

THE INTUITIVE BODY

Insights from the *intuitive body* as articulated through the choreographic language of Emio Greco | P.C. Scholten

Emio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten about the manifesto “The 7 necessities” (1996) in the recent publication by Francesca Magnini (Inspiration, Emio Greco | Pieter C. Scholten, The Multiplicity of Dance, Rome: Artegrafica, 2015).

“The manifesto is the result of our decision to offer a sign of change, to assert a new voice in the world of dance of the 1990’s, a reality with which neither Pieter nor I were satisfied at the time. I found dance to be flat, based on rigidly defined patterns, models and codes which used the body in an opportunistic and presumptuous manner as a mere means of representing forms and channeling concepts. Everything needed reinventing: dance, the relationship between dance and performance, the relationship between the dancer and movement. I consider dancers to be far more than people with athletic bodies who are able to produce forms of entertainment. Dancers are visionaries. Our manifesto is based upon these considerations, and a desire to reestablish the statute of the body, choreography and dance. Our manifesto is a living entity, rewritten with each of our creations, whose principles are present and reinvented every time... We immediately clarified the fact that our intention was not to rethink just dance and movement but also performance. Ideas are presented via the body which is simultaneously the object and the subject of the idea. Before starting the rehearsals for a new performance, we have no subject, text or source of inspiration other than the body: each choreography is the result of a series of ideas which emerge from the body, each drama is a story of the body...My body is the thing of mine I manage to articulate in the most varied manner (3)... The Manifesto contains the aesthetic premises of our work. We believe that creativity is incarnate in the body. Movement is self sufficient and able to create time and space. We are not interested in composition *per se*, but rather in trying to find the reason why individuals are involved in a dance.”(7)

Emio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten for GUT (research project on the value of intuition for the design fields <http://grahamfoundation.org/grantees/4992-gut>, 2013)

INTUITION

Intuition gives dance back its magic, its strength and sincerity. During the conceptual movement of the nineteen-nineties when there was little room for the intuitive body, just for carefully devised concepts, we were looking for a way to get that body back into the limelight. First, this brought us to the instinct. A physical instinct needs no explanation. No one questions it. It's just there. It has something to do with survival. Intuition sits in between the instinctive body and the rationalisation of it. It forms part of an interspace with which we have toyed since our first creation *Fra Cervello e Movimento* (between brain and movement). We want to effect a polarisation between what is instinctive and what is controlled by the brain. Between the two, we found intuition.

In dance, intuition shapes the link between two movements. It lets the body know how and where it is positioned inside the space. That intuitive connection creates freedom. Also in a creative process. A body driven by intuition can break away from social conventions, one's culture, or civilisation. It prevents us from analysing things in artificial ways.

In the coming years we will be working on a series about 'The Body in Revolt'. *Addio alla Fine* looks for the revolt in the making of new connections whilst *One man without a cause* shows an individual who is set apart from society. Three more productions will follow in the coming years, each approaching 'The Body in Revolt' from a different perspective. In a rational world, making room for something like intuition is a form of revolt in its own right. The way we are expected to behave no longer has anything to do with intuition. An opening, an opportunity for intuition will appear spontaneously during the dance. Something you cannot explain, but can feel falling into place. It's what we refer to in our work as the miracle.

It's a force you can develop. The more you observe, the more things come to you, allowing you to see the connections. The more you're drawn by the unknown and the more you question yourself, the more your intuition can inform you. Something must intrigue you for your intuition to speak to you. Just like Leonardo da Vinci by observing nature intuitively realised, long before Galilei, that the Sun doesn't move round the Earth, so by observing the body and the surroundings in which it is moving through the dance we nourish our intuition.

From the category “Basics” in the ABCdaire, a glossary containing an alphabetic list of vocabularies from the work of eg|pc collected by researcher Bertha Bermúdez

The intuitive body ...

... is articulated and talkative. It seeks to make the body accessible. It is aware of its boundaries which it perceives as the memory of the space and its elasticity.

... is continuously relating the inside and the outside by conscious channeling of the breath.

... can delete a previous action by brushing the body and subsequently writing something else, establishing a new memory.

... is aware of its continuous dis- and reappearance, replacing a previous action while being aware that there is always something remaining. It is aware of the resonances of previous actions in the body.

... is aware of its edge, its inner wall, which is the boundary from the perspective of the inner body.

... perceives the form and shape of the body in dance as a physical result of intentions and choices in relation to the creation and execution of movement.

... is in touch with the inside, the inner body. The inner body can be imagined as everything under the skin being an empty space that can be filled in with various elements such as air, water, fire etc.

... generates more movement by transmitting the input of the initiation of a movement to other body parts. It activates the stream of movement.

... creates traces by moving along an internal path that connects different inner points of the body.

... extends itself along lines that embody an intuitive relation with the space.

... is able to measure time by means of a mental state where movement is perceived through its duration.

... can animate the mechanism and fragmentation of movements like a singing body.

... can be in a state of passive activity - a state of awareness where the body listens and senses the consequences of a previous action.

... conceives of the pelvis as a voluminous gate and passage between the legs and the upper body.

... can position itself by expressing a choice of movement from where changes can take place.

... is a rhythmical body, adding different ranges of speed to the transfer of balance, awakening the awareness of the inner sound of the movement, offering new possibilities to bring the body further in length and space.

... is able to release, to let go, to trust that the dance will lead him or her to where he or she needs to be.

... is able to enact a situation by means of a state of awareness where past, present and future are available.

... is conscious of the skin, the surface of the body, the area of the body that unites its inside with the outside space.

