

Another life in ex- actly the same spot

Heather Kravas



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Photo: DD Dorvillier
Heather Kravas takes a break during rehearsal for
CPAU, *Get Ready!* during PRISMA Forum in Oaxaca

I think of DD's dances as invitations. We, the audience and the performers, discover methods to see the world with the potential to change our relationships with and within it. It is slippery and sometimes hazy, as is necessary. The dances neither show us how things are nor what they could be but behave like a door opening. It is movement. Freedom and Language are the constant companion themes throughout these dances.

In *Dressed for Floating* and *Coming Out of the Night with Names* the process seemed one of honing and multiple attack. Sometimes the dancing began from movement and there was a certain effort in letting it remain in a place of simplicity without imbuing it with our (the performers') conceptions. With *Choreography, a Prologue for the Apocalypse of Understanding, Get Ready!* and *Danza Permanente*, the structural considerations defined our working process. The creation and sequencing of choreography for those performances was so challenging that the business of work negated an emotional vigilance. For me these later pieces have much to do with the relationship between form and pleasure and I recall in both performance and rehearsal seeking pleasure in execution. This is not necessarily the same thing as feeling pleasure, which is transient. Seeking is my partner in DD's work. DD has kept my hard edges in a state of examination, not convinced but not stuck. Choreography existing as movement.

At first, DD's dances seem all possibility, the ideas grand yet specific. I have no idea where the ideas come from and have always been amused and intrigued because the seeds of her dances would never occur to me. The process of working, of beginning, is curious because there is no initial judgment about what is correct or what belongs. There is a lot of improvising that seems to be about finding flavor and

temperament. But not style. DD's dances seem inimitable to me but not actually concerned with style. The dancing is relative. Diagrams and scores are developed early in the process to let us examine the ideas – to look at their histories or to break them down so that we see how something is working. From these drawings, we dance. We attempt precisely what the paper tells us to do. This also becomes quite funny because, in my experience, everyone becomes quite adamant about the right way to interpret these scratches and lines. DD guides, we find the key, and we begin to read it, making the dance, learning the language. It is very difficult to remain vigilant to the key. The dancing language is new, its logic specific to the piece and not initially intuitive. I get very impatient and passionate, yet also, day by day, attached. I think these drawings keep us committed to the core inspiration of the work. DD doesn't sway and isn't taken in by doubt even if from moment to moment there is impenetrability. And I think this maybe allows for some weird, larger thing to take hold in her pieces – something we don't see coming that is about pleasure and recognition.

My participation within DD's work affords me an additional pleasure – that of unquestioned belief. It is a hell or high-water approach I have cultivated as a performer that requires me not to question but to accept. I discover ways to grapple with the meat and spirit of the dance and my body. Certainly it requires trust on my behalf, but there is also freedom that comes from non-judgment. DD allows for a degree of this acceptance to seep into the work. Sometimes she manipulates the material, shaping the movements, guiding my work, crafting the dance. Sometimes she watches and invites me to figure out my individual relationship to the structure. I think more often than not, she searches for ways

to let the form predominate so as to negate a personal criticism that thwarts a generosity of thought. Tidy and perfectionistic by nature, I am often frustrated within DD's dances because of the impossibility of performing them pristinely. It is a frustration I value, as I see my tendency not as an ideal but an impediment. Within my own work, I grapple with this perfectionism and exasperation; it is what my work is about. But I often wonder what lies beyond it within my own choreographic voice. To achieve a kind of perfection of form, we may experience satisfaction, but pleasure exists within one's ability to keep moving. Not merely using movement as a language to speak to other issues, DD's dances become about movement. No steps, no fixed points, no form, no languages, but the in-between of all these things.

**a future dd dorvillier piece as imagined
by h kravas**

3 PERFORMERS DO THE FOLLOWING
IN DIFFERING ORDERS:

DEPICT FEMININE, SENSITIVE,
TENDER ROMANTIC LUNGES
IN A STRAWBERRY FIELD

PORTRAY THE HISTORY
OF CHOCOLATE IN ROYAL AZTEC
EVENTS THROUGH LUNGES

EXECUTE PURE, SPICY, DELICATE
MOVEMENT SEEPING FROM ORCHIDS
THAT BECOME LUNGES
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