universes that start to coexist, to overlap, to collide until their mutual deconstruction. Among these universes, I look for the common place, a point where all these worlds and points of view can meet, in order not to get lost inside my Wonderland.

Here comes the step to solidify my presence. The playful naming and categorization of the movement leads me a step further from the other's body. The implication of the step contains a certain degree of emancipation and relief; it creates a fair distance with the video source and the police-like attitude of a historical source as a factual documentation. Beyond the images that haunt me, the step itself, which I keep learning and observing even when I perform it, becomes fact from now. The steps are a new generation that lost track of its roots and want to create the conditions for a dance that could exist the moment it appears.

This ritualistic approach to the step, its repetition, inherent in all bodies during the process of training and learning a dance, feels like an invitation from the step itself to observe my body and beyond my body; an invitation to stop being concerned with the origins as the reason or the purpose of my movement.

A ritual (performed in unison) that paradoxically, in its way of covering the references, significations, associations to the past, deconstructs the obvious image and desacralizes its nature and source. The steps that once upon a time referred to the shape, to the form, to the outline, now become my rough material and content. They are my primitive language, the Morse code I share with the bodies and images that cross my memory, with Nibia and Oren, and with the public. On this threshold of the step, the dance emerges beyond intentions and solid meanings. In this theatre of wonderland, there is not a single puppeteer, but many strings pulled from every direction. Causality and effect have no direct and simple logic in this performative situation. The notion of authorship in terms of pure intention and unique origin of things is undermined.

The Wonderland I describe creates a fertile situation, where a dance appears in its abstract nature and maintains its ephemerality as an event of the here and now, even though it listens to echoes from the past. A dance that shifts the expected question of who is acting (who is the choreographer, who was performing, who is performing) to the question of what is acting, what is happening?

My name is Katerina. From the other side of the mirror and back again, and always in between, I dance for you, recalling steps that I watched, steps that I learned, steps that I enjoy keeping alive every time I am visiting the catalogue with you.

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1 Tatjana Barazon, La «Soglitude», Conserveries mémorielles [online], # 7/2010 <http://cm.revues.org/43> (translated by author).