Improvisation

A continuum of moving moments in choreographic imagination and performance

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Eat Dirt – The Australian Choreographic Centre, Canberra

Photo: Jo Milne-Home

Starting with Flow

Improvisation and performance synergies can be understood and revealed using qualitative methods and Czsikszentmihalyi's seminal work, *Flow* (1990, 1996). From a dance perspective, the concept of flow combines performance challenges, self-efficacy, attribution (effort, ability, chance and task-difficulty),

motivation, rehearsal, risk-taking and resilience. Flow experiences are vital to sustained creativity. This research used a grounded theory approach to explore preparation, competence, stamina and challenges for working in 'the zone', to arrive at 'gem' (seminal) experiences. Answers became leads for richer veins of artistic endeavour. This paper explores legacies of Gertrud Bodenwieser as a forerunner to current uses of improvisation in choreographic processing.

Gertrud Bodenwieser's legacy

Gertrud Bodenwieser encapsulated the desire to express through dance the human condition of any age in its quest for truth.

Every work of art is the expression, through a form of an adventure of the soul, ... It is therefore to be understood that every epoch has its own form of artistic expression, showing the inner feeling of the soul of the people of that age.

(Bodenwieser, in Vernon-Warren, 1999, p. 120)

In 1939 Gertrud Bodenwieser brought 'New Dance' to Australia. This dance advocated freedom of body expression (Russells, 1983; Toepfer, 1997). She incorporated ballet training but forbade coded conventions to be imposed on choreography. She cited Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (eurhythmics), Francois Delsarte (mime), Bess Mesensdiek (physical culture), and Rudolph von Laban (analysis and philosophy) as mentors (Jackson, 1999; Vernon-Warren & Warren, 1999).

Bodenwieser drew on a rich palette of Viennese movement expression that expanded with exposure to our landscapes, people and dancers, especially contact with Indigenous dancers (MacTavish, 1987). Her central concern was growing movement from ideas: their genesis drawn from all movement options available. Her dancers were intelligent, versatile, and athletic. Johanna Exiner-Kolm described how barre and floor-work (modelled on Mesensdieck's gymnastics) built strength and athleticism (Exiner & Potter, 1994). Innes Murdock noted how Evelyn Ippen and Bettina Vernon taught strength, elevation and waltz to broaden movement vocabularies (Murdoch, 1999, p. 158). Bodenwieser was also innovative and responsive to artistic trends as described by Oberzaucher-Schuller:

Her dances were expressionist in the years of expressionism, later becoming more abstract and later yet acquiring fresh features, not least by virtue of the beauty of 'her' dancers.

(1999, p.19)

Coralie Hinkley¹ recalled how Bodenwieser's movement ideas were original, multilayered, imaginative and had the fluency of poetry:

She said 'expression is the basis of the soul given through form' ... It was a mode of dance which, according to Madam, suited the physicality, personality, and temperament of the Australian.

(Hinkley, 1990, pp.164-165)

Individualism, subconscious expression and communicating emotion underpinned *Ausdruckstanz*. Personality and emotion were central, ² but Bodenwieser's ideas dictated movement vocabularies to portray intellectual and social aspects of human existence (Brown, 1990, p. 15).

Her dances were her means of expression. She believed that the dancer, freed from traditional forms of dance, should develop his or her own physical 'language', which the audience should immediately understand.

(in Brody, 1990, p. 5)

Bodenwieser's improvisation was inextricably connected to music. Hanny Exiner recalled:

Improvised piano accompaniment was, on lucky days, provided by Marcel Lorber, Bodenwieser's dedicated pianist-composer and musical advisor. You could not but dance to his music.

(Exiner & Kelynack, 1994, p. xxv)

Improvisation was collaborative where musicians Marcel Lorber, Bela Dolesko and Dory Stern brought musical genius to play (Rawson, 1986). While collaboration with musicians was vital to Bodenwieser, the relationship between music and dance improvisation varied along a continuum from completely dependent to completely independent; from inspiration to being composed explicitly for the work in a collaborative process.

