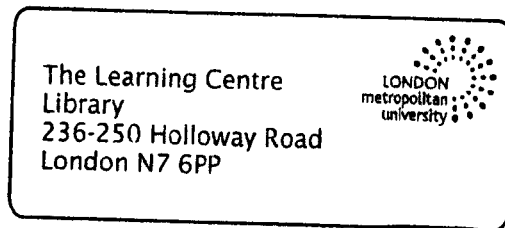


# Transmodern Dance Practices

Angelin Preljocaj, Mauro Bigonzetti and revisions of *Les Noces* (1923)



Kathrina Farrugia MA (Distinction) BA (Hons) LRAD

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
London Metropolitan University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2012

The Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (Humanities, Arts and Languages)  
London Metropolitan University

**All photographs have  
been omitted on  
request of the  
University**

Abstract.....	4
List of Figures and Tables.....	5
Acknowledgements.....	6
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PART ONE THEORETICAL CONTEXTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Chapter One Tracing histories of <i>Les Noces</i> (1923)</b>	
Chapter Outline	
1.1 An approach to historiography.....	19
1.2 <i>Les Noces</i> (1923): a context and history of the ballet.....	25
1.3 Revisions of the ballet: <i>Les Noces</i> (1952), <i>Svadebka</i> (1982).....	33
1.4 A rationale for the selected case studies: <i>Noces</i> (1989) and <i>Les Noces</i> (2002).....	39
<b>Chapter Two Revisionism: the ‘weight’ of postmodernism and the rise of transmodernism</b>	
Chapter Outline	
2.1 Revisionism and the ‘weight’ of postmodernism.....	44
2.2 A critique of theories of transmodernism: 1989–2012.....	51
2.3 Choreographic revisionism and the rise of transmodernism?.....	67
<b>PART TWO RECENT DANCE HISTORIES</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Chapter Three Angelin Preljocaj</b>	
Chapter Outline	
3.1 Dance in France: post-war developments and artistic agendas.....	73
3.2 Angelin Preljocaj’s training and early influences.....	75
3.3 A survey of choreographic commissions (1985–2010).....	84
3.4 Contemporary choreographic reflections: sites, myths and texts.....	91
3.5 Revising iconic ballets: <i>Romeo et Juliet</i> (1996) and the Ballets Russes repertoire.....	101
3.6 Conclusions for the chapter.....	109
<b>Chapter Four Mauro Bigonzetti</b>	
Chapter Outline	
4.1 Dance in Italy: post-war developments and artistic agendas.....	111
4.2 Mauro Bigonzetti’s training and early influences.....	117
4.3 A survey of choreographic commissions (1990–2010).....	126
4.4 Contemporary choreographic reflections: Italian culture, histories and legacies.....	139
4.5 Revising iconic ballets: <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (2006) and Ballets Russes repertoire.....	149
4.6 Conclusions for the chapter.....	155
<b>Chapter Five Two revisions of <i>Les Noces</i> (1923)</b>	
Chapter Outline	
5.1 Context and parameters of the analysis of the two selected revisions.....	157
5.2 An analysis of Angelin Preljocaj’s <i>Noces</i> (1989).....	160
5.3 An analysis of Mauro Bigonzetti’s <i>Les Noces</i> (2002).....	177
5.4 Conclusion.....	195

<b>PART THREE THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENTS</b>	<b>198</b>
<b>Chapter Six Theorising transmodernism in dance</b>	
Chapter Outline	
6.1 Theories of transference: evaluations of <i>Noces</i> (1989) and <i>Les Noces</i> (2002).....	199
6.2 Recent (transmodern) dance histories: Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti.....	206
6.3 Conclusion: Transmodern dance practices.....	219
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>Explanatory Notes for using the accompanying CD-ROM.....</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>CD-ROM: Extracts from choreographic works (<i>located on back cover</i>)</b>	
Folder 1 Extracts of revisions of <i>Les Noces</i> (1923)	
Folder 2 Extracts from the works by Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti	
Folder 3 Extracts from <i>Noces</i> (1989) and <i>Les Noces</i> (2002)	
Revisions of <i>Les Noces</i> (1923) from 1950 to 2010.....	226
Choreochronicle: Angelin Preljocaj.....	227
Choreochronicle: Mauro Bigonzetti.....	228
List of live performances and other events.....	229
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>229</b>
Printed sources.....	229
Electronic sources.....	246
Audiovisual sources (including online postings of repertoire).....	252
Photographs.....	258



In this thesis, I examine the current state of choreographic postmodernism in the wake of recent theories of transmodernism in film and literature studies. Moving from an analysis of revisionist choreographic practices, my aim is to retrace the unwritten histories of particular revisions of Bronislava Nijinska's *Les Noces* (1923), namely those by Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti. Whilst their syntactical organisation of choreographic vernacular and thematic treatment of the subject matter, mise-en-scène and choreographic form differ, Preljocaj and Bigonzetti share a common interest, namely their engagement with the choreographic legacies of the artistic migration in their indigenous context and their interest in revising artistic, cultural and narrative artefacts including the Ballets Russes repertoire (1909–1929). Through the analyses of their creative practices and their revisions of *Les Noces*, I situate the parameters and extensions of the postmodern genre against newer theories of transmodernism that align themselves more readily to the choreographic interest in tracing established histories and practices.

The theoretical developments of transmodernism in dance impact two significant areas: firstly, understanding of notions of border-crossing and artistic alterity from existing choreographic legacies, and secondly, revisions of ballet histories associated with works of historical significance. The study suggests choreographic revisionism as transmodern dance practices, where the weight of existing performance histories is re-organised and reconfigured into multidimensional and non-linear identities.

The three parts of this thesis are organised in the following way. The first part provides a theoretical context for revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) as well as a theoretical underpinning to the theories of revisionism and transmodernism. In the second part, at the core of the enquiry, I trace recent dance histories through the choreographic works created by Preljocaj (1985–2010) and Bigonzetti (1990–2010) and their revisions of *Les Noces*. In the third and final part, the research draws on analyses of *Noces* (1989) and *Les Noces* (2002) to facilitate an application of a theorisation of transmodernism in dance and its potential to further the field of dance studies.

Figure 1: Rehearsals of <i>Les Noces</i> in Monte-Carlo, 1923.....	26
Figure 2: Organisation in the Consecration of the Groom performed by the Royal Ballet.....	31
Figure 3: <i>Les Noces</i> in rehearsal (Cunningham, 1952) at Brandeis College.....	36
Figure 4: <i>Les Noces</i> in rehearsal (Cunningham, 1952) at Brandeis College.....	36
Figure 5: Still moment from the first choreographic section in <i>Svadebka</i> (1982).....	38
Figure 6: References to the choreographic tableaux from the 1923 ballet in <i>Svadebka</i> .....	39
Figure 7: Still moment from <i>Empty Moves (Parts I &amp; II)</i> (2007).....	83
Figure 8: Preljocaj coaching the Paris Opéra Ballet in <i>La Danse</i> (2008).....	88
Figure 9: Still moment from <i>Annonciation</i> (1995).....	95
Figure 10: Bigonzetti and Buonomo in <i>The dream walk of the Shaman</i> (1985).....	121
Figure 11: Bigonzetti and Buonomo in <i>The dream walk of the Shaman</i> (1985).....	122
Figure 12: <i>The Beheading of St. John</i> (1609) at St. John's Co-Cathedral, Malta.....	144
Figure 13: Images of flight from the duet in <i>Caravaggio</i> (2008).....	147
Figure 14: Organisation of musical and choreographic sections in <i>Noces</i> (1989).....	159
Figure 15: Organisation of musical and choreographic sections in <i>Les Noces</i> (2002).....	160
Figure 16: Detailed structural outline of sections in <i>Noces</i> (1989).....	161
Figure 17: A collision of images: bodies and/as props in the third section of <i>Noces</i> .....	168
Figure 18: The introduction to the women in <i>Noces</i> .....	172
Figure 19: Three couples' phrase in <i>Noces</i> .....	176
Figure 20: Detailed structural outline of sections in <i>Les Noces</i> (2002).....	178
Figure 21: The Groom lifts the Bride up in <i>Les Noces</i> .....	183
Figure 22: Rethinking the position of the kneeler and the female dancers in <i>Les Noces</i> .....	190
Figure 23: The couple with the red ribbon and the bride at the foot of the table.....	193
Figure 24: An overlapping image of choreographic heritage in <i>Les Noces</i> .....	195
Table 1: Summary of choreographic tableaux in <i>MC14/22</i> (2001).....	99-100
Table 2: Scenes from Preljocaj's <i>Parade</i> (1993).....	104
Table 3: Analysis of the organisation of the blocks in <i>Le Sacre du Printemps</i> (2001).....	108
Table 4: Organisation of body parts in The Chinese Solo from <i>Parade</i> (1917) .....	119
Table 5: Selected moments from the duets in <i>Pitture per Archi</i> (1992).....	128
Table 6: Key features from the duet in <i>Kazimir's Colours</i> (1996).....	133
Table 7: Analysis of a key motif in the first duet in <i>Festa Barocca</i> (2008).....	138
Table 8: Illustration of the use of the helmet in a male solo from <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> .....	151
Table 9: Illustration of the use of the helmet in a female solo from <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> .....	152
Table 10: The organisation and uses of the steel structures in the first duet.....	154
Table 11: Analysis of the organisation of the benches in <i>Noces</i> (1989).....	166
Table 12: Examples of Châtelet's lighting designs for <i>Noces</i> .....	170
Table 13: Analysis of the organisation of the table, kneelers and bodies in <i>Noces</i> (2002)...	185
Table 14: Examples of Cerri's lighting designs for <i>Les Noces</i> .....	188

This thesis was developed and completed with the support of a number of individuals. Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to my Director of Studies, Dr. Giannandrea Poesio. His unfailing support and rigorous advice within the supervision of this thesis were an exemplary display of guidance that supported the complexity of research across diverse academic fields, research libraries and sites of performance histories. I would also like to thank Dr. Anne Hogan for her invaluable contribution through her detailed and critical commentary. The examination commentary offered by Professor Emeritus Janet Lansdale and Dr. Rosemary Stott was instrumental in fine-tuning the thesis to its final completion.

A number of research libraries and performance institutes, dance companies, choreographers and artists offered support during the six years of research. In particular, I would like to thank: the Jerome Robbins Dance Division at the New York Public Library, the Brooklyn Academy of Music (USA); Susi Davoli and Lilliana Cappuccino at Teatro Romolo Valli Archives (Italy); Stefania Catellani at Aterballetto (Italy); Youri Van den Bosch and Dany Lévêque at Ballet Preljocaj (France); Chris Tudor (formerly of London Contemporary Dance Theatre); Jane Pritchard for and on behalf of English National Ballet (UK) and the executive directors of the Dublin Dance Festival (Republic of Ireland) and the Edinburgh International Festival. The support of Mr Preljocaj and Mr Bigonzetti was also key to completing this work and I am indebted to their encouragement.

For their support in accessing and resourcing the revisions of *Les Noces*, I am grateful to: David Vaughan at the Merce Cunningham Dance Company and Louis F. Lindauer, former student (1952) of Brandeis College (USA); Cristina Bozzolini at Aterballetto (Italy); Kat Spowell at the Royal New Zealand Ballet (New Zealand); Muriel Corradi-Provenzani at the Ballets de Monte-Carlo (Monaco); and Andrew Hurst, former managing director at Phoenix Dance Company (UK). I would like to acknowledge Michael Parmenter and Jean-Christophe Maillot for their generosity in loaning recordings of their choreographic work for the purpose of this research. Parts of this journey were supported by the hospitality of the following friends: Rachel Jaccarini, during my visits to Reggio Emilia; Stephanie Sammut during my final research trip in Edinburgh; Leslie Getz and Don MacDonagh for their warm welcome to New York and for providing copies of articles from Leslie's private collection.

To my colleagues in the Faculty of Education at the Royal Academy of Dance: I would like to thank the late Professor Joan White CBE MA FRAD FRSA (Director of Education, 1999–2011) for the support and study leave offered in recognition of this scholarly research. Sadly, Joan was not able to witness the completion of this PhD but her words of encouragement have lived on through the final stages of revision. Family members also played an important supportive role through their understanding and unfailing support. In particular, I would like to thank Matthew Farrugia, for his patience in resourcing and expanding an ever-growing personal collection of French and Italian contemporary dance and ballet recordings, and my companion Shaun Kriel, whose unfailing, relentless support and understanding together with his constant words of encouragement have helped me through this long journey.

Lastly, this thesis is dedicated to Anne and Karol Farrugia. Twelve years ago, they afforded me a great opportunity to pursue my studies in dance in London. For as long as I can recall, they have been most tolerably patient with my enquiring nature.

Kathrina Farrugia © 2012

## Introduction

“I personally do not really believe that postmodernism ... can ever really die out and disappear. But on the other hand, I am convinced that a re-emergence of modernism in a context characterised by the ‘fading of postmodernism’ is indeed in the offing and brings about new exciting material that one was eagerly waiting for.”

Szaniawski, 2004, p.168

The words of film researcher Jeremi Szaniawski (2004) offer a radical rethinking of a collective of histories known as ‘postmodern practices’. As a theoretical and performative construct, postmodernism has “arguably lost its speed in the current political, artistic and socio-cultural climate” (ibid). Instead, this ‘new exciting material’, or transmodernism, can be considered through the rise of a ‘modern loop’, embedded throughout the twentieth century and temporarily shifted through the rise of postmodernism. In literature studies, the theoretical writings of Spanish philosopher Rosa María Rodríguez Magda (1989) provided Christopher Taggart Lewis with insights into transmodernism. For Lewis, this new theoretical framework extends from and transcends epistemological strands of modernism and postmodernism, by looking back to the narratives that preceded the postmodern crisis. In the light of such recent thinking, what are the benefits and challenges of adopting a transmodern framework through which to analyse recent dance histories? How do the negotiated theories transfer effectively from one field to another and how can dance histories be considered through constructs such as ‘transmodernism’? How do transmodern practices differ from postmodern practices? And finally, can revisionist (dance) practices be aligned against a transmodern framework?

The parameters of postmodernism and postmodern dance indicate a largely-expanded spectrum of theories and a wide-ranging set of performance practices. An understanding of postmodernism would be helpful to set an understanding from which to depart. Borrowing from Eagleton's "illusions of postmodernism", the established features of postmodernism include the rejection and deconstruction of hierarchy and grand narratives, plurality of histories and the body as object. Moreover, "it has brought low the intimidating austerity of high modernism with its playful, parodic, populist spirit" (Eagleton, 1996, p.28). As a theoretical marker, postmodernism facilitates different conceptions of history. And, herein lie some of the questions about postmodernism in the twenty-first century: what happens when certain artistic practices include references to but are not exclusively consumed by postmodernism? As Eagleton writes: "the chief contradiction of postmodernism is a little like that of old-fashioned structuralism" and it unavoidably finds itself "pulling the rug from under itself" (ibid).

In its initial use and American environment, the term 'postmodern' was utilised in a chronological way to distinguish itself from other 'modern' practices that had been consolidated by the 1950s.<sup>1</sup> This new concept in performance rejected "musicality, meaning, characterization [sic], mood and atmosphere; it uses costume, lighting, and objects in purely functional ways" (Kirby in Banes 1987, p..xiv). Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century other practices emerged, hence the existing problematic use of terminology and confusion of theoretical frameworks.

The problematisation of postmodernism has emerged in recent dance practices but few authors have provided effective theoretical positioning in academic dance contexts. The writings of Ann Daly (1992), together with the recent anthology by Andre Lepecki and Jenn Joy (2009), speculated and prompted some of the unexplored concerns. A retrospective

---

<sup>1</sup> This is the description, allegedly first used by Yvonne Rainer, outlined by Sally Banes in her introduction to *Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-modern Dance* (1977; 1987 edition).

reflection on some of the debates that emerged over two decades ago should offer some clarification of the matter. In her *Tulane Drama Review* debate with Sally Banes in 1988, Susan Manning argued:

“a sense that our notions of postmodernism are confused because our notions of modernism are confused...it seems that the present encompasses varieties of postmodernism.”

