

Centre for Dance Research, University of Roehampton Events 2016/17

Research Seminars

Beware of plaster: Auguste Rodin's drawings of the Cambodian Royal Ballet

Juliet Bellow, Associate Professor of Art History, American University

24 January 2017

Over the course of four days in July 1906, the sculptor Auguste Rodin produced nearly 150 drawings of dancers from the Cambodian Royal Ballet, a troupe that formed part of the entourage of King Sisowath during his visit to France for the Exposition Coloniale held that summer. Though the story of Rodin's encounter with the Cambodian Royal Ballet has been told and retold, rarely has the tale itself been treated as an historical artifact worthy of study. Nor have the drawings themselves, or their relation to the dance he witnessed, received a robust analysis. Most surprisingly, few scholars have considered the curious fact that Rodin, a celebrated sculptor, made no sculptural representations of the Cambodian dancers. In this presentation, Professor Bellow considers why Rodin chose to privilege the pencil over the chisel to convey his perceptions of the troupe, and how that choice affected the sculptor's carefully-constructed public image.

Juliet Bellow is Associate Professor of Art History at American University. Her book *Modernism on Stage: The Ballets Russes and the Parisian Avant-Garde* was published by Ashgate Press in 2013, and she served as a Consulting Scholar for the 2013 exhibition "Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes, 1909-1929: When Art Danced With Music" at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. She recently completed a fellowship at The Center for Ballet and the Arts, New York University, where she worked on a new book project entitled *Auguste Rodin's Dancers: Moving Toward the Limits of Sculpture*.

Feminist vs. F-E-M-I-N-I-S-T: Or, What do Women Want?

Dr Jessica Berson, Lecturer in Dance Studies, Yale University; Fulbright Scholar, University of Roehampton

8 February 2017

In her 2014 performance for the MTV Music Video Awards, Beyoncé performed in front of enormous, brightly lit letters that spelled out an unusual anthem for a pop star: FEMINIST. Soon afterwards, bell hooks declared Beyoncé not a feminist, but a 'terrorist', decrying her complicity in her own sexualisation and degradation. One interpretation applauds Beyoncé for 'reclaiming' her sexuality and deploying her representation for (immense) financial gain; another condemns her for exploiting herself for money and thus contributing to the ongoing oppression of women by both capitalism and misogyny. Are women free to choose their own erotic representations, or are the liberal pleasures and freedoms extended by postfeminism merely advancing pernicious neoliberal agendas, distracting us from the structural frameworks that hinder real equality with a never-ending parade of dildos, fishnet stockings, and burlesque workshops? This open discussion session seeks to navigate the chasm between these two approaches, asking how embodied performance can frame the treacherous politics of female desire.

Dr. Jessica Berson is author of *The Naked Result: How Exotic Dance Became Big Business*.

Dance and the Visual Arts: Composition: Experiment: Sensation

Dr Erin Brannigan, Senior Lecturer in Dance, University of New South Wales, and **Lizzie Thomson**, choreographer and performer

16 November 2016

No blurb or biography circulated.

Tie up daffodils when they die

Professor Emilyn Claid, Professor of Choreographic Practices, University of Roehampton

22 March 2017

Professor Claid will give an outline of various research outcomes that have come to fruition during her sabbatical (Autumn 2016), including showing sections of *A Long Side*, a choreographic film co-directed with Lucy Cash. Following this, she will share some draft writings for her new book *Falling – Towards a Vitality of Presence*. 'Tie Up Daffodils When They Die' is a provisional title for the first chapter, which explores Martha Graham's falls in the context of American Modern Dance.