Ruth Osborne, taught by Margaret Chapple at the Bodenwieser Studio, captured this creative alignment of music and improvisation:

I remember ... this beautiful portrait of Madam Bodenwieser on the wall. She was sick ... so I never got to meet her or have her in class... In the other corner was the piano and this big man, Bela Dolesko³ ... who played for every class and just improvised ... He just watched in the mirror and would just go ... and sometimes he would get so carried away that 'Chappy' would be going 'Dolly, Dolly' ...and try and stop him, but he just couldn't stop. He was absorbed and out of control. So it was incredibly passionate and creative.⁴

Keith Bain, self-confessed late-comer to Bodenwieser's studio, arrived with a body familiar with ball-room dancing, a sprinkling of styles and insatiable thirst for theatrical innovation. He described Bodenwieser's approach to speed and dynamics in improvisation as 'playing games':

She did have a lovely skill in making movement grow out of movement ... everything had that developmental quality ... you tend to keep finding vocabulary. It may only be an extension of your use of an original motif, but at least you're not doing the same steps.

(in Rawson, 1986, p. 19)

Bodenwieser's improvisation exceeded body-inspired experience by training dancers to work with their spontaneity to open minds and bodies to interrupt restrictive movement vocabularies. The creative result revealed a capacity to constantly change movement pathways and readiness to respond or take

risks mentally, emotionally and physically. Emmy Towsey⁵ recalled how improvisation was the crowning point of lessons:

One can only say that it was the magic of her personality which created the mood and conveyed the content of what was to be expressed, thus dancers and musicians conceiving the idea were inspired to improvise. They externalised in movement their inner understanding and feeling for the idea. It must be left to be imagined how practised in expressive power those dancers must have been to whom such an experience occurred almost daily for years. We not only gained a living language of movement, but we exercised it incessantly, so that Bodenwieser could use us as instruments for the creation of images of beauty, of tenderness or of power; and she was a poet who could create such images. [From a letter held in the Hilverding Foundation.]

(in Steininger, 1999, pp. 98-99)

In dance composition form and meaning coalesce. Shona Dunlop MacTavish (1987), Innes Murdock (1999), Margaret Chapple and Keith Bain (in Rawson, 1986), all recalled how Bodenwieser's choreography was a gift, fashioned to fit individual dancer's strengths, abilities, personalities, bodies and styles (which they in turn developed, extended and made their own). Bodenwieser was not interested in movement that had no personal intention:

She couldn't wait for you to learn the movement and then supply the content. She could not see how you could divide that ... she didn't have to tell you what anything meant; the movement made the meaning perfectly clear.

(Bain, in Rawson, 1986, p. 23)

Bettina Vernon (1999, p. 116) recalled how this symbiotic interplay worked to create movement stamped with the signatures of both choreographer and dancer, by taking 'a few movements which she liked and include them in her choreography'. Dancers were partners fleshing out that poetry in movement composed for them. Improvising was felt to have an energetic centre. Isadora Duncan located her creative impulse in the solar plexus. Ruth St Denis cited meditation; Martha Graham used contract-release centring technique, while Gertrud Bodenwieser aligned movement intention from the heart and rhythm of the breath:

Breathing, the continuous rhythmical communication of our body with the outside world, is used as a means of expression, and each of our movements has to be carried by breath. It animates the life of the torso, in which the heart – age-old symbol of love and pain – is embedded.

(Bodenwieser & Cuckson, 1970, p. 81)

Bodenwieser believed that the genesis of spontaneity, creativity and rhythmical flow of kinaesthetic ideas, shapes and forms, sprung from a knowing body fit to move.

The demands of her technique embraced the circle, wave, arc, spiral – never static – always fluid – never-ending gradations of flow, rhythms, designs, expressions, with the breath as the *impulse* for the surge of the dance.

(Hinkley, 1990, p. 161)

Themes from interviews: inheriting the legacies and moving on

The principles of improvisation laid out by Gertrud Bodenwieser and her followers remain relevant to current theories and practices in Australian contemporary dance. Words and phrases in interview transcriptions for this research, repeatedly echoed expressions articulated by this pioneering artist. Thus, innovation is not out of step with legacies when bodies of work and bodies at work, authentically engage current ideas and audiences.

Essentially, improvisation involves an internal challenge utilising *revelation*, *curiosity*, *play* and *discovery*. According to Morrish (2006) improvisation is

... (a) preparedness to find something out... you go out there and you can say 'What did you discover?'... I am going to discover something! ... It could be something about the content, or a discovery and exposing of some aspect of myself and doing that through poetic means, or it could be something about the technicalities of how to improvise. There are lots of different sites for that point of discovery. That is really why I am improvising ... to find something out.⁷

For Sol Ulbrich, '.... ultimately improvisation is really being open and responsive to the possibility ... It's actually just keeping that lovely, warm, open, inviting space for possibility'8.