Manning, 1988, pp.37, 38

Of course, Manning raises a valid point. The variety of practices that emerged out of the postmodern period of the 1960s offered a spectrum of practices – what is important is the theoretical framework through which dances are being interpreted. Dance critic Roger Copeland (1983) predicted that the 1980s would become known as the decade of postmodernism. The work of American choreographer Karole Armitage (b.1954), whose works include *Drastic Classicism* (1981) set to punk rock music and a deconstruction of balletic idiom, is an example. Since then, many choreographers such as Armitage have steered away from the minimalist postmodern dances of the 1960s. How is it then possible to situate choreographers who have engaged in the process of revising artistic influences and seminal works that have shaped historical canons? Should their practices be also exclusively considered as postmodern dance practices? Is it possible to find new ways to construct recent dance histories that show references to other theoretical points, including postmodernism?

Fifty years on, postmodernism in dance (or rather practices that are called postmodern because they partly resemble those features associated with the genre) can certainly be described as in a state of transition. It is timely and necessary to rethink the last three decades of dance histories – at least, an attempt to address part of the spectrum is warranted. Drawing upon two exemplars of performance makers’ artistic careers and their revision of a seminal ballet, the position offered in *Transmodern Dance Practices* is that postmodernism in dance belongs to a transitional era. To borrow a metaphor from Eagleton’s critique, it is “one in

which the metaphysical, like an unquiet ghost, can neither resuscitate itself nor decently die” (Eagleton, 1996, p.134). In rethinking the positioning of postmodernism in dance, this thesis explores one of the epistemological strands of the postmodern spectrum: notably, performances that address ‘revisionist’ practices, largely stemming from the 1980s and across three decades.

New perspectives on recent dance histories situate the work of two selected dance makers, namely the French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj and the Italian Mauro Bigonzetti. *Transmodern Dance Practices* also offers pathways into understanding these recent choreographic practices and opens up new discursive approaches by analysing their two bodies of work as well as their revisions of Bronislava Nijinska’s *Les Noces* (1923), a seminal modern ballet that stems from the performance histories of Serge Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes (1909–1929).<sup>2</sup> The European and American performances of this iconic twentieth-century ballet company disseminated extracts from the nineteenth-century choreographic canon outside Russia. More importantly, the company’s performances in London, Paris and New York served as a platform for the avant-garde modernist ballets of the early twentieth century (Garafola, 1998). Choreographic works such as *Petrushka* (Fokine 1907), *Firebird* (Fokine 1909), *Le Spectre de la Rose* (Fokine 1911), *L’après midi d’un faune* (Nijinsky 1912), *Le Sacre du Printemps* (Nijinsky 1913), *Parade* (Massine 1917) and *Apollon Musagète* (Balanchine 1928) provide significant insights into the artistic temperaments at the heart of Serge Diaghilev’s company. The histories of these performances have had a considerable impact on choreographic practices across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Over the course of the last century, various revisions of these cultural and historic

---

<sup>2</sup> The company of Russian artists, musicians, dancers and choreographers was managed by Serge Diaghilev (1872-1929) and it toured European cities including Paris and London, as well as North and South America. A detailed history of the company can be found in Lynn Garafola’s *Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes* (1998) published by Da Capo Press (New York).

artefacts have given rise to complex interpretive discourses<sup>3</sup>. The unwritten choreographic histories of the subsequent revisions of *Les Noces*, together with the revisions offered by Preljocaj and Bigonzetti, offer a unique insight into how these performance histories connect to recent theoretical developments.

*Transmodern Dance Practices* suggests an opportunity for theories to transfer effectively from one field to another. The negotiation of theories does not simply mean borrowing and fixing theories from film and literature studies. Szaniawski's sixteen-page seminal article published in 2004 in the *Belgian Journal of English Language and Literatures* parallels American dance scholar Sally Banes' treatise on postmodern dance first published in 1977. The impact of Banes' theoretical construct based on the writing of dance histories in New York in the 1960s provided a new framework for dance studies and it is anticipated that the construct provided in this thesis will offer a parallel contribution to the field of dance scholarship. The scholarly position of transmodern theories includes two recent doctoral theses that explore the overlapping fields of philosophy, film and literary studies; namely, John Marvin's doctoral thesis (2004) on transmodernism in the work of James Joyce, Wallace Stevens, Thomas Pynchon and Stanley Kubrick, and Christopher Taggart Lewis's analyses of transmodernism in Brazilian literature (2011), through the work of Chico Buarque and Santiago Nazarian. Elements from both Szaniawski's and Lewis's theoretical concerns provide some of the essential strands within the framework and help to shape the proposed application of transmodernism in dance.

The challenges and overlaps between postmodernism and transmodernism are complex. Szaniawski argues that transmodernism can be viewed as a form of postmodern recycling of modernism, or a set of concerns shaped by self-reflexive criticism (Kolocotroni,

---

<sup>3</sup> Here references are made to the theoretical frameworks by Giannandrea Poesio (in Lansdale, 2008) and Vida Midgelow (2007).



Goldman, Taxidou 1999). This multifaceted form of modernism does not neglect its postmodern past but rather engages with its displaced predecessor, establishing a ‘hybrid’ theory that emerges into its ‘new’, complex and non-linear identity. Unlike its counterpoint of postmodernism, transmodernism suggests a transitory but clear presence of both modern and postmodern elements. Like its precursor, transmodernism is “a problematizing [sic] force in our culture today: it raises questions about (or renders problematic) the common-sensical and the ‘natural’” (Hutcheon, 1988, p.xi). Unlike transmodernism, postmodernism would effectively be far closer to modernism, where “this re-emergence or new re-invention of modernisms ... is probably due to the same reason that brought about postmodernism” (Szaniawski, 2004, p.167). The subordination of high modernism and the emergence of popular art appear to be interrupted by the resurfacing of a complex form of modernism. For Szaniawski, transmodernism implies:

“a resurgence of modernist reflexes and aesthetics in contemporary culture ... what it inherits from postmodernism is the weight of past productions”

Szaniawski, 2004, pp.169, 179

In dance, the use of a transmodern framework aims to facilitate effective interpretations of those recent choreographic practices that reflect a multidimensionality of form, layered with notions of artistic otherness through references to established performance histories and traditions. The offering of a theoretical construct of transmodernism in dance allows for a resolution of the problematic diversity of postmodern dance practices and answers Richard Schechner’s call for a revision of theories in the aftermath of a “post post-structural” period (Schechner, 2000a, p.7). In the parameters of this study, the bodies of work by Preljocaj (1985–2010) and Bigonzetti (1990–2010) prove to be valuable case studies. The central features of their work suggest an artistic migration of performance histories that include but do not exclusively reflect the characteristics of postmodernism. The

reconfiguration of dance, dramatic and musical narratives in revisionist practices provides scope for pursuing and suggesting a more effective theoretical construct.<sup>4</sup>

Through these chapters, the transference of theoretical positioning on transmodernism from film and literature studies may provide the dance scholarship community with an alternative understanding of recent performance-making practices, as well as offering newly written dance histories. Whilst the major impact of proposing such a theoretical framework implies a repositioning of the postmodern canon of work created between the 1960s and recent times, the liberating and forward-thinking qualities offered by transmodernism provide new avenues for dance scholars.

### Summary of the argument

*Transmodern Dance Practices* is structured in three parts: Theoretical Contexts, Recent Dance Histories and Theoretical Developments. Part One commences by examining the historical and theoretical contexts of the thesis: notably revisionism and its relation to postmodernism, theories on transmodernism, balletic histories and recent choreographic practices. In Chapter One, attention is drawn to revisions of the performance histories of the repertoire of the Ballets Russes (1909–1929). Particular emphasis is placed on the unwritten histories of the ballet *Les Noces* (1923) and the subsequent revisions of Bronislava Nijinska's ballet over the past ninety years. The chapter includes a survey of significant revisions of *Les Noces* including tracing the revisions by Jiří Kylián (1982) as well as more recent ones by Jean-Christophe Maillot (2002), Michael Parmenter (2002) and Javier de Frutos (2007). The chapter situates the two selected revisions by Angelin Preljocaj (1989) and Mauro Bigonzetti (2002) and offers an insight into the methodological approaches at the centre of this thesis.

---

<sup>4</sup> After Poesio in Lansdale, 2008.

Chapter Two draws on theories on revisionism in theatre studies (Green, 2006) and in dance studies (Midgelow 2007; Poesio in Lansdale, 2008). Revisionist practices and theories about postmodernism are discussed against the ‘weight’ of such theoretical thinking; to initiate the debate, an appraisal of the various approaches to the nature, characteristics and changes in postmodernism is undertaken in the light of past and recent perspectives.<sup>5</sup> This chapter explores recent considerations about the ‘fall of postmodernism’ as well as the rise of transmodern theories. Parallels are offered and drawn between choreographic revisionism and recent theories on transmodernism proposed by film and literary theorists, positing an introductory context to the work of the two selected performance makers.

The core of the enquiry of is a series of analyses of the work of Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti and their revisions of *Les Noces*. The three chapters in Part Two should be read in conjunction with the interactive and user-led digital materials presented in the Appendix CD-ROM located at the back of this submission. The chapters draw upon recordings of performances that were located in a variety of research libraries and company archives. Research was carried out at the New York Public Library and the archives at the Teatro Romolo Valli<sup>6</sup> in Reggio Emilia (Italy), as well other ballet and dance companies in London and France. Television broadcasts of works by Preljocaj and Bigonzetti have been collected since the early 1990s and these sources played a crucial role in tracing the performance histories. More recently, the phenomena of online posting platforms, such as dance company websites, YouTube and Vimeo, offered insights into those works which were recently created or those that proved to be inaccessible. For the central analyses of the two selected revisions of *Les Noces*, two performances of each choreographic revision were accessed through various sources. A recording of *Noces*, performed by Compagnie Preljocaj

---

<sup>5</sup> Amy S. Green (2003); Vida Midgelow (2007); Giannandrea Poesio (in Lansdale, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> Hereon, this theatre will be referred to as Teatro Valli.

at Teatro Valli on 3 March 1994, was accessed at the archives of Teatro Valli. A second recording, performed by Ballet Preljocaj at Joyce Theater, New York (USA) in April 1997, was accessed at the New York Public Library. Recordings of *Les Noces* were accessed at the New York Public Library and the Aterballetto Archives. Performed by Aterballetto, the two performances were recorded at Teatro Regio, Parma (Italy) on 5 November 2004 and at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (USA) on 10 November 2005.

Chapters Three and Four summarise the recent dance histories that have emerged from the body of work by Preljocaj and Bigonzetti created during the last three decades. The ‘bodies of knowledge’ (Claid, 2006, p.91) or “corporeal literacy” (Bleeker, 2008a, p.67) that underpin the work of Preljocaj’s and Bigonzetti’s choreographic careers reveal a tapestry of performative heritages that are historically shaped and situated through the artistic migration into the French and Italian dance cultures. These historical environments prove to be important springboards from which their artistic concerns evolved.

Chapter Three outlines the signature traits in Preljocaj’s choreographic practices since his early performance-making years in the mid 1980s. These choreographic histories are explored through his early dance influences in France, primarily through the choreographic legacies of German expressionist dancer and pedagogue Karin Waehner (1926–1999), American choreographer Merce Cunningham (1919–2009) and French postmodern performance maker Dominique Bagouet (1951–1992). A survey of choreographic commissions created between 1985 and 2010 by European and American companies including the Paris Opéra Ballet (1993–2010), London Contemporary Dance Theatre (1997) and the New York City Ballet (1997) is closely analysed, together with an analysis of the revision of a selected repertoire of the Ballets Russes (1909–1929) and Preljocaj’s seminal revision of *Romeo and Juliet* (1996). A series of case studies construct insights into

Preljocaj's contemporary choreographic reflections on myths, sites and bodies as well as his choreographic treatment of *mise-en-scène* and the theatricalisation of the dancing body.

Chapter Four examines Mauro Bigonzetti's choreographic *oeuvre*, focusing on works created between 1990 and 2010 for the Italian ballet company Aterballetto, as well as other European and American ballet and modern dance companies including Staatsballett Berlin, and more recent American commissions by the New York City Ballet (2002–2010) and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (2008). Early choreographic influences during his apprenticeship with Aterballetto include Glen Tetley (1926–2006) and William Forsythe (b.1949), and the frequent visits by the Cullberg Ballet, a Swedish company led by Mats Ek (b.1949). The revision and construction of Italian culture and histories are presented as contemporary choreographic reflections in a series of case studies. Bigonzetti's iconic ballet *Romeo and Juliet* (2006) and others from the Ballets Russes repertoire are situated in the light of the choreographic practices at the heart of his career.

Chapter Five is largely an analysis of Preljocaj's *Noces* (1989) and Bigonzetti's *Les Noces* (2002). The analysis of each production is structured in a similar fashion. Firstly, an overview of the structural organisation of each choreographic revision is presented. Secondly, analyses of costumes, bodies and/as props and lighting states are constructed as theatricalised narratives. Finally, the investigation of both Preljocaj's and Bigonzetti's stylistic concerns of choreographic vernacular are drawn to the reader's attention.

Part Three consolidates and summarises the central theoretical developments of transmodernism in dance. The concluding Chapter Six positions the epistemological inferences that shape the theories that transfer in the field of dance. The argument of transmodern dance practices is driven by the analyses of revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) expounded in Chapter Five. In support of the initial focus, the set of points is cast wider across the context of the choreographic histories that shaped Chapters Three and Four. In this

way, revisionism as a transmodern construct is framed in the light of both choreographers' recent dance histories.

And finally, a word on the classification of the various texts, sources and materials that have been fabricated into this historiographic and academic effort. In adherence to academic conventions, the bibliography provides three types of source materials: printed materials, electronic sources and audiovisual materials, which include sources from research libraries as well as online databases.<sup>7</sup> A bibliographic list of live performances attended between 2005 and 2012 has been placed in the Appendices. This document illustrates an adherence to traditional academic bibliographies as well as problematising the location and inclusion of live (performance) events. In line with the methodological concerns on resourcing dance/performance histories, the current location of these sources raises significant concerns about the existing marginalisation of embodied sources in academic practice. Congruent with the methodological concerns on resourcing histories, these sources provided significant insights and warrant a more inclusive and equal appreciation in the bibliography. Through the period of research, various sources, including live performances as well as archived and online digital media, were fundamental to the writing of these histories, liberating deposits of "memory-affects, photographic contact, digital depth and choreo/graphing" (Lepecki, 2004, p.4).

---

<sup>7</sup> Other historical tools such as digital materials shifted the experience of dance through library and online databases. Additional resources, including online uploads, provided suitable replacements for the materials which could not be reproduced or taken out of research libraries and other archives. The phenomenon of Web 2.0 tools such as YouTube.com, Realplayer.com and other dance company archives (such as iDoc Ballet Preljocaj) facilitated the support of extracts from repertoire in Chapters Two, Three and Four. These are included in the three Folders in the interactive Appendix CD-ROM. These materials support the reader's engagement and complement the archive of live/embodied performances through the use of this user-led CD-ROM.

## Part One Theoretical Contexts

The two chapters in this first part of the thesis bring into context the primary areas of this study: a historical study of the revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) and theories on revisionism and new frameworks for transmodernism. Chapter One suggests that little has been written on the performance histories of subsequent revisions of *Les Noces*. The enquiry provides an understanding of the ballet's iconic status, insights into its critical reception and a survey of the revisions including *Les Noces* (1952) and *Svadebka* (1982). In Chapter Two, three theoretical concepts are explored within the context of the performing arts as well as film and literature studies. Through the collision between revisionism and transmodernism, the transference of knowledge from one discipline to another is presented as a creative opportunity for new epistemological pathways. These theoretical contexts are the foundations through which an understanding of recent choreographic histories as well as the potential application of theories in other fields such as dance will be pursued later in this thesis.

## Chapter One

### Tracing histories of *Les Noces* (1923)

#### Chapter Outline

- 1.1 An approach to historiography
- 1.2 *Les Noces* (1923): a context and history of the ballet
- 1.3 Revisions of the ballet: *Les Noces* (Cunningham, 1952), *Svadebka* (Kylliän, 1982)
- 1.4 A rationale for the selected case studies: *Noces* (1989) and *Les Noces* (2002)

Nearing its ninetieth anniversary, the ballet *Les Noces* that was first choreographed by Bronislava Nijinska<sup>1</sup> in 1923 has left academics and critics arguing over the aesthetic issues that surround various anthropological, musicological, feminist and choreological perspectives.<sup>2</sup> Despite nearly ninety revisions of the ballet, little has been written on the performance histories of these subsequent revisions of *Les Noces*. An understanding of the ballet's iconic status, together with insights into its critical reception, precedes the survey of the revisions of this ballet, fulfilling an absent and yet essential narrative in dance and ballet studies. In view of this, this chapter commences with an explanation on the methodological approach to historiography and its connections with performance analysis.