Royal Anthropological Institute's 2016 Blacking Lecture: An anthropological passage from the body to dance

Georgiana Gore, Professor of Anthropology of Dance and Bodily Practices, Blaise Pascal University, France

24 November 2016, Portrait Room, Grove House

Following Rudolf von Laban's and Marcel Mauss' seminal work in the 1920s and 1930s, it is commonplace in anthropological analyses of dance to think of dance as the art of movement in time and place and the body as its instrument. But what if dancing is considered to be the art of relations, a social space for the enactment of worlds past and for the invention of worlds to come? This semi-autobiographical lecture considers the ways in which the presenter's early engagement with an anthropology of the body, inspired by French post-structuralist authors, continues to inform her current research on the dynamics of interaction in dancing. This research oscillates between an inquiry into the individual dispositions and skills constitutive of dancing in general and the analysis of concerted collective performances. Examples are drawn from diverse sources including research in the 1980s amongst the Edo of Nigeria, and more recent work on international flashmobs and modes of transmission in French contemporary dance.

Georgiana Gore is Professor of Anthropology of Dance and Bodily Practices at Blaise Pascal University (Clermont-Ferrand, France) and a member of the research centre ACTÉ. She directs a Master's programme in Ethnomusicology and Anthropology of Dance (EMAD) and is local convenor for the Erasmus Mundus International Masters in Dance Knowledge, Practice and Heritage – Choreomundus. She has undertaken fieldwork in Southern Nigeria and in Europe, her research focusing mainly on dance transmission and the politics of embodiment as well as on various epistemological issues. Her publications include *Anthropologie de la danse: Genèse et construction d'une discipline* (with Andrée Grau 2006) as well as a forthcoming encyclopaedia contribution on the anthropology of dance also with Andrée Grau, a recent essay in the *Journal for the Anthropological Study of Human Movement – JASHM* (2013), and collaborative contributions to the edited collections *Fields in Motion: Ethnography in the Worlds of Dance* (Davida, 2011) and *The Interview: An Ethnographic Approach* (Skinner, 2012).

The annual RAI Blacking lecture is named in honour of esteemed ethnomusicologist and anthropologist John Blacking (1928-1990). The 2016 lecture is hosted by the Dance and Anthropology departments of the University of Roehampton, London.

Catholicism, masculinity, and femininity among the Tiwi of Melville Island, North Australia

Andrée Grau, Professor of the Anthropology of Dance, University of Roehampton
19 October 2016

Andrée Grau has carried out fieldwork in South Africa, Australia, India, as well as in London. Her interest lies in different conceptualisations of the world and how these become expressed in danced practices. In this talk Andrée discusses the Tiwi traditional understanding of femininity and masculinity, when in rituals men dance that they are pregnant and women that they find the spirit of unborn children, an activity only men can perform in everyday life, and how this gender 'interchangeability' fits with their Catholic faith.

Research seminar hosted by the Digby Stuart Research Centre for Religion, Society and Human Flourishing in collaboration with the Centre for Dance Research

Dance and Evolution – Perspectives from an Anthropologist of Dance

Dr Andrée Grau, Professor of the Anthropology of Dance, University of Roehampton
22 February 2017

Popular dance history books often refer to the "origins of dance" and discuss ancient "pagan rites", "fertility rituals" and other "shamanic practices", frequently linking them to contemporary practices found among small scale hunting and gathering societies. Professor Grau's seminar will debunk such discussions, examine the evidence that evolutionary anthropology has to offer, and engage with the recurring scholarly debates about the significant dance, or rather proto-dance, may have had in the evolution of our humanity.

Andrée Grau is Professor of the Anthropology of Dance at the University of Roehampton. She is convener of the MA Dance Anthropology and the Choreomundus: International Master in Dance Knowledge, Practice and Heritage programmes.

Dance Archaeology: What did you find? Wonderful things!

Ann Hutchinson Guest, notator and researcher
29 March 2017

World-renowned notator and researcher Ann Hutchinson Guest will discuss her work on Vaslav Nijinsky, exploring the dancer as a person as well as a performer, and focusing on the dance notation system he developed. She will describe and analyse the process and results of reviving Nijinsky's first ballet *L'Après-midi d'un faune* from his written description.