Brian Lucas associated improvisation with 'play':

The term 'play' is loaded, but it does seem to me to more effectively sum up how I approach and respond to the process. It seems to more effectively communicate the sense of freedom that precedes the tough decision-making, editing and shaping processes, or which at least allows you the freedom to occasionally escape from the more draining aspects of creation and performance. Importantly, the term 'play' also reminds me of the simplicity and beauty of this aspect of the process, the innate innocent pleasure that is found within it, and reminds me of the vital part that this sense of enjoyment and pleasure has played as a core reason for my continued involvement in the form.⁹

For Shirley McKechnie, whose teachers included Daisy Pirnitzer ¹⁰ and Johanna Exiner-Kolm, Bodenwieser influences shaped training and pedagogy. She emphasised the connection between improvisation and *revelation*. She emphasized, that 'It was not *what* you did, but *how* you did it and *why* you did it.'¹¹ Exposure to music and inspiring musicians, along with a range of stimuli for improvisation was exciting and richly rewarding for artistic development. Stimulus materials included visual art, poetry, sculpture, music, words or sounds as catalysts for getting to the essential tone or feeling qualities to express as movement ideas for improvisation.

Kinaesthetic imagination was encouraged and Australian gestural qualities were evocative in shaping future directions in McKechnie's brilliant career and those of her students. Improvisation evoked movement ideas that were developmentally advanced, satisfying and engaging on many levels. That

ability to abstract and employ a choreographic imagination creatively was key to the development of unique qualities in their work. As McKechnie discovered (ibid.):

Students improvising ... could be from different planets, in their response to a particular stimulus...The material that was being produced by these dancers! (Gestures excitement). Seven or eight of them, became the nucleus of my dance company. This was happening from the time they were eleven and twelve. So that I was as enriched by their invention as each of the other ones in the group were enriched by the inventions.

Ability to identify or name what you know from experience or observation, McKechnie (ibid.) explained, was another key to developing movement vocabularies and metacognitive qualities in choreographic processing. In the instance above, improvisation facilitated intrinsic motivation as it was extremely enjoyable. This richness was drawn on, plus the love of subtle dynamics (valuing of stillness, appreciating qualities of tension/relaxation in the body and noticing individual movement choices). Students observed, reflected and danced-back what they noticed. In effect, they mirrored, doubled and role reversed which heightened physiognomic awareness or memory for movement. This ability to abstract or get to the *essence* of movement intentions was evident before reaching stages associated with Jean Piaget's 'Formal Operations'.¹²

An external perspective is integral to making internal experiences 'visible'. This internalised 'audience' perspective cultivates an awareness of being a visual-performance artist exhibiting ideas. Improvising is a continuous edit in transition rather than arriving at set coded positions or linking forms with steps. Disciplined attention cultivates mindfulness and alertness rather than a detached 'flow-of-un/consciousness'. Improvisation, like guided discovery learning, involves stepping into the unknown with what is known. Lev Vygotsky referred to structured learning opportunities as working in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), or working in 'The Zone' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). There is an essential element of vulnerability and risk-taking where effort and ability are matched with the challenge of the task. Accurate self-efficacy is involved in rehearsing or adequately preparing for the demands of performance.

One limitation on unbridled risk-taking was that some moves were considered dangerous. Access to all possible movements available to the improviser was thus bracketed by a discourse on safe dance practices. The imperative was to abide by an ethic of safety and due-respect in improvisation involving speed, weight-bearing, touch, body-contact and release (Lucas. 2008; McKechnie, et al., 2007; Osborne, 2007).

Shirley McKechnie questioned connections between cognition and embodied expression. This dissonance was critical in seeding the research investigations (see Stevens, Malloch, & McKechnie, 2001):

Questions about these connections between what was going on in my head and what came out of my body; what I fed into the heads of these dancers,

and what their bodies were doing, ...fascinated me. Improvisation housed core values and kernels for inquiry ...valuing originality, extraordinary risk taking, and risk taking with the idea, or the movement idea, whatever it was, and then the way in which that might be performed.