#### 1.1 An approach to historiography

The writing of history in this thesis is presented from a collective view, aligning to Richard Schechner's view on the scholarly study of performance where histories and performance discourses are inclusive of each other (Schechner, 2000b). It also adopts perspectives corroborated by dance historian Alexandra Carter (2004): that this endeavour "develops a consciousness that the study of history is a creative activity. It involved the imaginative

---

<sup>1</sup> With a career spanning over six decades, Nijinska was the only female of the five major choreographers of the Ballets Russes (1909–1929). Nancy Van Norman Baer (1986) provides a detailed account of Nijinska's creations including other important works such as *Les Biches* (1923), *Le Train Bleu* (1924) and her revisionist production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

<sup>2</sup> References are made to the work of Margarita Mazo (1990) and Lynn Garafola (1998), and my research and analyses of the ballet (2004–2005).



piecing together of various accounts in order to produce meanings” (Carter, 2004, p.14). This approach echoes approaches to dance histories that are concerned with analysing performances and sources that ‘voice’ the recent past.<sup>3</sup> In centralising the artefact through the archive and the repertoire, this method of historiography suggests the ‘bridging’ of other disciplinary skills, including the application of performance/dance analysis as a methodological concern. The nature of the enquiry and the course of these written histories are primarily explored through the notions of performativity and theatricality within the artefacts and the sources of histories at the heart of this research. This epistemological standpoint thus infers that:

“performance analyses can also examine the ways in which a *mise-en-scène* is inscribed in history and history is inscribed in it, through successive layers or juxtaposed details. They can determine what stratifications history has already deposited.”

Pavis, 2003, p.323

Whilst concurring with Carter that “history is an imaginative act” (Carter, 2004, p.3), the line of enquiry within this thesis is not preoccupied with the ephemerality of the dance, as the analyses presented in this study focus mostly, though not exclusively, on recorded dance performances historicised in digital format. Supported through an understanding of Michel de Certeau’s epistemological stance on the location of the object (De Certeau, 1998, p.58), this study of live and digitalised recordings suggests the convergence of the fields of performance analysis and historiography. The positioning in the analyses of the sources, subjective to the role of the reader or historiographer, suggests views raised by a large majority of authors on specific approaches to the writing of history. Post-structuralist historians Derek Attridge, Geoff Bennington and Robert Young (1987) suggest that the decentring of the subject, artefact or text makes interpretation subject to “a more rigorous consequence of difference”

---

<sup>3</sup> Here I refer to the historiographic approaches in the publications by Banes (1998) and Hammergren in Carter (2004).

(1987, p.1). Moreover, recent applications of such epistemologies are visible in *Decentring Dancing Texts: The Challenge of Interpreting Dances* (Lansdale, 2008), where scholars like Giannandrea Poesio challenge the positioning of revisionist practices through analysing selected choreographic works, in particular through an analysis of Mats Ek's *Giselle* (1982). The interpretation of the artefact is in the hands of the role of the reader, in this case Poesio. Such interpretations highlight the decentred or shifted nature of historiography and implicate further reiterations that postmodern theories of interpretation "invariably go further than simply insisting on the integrity of the cultural artefact" (Appleby, Hunt and Jacob, 1994, p.224). The adopted approach to historiography is characterised as a discourse between the artefact (production of a choreographic work at a particular point in time and its subsequent existence in the repertoire) and the recipient (through the epistemological standpoint of the author/viewer/analyst).

Histories can also be constructed out of interstitial layering of the digitised performances through the concepts of performativity and theatricality. As performance theorist Maaïke Bleeker (2008a) suggests, corporeal literacy implies an "understanding of bodies as capable of reading and thinking in ways that are both concrete and abstract, both material and cultural, always lived through the body" (Bleeker, 2008a, p.67). As a proponent of the potential for analysing recorded performances, Schechner outlines performativity as the in-depth processing of minute performance qualities, likened to a slow motion camera where kinematic vocabularies of discrete units of repeatable behaviour are drawn towards the spectator's attention. The theatricality of historiographic sources is paralleled to a sign, or, as Schechner claims, "readable" units received by the spectator, and a scene as a series of signs, making up a unit of interaction. Notions of theatricality are established by Tracy Davis and Thomas Postlewait (2003), where a generalised understanding of 'theatricality' cannot be taken for granted (Davis and Postlewait, 2003, p.2). Alongside the many ways available to

outline the term, Davis and Postlewait outline period, globality and mimesis as their primary concerns. The act of tracing these three elements in the specific recording of production offers a variety of analytical tools which open the possibility of extrapolating additional meta-narratives that may be traces within the artefact over and across specific periods of time. Sources of histories such as extracts from recordings of performances can support the analyses of period, interpretation and performance heritage, and largely contribute to the mediated potential of performance histories. Other sources such as programme notes and reviews of productions can be considered as useful histories that may provide insights, though limited, into performativity and the theatrical potential of the choreographic treatment.

The narration of performance histories in this study is largely shaped through the role of the repertoire and the archive.<sup>4</sup> Similar to the premise of Susan Leigh Foster's *Choreographing History* (1998), this work is interested in signposting the efforts, resourcefulness and creativity of those performance makers that have dared to challenge iconic performance traditions, as well as presenting predominantly recent choreographic histories. The enquiry is underpinned by the imaginative 'piecing together' that narrates both Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti's work across their indigenous companies and illustrates the history of commissions created for national and international companies. The narrated histories are effectively dependent on the extensive body of work encountered in the variety of sources and have been led by the journeys around various sites of performances. Largely undertaken between December 2006 and August 2012, the journey of collecting and collating research and evidence from theatres, research libraries and company archives concluded at Ballet Preljocaj's performances at the Edinburgh International Festival (2012).

---

<sup>4</sup> Here I refer to the epistemological perspectives presented by Diana Taylor (2003).

Live, recorded and digitalised performance histories provided and facilitated “the manipulation and the analysis...as a staging of the past” (De Certeau, 1998, p.9). This variety of histories democratised the function of written, oral, recorded and embodied histories. As Latin(o) American scholar Diana Taylor advocates:

“shifting the focus from written to embodied cultural, from the discursive to the performatic, we need to shift our methodologies. ... This shift necessarily alters what academic disciplines regard as appropriate canons, and might extend the traditional disciplinary boundaries to include practices previously outside their purview.”

Taylor, 2003, p.17

Sources were derived from theatre and company archives, television broadcasts and other digital platforms such as YouTube. Archived, commercial and TV broadcasts of dance company repertoire between 1985 and 2010, together with recent documentary films<sup>5</sup>, provide many of the source materials from the New York Public Library, Teatro Valli and the archives of Ballet Preljocaj and Aterballetto, as well as from personal collections. Online archives such as Ballet Preljocaj’s online iDoc database provided archives of TV broadcasts on French channels between the 1980s and most recent accounts. Live and recorded oral histories include post-performance talks, such as Ballet Preljocaj’s at the Joyce Theater, New York (1997), sourced at the New York Public Library, and other performance talks by Ballet Preljocaj at the O’Reilly Theatre in Dublin (2008) and the Edinburgh Playhouse (2012). Opportunities to observe rehearsals defined the embodied experiences of the spectator – Aterballetto (October 2008 and May 2009) and Ballet Preljocaj (October 2007 and April 2008) – as well as observing live performances in New York, London, Reggio Emilia and Aix-en-Provence between 2005 and 2009. The reliance on resources in the form of orality, narratives and subjectivity<sup>6</sup> created an acute sensitivity towards digital archives that provide not only oral histories but also a vivid sense of the very recent ‘past’. Other sources of

---

<sup>5</sup> Here I refer to the film *La Danse* by Frederick Wiseman (2008).

<sup>6</sup> Here I refer to the theoretical viewpoints outlined by Portelli in Perks and Thomson (2006).

histories include archived or recent photographs, programme notes and publicity materials. However, it is important to note that these recent choreographic histories represent a lack of scholarly writing on the choreographic practices associated with either Preljocaj or Bigonzetti. Critics' reviews present written forms of histories, and on the one hand present cultural readings and on the other, individual critics' perspectives which, in some cases, demonstrate a lack of awareness or understanding of Bigonzetti's recent practices (Macaulay, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c). As the vantage point of this context, the studies of the body of work by Preljocaj and Bigonzetti draw significantly on the analyses of recorded and, where present, oral histories in the form of spoken histories.

The mediality of the sources provides an allegorical escape from the concerns of ephemerality in performance. The interactive Appendix CD-ROM that accompanies this thesis provides examples of 'samples of performance histories'. In each folder, samples from the choreographic works relate to the areas of historical interest and support the written chapters to visualise the points drawn out in the various sections of the written text. The digitalised media allow the effective resourcing of histories through archived performances; as performance "has a history, it *tells* a history and it *embodies* a history" (Taylor, 2003, p.94).

Through this thesis, historic constructs are shaped out of the analyses of the digitalised sources and the shift towards the establishment of newer forms of historiography, "carefully selected, distributed and weighted, the result being that a certain 'picture of the past' (an icon) is fabricated" (Jenkins, 1995, p.21). Thus, if history is an arbitrary set of "crises, disjunctures and disruptions" (Appleby, Hunt and Jacob, 1994, p.294), then this thesis provides a new set of performance histories that intentionally takes issue with the prolonged use of the 'postmodern' label. Nevertheless, "history remains inevitably a personal

construct, a manifestation of the historian's perspective as a 'narrator'" (Jenkins, 1991, p.13).

As the unwritten choreographic histories of Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti are traced as recent practices, their choreographic revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) are situated alongside the performance histories and revisions of *Les Noces*, largely through my observations and position as the author.

## 1.2 *Les Noces* (1923): a context and history of the ballet

Translated as *The Wedding*, or *Svadebka* in Russian, *Les Noces* (1923) was the result of collaborations between three leading Russian avant-garde artists: Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), Bronislava Nijinska (1891–1972) and Natalia Gontcharova (1881–1962). *Les Noces* was subject to the influences of the old Russian orthodox working class constructs as well as the creative endeavour of breaking away from the imperialist aesthetic of productions under the artistic reign of French choreographer Marius Petipa (1822–1910). The ballet heralded the fractured modernism of early twentieth-century works against the thematic exploration of ancient Russian folklore. The ballet portrays a working class, arranged marriage and reflects the tapestry of social, artistic and political currents prevalent in Russia at the turn of the twentieth century. Within a minimalist *mise-en-scène*, the dancers are dressed in Gontcharova's designs of brown tunics with white shirts and the austerity of the ballet is no coincidence in the aftermath of the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. According to Elizabeth Souritz, the organisation of choreographic idiom is acutely reflective of the revolution.<sup>7</sup> Encapsulated by the presence of the balletic dancing bodies, the angular stylistic treatment of arms, legs and torsos reference the textures of the constructivist art movement of the Russian art cultures in the 1920s. The linear and pyramidal groupings within the choreographic form

---

<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed understanding of the 1917 uprising and its reflection on the artistic cultures and balletic works created in the 1920s see Elizabeth Souritz's *Soviet Choreographers in the 1920s* (translated by Lynn Visson and edited by Sally Banes), published by Dance Books in 1990.

further reference the constructivist art movement which, as Souritz suggests, was prevalent in the 1920s. The use of props, particularly the use of the extended hair braids in the first scene, and the body within choreographic tableaux provide extensions and representations of the metaphors in the ballet.

Today, two performance histories emerge from the lineage of *Les Noces*. The first is the Royal Ballet's production, which Nijinska restaged for the company in 1964. The second refers to the heritage of Irina Nijinska (1913–1991), Nijinska's daughter, and the 1970 staging at the Teatro della Fenice in Venice, together with her reconstructions, and the work of Howard Sayette on the ballet for the Oakland Ballet, the Kirov Ballet and the Paris Opéra Ballet. As anticipated, both versions of *Les Noces* consolidate many commonalities as well as some differences in the ballet's performance histories.<sup>8</sup>

**Fig. 1**

Rehearsals of *Les Noces* in Monte Carlo, 1923.

Source: Library of Congress.

<sup>8</sup> In a *Ballet Review* interview by Andrea Grodsky Huber (1992), Brendan McCarthy further investigates the asymmetric aesthetic of *Les Noces* and cites fundamental differences between Irina Nijinska's Oakland/Kirov/Paris Opéra Ballet versions of *Les Noces*. The choreographic discrepancies that are reportedly identified allow for the possible choreographic changes that could have arisen in the 1923–1966 period when her mother may have made alterations and minor changes, and acknowledge the evolution of the ballet over time.

A survey of the critical reception of the ballet reveals a diversity of perspectives. British dance critic Philip J. Richardson (1875–1963), also known as the Sitter Out as well as the editor of the *Dancing Times*, reviewed the 1923 Paris performances of *Les Noces* as “a disconcerting venture... a pronounced mechanical marking of the rhythm” (Richardson, 1923, p.1000). Russian ballet critic André Levinson (1887–1933) described *Les Noces* as “full of vitality and direct power ... alternating ecstasies and primitive brutalities” (Levinson in Acocella and Garafola, 1991, p.41). He also labelled the work as a “Marxist choreography”; his description of Nijinska’s *Les Noces* was his gravest miscalculation in his role as a prominent twentieth-century dance critic. In their publication *André Levinson on dance: writings from Paris in the twenties*, Joan Acocella and Lynn Garafola (1991) view Levinson as having an inability to see anything good in Nijinska’s work.

Whilst American critic Jack Anderson described the 1926 London première of Nijinska’s *Les Noces* as a storm of controversy (1963, p.41), he also cites contemporary critic H.G. Wells’ descriptions of *Les Noces* as ‘interesting and fresh’ for the London audiences of 1926. Sir Frederick Ashton (1904–1988), who allegedly watched the London premiere of *Les Noces* in 1926, described Nijinska as an architect of dance (1930, p.124). In his short article titled ‘A word about choreography’, Ashton argued that Nijinska’s work is built ‘brick by brick’ into ‘amazing structures’ which resulted in ‘masterpieces like *Les Noces*’. American ballet critic Edwin Denby (1903–1983) reviewed De Basil’s Ballets Russes’ revival of *Les Noces* in New York in 1936. He described the performance as “one of the finest things one can see anywhere” (Denby in Sorley Walker, 1983, p.59). This idyllic portrayal of Nijinska’s choreographic achievements significantly contrasts with the thoughts of other critics, particularly those who denounced her accomplishments.



Writing towards the end of the twentieth century, dance critic Nadine Meisner argued that it took forty years from its première in London for the long-awaited critical acclaim and acceptance of *Les Noces* as a masterpiece (1991, p.17). In her article in *Dance and Dancers*, Meisner suggests that in the 1920s the upper middle class readership of *The Times* shunned the austerity of the social statements implied by the choreographic explorations of *Les Noces*. Comparatively, contemporary audiences in the twenty-first century may be considered more receptive, with more open cultural values than audiences bound by the social constraints of the 1920s.

The choreographic tableaux of Nijinska's organisation of the ballet match Stravinsky's four-part music accompaniment arranged for four pianos and a choir, led by a soprano, alto, tenor and bass. The ballet commences with the consecration of the bride (part 1), followed immediately by the consecration of the groom (part 2). As an interlude, the departure of the bride (part 3) sets the scene for the final and fourth part of the ballet, the wedding feast. The music narratives offer a quasi-nonsensical set of stories through which Stravinsky's libretto brings together a series of short traditional Russian folk narratives. *Les Noces*' musical score is characterised as an epitome of complexity, as "a hedonistic whole" (Jordan, 2000, p.18), and it challenged the modernist revival of Richard Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* principles, where the musical, movement and artistic narratives were brought together to create a total work of art. In *Les Noces*, there is an evident contrasting argument amongst the three dimensions of the production and connections to concerns by Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956), in so far as the words, music and setting "must become more independent of one another" (Brecht in Jordan, 2000, p.19). The distinct unrelatedness of the lyrics of the sung text to the choreographic definitions within the choreographic narrative reflects what Jann Parry described as the pounding and matching movements to the chanted score, as "nonsensical and as meaningful as Stein" (Parry, 2005, online).