Local dance traditions and glocalised crisis: A landscape of traditional dance in Greece under austerity

Dr Maria Koutsouba, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
15 March 2017

The present socio-economic crisis worldwide has inevitably affected dance and dancing both locally and internationally. Greece is among the countries that has faced and faces this situation acutely. With a stagnant economy, a public sector devastated, a high level of unemployment, a public administration unable to cope, and people's income going down all the time, Greece has indeed been described as 'spiralling down' (The Guardian 13.08.2016). In this context, one would expect that interest in Greek traditional dance would be insignificant. Yet the contrary is true and dance is going through a boom period. This seminar examines this phenomenon. Drawing from personal experiences (being Greek as well as living and working in Greece and being involved with Greek traditional dance both professionally and socially) and from observations at Greek traditional dance clubs in Athens and other venues where dance is

practiced formally and informally, it attempts to make sense of the situation. How is it that within such a devastated financial landscape Greek traditional dance is thriving? It looks at the economy of Greek traditional dance and shows that being a relatively cheap activity it is affordable, and that employment opportunities to traditional Greek dance teachers continues its upward trend. It contends, however, that this economic factor is insufficient to explain the trend and argues that it is because of traditional Greek dance dynamics of interaction and its integration of the multifaceted and complex layers of Greek identity, that it has played a supportive role in bringing communities together during a difficult period, especially in offering a privileged space to the young, an issue yet to be examined academically.

Maria Koutsouba is an Associate Professor of Dance Studies with emphasis on Greek Traditional Dance at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Tutor of Open and Distance Education at the Hellenic Open University. During her 30 years' professional life, she has been member of Greek traditional dance clubs and has taught dance in Greece and abroad. She is member of scientific organisations in Greece and abroad, and she has participated in several research programmes. She is also a specialist in Labanotation. Her research interests and publications are mainly on social and human sciences and dance (ethnochoreology/dance anthropology, dance notation and movement analysis, cultural policy and dance, dance education), as well as on educational innovations such as open and distance learning in dance. Her recent publications include 'Learning and digital environment of dance. The case of Greek traditional dance in YouTube' in the *European Journal of Open, Distance & E-learning* (2016), as well as the collaborative contribution 'Advocacy, austerity and internationalisation in the anthropology of dance' (work in progress) to the proceedings of the SDHS/CORD Annual Conference 2015, *Cut & Paste: Dance Advocacy in the Age of Austerity* (in press) (with Georgiana Gore and Andrée Grau).

A Danse Fantastique: Women, Dance and the Macabre in *Giselle*

Dr Geraldine Morris, Reader in Dance Studies, University of Roehampton

2 November 2016

No blurb or biography circulated.

Dance and Sustainability

Dr Cristina Rosa, Senior Lecturer in Dance Studies, University of Roehampton

9 November 2016

Open discussion on a new research project. *No blurb or biography circulated.*

MA students' Confluence Conference presentations

Dance MA students, University of Roehampton

1 February 2017

An exciting and diverse line-up of MA students will give five-minute mini-presentations of the research papers they will be presenting at the Confluence Conference at DOCH in Stockholm later this month.

Residency Seminars

Pop Portraits Research

Lea Anderson, choreographer, in conversation with **Mary Kate Connelly**, PhD student, University of Roehampton
8 December 2016, Michaelis Theatre

Inspired by the screen-printed portraits of Andy Warhol, British choreographer Lea Anderson's Pop Portrait project investigates the movements of a selection of popular cultural superstars of the twentieth century. Anderson had a two-day intensive research residency at Roehampton Dance in October and worked with a group of students to examine and reproduce essential characteristic movements performed by Muhammad Ali, Janis Joplin and Michael Jackson. This was part of a larger investigation that will result in a live and filmed work in 2017. In this seminar, Anderson will discuss her research and choreographic ideas around movement portraits.