For Robin Grove the opposite was true in music and dance education:

Everything you say about improvisation was exactly what was forbidden by my early teachers ...In fact, by all my teachers! You never improvised ...it was unthinkable that you would do that. If you felt an improvisation coming on you went to play the E major scale.¹³

The emphasis was on mastering classical techniques already coded with an aesthetic ideal to practice and perfect.

It was a splendid training because I feel as if I have never not known the major composers and their language. Goals and ideas were 'risky business ...and the abyss' ... I would define (improvisation) as having a goal to reach which you have to go about in ways you can't predict ...how you get there you can't tell. You're going blind in some respects ... Pianists can do that by deploying very familiar vocabulary...Once you move outside that sort of diatonic range, once you move outside that basis for the harmony, you might find yourself having to negotiate chasms before you can get from here to there ...that's how I see improvisation... Confidence is important and a sense that the barriers are not rigid. There will be barriers, there will be difficulties in what you're trying to bring about but they're not fixed difficulties of a kind that you just despair of overcoming. These are risks to be taken and problems to be solved as you proceed.¹⁴

Mark Gordon, director of The Australian Choreographic Centre extended self-efficacy in 'flow' to advance improvising solutions to problems that inevitably arise:

Dancers and choreographers also use improvisation to test themselves and challenge themselves in terms of their capacity to flow and respond to each other and new information opportunities. So it is about liberating the self and breaking the structures that led me on to a point about disrupting what has been learnt or disrupting habitual pathways.¹⁵

At The Australian Choreographic Centre, commitment to equity promoted diverse pathways to improvisation. Movement-vernaculars in the bodies of applicants included circus arts, acrobatics, gymnastics, martial-arts, acting, diving and Indigenous dance. Improvisation freed movement from the 'inside-out'; thoughts/ideas connected feelings to be opened out and explored. In this environment, central ideas for dancers to explore were sufficiently broad to invite diversity and foster uniqueness through inclusion of varied body shapes and movement idiosyncrasies. Movement from the 'inside-out' located movement vocabularies for dancing your 'self'.

Everybody has a movement signature that distinguishes them as unique in shape, style and form. Lucas (2008) commented that,

I always talk about how deeply entrenched classical ballet was in my body ... my sole form of dance for 16 to 17 years ...then going into contemporary dance. ... It was not until I left Expressions (Dance Co) in the mid nineties that I realised how driven my body was by that training. ...I did not realise how my body actually moved ... I did not really have an understanding of what my intrinsic way of moving would be. Everything would be coloured by the training that I had ... and it has taken me ... 10 of those years at least ... spent unlearning a lot of that stuff. It is not as though it is not in me, but it does not govern me ...my physical practice has been to express myself through my body for what it is and what it can do ...flesh it out more and what its capabilities are. What it's more natural or responsive urges are. What its restraints are. 16

Movement plasticity enables dancers to work from an internal place, rather than censor steps to privilege ideal aesthetic shapes. Improvisation is not about steps, counts, hyper-extension or excellent vertical stage deportment. For male performers improvisation created space to move authentically rather than fit or fill myths and masks, or pretend not to be self-expressive in a predominantly feminine movement lexicon: As Osborne (2007) commented:

You don't need to demonstrate extraordinary physical prowess in the improvisation. What you want to see is this actual freedom of movement or this complete concentration of something developing.¹⁷

Improvisation at the QL2 Centre for Youth Dance facilitated 'group flow', where selection into projects was not based on a uniform standard for height, weight, flexibility and technical competence. Different bodies instructed to move do not supply identical gestural statements even when actions are identical. Thus, building connections for ensemble work relied on subtle shifts that occurred in group improvisation practice. Improvisation connects motivation with performance qualities by igniting a joy of movement. Mark Gordon and Ruth Osborne made similar statements about young performers' sincerity, energy and vitality. They promoted a sense of challenge and integrity by creating space for developing individual expressive qualities. Osborne (2007) reflected:

The passion that a dancer feels when they dance is so easy to read from an audience stand point and so infectious. ...When working with young people I want more meaning ...I want to know, and I want them to know *why* they are doing *what* they are doing. That comes out (in performance) ... when they don't have technical strength or incredible maturity ...the honesty of their doing something they really believe in comes through ...even if every delivery is not nuanced with the idea ...(they must deliver answers to the question) 'what are you trying to say?' 18