Choreo-musicologist Stephanie Jordan (2000) argues that the relationships between dance and music in *Les Noces* are unpredictable. As a challenge to such perspectives, research was undertaken to analyse the (inter)textual meanings of the musical compositions and the relation to the ballet's choreographic treatment, culminating in a postgraduate dissertation.<sup>9</sup> The study inferred that the choreographic organisation disrupted Stravinsky's composition. In opposition to Jordan's claims, the emergent discourses on choreo-musicological relationships suggested the complexity of organisation and interjections across the organisation of choreological and music scores.

The connections between Stravinsky's scores for *Les Noces* and his earlier work, *Les Sacres du Printemps* (1913), offer additional insights into the two ballets and their choreographic development and stylistic identities. Leslie-Anne Sayers claims that the two ballets support both thematically and formally the 'artistic preoccupation' with the notion of primitive unconscious and the concern to rediscover the compositional elements of a mythical epoch in early twentieth-century choreography (in Bremser, 1993). Dance and musicological researcher Robert Johnson (1987) agrees that both Nijinska and Stravinsky express the commonality of a ritualised wedding celebration as well as the homogenised unity of peasant communities. The visualised mass structures and constructivist ideas were not entirely proliferated by Nijinska's work. In the Italian publication titled *I sei e Satie: neoclassico nella francia degli anni venti e oggi*, Marinella Guatterini (1991b) posits that Nijinska's choreographic creations were influenced by three factors: the iconic and liberal performance style presented by Isadora Duncan (1877-1927), the eurhythmics of Emile Jacques-Dalcroze (1865–1950) and Nijinsky's anti-academic style. Her choreographic heritage reflected and transcended the explorative movement vocabulary that was instigated by her brother, Vaslav

---

<sup>9</sup> This investigation culminated in the dissertation titled *Gender morphology in Les Noces: prismatic choreological and musicological occurrences*. It was presented at the University of Surrey as part of the author's Masters in Dance Studies (2003–2005).

Nijinsky (1890–1950).<sup>10</sup> In ballets such as *Jeux* (1912) and *Le Sacre du Printemps*, the movement vocabularies illustrated a similar pattern of body orientations and groupings.

Similarly, in the edited and translated auto/biography<sup>11</sup>, *Early memoirs: Bronislava Nijinska* (1992), Nijinska described the developments of her brother's movement vocabulary:

“[*Sacre*] took the ensemble as a whole and in his choreographic composition manipulated the artists as one unit ... Their legs and feet are turned inwards, their fists clenched and their heads held down between hunched shoulders; they walk on slightly bended knees ...”

Nijinska in Nijinska and Rawlinson, 1992, p.459

Furthermore, Nijinska recalls:

“I was formed as a choreographer more by *Jeux* and *Les Sacre du Printemps*. The unconscious art of those ballets inspired my initial work. From them, I sought to realise the potential of my brother's creativity in term of neoclassical and modern dance.”

Nijinska in Nijinska and Rawlinson, 1992, p.469

This description may be applied at particular instances to the men performing in *Les Nocces*, particularly within the second choreographic tableau, the consecration of the bridegroom. These connections between *Les Sacre* and *Les Nocces* can be expanded beyond the visuality of the dance and a further parallel between these two ballets may be explored through additional historiographical dimensions.

---

<sup>10</sup> In her translated biography, Nijinska explains how she created the role of the leading Nymph in *L'après midi d'un faune* but gave up the role of the chosen one in *Le Sacre* due to pregnancy.

<sup>11</sup> The validity of the source may be marginally overshadowed by the premise that these are memoirs written by the choreographer almost forty years after the original events. The chapters in the memoirs are also the translated renditions of the original manuscript by the choreographer's daughter, further edited by Rawlinson.

Fig. 2 Organisation in the Consecration of the Groom performed by the Royal Ballet (2001)<sup>12</sup>

The absence of written histories of subsequent revisions of *Les Noces* offers an opportunity to fill this gap in knowledge as well as creating the possibility of connecting with established models of writing that trace choreographic revisions. Catalogues of the revisions and written histories of *Les Sacre du Printemps* span the past twenty years and provide a model of practice established within the field.<sup>13</sup> The focus on three seminal publications can be traced back to the late 1980s and 1990s. In their contribution to *Ballet Review* (Summer 1992), American critics and scholars Joan Acocella, Lynn Garafola and Jonnie Greene presented a catalogue which cited a minimum of seventy-one choreographic revisions of *Le*

---

<sup>12</sup> This is a still image taken from the DVD of the Royal Opera House and BBC production of *The Firebird and Les Noces*, published in 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Here the work of Shelly Berg (1988), Ada d'Adamo (1999), Joan Acocella et al. (1992) and Stephanie Jordan and Lorraine Nicholas (2007) is taken into account.

*Sacre du Printemps*.<sup>14</sup> In another account, Susan Manning (1993) presented select revisions of *Le Sacre du Printemps* within the context of German dance practices in the twentieth century. Manning's observations on the availability of written and oral histories signpost the role of critics, dancers and choreographers' perspectives on the artistic, political and socio-cultural understanding of these revisions.

Other authors provide monographic accounts of written histories of selected revisions of *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Shelly Berg (1988)<sup>15</sup> and Ada d'Adamo (1999)<sup>16</sup> provide analyses of performance histories of a shortlisted selection of revisions of the 1913 ballet. Both authors highlight a similar approach to writing dance histories: they present their analyses of the selected revisions, consider the historiographic positioning of the choreographer and company, and comment on the analyses in the context of revisions and the emergent aesthetic values. Both Berg and d'Adamo proposed a rationale and underlying factors behind the vast number of revisions: namely, the combination of the infamous riots at the ballet's première, the radical revision of choreographic idiom and the complexity and scope of Igor Stravinsky's musical score. Within the context of *Les Noces*, the absence of written histories

---

<sup>14</sup> The written enquiry lists revisions and performance histories in chronological order of the year of production; the entries provide the title of the production alongside credits for the set, costumes and company. This catalogue lists revisions of *Sacre* between 1920 and 1991 and draws upon ten international dance archives and collections including the Dance Collection at the Jerome Robbins Dance Division in the New York Public Library, the Theatre Museum (London) and the Stravinsky Archives at the Paul Sacher Collection in Basel, Switzerland.

<sup>15</sup> Berg addresses the works of Martha Graham (1894–1991), Paul Taylor (b.1930) and Pina Bausch (1940–2009).

<sup>16</sup> D'Adamo presents a three part enquiry: firstly, she traces the written, choreographic and reconstructed legacies of Nijinsky's 1913 production and the 1920 production by Leonide Massine (1896–1979); secondly, d'Adamo analyses revisions by Mary Wigman (1957), Béjart (1959), Bausch (1975), Mats Ek (1984) and Graham (1984); thirdly, the publication presents an overview of revisions of *Le Sacre du Printemps* within the context of Italian dance culture through the work of Aurel Milloss (1941, 1967), Ugo dell' Ara (1972) and Vittorio Biagi (1975). D'Adamo emphasises the omission of some of the more radical revisions of the musical score including the works by Paul Taylor (1980), Hans van Manen (1974) and Michael Clark (1991).

on the subsequent revisions of this ballet and the models of historical analysis explored here provide the impetus for a timely pursuit in tracing the performance histories of this ballet.

### 1.3 Revisions of the ballet: *Les Noces* (Cunningham, 1952), *Svadebka* (Kylän, 1982)

The collection of the revisions of *Les Noces* and analyses of two specific performances that are presented in this chapter have been primarily facilitated by an online electronic catalogue titled *Stravinsky the Global Dancer*.<sup>17</sup> The database lists choreographic works set to compositions by Stravinsky, including commissions by Ballets Russes (1909–1929) and other subsequent commissions and revisions. The catalogued entries list a range of information including choreographer, performer and company credits, date of first production and, where possible, information on the genre, style and mise-en-scène of the production.

The list of revisions of *Les Noces* covers a span of almost nine decades and most of the performance histories of these works remain unwritten. As the Appendix chart outlines, the period between the 1950s and the 1970s includes seventeen choreographic revisions of the ballet and its narratives, including those by Merce Cunningham (1952), Maurice Béjart (1962)<sup>18</sup>, Vittorio Biagi (1975) and Lar Lubovitch (1976).<sup>19</sup> With no access to recordings of works by Béjart, Biagi and Lubovitch, a couple of rare photographs of the choreographic revision by Cunningham provide an insight into some of the legacies of this period and these

---

<sup>17</sup> This is an online catalogue which is published and updated by Stephanie Jordan and Lorraine Nicholas. Jordan and Nicholas's revised introduction (2007) claims that the catalogue traces one thousand two hundred entries, showcases a catalogue of ninety-nine works and lists over seven hundred choreographers.

<sup>18</sup> Few traces are available to create a picture of Béjart's revision. However, if his version of *Le Sacres du Printemps* (1959) parallels his radical rethinking of Nijinska's heritage, then Béjart's revision of the legacies of *Les Noces* (1962) could possibly present the most challenging approach to rethinking the choreographic and dramatic narratives during this period of time.

<sup>19</sup> Works by American choreographer Jerome Robbins (1965), Hungarian Aurell Milloss (1966), Russian Léonide Massine (1966) and Italian Ugo dell'Ara (1977) are not considered as radical revisions of the score.

will be discussed later in the chapter. The online database lists nine major revisions of the ballet in the 1980s. These include Don Asker's production for West Australian Ballet (1980), Gray Veredon's for the Lyon Opéra Ballet and Jiří Kylián's commission by Nederlands Dans Theater in 1982, as well as Angelin Preljocaj's *Noces* for Ballet Preljocaj and Christopher Bruce's *As Bodas* for the Ballet Gulbenkian in 1989. In the 1990s, the few revisions include Brandstrup's commissions for the London Contemporary Dance School, and later a version for his own company, alongside the commission by the Maryiinsky (Kirov Ballet) created by Alex Miroshnichenko. At the turn of the twenty-first century, eleven choreographic revisions are listed in the online database. These include works by: Italian choreographers Jacopo Godani (2001)<sup>20</sup> and Mauro Bigonzetti (2002); Belgian choreographer Anna Teresa de Keersmaecker (2002); New Zealander Michael Parmenter's revision for the Royal New Zealand Ballet (2003); and French choreographer Jean-Christophe Maillot's production for the Ballets des Monte-Carlo (2003). In the last six years, recent endeavours include works by Marie-Claude Pietragalla (2005), Heinz Spoerli (2006) and Tero Saarinen (2007). Other more radical revisions by Michael Clarke (2003) and Javier de Frutos (2007) also presented some major changes to the performance traditions.<sup>21</sup> A chart in the Appendices lists all the revisions since 1923.

More than eighty of these choreographic revisions survive through a variety of artefacts: performance reviews, memories of live and recorded performances, photographs, and autobiographies and biographies of choreographers and performers who trace their experiences of performing and creating the revised works. Such is the case for Cunningham's

---

<sup>20</sup> Godani is a former Ballet Frankfurt company member (1984–2004) and the style of his work is closely associated with that of the choreographic work of William Forsythe (b.1949)

<sup>21</sup> *Los Picadores* (2007) by Javier de Frutos is arguably the most radical revision of the 1923 musical score. Having choreographed *All Visitors Bring Happiness, Some by Coming Some by Going* (1997) for the Ricochet Dance Company, this choreography marks de Frutos's second experimentation with Stravinsky's *Les Noces*.

*Les Noces* (1952), where photographs<sup>22</sup> and programme notes are crucial in (re)tracing some of the performance histories of this one-off performance. *Les Noces* (1952) was presented at the Adolph Ullman Theatre on 14 June 1952 during Brandeis University's four-day Festival of Creative Arts produced by Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990).<sup>23</sup> This performance was to be the first and last performance in Cunningham's choreographic career. Fourteen dancers performed the choreography, including Natanya Neuman as the bride and Cunningham as the groom, and his company dancer Remy Charlip (b.1929) alongside other Brandeis students including Phyllis Backer (Brandeis graduate, 1954) and Naima Wallenrod (Brandeis graduate, 1955). Conducted by Bernstein and with the choir which accompanied the performance of the ballet, Cunningham's choreographic revision utilises the four-part score and retained the organisation of the four choreographic scenes:<sup>24</sup>

- [1] at the home of the bride
- [2] at the home of the bridegroom
- [3] the departure of the bride
- [4] the wedding celebration

The photographs of a rehearsal illustrate the use of a ribbon or a rope in the first scene of the ballet and this reference could be traced back to the legacies of the 1923 ballet (see Fig.3 and Fig.4 overleaf).<sup>25</sup> Another of the photographs (Fig.4) depicts Cunningham on the floor, making use of gestures and movement language which possibly suggest traits of American

---

<sup>22</sup> The photographs were loaned by Lou Lindauer, a Brandeis student who in 1952 was a keen film-maker and who, together with two other students, set out to document the creation of the theatre and the preparation for the Festival.

<sup>23</sup> Bernstein was then the Professor of Music at Brandeis University, Massachusetts.

<sup>24</sup> Brandeis Festival of the Creative Arts 1952, programme note.

<sup>25</sup> It is possible to speculate that the 1929 choreographic revision by Elizabeth Anderson-Ivantsova, showcased in New York, was a version which Cunningham might have seen in local theatres at the time.



modern dance idiom.<sup>26</sup> Cunningham lies on his left side. His gaze is directed toward the bride (Neumann), and he supports her by providing a raised right leg and a right arm.

**Fig. 3** *Les Noces* in rehearsal (Cunningham, 1952) at Brandeis College

**Fig. 4** *Les Noces* in rehearsal (Cunningham, 1952) at Brandeis College

<sup>26</sup> Here references are made to the vocabularies codified through the works of Martha Graham (1894–1991).

These photographs suggest the choreographic revisions to the heritage of *Les Noces*. Whilst the musical score and the thematic narratives suggest the heritage of the original ballet, the modifications of the choreographic idiom of the 1923 ballet offer new insights into Cunningham's revision of the seminal production.

Jiri Kylián's *Svadebka* (1982) retains the Russian sung score in the form of a recorded version of the choral and orchestral Stravinsky composition. The musicality in *Svadebka* highlights sensitivity toward the timbre within the score, including the use of feet in parallel *bourrées*. However, the choreographic work transitions into a more contemporary revision of the choreographic idiom. Set with a backdrop of a wooden door, this production uses no additional props. The performance<sup>27</sup> commences in silence; the ballet is introduced by a choreographic tableau comprised of a triangular shape of female dancers with the bride at the front of this corporeal structure. Organised in four parts, the first section is dedicated to the female dancers and the bride, and the second to the males and groom. In the third part, *Svadebka* includes a *pas de deux* for bride and groom as well as introducing the consecration of the couple by two maternal characters. These are two additions to the performance heritage of the ballet. In part four, the choreography highlights a celebration with both male and female dancers.

The choreographic idiom in *Svadebka* reflects Kylián's choreographic histories, including the recurring parallel organisation of limbs in the sagittal plane with flexion at wrists and ankles. Moreover, the arms are frequently placed to the side with extension across the length of the arms. Such treatment can be observed in earlier works such as *Symphony of Psalms* (1978) and *Sinfonietta* (1978), and all three choreographic examples illustrate stylistic

---

<sup>27</sup> The analyses of Kylián's revision stem from a recorded performance televised in the United Kingdom on Channel Four's *Dance on Four* in 1984. An extract from this performance can be found in the Appendix CD-ROM.

features which can be considered typical of neoclassical trends within the Dutch choreographic legacies from the early 1960s. The following images indicate the recurring choreographic features.

**Fig. 5** Still moment from the first choreographic section in *Svadebka* (1982)

Kyliän's revision employs linear and semicircular formations across the performance space. These features illustrate modified references to the legacies and traditions of Nijinska's 1923 ballet and reflect a sense of community and fraternity within the group of dancers. The performing bodies demonstrate corporeal tensions with references to Nijinska's ballet. For example, the tableaux surrounding the leading male/female in the fourth musical section includes the employment of the recurring group triangular structures in parts one, two and four. Furthermore, the separation of genders in parts one and two and, more readily observable, the tilt and inclination of heads, render references to the 1923 ballet.

**Fig. 6** References to the choreographic tableaux from the 1923 ballet in *Svadebka*

Of these many performance histories, two choreographic revisions have been selected for further investigation and will be explored in the final section of this chapter.