... is soft and malleable.

... can differentiate the awareness of the use of the space of the body, can split the body in different qualitative areas.

... can hold time by sustaining the movement of the body.

... is a dual utopia, where the metaphysical and the physical coincide, guided by the principle of synchronicity.

... is a transforming body, tracing its becoming.

... is a vulnerable body.

From the booklet you PARA | DISO (a guide to a dance performance)

The intuitive body...

... aims towards cultivating and stabilizing a state of inner rest, trust and surrender in the midst of being fully absorbed in the passions of the dance.

... aims towards what it can imagine.

... aims towards purifying itself, so that everything can be retained within the contours of the body. The present ballast has to be thrown off, thoughts effaced,

feelings thrown overboard. It is one with the space, merges with the space, becomes neutral, has no characteristics but can adopt any. In that state of purity, it can

become part of the space, can be dissolved in the particles that move through the space without being visible. These particles enter the pores of the other and communicate purity in this way.

Different languages are expressed in rhythms that are incorporated in the body. The intuitive body can communicate with other bodies via these rhythms. Communication takes place without words, directly through the body. The rhythms of the bodies maintain their own identities, they can enter in a dialogue with each other, merge with one another, without failing to exist in their own right.

... engenders an exclusive space where it can communicate without words. The plurality of the intuitive body (its multidimensionality) does not allow an order to be imposed on it. It uses all its senses to communicate.

... communicates about the essence of things.

... is aware of being imbued with cosmic power, which is everywhere on all scales of manifestation. It is energized by it, it sets things in motion because of it, inciting chain reactions with other bodies with which it collides. It is aware of the larger totality.

... is able to merge with the greater whole and to lose itself in the flush of a cosmic existence, an existence without boundaries, without lines separating the I from the other, yet aware of its distinction as an individual entity, aware of the gift of existence.

... is trailblazing its future, making room for what is yet to come, looks ahead through history - is present.

... feels its soul and can smell it, is sung free from the body by its soul.

Key aspects related to the intuitive body collected from various textual sources on the work of eg|pc and from experiential insights.

The intuitive body...

... is characterized by immediacy.

... is situated between the conceptual body and the virtuous body.

... is an idea the body has of itself which is not rational.

... is not competitive but communicative.

... is magical, strong and sincere.

... wants to get the body into the limelight, it focuses intuition on its mystery.

... sits between the instinctive body and the rationalization of it.

... shapes the link between two movements.

... creates an interspace that allows for a manifold expression of several layers of meanings.

... is polymorphous and explicitly ambiguous.

... emphasizes the intentions and qualities of the execution of the motions.

... promotes the logic of the included middle, not black and white thinking. It lives rather a thought and being in terms of both and neither (the intuitive is both instinctive and rational and at the same time neither rational nor instinctive) or and/and/and (the intuitive body is rational and instinctive and intuitive).

... emerges from the active friction between and the potential convergence of the thinking faculty and the natural impulses of the body - the noumenal intelligible and the sensible.

... creates spontaneous openings during the dance, towards other qualities of reality.

... is not explainable or definable one-dimensionally.

... is in touch with his/her innocence.

... is in touch with spatial and temporal intuitions.

... "operates" at the cutting edge between the conscious and the subconscious bodymind. The subconscious bodymind is often faster than the conscious mind. Following the intuitive body means being in touch with the levels of reality perceived by the subconscious bodymind that need time to be understood/digested by the rationally conscious mind.

... does not detach the stream of consciousness from bodily presence and awareness. It is anchored in conscious connection with the body, the breath that is filling it, the earth and the cosmos that is supporting and nourishing it.

... seeks to create space where there is none.

... is aware of functioning as a connective bridge between heaven and earth.

... seeks to be fully aware of the interior and exterior space simultaneously.

... moves with emotion, imagination, inspiration and clear intention.

... is in touch with the inner being that animates the body, more so than with the outer appearance of the body. It is easier to perceive the inner being while being as open as possible to the space in which it is embedded.

... is in touch with its vulnerability, loosing the overall image of the movement by crossing the boundaries of possibility.

... is on a journey and is hungry. It is fed by intuition which prevents artificial analysis. Driven and fed by intuition, it can break away from social conventions, culture and civilization.

... throws itself into the battle by letting the body sing, embodying the rhythm, being the rhythm. It lets go. We don't understand it but we feel it is right. We encounter the wonder.

... remembers itself.

In a rational world, making room for intuition is a form of revolt in its own right. Intuitive connection creates freedom in any kind of creative process. Promoting the intuitive body means to enforce time, to invest in time and in sustainability, not in fast making and fast selling. Things need time to become and to be, enforcing time as a method for making new creations and for building repertoire.

The intuitive bodies of the dancers of ICK are asked to be alert with regard to the dimension of time – where are they coming from and where are they going? To *be* in time rather than measuring time, playing with the rhythm of time. The audience becomes conscious of this rhythm, this kind of being in time.

To cultivate the intuitive body, one has to constantly work to bring consciousness into the body. The body stores memories, thoughts and feelings and conglomerates them in the form of muscle tensions or other blind spots. Bringing consciousness into the body means also expanding the places in the body that have ossified, hardened or contracted- often unconsciously. By consciously bringing breath, awareness, space and receptivity to the entire body, it lights up from the inside. It can then come easier into communion and communication with the space and with the audience. When one is fully present and aware within the body, communication can be very subtle, honest and complex. Collaboration and non-verbal communication can become very sophisticated.

The intuitive body is not there yet, and it has been there all the time.