The importance of a storyline or narrative to hang movement meaning from was woven differently through interviews. Ideas could be abstract qualities, metaphors, emotional zones, or caricatures that are part of community awareness. David Corbet and Jacob Lehrer played with improvising a nonlinear narrative. The moving body is endlessly creative; charged with meaning potential for an audience to connect with or project onto. Jacob supplied this example:

It could be something as simple as gesture (extending his arm and reaching out) ... and that creates a story. Another of these non-linear narratives would be in that zone of emotions. (In this case)... when we talk about emotions we are not about being emotional, it's about 'body' or feeding back sensory information ... and allowing the emotional state to generate movement.¹⁹



Spectators David Corbet, Andrew Morrish and Ashley Dyer *Precipice*, The Australian Choreographic Centre, Canberra Photo: Jo Milne-Home

Suzanne Langer (1983) suggested that imagined feeling governs dance where actual movement and virtual self-expression is mediated by cognition. Feelings are read or seen, rather than felt or expressed as gestures (in Copeland & Cohen, 1983).

Group improvisation included the glue that connects performers and audience or performers with other performers. Mark Gordon (2006) indicated how relational qualities aroused and engaged sustained or momentary attention, in the duet work of David Corbet and Jacob Lehrer:

Some performers are quite abstract in the way they work but their connecting together draws you in. It is not emotional, (but) still there is something emotional about the way they work as men and it's very powerful. That in itself is some kind of narrative even if it is quite abstract.²⁰

Improvisers worked with meaning in solo work, duets and building relationships for ensemble sequences. Spontaneity required being 'tooled-up', alive and open to choices yet simultaneously aware of being a moving exhibition working the zone of a unifying idea. Movement into the space plus the patterns, attitudes and distances between performers or the stage location set up tensions. Artists must be mindful of form and meaning from the 'outside-in' or external-audience perspective, as well as the 'inside-out' of intentions and visceral cues for movement options. Playing with qualities of relationship can result in serendipitous moments of 'flow' or 'gem' moments for dancers attuned through work over a protracted period.

Perhaps the sharpest 'tool' in the shed is that synthesis of frames of mind or multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2006). In addition to the 'tooled-up' body with access to a rich 'palette' of movement material, multiple intelligences include: cognitive, logical, spatio-temporal, mathematical, kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intra-personal, emotional, artistic-aesthetic, musical, ecological and social intelligences. Brian Lucas (2008) gave an example of multiple-processes engaged when exploring an idea and finding ways to embody it:

Improvisation is a process of locating a starting point - a physical image, a thematic concept, a characterisation, an emotion, a specific event - and then clearly 'loading' that starting point into my physical and mental consciousness. Once that starting point is inside me, I am then able to just 'free-form' with it, allowing it to lead me, and allowing it to open-out, shift and reform in whatever direction or form it chooses.²¹

David Corbet and Jacob Lehrer (2006) described how they 'tool-up' or 'feed the beast' by working on 'stamina' literally and metaphorically. Their duet improvisation practices aimed to build 'performative muscles' (stealth, physical and mental stamina, openness to instinctive movement options or intuitively having access to all possible visceral ideas). Their goal in preparation was to perform in that optimal zone of flow, where the probability of 'gem' moments is increased for both performers and audiences alike.

Sol Ulbrich suggested that seminal moments ('gems') could come after hours improvising or crystallize in a moment of surprise. Moments appeared as if by chance, but the backdrop to their fruition was the work and creating that space for moving moments to surprise:

You work really hard for hundreds of hours to find a moment, improvising and improvising and digging and digging and digging and digging and digging and digging and you finally come up with one little gem or a whole scene. And other times it's just like 'Oh!' the same.²²

Andrew Morrish (2006) reaffirmed being 'tooled up' by introducing his symbolic on-stage 'bag lady':

My idea is more like the bag lady. You come in with a shopping trolley ... three shopping trolleys ... full of stuff and you bring it all on with you. You bring everything you are going to need. Sometimes being careful what you grab, and sometimes not being very careful! I really love this idea in which I have all these resources with me to deal with the situation. Emptiness is one of them too but I love feeling like I've got a smorgasbord of options... And that is why my bag lady metaphor works ... because that is the stuff I know ... and that is the stuff that supports me to deal with what I need when I am there. But boy those bags are noisy. All that plastic is rustling in my background all the time.²³

Improvisation is a complex concept with multiple functions. Mark Gordon (2006) telescoped it into three components: 'One, an act of discovery; two, an act of performance; and I think the third is therapy'.²⁴

Shirley McKechnie added a sixth sense where movement transcends immediate experience. The idea expressed becomes an ecstatic experience or exquisite joy of dancing, which is why dancers identify as artists throughout life. This suggests metaphysical qualities in the passion to create art from kinetic imagination.