**1.4 A rationale for the two selected case studies: *Noces* (1989) and *Les Noces* (2002)**

Two significant works, *Noces* (1989) by Angelin Preljocaj and *Les Noces* (2002) by Mauro Bigonzetti, provide the main choreographic exploration in Part Two of this thesis. Both choreographic revisions provide a rethinking of the performance histories of the 1923 ballet. These two productions outline an engagement with the four-part *cantata*, together with a rethinking of the *mise-en-scène* and the underpinning narratives of ‘the wedding’. Of the many possible choreographic revisions, the approaches of these two performance makers to the revision of the 1923 ballet offer a significant context and breadth of choreographic experiences. Spanning the last three decades, their choreographic idiom is layered with references to the artistic practices that inhabited their respective French and Italian dance

cultures, and their choreographic offerings together with their revisions of *Les Noces* provide a multifaceted insight into recent revisionist choreographic practices.

Both productions offer an intriguing treatment of the four sections of Stravinsky's *cantata* along with introductory or mid-section periods of silence which alter the dimensions of the score, the emerging narratives and the treatment of the *mise-en-scène*. Similarly, the choreographic revisions by Preljocaj and Bigonzetti prompt a remarkable use of the body as a prop alongside other artefacts such as dolls and steel structures, as well as a theatricalised use of various layers of performativity against benches and tables across the various choreographic episodes that make up the performances.

Since its debut at the choreographic platform in Val du Marne in 1989, *Noces* bridges the heritage of Igor Stravinsky's 1923 score, the legacy of Bronislava Nijinska's subject matter and Preljocaj's performance-making trends in Europe since the late 1980s. Italian dance scholar and critic Giannandrea Poesio argues that Preljocaj's work fosters the "creation of vivid, often strong theatrical images, based on a highly energetic movement vocabulary" (Poesio, 1995, p.1059). Similarly, American dance critic Anna Kisselgoff describes the complexity of Preljocaj's work, typified by the "speed of the choreography's shifting formal patterns and accelerated courtship ... under five constantly rearranged benches" (Kisselgoff, 1991, online). *Noces* signifies Preljocaj's reflections on pre-arranged weddings, drawing upon his Albanian heritage as well as his own feelings towards the sombre and often unhappy emotions of such practices. Similar to Poesio's interpretations, American dance historians Nancy Reynolds and Malcolm McCormick identify that *Noces*:

"might be a funeral in reverse, the inevitable nuptial conclusion a "consented rape". In striking a final image, dummies in bridal dress hung discarded on a rack, as the exhausted wedding guests, their sexual battles unresolved, withdrew."

Ballet Preljocaj, nd, online

It also bridges an important period of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century dance histories. Following its American première at the New York International Festival of the Arts (June 1991), Preljocaj revisited his choreography that same year, creating a film version of *Noces* that was reset in a warehouse. The film version of *Noces* captures significant details of the choreographic vernacular, together with a close-up on specific details within the mise-en-scène. In 1993, Ballet Preljocaj restaged and toured the theatrical version of *Noces*<sup>28</sup> and more recently the ballet was restaged at the Pavillion Noire (Black Pavilion) between 2005 and the recent artistic seasons.

Bigonzetti's revision of *Les Noces* premiered at Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia on 14 June 2002. Like Preljocaj's revision, the ballet engages with and challenges the legacies of the 1923 ballet and musical score. It provides significant references to the artistic practices emerging from Bigonzetti's choreographic commissions developed throughout the previous two decades. Alongside regional Italian tours to the cities and towns of Rome, Bologna and Palermo in 2002, the ballet has been performed internationally. Its reception incited a mixed response in the critics' reviews of the American tour in 2005 as well as performances at Sadler's Wells in London (May 2005) and in China in 2006. The reviews from the UK and US tours of *Les Noces* in 2005 present an inconsistent appreciation of the work. In *The Guardian*, British dance critic Judith Mackrell considered that:

“the dancers launch themselves on to the table in desperate bruising attempts to make contact ...as the piece progresses it becomes all too predictable that these doomed embraces are merely a rehearsal for the big bride and groom duet.”

Mackrell, 2005, online

---

<sup>28</sup> *Noces* has been performed in an array of international theatres such as Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia (Italy) in 1994 and the Joyce Theater (New York) in 1997, and at various French theatres including the Pavillion Noire (Aix-en-Provence) in October 2007 and the Palace of Versailles (Paris) in July 2010.

Similarly, in *The New York Times*, Jennifer Dunning misinterprets the “clattering tangle of shiny steel chairs” (Dunning, 2005, online). British dance writer Donald Hutera suggests that Bigonzetti’s choreography “wields metal prayer stools like portable prisons, clinging to and climbing inside the hard lines” (Hutera, 2005, npn). Laura Caparrotti (2005), in her review of the Next Wave Festival performances at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2005, describes the choreographic form of *Les Noces* as a creative transfiguration of paralysis and imprisonment; the geometric dimensions of the choreography of *Les Noces* conclude with a final scene where:

“the chairs, now hanging from the table, take on the appearance of huge bells, the same ones that toll for a wedding or a funeral.”

Caparrotti, 2005, npn

Revisionist practices, including the subsequent revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) and the choreographic practices that underpin the work of Preljocaj and Bigonzetti, offer a multidimensional vantage point that highlight an entanglement of histories and practices. A close analysis of the historical artefacts and the performance histories deserves and “implies a process, a rethinking, a reconceptualising and a revising of the source text in order to bring about some new resonance” (Midgelow, 2007, p.13). The impact of discovering these unwritten choreographic histories leads to a series of research questions that not only revolve around the context of these revised ballets and scores but also allow us to consider the trends and practices within recent dance histories. They also permit additional insights into migrated practices that have transferred across and that interject into the body of work by these two choreographers. The implications of studying these two revisions of *Les Noces* extend the engagement with the multifarious dimensions of ‘otherness’ that emerge through the texts, props, choreographic vernacular and organisation of the various sections of the score. The process of viewing these two revisions of *Les Noces* against the choreographic histories of the two choreographers realises an opportunity to reveal both Preljocaj’s and Bigonzetti’s

---

concerns within the parameters of revisionist practices and, out of the analyses of these collective practices, provides possible pathways to consider recent theoretical developments.

The analyses of the two choreographic *oeuvres*, embedded in Part Two of this thesis, provide initial responses to these queries. There, the chapters narrate the performance histories of both Preljocaj and Bigonzetti and their respective companies and commissions, together with a thorough analysis of the two revisions of *Les Noces*. The tensions that emerge from the collective analyses of the case studies in Part Two manifest and give rise to the context of theories of choreographic revisionism, the rethinking of the parameters of postmodernism and the proposal of new theoretical standpoints of transmodernism. The following chapter will provide a theoretical context for some of the significant theories that inform the progression of the chapters in this thesis.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Revisionism: the ‘weight’ of postmodernism and the rise of transmodernism**

#### **Chapter Outline**

- 2.1 Revisionism and the ‘weight’ of postmodernism
- 2.2 A critique of theories of transmodernism: 1989–2012
- 2.3 Choreographic revisionism and the rise of transmodernism?

In this chapter, the three theoretical concepts – revisionism, postmodernism and transmodernism – are explored within the context of the performing arts as well as film and literature studies. These theoretical insights offer points of clarification, suggesting “what kinds of logic drive the construction of argument” (Lansdale, 2008, p.2). The transference of knowledge from one discipline to another, here in the collision between revisionism and transmodernism, presents creative opportunities for new pathways that propose an understanding of recent choreographic histories as well as questioning the potential application of theories in other fields such as dance. This chapter will now commence with an introduction to revisionist theories.

#### **2.1 Revisionism and the ‘weight’ of postmodernism**

The rewriting or reinterpretation of performance texts implies that parts of the source undergo various changes and offer as “rich a source of inspiration as constructivist aesthetics” (Green, 1994, p.22). The act of reworking or revising such sources can be matched with a range of terms that describe the variations of levels of interpretation of artefacts appearing across the art forms of opera, musicals, theatre and dance. The terminology in this field appears to be interchangeable and a clearer understanding of such terms will be useful to frame the issues at the centre of this study.

British opera director Sir Jonathan Miller (b.1934) claims that the possible changes to a production include alterations to the physical effects of the staging, comparable to a social setting which may change the life of a work of art. Miller associates this type of progression in the ensuing productions as “an afterlife”, a reinterpretation or rewriting of the performance text. Miller associates the legacies of performances of a production with a “phylogenetic history of an evolving organism” (Miller, 1986, p.29). The act of preserving part of the performance text suggests a counter balance to the rewriting or reinterpretation of parts of a revised production and the “subsequent performances”. To elucidate this, in 1987 Miller restaged Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado* (1885) and set the operetta in an English seaside town in the 1930s. More recently, in 2009 he restaged Giacomo Puccini’s *La Bohème* (1896) in Paris in the 1930s.<sup>1</sup> These examples highlight the alteration of the ‘location’ of the performance with little or no change in the operatic text, and reflect the phenomenon of *Regieoper* as a late nineteenth-century German, then international, preoccupation with “aggressively updating the visual embodiment of old works” (Parker, 2006, p.3). In effect, Miller’s practices entail the rethinking of only one aspect of the performance: the mise-en-scène. Other revisions of operatic texts appear within the work of other directors. American theatre director Peter Sellars (b.1957) revisited Mozart operas and offered revisions of their physical setting: *Così fan tutte* (1986) was set in a diner in Cape Cod in the 1950s and *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1988) in Despina’s Diner and in a launderette.<sup>2</sup>

The rewriting or reinterpretation of a performance or historical source implies that parts of the artefact, such as the language within the text, undergo various changes as well as making significant reference to the original source. Croatian literary analyst Darko Suvin (1988) presents a framework which outlines three considerations when sources undergo some

---

<sup>1</sup>Here a reference is made to the production by the English National Opera performed at the London Coliseum in 2010.

<sup>2</sup>Here a reference is made to the analyses provided by Amy S. Green (1992).

form of revision: variants, adaptations and rewrites. Variants suggest “central structural features of the text being interpreted” (Suvin in Midgelow, 2007, p.13). Variants of the sixteenth-century texts by William Shakespeare (1564–1614) are popular sources of variants across theatre, film/television, musical and dance genres. Adaptations highlight significant changes alongside an inclusion of “some of the central invariants”, but these “are sufficient to establish its ‘family likeness’ to other members of that family” (ibid). The Disney movie *The Lion King* (1994) identifies references to the performance history of Hamlet, in which the adaptation of the narrative within the context of a pride of lions and the rightful heir to the animal hierarchy highlights the relationship between Hamlet/Simba and his right to the throne/Pride Lands in Africa. In the animated movie, the Shakespearian narrative is layered with African traditions, the animalistic dimensions and the popular musical songs written by Sir Elton John (b.1947) and Sir Tim Rice (b.1944).

Lastly, rewrites suggest that a work “is no longer, strictly speaking, an interpretation but a use of some elements from the anterior structure as a semi-finished product” (Suvin in Midgelow, 2007, p.13). *ShakespeaRe-Told* (2005) presents rewrites of four popular narratives: *Much Ado About Nothing* set in a local news studio, *Macbeth* as a troubled sous chef in a three star Michelin restaurant, *The Taming of the Shrew* set around Katherine’s political career and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* set during an engagement party at Dream Park, a family leisure facility.<sup>3</sup> The rewriting of the context of the narratives is further explored through the mise-en-scène as well as the use of contemporary spoken language and other references to contemporary historical points.

---

<sup>3</sup> This collection of films was produced by the BBC and featured several directors who explored the narratives beyond the traditional Shakespearian texts and focussed on the primary narratives of the texts in contemporary contexts.

Perspectives from theatre studies outline other pathways for revising performance histories. Amy S. Green (1994) suggests three possible ways of revising a production. Firstly, Green outlines an alteration to the historical or geographical location in the designed production. In the second instance, there is a favouring of abstract settings that avoids realistic “trappings”. Thirdly, the work suggests an interpolation of recognisable references. To elucidate this point, it is useful to draw upon the popular film/musical *Moulin Rouge!* (2001) by Australian film director Baz Luhrmann (b.1962). The film is a revision and combination of two popular sources, notably *La Traviata* (Verdi, 1853) and Alexandre Dumas’s *La dame aux Camelias* (1848). Moreover, an intertextual pastiche is created through the collage of a variety of popular twentieth-century songs with the nineteenth-century *fin de siècle* as a *mise-en-scène* and the variety of historical and fictional characters that shape the cinematic tapestry.

In the field of dance scholarship, two strands of thinking offer ways of understanding theoretical stances through which to explore recent histories in choreographic revisionism. Two authors, Vida Midgelow (2007) and Giannandrea Poesio (2008), indicate the popularity of such perspectives in recent artistic practices associated with engagement with the performance histories of iconic ballets. The conceptual premises of reworkings and revisions advocate the legacies of and challenges to historical artefacts, suggesting the initiation of an “interpretive discourse – often wilfully reinterpreting or misinterpreting their sources” (Midgelow, 2007, p.11). Differences between the epistemological standpoints of both writers result from the differing etymological underpinning of terms such as ‘reworking’ and

‘revisionist’. Midgelow’s theoretical stance on ‘reworking’ embraces the postmodern condition of intertextuality imparted by Julia Kristeva (1980).<sup>4</sup> As Midgelow argues:

“reworkings can usefully be positioned as a particular type of intertextual practice. Reworkings involve liberal references to, and quotations from, their source text(s), and the choreographers of reworkings can be seen self-consciously to embed, cite and allude to other pre-texts in their dances.”

Midgelow, 2007, p.28

To highlight her epistemological points, Midgelow analyses a series of revisions of the iconic ballet *Swan Lake* (1895)<sup>5</sup> through artistic re-conceptions by Swedish choreographer Mats Ek (1987) and British choreographer Matthew Bourne (1995), as well as her own choreographic practices. Her interpretations of these reworkings evolve into corporeal readings of race, gender and sexuality against the accumulations of and challenges to the established narratives of *Swan Lake*.

Alternatively, Poesio’s perspectives evolve from a theoretical model of ‘decentring dance practices’.<sup>6</sup> Drawing from his analyses of revisions by Ek, Poesio’s framework for defining revisionist practices is rendered through the consideration of three layers within a performance: the dramatic narrative, the musical narrative and the dance narrative.<sup>7</sup> In this model, the distinction of revising these critical components of the performance traditions of a

---

<sup>4</sup> The concept of intertextuality, coined by Kristeva in the late 1960s and translated into English in the 1980s, is described as “non-hierarchical and democratically inclusive notions of texts in a vast mosaic of other texts” (Orr, 2003, p.1).

<sup>5</sup> The ballet is one of the iconic works from the nineteenth-century canon of the Imperial Russian heritage. In 1895, the production for the Imperial Ballet included collaborations with the 1876 score by Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840–1893), as well as choreography by French ballet master Marius Petipa (1818–1910) and Russian ballet master Lev Ivanov (1834–1901). Tim Scholl (1994) provides a detailed understanding of the aesthetic of classicism at the height of the *fin de siècle* and into the twentieth century.

<sup>6</sup> In the context of poststructuralist theory, ‘decentring’ can be associated with difference and diversity. Lansdale’s explanation of ‘decentring’ suggests the possibility that, within a dance work, “there are *many* centres or perhaps *none* at all” (Lansdale, 2008, p.3).

<sup>7</sup> Poesio draws on Ek’s revisions of three iconic ballets: *Giselle* (1982), *Swan Lake* (1987) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1996).

historical artefact becomes central to the emerging discourse. This challenges the superficial updates of the staging, or the *mise-en-scène*, of the performance where largely the choreographic narratives are slightly altered. Nonetheless, it is not to say that these components do not play an important part in the revision of an iconic work. The rethinking of the scenery, props and costumes of a performance may contribute significantly to the dramatic narratives within a revisionist production so long as these alterations are made in conjunction with radical changes to the choreographic idiom and, potentially, the adaptations of the musical narratives or the score. On revisiting the historical tracings from Chapter One, it is through such a framework that the sample of select revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) can be explored through their connections with the dramatic and musical narratives and the positioning of the dance narratives.