Lea Anderson is Artistic Director of The Cholmondeleys and Featherstonehaughs, two of the foremost contemporary dance companies in the UK. In 2002 Anderson was awarded an MBE for her services to dance, and in 2006 was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Arts from Dartington College of Arts. In autumn 2014 she was appointed Regents Professor at the University of California in Los Angeles and is currently Artist in Residence at the Southbank Centre. Her latest works include a performed exhibition of choreography and costume at The V&A Museum in London, full-length theatrical piece, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, and *Pans People Papers*, an on-going digital series with film-maker Marisa Zanotti. Anderson recently choreographed *How To Talk To Girls At Parties*, the latest film directed by John Cameron Mitchell based on the short story by Neill Gaiman due for release in 2017.

Mary Kate Connelly is a doctoral student at Roehampton Dance researching Anderson's work from the perspective of the costume archive.

The Thinking Body: Residency sharing and talk with Vera Mantero

Vera Mantero, choreographer, in conversation with **Charlie Ashwell**, dance artist
22 April 2017, Michaelis Theatre

This sharing is the culmination of choreographer Vera Mantero's five-day residency, 'The Thinking Body', at Roehampton Dance (18-22 April 2017). The evening will involve practical sharing of materials from the workshop by the participants and a talk by Mantero in conversation with dance artist Charlie Ashwell. Mantero will discuss her current artistic concerns as explored through the residency as well as give an insight into the development of her work over time.

Workshop description: Relaxation, the use of voice, writing, breathing and free association are some means to be used in this workshop in order to find the movements, actions, structures and desires of composition that are currently inside us. We will explore some of them separately in order to incorporate them later in longer and more complex improvisational processes or even in composition processes. Equally important will be the particular states of consciousness, the attention to exterior and interior signals (awareness), the use of space and the exploration of objects and materials. Irony and empty hands will take us further.

Vera Mantero is an internationally renowned Portuguese dance maker who has presented her work all over Europe, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Singapore, South Korea and the USA. Her recent work *The Clean and The Dirty*, premiered in April 2016 at the Maria Matos Theatre in the framework of the cycle *The Three Ecologies*. It reflects her concern for fundamental issues such as the environment, economic sustainability, social cohesion and inclusion, and citizenship. Mantero participates regularly in international improvisation projects alongside improvisers and choreographers such as Lisa Nelson, Mark Tompkins, Meg Stuart and Steve Paxton. Since 2000, Mantero has also been exploring vocal work, either singing the

repertoire of different authors or co-creating experimental music projects. Mantero was invited by Boris Charmatz to be part of '20 Dancers for the 20th Century', a living archive of the defining choreographic solos of the 20th century, which took place at Tate Modern (London) and at the Paris Opera/Palais Garnier in 2015. More: www.orumodofumo.com

Performance

Ithaca: upon every arrival

Gesamtatelier and **intermedia**

11 March 2017, Michaelis Theatre

After the great success at the UK Young Artists National Festival, Gesamtatelier in collaboration with the Architectural Association Interprofessional Studio, returns to Michaelis Theatre with the intermedia performance *Ithaca: upon every arrival*. The performative installation explores the process of integration into a new destination which entails a redefinition of one's image/identity and their relationship with space and their body. Five artists and four creative fields: visual art, contemporary dance, sound design and performance art, intertwine and pass through phases inspired by Jacques Lacan's 'Mirror Stage'. Each medium has its own role to perform as they invite the audience to witness the sequence of transformations a person experiences upon arriving in his/her Ithaca, until the decision moment. 'Is this where I aspire to be?'

A Q&A session with the artists will follow the performance, hosted by the Centre for Dance Research and chaired by Tamara Tomic-Vajagic, Senior Lecturer Department of Dance, University of Roehampton.

More: www.gesamtatelier.com and vimeo.com/202803562

Conference

Dance Fields — Staking A Claim for Dance Studies in the 21st Century

19-22 April 2017

Elm Grove Conference Centre, University of Roehampton

Joint conference convened by the Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE), Coventry University; Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Dance (CIRID), De Montfort University; and Centre for Dance Research (CDR), University of Roehampton.

More: Conference website dancefields.org and roehamptondance.com/conferences/dance-fields-staking-a-claim-for-dance-studies-in-the-21st-century.