The Concept of Flow in this research was sufficiently dynamic and encompassing to begin a dialogue between psychological and improvisational processes (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 1996, 1997). Flow included visual-spatial awareness and mindfulness in collapsing dualities of self and object, mind and body, space and time, form and meaning. Patterns emerged that connected psychological processes of Flow and improvisation where cross-disciplinary collaboration informed an advance in theory generation.

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Notes

¹ Coralie Hinkley was the first Australian to be awarded a Fullbright Scholarship for graduate study in USA with Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, Doris Humphrey and Louis Horst, 1958-1960.

² The Dance Digest Tribute to Bodenwieser (1960) noted the influence of Sigmund Freud as a relative of Bodenwieser as well as a giant influence on the Arts.

³ Bela Dolesko – composer and musician arrived 1950 from Vienna aged 48 yrs – studied in Vienna and Budapest - with composer Maurice Ravel.

⁴ Ruth Osborne, personal interview with author, Canberra, 25th February 2007.

⁵ Emmy Towsy was also known as Emmi Steinberg and later Emmy Taussig.

of vision for the creation of the dance '(Duncan, 1927, p. 72). ⁷ Andrew Morrish, personal interview by the author, Canberra, 28th September, 2006.

8 Sol Ulbrich, personal interview by the author, Sydney, 17th March, 2007.

⁹ Brian Lucas, personal interview by the author, Brisbane, 9th October, 2008.

Daisy Pirnitzer danced with Bodenwieser, and with Rosalia Chladek (Rawson, 1986, p. 16) Dance Director 1930-1938 at Hellerau-Laxenberg, Dalcrozian rhythmic gymnastics and Mensendieck's feminine gymnastics. (Chladek) ... more expressive and improvisational features of 'the free dance' (Toepfer, 1997, p. 119). 'Probably no other dancer after 1930 received as many offers to appear outside her homeland ...' (Toepfer, 1997, p. 121) Chladek took up Bodenwieser's position in Vienna 1938 (See Vernon-Warren & Warren, 1999).

¹¹ Shirley McKechnie, personal interview with Robin Grove, by the author, Sydney, 26th April,

¹² Interview with Shirley McKechnie and Robin Grove by the author with Cate Stevens, Sydney, 2007. Shirley McKechnie refers to Warren Lett in coming to appreciate the stages of cognitive development for dance cognition. Johanna Exiner (1994) devotes attention to Piaget. Montessori and Bruner among others, while the Introduction acknowledges colleagues at the College, Shirley among them (xx, xxvi).

Robin Grove, personal interview with Shirley McKechnie, by the author, Sydney, 17th April, 2007.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Mark Gordon, personal interview by the author, Sydney, 25th August, 2006.

¹⁶ Brian Lucas, personal interview op.cit.

¹⁷ Ruth Osborne, personal interview by the author, Canberra, 2007.

18 ibid.

- ¹⁹ David Corbet, personal interview with David Corbet by the author, Canberra, 20th May, 2006.
- Mark Gordon, personal interview, op. cit.
- ²¹ Brian Lucas, personal interview, op. cit.
- ²² Sol Ulbrich, personal interview, op.cit.
- ²³ Andrew Morrish, personal interview, op. cit.
- ²⁴ Mark Gordon is listed in the Acknowledgements of Johanna Exiner and Denis Kelynack (1994) Dance Therapy Redefined: A body approach to therapeutic dance in his role as Executive Officer of Australia Dance Council – Ausdance (Vic) for administering the monies for the study grant.

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⁶ 'I spent long days and nights in the studio seeking that dance, which might be the divine expression of the human spirit through the medium of the body's movement. For hours I would stand quite still, my two hands folded between my breasts, covering the solar plexus. My mother often became alarmed to see me remain for such long intervals quite motionless as if in a trance - but I was seeking and finally discovered the central spring of all movement, the crater of motor power, the unit from which all diversities of movements are born, the mirror

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