Through collating the histories of the subsequent choreographic revisions of Bronislava Nijinska's *Les Noces* (1923), the eclecticism of the group of choreographers suggests that choreographic revisionism facilitates additional pathways through which an understanding of these practices may be achieved. The weight of Igor Stravinsky's score grounds the diverse revisions over the last fifty years, including those by Merce Cunningham and Jiří Kylián. Whilst the score offers structure to the two choreographic revisions, namely *Les Noces* (1952) and *Svadebka* (1982), the musical narratives accumulate historical, and in some cases thematic, resonance, particularly through the Russian heritage, the nonsensical folk stories and the rhythmic textures of Stravinsky's compositional arrangements. As a result, the musical narratives create a web of connections between the diversity of unrelated choreographic idioms and the performance histories of these revisions that draw upon the iconic status of the 1923 ballet.

Despite many of the choreographic revisions adopting the title of *Les Noces*, the alternations of the choreographic idiom suggest a complex network of performance styles that have become realigned to the heritage of the ballet. In the case of Cunningham's 1952 revision, the interjection of the images from the photographic evidence provides an additional dimension to the work. The presence of the ribbon as a referent to the rope from the 1923 production alongside the choreographic treatment of the duet performed by the bride and groom outlines connections and alterations to the histories of the 1923 ballet. Similarly, Kyliàn's *Svadebka* illustrates the incorporation of occasional variations of the choreographic tableaux from Bronislava Nijinska's choreography of the 1923 production together with the stylistic features in Kyliàn's treatment of the balletic idiom. Here it is possible to suggest that choreographic revisionism appears to be more complex than simply providing intertextual references to historical sources. The performance histories of these two subsequent revisions of *Les Noces* suggest that the occurrences of intertextual sources as well as several other compositional traits filter through the diverse layers of performance narratives and thus result in conglomerate performances that may not sit exclusively within the theoretical parameters of postmodernism.<sup>8</sup> As the revisions of *Les Noces* reveal, it is evident that references to postmodernism are embedded within the performances, but both productions embed other compositional traits which are not exclusively typical of postmodernism. Therefore such performances can be viewed as fabrications of a diversity of compositional approaches. At this juncture, it is important to note that this point stems from the work of Poesio but arguable this is one that needs further exploration and research.

As Poesio claims, an early crisis emerged in the consideration of this sub-culture of 'postmodern practices'. He argues, "paradoxically, it was in the name of that ambiguity

---

<sup>8</sup> Some features of postmodern practices include parody or pastiche of sources, reflections on the past, and challenges to the distinctions between high and low culture (Barry, 2002, p.91).

['revisionist'] that many adopted the idea to define and classify a choreographic genre that was elusive" (Poesio in Lansdale, 2008, p.75). Thus, the preoccupation with understanding these revisions of existing performance histories warranted the advancement of a theoretical framework of these histories that apparently evolved into new formats and performance genres. The complexity of revisionist performances, here explored through the histories of subsequent revisions of *Les Noces* and the body of work of two selected choreographers, assists in addressing the matter of the 'elusive' traits and proposes the reconsideration of the nature of revisionism. In doing so, it is vital to cast further afield across other disciplines to recruit a new theoretical framework that could offer a more robust epistemological application in order to pursue an understanding of choreographic revisionism. A recently recognised collection of theories from film and literature studies reflects new epistemological tensions that emerged at the turn of the twenty-first century (Jardine, 2002, p.341). Although not yet universally shared in academia, these new theoretical tensions draw out a reaction against the postmodern condition of "death of the imagination" (Jameson, 1990). It is in this light that recent theoretical offerings on 'transmodernism' are brought into the context of this research and are considered as potential pathways for understanding these choreographic histories.

## **2.2 A critique of theories of transmodernism: 1989–2012**

Today, theories on transmodernism can be drawn from political, film and literature studies. Over the course of the last three decades, various definitions have emerged across Latino-Hispanic, European and South American contexts. In its historical origins, the earliest theorisation of transmodernism is identified with the Spanish philosopher and feminist Rosa María Rodríguez Magda and her monograph *Saturn's Smile: Towards a Transmodern Theory*



(1989).<sup>9</sup> Rodríguez Magda proposed a continuum of three theoretical stances: modernism (thesis), postmodernism (antithesis) and transmodernism (synthesis). Since these early writings, other perspectives have emerged. Literary scholar Alice Jardine describes transmodernism as “destabilized demographic practices” that emerged following the Gulf War in 1991 (Jardine, 2002, p.341). More recent political theories are driven by other intracultural dimensions. In his publication *Beyond Modernity, The Patriarchy and Capitalism* (2001), the philosopher and political strategist Marc Luyckx Ghisi<sup>10</sup> characterises a narrow and limited application of this term. For Luyckx Ghisi, transmodernism offers a transformative mindset at the start of the twenty-first century, where the decline of the patriarchal is offset by the empowerment of women. In her doctoral thesis on intercultural and gender communication, Indian scholar Bhavana Upadhyaya (2009) cites the complexity and non-linear characteristics of her ‘transmodern’ research journey and, significantly, restricts her application of the meaning of the term borrowed from Luyckx Ghisi.<sup>11</sup> Transmodernism, for Luyckx Ghisi, is described as “a creative mix of rational and intuitive brainwork; an enthusiastic embrace of new information technologies; a tolerance, even celebration, of diversity” (Luyckx Ghisi, 1999, p.973). Although this study is not necessarily concerned with gender politics, the concept of embracing diversity will be a recurring feature in this analysis of recent theories on transmodernism.

---

<sup>9</sup> This publication is only available in Spanish and for the purposes of this study a series of applications was consulted, including Christopher Taggart Lewis’s doctoral thesis presented at Harvard University (2011) and Irena Ateljevic’s contribution to John Tribe’s *Philosophical Issues in Tourism* (2009).

<sup>10</sup> Marc Luyckx Ghisi is a mathematician, theologian and philosopher. He was an advisor to the European Commission in Brussels, building a sense of Europe, and its ethical, cultural, religious and political roles in the context of a changing society.

<sup>11</sup> The complete title of her thesis is *Amma’s daughters: A transmodern study of personal, gender, cultural, and religious identities amongst women in the Amma community in United States* (2009), examined by the University of New Mexico.

In more accountable and extended studies, the term ‘transmodern’ has been depicted as the synthesis of the best of what modernization has to offer along with the best of indigenous traditions and cultures. A number of these theories warrant closer analysis. Of these, I would like to draw attention to the theories proposed by Argentinean-Mexican philosopher Enrique Dussel (2008) and the applications in the recently published anthology edited by film/literary scholar Ignacio López-Calvo (2012).

In his seminal *Twenty Theses on Politics* (2006), Dussel conceived the idea of a new, *transmodern* civilisation which “will be as a result of transc capitalist and beyond liberalism and real socialism” (Dussel, 2006, p.xvi). He advocates that the twenty-first century demands great creativity, and if this study should benefit from any of these theories, it is rightly this principal concern. Dussel argues that:

“new theses should situate these levels with an even greater degree of complexity and concreteness, taking into account the integration of the subjects of colonialism, postcolonialism, metropole, and Empire, and the struggle for liberation from these international forces”

Dussel, 2006, p.xvii

Dussel’s parameters for a transmodern political framework stem from a neoliberal model that was formulated during the last decades of the twentieth century. He argues that such a transmodern framework will be a new paradigm, one that eliminates the monopoly of the “political class” and demarcates a praxis of liberation where the political activities prompt “a tension pressing toward a point of arrival” (Dussel, 2006, p.137). Furthermore, the new expression of alterity, solidarity and liberation offers the opening of short-term paradigms which, as the twenty-first century unfolds, may provide more long-term effects across the fields of politics and other domains. Nonetheless, whilst few studies have drawn upon

Dussel's utopian politics<sup>12</sup>, there are some valuable points that can be of use to this study. In this context, the abandonment of hierarchical levels offers a new entry point into this new theoretical framework.

For Dussel, the capacity of this new paradigm strategically opens up new forms of integration and pluralistic possibilities. Transmodern pluralism encompasses the recuperation and affirmation of one's own culture, language, religion, ethical values and respectful relation to nature and stands in opposition to the liberal political ideal of a homogenous egalitarianism among citizens.<sup>13</sup> Dussel views equality as the destruction of diversity, and advocates that it becomes necessary to defend cultural *differènce*, a stance that is useful for the trajectories that are to be made in this study. The political theses advocated by Dussel herald a responsibility toward alterity through attention to the rights of the individual within the context of the Other. In Dussel's case, this gathers "the exploited, the excluded, the nonequals (citizens who are nonwhite, poor, post-colonial, and differentiated by culture, sex age)" (Dussel, 2006, p.122). As a result, Dussel views this new paradigm of transmodernism as a struggle for the recognition of the Other *as other*, with "the institutionalisation of a heterogeneous, differentiated legality that respects diverse practices" (Dussell, 2006, p. 123).

A recent anthology of writings has explored the nature of Dussel's epistemological perspectives. Edited by Ignacio López-Calvo, *Peripheral Transmodernities: South-to-South Intercultural Dialogues between the Luso-Hispanic World and the "Orient"* (2012) explores the theoretical applications of 'transmodernism' in the literature of marginalised cultures. The applications attempt to consider the 'pluriverse' stance offered by Dussel's advocacy against a homogenised form of globality. As López-Calvo explains in his introduction, the anthology

---

<sup>12</sup> Here I refer to the chapter by Irena Ateljevic in John Tribe's publication (2009) and a recent doctoral thesis by Christopher Taggart Lewis (2011).

<sup>13</sup> The political inferences suggest Dussel's vision for the construction of a South American union of states that parallels the construct of the European Union.

investigates “vivid examples of de-colonising impetus and cultural resistance” (López-Calvo, 2012, p.2). In her opening theoretical chapter within the collection of essays, Debra Lee-DiStefano hints at the epistemological positionings in the aftermath of post-colonial theories of Edward Said (1977). She proposes that Said’s theories of Orientalism could be a useful framework to expand and further understand the fields of diasporic and cultural interconnections within power relationships of Asian cultures within the Americas. Whilst the theoretical context suffices as an indicative positioning of Orientalism and oriental studies, there is little connection to Dussel’s theoretical stance on transmodernism and nor does it attempt to find a theoretical resolution to the overlaps or struggles of such intercultural dialogues with new concepts of transmodernism. Nonetheless, the chapters provide an interesting array of examples of how cultural dialogues manifest themselves across the early twenty-first century and, despite the inconsistent application of this theoretical point, these offerings suggest

“peripheral subjectivities’ perception of other peripheral, racialized, and (post)colonial subjects and their cultures. They also reflect critical diasporic thought, border thinking and everyday living in contact zones”

López-Calvo, 2012, p.2

Beyond the theoretical models put forward by Dussel and López-Calvo, two recent doctoral theses and one article explore the concept across the fields of philosophical, film and literary studies.<sup>14</sup> These three applications of varying thoughts on transmodernism will be explored in chronological order and critiqued according to their validity and reliability of application. John Marvin’s doctoral thesis examines the concept of transmodernism in the work of James Joyce (1882–1941), Wallace Stevens (1879–1955), Thomas Pynchon (b.1937)

---

<sup>14</sup> Here, the three studies refer to Szaniawski (2004), Marvin (2004) and Taggart (2011)

and Stanley Kubrick (1928–1999).<sup>15</sup> The case studies in this thesis promote a network and synthesis of interpretations that grew out of and beyond “the alchemy of Nietzsche’s philosophy and the continuing development of scientific thinking” (Marvin, 2004, p.81). Drawing upon Nietzsche’s concern with motion and music into writing, the author explores the reader’s corporeal engagement as manifested through an intertextual outlook. Marvin’s transmodern concerns with cultural paramimesis are illustrated through the construction of intertextual relationships with *Finnegans Wake* (1939), *Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction* (1942), *Gravity’s Rainbow* (1973) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968).<sup>16</sup> Through these examples, Marvin suggests a theoretical progression of Nietzsche’s theory across the twentieth century through a transmodern direction, one that is updated to include twentieth-century artistic and scientific concerns.

Some importance can be attached to Marvin’s analysis of *2001: A Space Odyssey*. He suggests that Kubrick’s interest in adaptations of two novels by Arthur C. Clarke (1917–2008), *The Sentinel* (1948) and *2001: A space odyssey* (1968), provides the central tenets for transmodernism in films such as *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Marvin suggests that for Kubrick, as for Nietzsche and the other artistic voices in his study, content and form are “inextricably one” (Marvin, 2004, p.165). The film *2001: A Space Odyssey* engages the spectator through the total effect of the work. Drawing upon techniques of early modern films, the complex and profound statements are complemented by the relationship of the moving shapes of the objects and living things, the spaces among them as well as the sounds, spoken words and the music. Marvin compares the film’s internal structures to a fugue, through which initial statements are repeated and developed through combinations of other voices and cinematic

---

<sup>15</sup> The doctoral thesis titled *Nietzsche and Transmodernism: Art and Science beyond the Modern in Joyce, Stevens, Pynchon and Kubrick* was presented at the Graduate School of The State University of New York, Buffalo, in August 2004.

<sup>16</sup> His analyses of the four case studies present the objectification of transgression and contamination through the Derridean play of representation.

effects. The references to flight emerge through the journey away from the Earth and towards technology without art, and these journeys are embellished through the layering of references to musical choices as well as to cinematic and textual references. The musical choices, in particular, provide entry points into the transmodern thinking. Kubrick's choice of musical compositions by Johann Strauss (1825–1899), Richard Strauss (1864–1949), Aram Khachaturian (1903–1978) and György Ligeti (b.1923) outline the complexity of musical texts that harmonize the overall organisational structure. The connections in *Also sprach Zarathustra* (Strauss, 1896) reflect Nietzsche's philosophy, as does Kubrick's treatment of the *Blue Danube* (1866), as well as other musical texts, and the cinematic representation of the journey through space. Marvin concludes that *2001* is an odyssey from the past of humanity to its future, alongside a musical odyssey from the end of Romanticism to the beginning of a new genre, that of transmodernism. Beyond their concerns with philosophy and science fiction, many of the points raised by Marvin are inapplicable to the context of this study. Whilst the analyses of the cinematic dimensions of Kubrick's work offer an interesting model, there is very little which can be transposed into the field of dance and it is therefore considered appropriate to consider other models of application.

In a comparable vein, film researcher Jeremy Szaniawski loosely describes transmodernism as a “hybrid expression of a resurgence of modernist reflexes and aesthetics in contemporary culture” (Szaniawski, 2004, pp.169, 179). In his sixteen-page seminal article published in the *Belgian Journal of English Language and Literatures*, Szaniawski provides what could be considered as the starting point for further research into transmodernism in film. He raises issues about the current state of postmodernism, which in Szaniawski's thinking has “arguably lost its speed in the current political, artistic and socio-cultural climate” (ibid). He argues that transmodernism reflects “a form of postmodernism recycling of modernism” where postmodernism would effectively be far closer to modernism

(Szaniawski, 2004, p.182). This hypothesis offers another dimension to transmodernism but largely offers a series of case studies that attempt to tease out the possible differences between modernism, postmodernism and transmodernism. Situating his theoretical stance through a (re)organisation of the canon, Szaniawski traces a brief understanding of genres in film history against several types of modernisms that emerged in film following the 1920s: notably surrealist, constructivist, expressionist and Soviet cinema aesthetics. Szaniawski suggests that films by Federico Fellini (1920–1993), Ingmar Bergman (1918–2007) and Roman Polanski (b.1933) indicate the “intellectual participation” required from modernism. This was similarly explored in the work of Stanley Kubrick (1928–1999). Postmodern films are characterised, according to Szaniawski, by references to nostalgia, pastiche, and idiosyncratic openness. Since the late 1970s, they include works by Steven Spielberg (b.1946) and George Lucas (b.1944). Films that emerged in the 1980s, particularly those by directors such as the Coen brothers and Tim Burton (b.1958), were characterised by distinctive *homages* to genre movies (such as *noir* and horror), plot twists layered over a simple story, and a dark humour and the *mise-en-scène*.

Szaniawski claims that a new aesthetic emerged in film from the late 1990s. Works by Gus Van Sant (b.1952) and Lars Von Trier (b.1956) appeared to be closer to the modernist genre and yet retained some postmodern perspectives. Leading the manifesto of *Dogma 1995*, Von Trier’s work is as much about re-inventing realism as it is a modernist gesture to create something “new”. The ‘vow of chastity’, involving the ruling out of the use of props, artificial lighting and scenery, furthered the films’ abilities to unsettle and challenge audiences and set in motion a shift from the postmodern aesthetic. *Crash* (1996), by the Canadian film director David Cronenberg (b.1953), and more recent films such as *The Fountain* (2006) by Darren Aronofsky (b.1969), suggest an alteration of artistic perception. Both films depict perspectives of restless and worried people, unable to cope with the

advances in society. Moreover, the films question the limits of mortality (death) and explore elements of incommunicability between the characters in each film and the contexts of the narratives that unfold across the film. For Szaniawski, these characteristics suggest a new way of thinking.

Szaniawski's theory of transmodernism suggests a hybridity of modernist and postmodernist dimensions. In his analysis of *Dogville* (Von Trier 2003), Szaniawski posits the emergent modernist features in what he labels as a transmodern production. *Dogville* (2003) depicts a subverted catharsis of its central female character in its duality of both modern and postmodern status. The simple plot surrounds the arrival of a young woman in a village in the Rocky Mountains, Colorado (USA) and the reaction of the community to her presence. The role of Grace, a devil-like temptress in the context of village parochialism, is presented through a modernist lens. Insights into the story of Grace's position in the society are presented as intermittent images and reflections that allow the spectator to construct the meanings from these sporadic and fragmented narrative interjections. Her will for redemption and integration is doomed from the very start and the narrative outlines its effect on the community. The film depicts an abstracted modernist environment, where the use of camera angles and the narrator's voice become central to the motific identity within the work. The *mise-en-scène* is sparse. Set in a black box performance space, the floor markings and the occasional prop provide a minimal theatricalised setting. The collage of musical texts includes a baroque leitmotiv along with David Bowie's *Young Americans* (1975), as an interjection of postmodern features.

The features of this film include the ability to provoke and unsettle the audience through simple plots that question the limits and the incommunicability of narratives, particularly through the portrayal of the characters' double natures. The film also provides an inconclusive ending and a frugal, ironic or opposing use of musical choices that opens up a



new approach to realism. Other significant features of *Dogville* include the personification of objects and the exploration of ‘innerness’ through the alienation and social fragmentation of the protagonists, as well as perspectives on questioning the future and the treatment of sex and violence. For Szaniawski, the postmodernist features in transmodernism include intertextual characteristics of the weight of past productions, the marginality of characters and a multifaceted structure with no real beginnings or endings. For Szaniawski, films such as *Dogville* provide entry points into a “modern loop”, embedded throughout the twentieth century and temporarily displaced through the rise of postmodern thinking. This form of modernism does not neglect its postmodern past, but rather, as Szaniawski’s analyses of *Dogville* suggests, it engages with its displaced predecessor, establishing a ‘new’, complex and non-linear identity.

Despite its limitations, Szaniawski’s attempt to theorise transmodernism largely rests on his consideration of the roles of the three theoretical points. Disappointingly, his enquiry fails to consider any theoretical underpinning of transmodernism, including Rodríguez Magda’s theoretical positioning on the three theories. The value of this model is largely compromised, but nonetheless, his consideration of the overlaps between postmodernism and transmodernism offers an early attempt to differentiate between the theoretical stances. His application of transmodernism as framework is largely limited to one case study, and various points of clarification emerge from a close interrogation of this source. However, his approach to rethinking the canon of film in the twentieth and twenty-first century is a daring effort and the issues he raises are indicative and evidently symptomatic of the changes to and evolutions of artistic practices. Moreover, his initial endeavours reinforce the need for a similar exercise in the field of dance.

A more recent and thorough application of the early theories on transmodernism is offered by Christopher Taggart Lewis (2011) and provides a forward-thinking application of

these recent theoretical positions. In his thesis titled ‘When the glass slips: Building bridges to transmodern identity in the novels of Santiago Nazarian and Chico Buarque’<sup>17</sup>, transmodernism is defined as “attempts to recover the centers of modernism and repudiate postmodernism’s dismissal of meaning in a kind of “transversal unification” that effect a convergence without coincidence” (Lewis, 2011, p.20). Analysing Brazilian literature through the novels of Chico Buarque (b.1944) and Santiago Nazarian (b.1977), Lewis depicts transmodern thinking as a “shifting, ever-changing organism ... that bridges the gaps between the shards (of postmodernism), anchoring identity between multiplicity and (global) interconnectivity” (Lewis, 2011, p.iii). Lewis effectively reconceptualises Dussel’s notion of alterity and *differènce* through his interpretations of the selected novels of Buarque and Nazarian, “insisting instead on the shattered human condition and providing alterity with a voice” (Lewis, 2011, p.24). A close reading of Lewis’s doctoral thesis and the selected novels prompts the emergence of a new fiction, one that “begins to weave a complex of shifting connections” (Lewis, 2011, p.22).

His analyses of Nazarian’s novels, published between 2003 and 2009, construct a transmodern hybridity through a three-fold disposition: a rejection of universal narratives, insights into shattered human conditions and a provision of a voice for alterity.<sup>18</sup> Both sets of novels offer a labyrinthine set of texts that, through an interconnecting web of twists, “emerge from the disorienting shattered psyche of postmodernism and step into a transmodern paradigm” (Lewis, 2011, p.34). Like shards of a broken mirror, the central characters in the Nazarian novels such as *Olívio* (2003), *A Morte Sem Nome* (2004) and

---

<sup>17</sup> This thesis was presented at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University in April 2011.

<sup>18</sup> Alterity refers to the philosophical understanding of the conceptual “other” explored in theories of Emmanuel Lévinas (1970, 1999), Johannes Fabian (1983) and Michael Taussig (1993).

*Feriado de mim mesmo* (2005)<sup>19</sup> are interconnected through narratives of the conscious and the unconscious. Buarque's characters are self-reflective, often interchanging their traits as the character ages or reflects on their youth.<sup>20</sup> Nazarian's characters are also concerned with issues surrounding the self. Miguel, a writer, has irrational fears and "consoles himself with solitude and the illusory reliability of his everyday routine" (Lewis, 2011, p.54). Olívio is obsessed with his idealised domestic life, his impotence and his uncomfortable relationship with his (homosexual) brother. Lorena's issues include relationship issues with her father, a teenage affair with her cousin, an older man (viewed as a rapist), as well as the affair with an adolescent whilst in her thirties.

Lewis traces accumulations of episodic traits in the narratives, connecting the protagonists of both the Nazarian and Buarque novels. These episodic narratives are framed across a postmodern collection of fragmented narratives and simulacra<sup>21</sup> that culminate in "an intense vortex of surreality" (Lewis, 2011, p.81). In the Nazarian novels, Lewis identifies the character/s of Miguel and his narcissistic preoccupation with his unconscious self (Thomas Schmidt) who are introduced in *Feriado*, as well as other characters like Olívio in Nazarian's first novel and Lorena (Olívio's neighbour) and the same imaginary friend (Thomas Schmidt) in *A Morte sem Nome*. It is also important to consider that Miguel's relationship with Thomas is explored through a multimediality of forms: through the television, emails, squashed cockroaches<sup>22</sup>, a half-eaten chicken, and a red toothbrush in his bathroom. As he reads

---

<sup>19</sup> There are no English translations of these Nazarian texts. However, two Buarque novels were read as English translations. These novels are *Benjamin* (1995) and *Budapest* (2003).

<sup>20</sup> This is evident in *Benjamin* (1995), where the episodic insights into the character of Benjamin unfold as the narratives are connected together.

<sup>21</sup> Simulacra refer to the philosophical positions of understanding 'likeness' explored in the theories of Fredrick Nietzsche (1888), Gilles Deleuze (1968) and Jean Baudrillard (1981) and the postmodern concerns with pastiche and referential practices.

<sup>22</sup> Here Lewis connects references to texts such as *The Metamorphosis* (1915) by Franz Kafka (1883–1924). This serves as a "fulcrum of the inner deconstruction of identity experienced by the eponymous protagonist" (Lewis, 2011, p.56).

through Thomas's writings, Miguel notices many parallels and similarities to his life. Lewis extrapolates these narrative traits and suggests that this 'other side of the mirror' reflects hallucinogenic paranoia that is reminiscent of recent cinematic treatments in *The Sixth Sense* (Shyamalan 1999) and *The Others* (Amenabar 2001).<sup>23</sup> Thus, the transmodern connections between the novels of Nazarian offer insights into the denunciation of universal narratives and multiple insights into shattered human conditions, as well as the voice for alterity explored through the presence of Miguel and Thomas.

For Lewis, the construct of transmodernism in literature implies a network of connections and a freer exchange within the process of creating narratives and the settings of the *mise-en-scènes*. Unlike Marvin's ambiguous and vague claims, Lewis's application of the theoretical writings of Rosa María Rodríguez Magda (1989) provide an additional pathway in transmodern trajectories. The model in Lewis's study extends from and transcends modernism and postmodernism by looking back to the narratives which preceded the postmodern crisis. In this transmodern literary context, points of intersection through synthesis are brought about through the exchanges and dialogues that create "a labyrinth of connections brought together inside flexible, practical scaffolding" (Rodríguez Magda, 1999, p.143). This is a useful metaphor which offers innovative ways to address those complex choreographic practices that are typical of recent times.

Moreover, the dimension of transmodern "otherness" does not involve a return to the rigidity of modernism. The postmodern hyper-flexivity is altered to other dimensions to the vantage point of outsideness that surrounds the reader or spectator. Instead of reshaping the original text, the transmodern process favours recentring in a web, weaving and twisting the remains of the shards of text/s or historical sources. As Lewis suggests, transmodernism

---

<sup>23</sup> Both films explore the notion of alterity across the parallel existences and the struggles of the self against 'the other' and the subversion of the intruder's presence.

exercises “a crucial role in negotiating the relationship between self and other” (Lewis, 2011, p.197). These considerations are valuable for looking at recent choreographic practices and revisions of sources of performance histories in so far as they reflect the concerns of the presence of multiple traces of choreographic practices. Lewis’s largely robust application may prove to be a useful theoretical model for dance and this current framework offers a sound pathway forward to consider further developments in dance scholarship.

Having presented a history and a range of the contexts and applications of the term ‘transmodernism’, it would be useful to summarise the key features that currently form the theoretical framework. So far, these include:

- Dimensions of ‘otherness’ as diversity and defence of cultural difference
- Weaving and twisting of shards of texts or sources
- Pluralistic possibilities, eliminating monopolies and hierarchy
- Potentially, pluralistic possibilities of postmodernism against new emergences of modernism.

It is also important to consider these parameters against other theoretical markers and distinguish the differences from postmodernism. For Szaniawski, the main distinction between postmodernism and transmodernism is “its ability to unsettle and challenge the audiences” (Szaniawski, 2004, p.172). However, the overlapping commonalities and noticeable differences between the two theoretical stances begin to mark epistemological shifts across boundaries.

Borrowing from Terry Eagleton’s “illusions of postmodernism”, the established features of postmodernism include the rejection and deconstruction of hierarchy and grand narratives, the plurality of histories and the body as object. Furthermore, to borrow Eagleton’s words, postmodernism “has brought low the intimidating austerity of high modernism with its playful, parodic, populist spirit” (Eagleton, 1996, p.28). Lewis

distinguishes between the postmodern consideration of “mashing up” high and mass culture together in a disjointed mess and its transmodern counterpart, where both high and low cultures have points of intersection across both ends of the spectrum.

It is also useful to return to Szaniawski’s theoretical comparisons between postmodernism and transmodernism. His initial propositions emerge from his analyses of two films – notably, *Kill Bill* (Tarantino 2003) and *Dogville* (Von Trier 2003). The overlapping features of the two films include simple plots that end in highly unrealistic bloodbaths.<sup>24</sup> Both films include voice-over narration: in *Kill Bill* the narration is anecdotal whereas *Dogville* displays an emotive and benevolent voice that Szaniawski compares to a grandfather reciting a fairy tale as well as a compound of the voices of Von Trier and the character of Grace. However, the treatment of the *mise-en-scène* in each film radically differs from the other. *Kill Bill* is set in a colourful, postmodern and heterogeneous world. *Dogville* is set in a theatrical setting devoid of any scenery and props, that reflects a modernist abstracted environment representing “a cold wasteland-like rocky landscape” (Szaniawski, 2004, p.181).

*Kill Bill* suggests a postmodern pastiche through its recycled soundtrack, citing Louis Bacalov’s spaghetti-western music and Nancy Sinatra’s *Bang Bang* (1966), as well as the aesthetics of comic strips and the romanticism of a murdered Bride and her vengeance. The ‘recycled’ pastiche of Japanese *manga*<sup>25</sup>, Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan films, and spaghetti westerns provides a “firework-like” extravagance of comic-book unnecessary violence and offers insights into the postmodern aesthetic. In *Dogville*, the frugal weight of the Bach musical leitmotiv and the extended use of periods of silence are interwoven across the

---

<sup>24</sup> *Kill Bill*’s plot features a mysterious woman (referred to as the Bride) who comes back to life after four years in a coma to avenge herself of Bill and his four acolytes, who murdered her fiancé on their wedding day. *Dogville* recounts Grace’s failure to redeem herself and the ruthless retaliation of her surrounding community.

<sup>25</sup> These are Japanese comics that work across a variety of genres including comedy, sports, action, science fiction and fantasy.

cinematic landscape to provide moments of forced irony and awkwardness. The use of David Bowie's *Young Americans* (1965) is an ironic postmodern comment on the limitations of the community that parodies its mediocrity and hypocrisy. These devices are used as an effect of social distancing from the characters in the film as well as raising haunting questions surrounding the premise of one's relationship to others.

As a theoretical marker, postmodernism facilitates different conceptions of history; "like many postmodern texts, there is no plot to it at all" (Eagleton, 1996, p.34). On the other hand, these new artistic practices seem to offer a new type of narrative. As Lewis argues, transmodernism "extends and transcends modernism and postmodernism by looking back to the narratives which preceded the postmodern crisis and recognising them as useful fictions in a loose framework rather than rigid foundations or universal truths" (Lewis, 2011, p.21). Transmodernism in Lewis's study demonstrates how Mikhail Bakhtin's theories on accumulative identity through border-crossing and the interaction of languages (*heteroglossia*) replace the random play of signifiers associated with postmodern practices. The outward (postmodern) hyper-reflexivity relocates through the resulting complex of reference points. Lewis confirms: "you only know others by being non-coincident with them, and know yourself when your view of yourself comes not from within but from somewhere else" (Lewis, 2011, p.27).

Unlike its counterpart theory, postmodernism is awkwardly positioned. As Eagleton writes: "The chief contradiction of postmodernism is a little like that of old-fashioned structuralism....radical or conservative?" (Eagleton, 1996, p.131). Sixty years after its rise, postmodernism as a theoretical concern is now in a state of transition. This is demonstrated by the spectrum of practices that are allegedly informed by this framework because they include features which partly resemble those characteristics associated with the genre. As

Szaniawski and Lewis suggest, recent artistic practices have shifted across a new theoretical offering which is now instigated for rethinking the positioning of certain practices. Thus, the proposition that the postmodern period in art, film and literature characterises a transitional era parallels “one in which the metaphysical, like an unquiet ghost, can neither resuscitate itself nor decently die” (Eagleton, 1996, p.134). The rise of transmodernism is brought about through the remnants of its ‘ghostly’ postmodern traits together with a re-emergence of some features of modernism and other dimensions that have been outlined earlier. In the field of dance, the absence of theorising and the application of a construct of transmodernism offers stimulating pathways that should be explored with timely consequences. The following considerations offer one way of applying and moulding these new theoretical concerns.

### **2.3 Choreographic revisionism and the rise of transmodernism?**

In the wake of transmodern thinking and the rise of applications observed so far in the fields of philosophy, film and literature, a noticeable gap highlights the potential consideration of creatively bridging the relationship with revisionist practices and these new theories. The context of dance and the choreographic practices outlined in this study are critical with regard to the nature of ‘revisionist practices’. Such recent and unwritten histories herald the prospect of considering choreographic revisionism as compatible practices with those explored in the applications of transmodern theories. Resolving the exhaustion of postmodernism becomes a tangible reality and such proposals beg the question whether revisionism in dance can be realigned to this new theoretical positioning.

The examination of revisionist choreographic practices in the field of dance scholarship, as revealed in the earlier parts of this chapter, has so far been explored through a limited range of perspectives. The elusiveness of choreographic revisionism warrants a



further revisitation of Poesio's perspectives that are underpinned by 'decentring' dance practices. As outlined earlier in the chapter, the distinction of revising three critical components of the performance traditions of a historical artefact becomes central to the emerging discourse. The consideration of three narrative layers within a performance – the dramatic narrative, the musical narrative and the dance narrative – and the historical tracings of select revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) from Chapter One suggest the potential that an understanding of choreographic revisionism can be facilitated through additional epistemological pathways. Revisions, such as those offered by Merce Cunningham and Jiri Kylián, illustrate the intricate weaving of shards of choreographic traces that accumulate through their treatment of the choreographic idiom, as well as other features including the heritage of the Russian folk stories and the rhythmic textures of Stravinsky's compositional arrangements. The resulting web of connections across the diversity of unrelated choreographic idioms and the performance histories of these revisions centralise the iconic status of the 1923 ballet.

These initial perspectives provide scope for investigating the field further, in particular to take account of those practices that include the weight of migrated practices as well as references to the influences that filter through and into subsequent generations of choreographic practices. Whilst none of the examples raised in the historical overview and recent applications of transmodernism deal with the notion of revisionism, it is nevertheless useful to pursue the application of some of the characteristics of current frameworks of transmodernism. Such theoretical applications may offer viable pathways in order to consider the complex nature of revisionist practices.

The overarching features outlined in the summary of transmodernism explore the notions of pluralistic possibilities, including the dimensions of 'otherness' as diversity and

the elimination of monopolies and hierarchy. The connecting strategies of weaving and twisting shards of historical traces, together with the potential possibilities of viewing the remnants of postmodernism against newer emergences of modernism, further the prospective dimensions of this new theory in dance. The proposition of the transference of such concepts from literature and film studies into dance could effectively advocate the consideration of such parameters against some of the overlapping trends of recent dance histories. On a larger scale, the revisions of an iconic ballet such as Bronislava Nijinska's *Les Noces* (1923) may provide one dimension of this theoretical application. On another level, the close analyses of the choreographic histories, or the performative shards that surround, migrate into and reshape into composite choreographic practices, further increase the potential of this framework. The validation of transmodernism in dance will be largely led through the utilisation and resourcing of recent dance practices, for the most part preoccupied with the selected revisions by Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti, together with a close analysis of their body of work. As their work and their position as performance makers cannot be readily situated against postmodern practices, the examination of such practices becomes the vantage point through which to consider exemplars for this study.

The perspectives cited in this chapter have outlined a theoretical context for the major theories at the heart of this enquiry. The proposal for considering the potential transference of theories from one field to another warrants that these frameworks are tested in the light of the two selected strands within this study: choreographic revisionism of an iconic work and practices surrounding migration and diversity. As a response to Richard Schechner's call for a revision of theories in the aftermath of a "post post-structural" period (2000a, p.7), the negotiation of epistemologies does not simply mean borrowing and fixing theories from different fields of studies. Rather, the case studies offered in the second part of this thesis will test out the effectiveness of these theories. It is in this light that Part Two of this thesis offers

three chapters on the work of Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti and their subsequent revisions of *Les Noces*.

## Part Two

### Recent dance histories

In this second part of the thesis, three chapters analyse the body of work by Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti and their revisions of *Les Noces* (1923). The dance cultures surrounding the work of Preljocaj and Bigonzetti provide a contextual background to understanding these recent dance histories. The engagement of their heritage and contexts, together with their interest in revising the performance traditions of ballets, result in a wealth of performances that bring many of the theoretical constructs to light. France's twentieth-century dance histories stand out for their "sheer volume and eclecticism" (Gore in Grau and Jordan, 1999, p.28). Similarly, the twentieth century provided an opportunity for a proliferation of influences in dance within Italy. A study of twentieth-century Italian dance offers many interesting possibilities for research (Poesio in Grau and Jordan, 2000). The political and artistic contexts provide historical landscapes that contextualise and explain the trends and traditions that emerged and consolidated towards the latter part of the century and that have shaped the choreographic practices of both these performance makers.

## Chapter Three

### Angelin Preljocaj

#### Chapter Outline

- 3.1 Dance in France: post-war developments and artistic agendas
- 3.2 Training and early influences
- 3.3 A survey of choreographic commissions (1985–2010)
- 3.4 Contemporary choreographic reflections: sites, myths and texts
- 3.5 Revising iconic ballets: *Romeo et Juliet* (1996) and the Ballets Russes repertoire
- 3.6 Chapter Conclusions

This chapter outlines the performance and choreographic histories associated with Angelin Preljocaj. Positioning his work as an exponent of French choreographic commissions during the last three decades, this chapter traces the choreographic influences and works that Preljocaj encountered during his early career, including his brief choreographic apprenticeship with Dominique Bagouet's company (1982–1984). The analyses of a selection of important commissions<sup>1</sup> created for companies such as Paris Opéra Ballet (France) and New York City Ballet (USA), alongside the extensive work created for his company, will highlight the signature features that shape the body of work created by Preljocaj between 1985 and 2010.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Tools used in the analysis of recordings of (live) performances include those located in research libraries and company archives at the New York Public Library (USA) and at the Teatro Valli Archives in Reggio Emilia (Italy). Recordings of television broadcasts have been drawn from the author's personal collection as well as from extracts posted online on Ballet Preljocaj's iDoc online database as well as YouTube.com. Observations of live performances of repertoire took place in Aix-en-Provence (France), Sadler's Wells (London) and Dublin Dance Festival (Ireland). Extracts from the works mentioned in this chapter can be viewed through the interactive Slide Show in Folder 1 of the CD-ROM (Extracts of Choreographic Works). A short list of the extracts is indicated in red on the choreochronicle for Preljocaj in Appendix Chart 2.

<sup>2</sup> Insights into these works can be obtained through the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.

### 3.1 Dance in France: post-war developments and artistic agendas

Dance developed prolifically in the post-war years following the end of the Second World War (1939 – 1945). Jacqueline Robinson makes a similar point in her monograph, *Modern Dance in France: An Adventure 1920–1970*.<sup>3</sup> Within this French setting, two major political drives provided the foundations for the so-called French New Wave dancer makers in the 1980s. In the first instance, an “accelerated post-war decentralization in the performing arts” was encouraged by André Malraux (1901–1976), the Minister for Cultural Affairs between 1959 and 1969 (Gore in Grau and Jordan, 1999). Secondly, between 1982 and 1986, Minister for Culture Jack Lang (b.1939) quadrupled the national funding for dance and established nineteen national centres for choreographic development. These were, and still are, known as the *Centres Chorégraphique National* (National Choreographic Centres) or the CCNs. In 1987, the *Marché international des arts de la scène* (Convention on international performing arts practices) was launched to showcase indigenous and international choreographic practices (Bentivoglio, 1987b, npn). This two-fold approach characterised what Georgiana Gore marks as a “rapid expansion in dance” (in Grau and Jordan, 2000, p.29) and the import of German expressionist dance and American modern dance.<sup>4</sup>

In France, dance émigrés from Germany promoted a shift of the early twentieth-century Weimar Republic (Expressionist) choreographic practices. Jean Weidt (1904–1988), a Sigurd Leeder-trained dancer-choreographer, and Wigman-trained Karin Waehner (1926–1999) were two of the prominent and eminent contributors to the development of French modern dance in the twentieth century. Gore suggests that French culture was “not able to

---

<sup>3</sup> This publication was translated in 1997 by Catherine Dale and covers the variety of modern dance influences that migrated into France from the 1920s through to the consolidation of modern dance in France by the 1970s.

<sup>4</sup> Here I refer to the framework offered by Isa Partsch-Bergsohn (1994) in her chronicle of German and American modern dance between the 1920s and the 1960s.

come to terms with modern dance until after 1968” (in Grau and Jordan, 2000, p.32). On the other hand, Robinson depicts a different narrative during the post-war decades, offering analogies to the ‘Sowing Years’ (1945–1960) and the ‘Flowering Years’ (1960–1970). The cultural impact of Roland Barthes’ *Mythologies* (1957) allegedly paved the way for the choreographic parallel between the overthrown traditional society and the avant-garde, across the arts and everyday life. The establishment of an American Center in Paris in the 1960s provided French artists with a platform for the ‘latest’ trends in contemporary American arts. Performances by the companies of Alvin Ailey (1931–1989), Martha Graham (1894–1991), Paul Taylor (b.1930) and Merce Cunningham (1919–2009) between the mid 1950s and the 1970s brought along new aesthetics that displaced the existing paradigms of French dance culture:

“the arrival of ‘American bodies’, serene and neutral ...either seduced the French dance community or provoked an even greater commitment to a ‘wild’ body”

Gore in Grau and Jordan, 2000, p.33

The American dance artists who remained in France paved the way for further changes. Lucinda Childs (b.1940), Carolyn Carlson (b.1943) and Karole Armitage (b.1954) imported and expanded upon the principles of American postmodern dance.<sup>5</sup> The appointment of Alwin Nikolais (1910–1993) as director of the *Centre National de Dance Contemporaine* (National Centre of Contemporary Dance) in Angers, the only state-funded contemporary dance school in France, also made an impact on the national and cultural dance scene. Yet it was the work and the aesthetics of French-born but Brussels-based choreographer Maurice Béjart (1927–2007) that particularly informed the shattering creative force of the first French New Wave choreographers Claude Gallotta (b.1950), Maguy Marin (b.1951) and Dominique Bagouet (1951–1992).

---

<sup>5</sup> The premise of postmodern dance is referring to the framework proposed by Sally Banes in *Terpsichore in Sneakers* (1987, second edition).

Whilst artists such as Bagouet and Marin began to question their creative processes within their work, the established spectrum of German expressionist dance and the abstracted classicism of Cunningham resulted in American writer Gay Morris's observations of this binary approach in French contemporary dance:

“Much of the French dance I saw derived from poetry or literature and centered on themes of sexual aggression. ... There is, though, another side of French dance, a formalist one. Choreographers such as the late Dominique Bagouet, ... although eschewing the formal rigour of a Cunningham, nonetheless explore movement as the basis of their dance.”

Morris, 1993-94, p.17

The 1980s also provided a significant grounding for the development of regional dance companies. In contrast, the 1990s heralded turmoil in funding and politics across ballet companies whilst contemporary dance flourished.<sup>6</sup> Following the establishment of the CCNs in the 1980s, other significant companies were established, including Ballet de L'Opéra de Nantes and Ballet du Rhine, alongside established contemporary dance groups, including Compagnie Dominique Bagouet in 1980 and Compagnie Preljocaj in 1984. The heritage of Angelin Preljocaj and his Compagnie Preljocaj offers distinct and multifaceted choreographic histories that further the diversity of choreographic migrations and trajectories across the last three decades.

### 3.2 Angelin Preljocaj's training and early influences

A limited range of French sources outlines the influences of Preljocaj's early performance and choreographic experiences.<sup>7</sup> Given the absence of written dance histories within international dance scholarship, there is significant potential for an introduction to the

---

<sup>6</sup> Both Sulcas (1993) and Pakes (2000) suggest this in their research on French contemporary dance.

<sup>7</sup> French publications include those by Jean Bollack (1992), Agnès Freschel and Guy Delahaye (2003) and Françoise Cruz (2008).



histories that have shaped and constructed Preljocaj's approach to performance making. His work has been described by fellow collaborators as effervescent, with distinct intellectuality and corporeal viscosity that often rethinks the centrality of human myths.<sup>8</sup> Born in 1957, of Albanian parents of Montenegro descent (l'Institut national de l'audiovisuel (INA), 1985, online), Preljocaj was raised in the south-eastern suburbs of Paris. He studied with Karin Waehner (1926–1999) and German-born American dancer and choreographer Viola Farber (1931–1998) in France (Meisner, 1999). Established in the 1960s at the *Schola Cantorum*,<sup>9</sup> Waehner's dance school provided the platform through which Preljocaj encountered principles of both American modern dance and German expressionist modern techniques, associated with the performative legacies of Mary Wigman (1886–1973) as well as those of Doris Humphrey (1895–1958) and later Merce Cunningham (1915–2009).

The influences from Waehner's emotive choreographic contributions mark Preljocaj's early work. These include her interest in the dynamic range of the expressive body and her experimentation with effort and shapes through the modernist features in dance. During a 1986 interview on the French television channel TV2, Preljocaj describes his work as artistic events depicted by "emotive objects with bodies" (Preljocaj in iDoc posting, 1986, online). Such a claim parallels Waehner's attempts to execute an intensity of dynamics across the spectrum of movements within the choreography. A documentary, *Karin Waehner* (2001)<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> These perspectives have been collated in Cruz's French publication, *Angelin Preljocaj: Togologie de l'invisible* (2008). Here, commentary by French critics, perceptions by Preljocaj's collaborators and Cruz's analyses of a selection of his works (including extracts of the Benesh Movement Notation scores) shape this recent publication.

<sup>9</sup> This is a specialist school for music established in the late nineteenth century, located in the Latin Quarter of Paris. Waehner established her dance school within the parameters of the school in 1960 (Lawton, 2000, p.299). *Schola Cantorum* is considered to have been the central focus which introduced American modern dance: Graham's teachers included Linda Mitchell and Anna Mittelholzer, Paul Taylor Dance Company artist Carolyn Adams, and Alwin Nikolais's follower Susan Buirge (Lawton, 2000, p.300).

<sup>10</sup> This DVD was produced by the Ministère de la Culture DMD, Fédération Française de Danse, CNC, Les Cahiers de l'Oiseau, and Compagnie Epiphane; an online promotional

by Marc Lawton and Sylvia Ghibaudo, describes Waehner as one of the pioneers of modern dance in France in the late 1950s who established a group of dancers, choreographers and pedagogues interested in modern dance.<sup>11</sup> Waehner's life, according to Lawton, mirrored the historical, political and artistic developments of modern dance in France. Central tenets of American modern dance (exemplified by Graham, Humphrey/Limon and Cunningham) and German modern dance (exemplified by Wigman) were relocated within a French dance educational context.<sup>12</sup> Having observed and trained with Mary Wigman (1886–1973) in performance in 1938 and later trained with her in 1946 in Leipzig (Robinson, 1997, p.258), Waehner's early pedagogical concerns surrounded a detailed understanding of the use of corporeal weight and its surrounding space. Extracts from the 1963 film footage in Lawton and Ghibaudo's documentary illustrate Waehner's "French adaptation of American styles" (Lawton, 2000, p.301), demonstrating a multi-layering of choreographic idioms: the spirals to and from the barre are followed by intricate sequences travelling across the floors; the dancers then spiral down to the floor, travel across it and recover with an upward spiral. In her later years of teaching, Waehner appears to stress the use of the breath as a mechanism for driving the solar plexus, here seen as a composite amalgamation of the Humphrey/Limon and Wigman legacies, together with a pronounced use of the three planes within the kinesphere. Waehner's emphasis on improvisation and composition, envisaged as part of her dancers' daily routines, facilitated her students' success, including that of Preljocaj, at the annual Paris-based Bagnolet Choreographic Competitions in the 1980s.

---

video outlined short clips depicting Waehner teaching a class in the latter stages of her career as well as her teaching in 1963 at *Schola Cantorum*.

<sup>11</sup> Lawton describes the lack of interest in the Parisian performances of Graham (1954) and Limon (1957) (2000, p.299); he further argues that influential teachers such as Waehner were instrumental in teaching modern dance techniques to dancers during the late 1950s.

<sup>12</sup> This is the central argument made in Marc Lawton's paper at the conference of the Society of Dance History Scholars in Washington (2000).

Another signature trademark of Preljocaj's work is the linear organisation of the body that is typical of the rigour, clarity and economy of Cunningham's technique.<sup>13</sup> In a recently televised documentary on the legacies of Cunningham in France and within French contemporary dance (Plouchard, 2009), Preljocaj stresses the cultural and artistic significance of the performances of Cunningham's company at the Pompidou Centre in Paris in 1979. Preljocaj describes Cunningham's *Channels/Inserts* (1981) as "a semantic approach to choreography...something completely new" (Preljocaj in Plouchard, 2009, TV broadcast). As Don MacDonagh eloquently summarised,

"his [Cunningham's] approach was increasingly marked by its new approach, which was not dependent on the accepted need for story, character and dramatic mood. ... Many young choreographers have been quick to seize on the new freedom of stage space ..."

McDonagh in Kostelanetz, 1992, pp.1, 2

Like many French dancers who finish their studies in the United States (Morris 1993–1994, p.15), Preljocaj spent a year in New York at the Cunningham studio in 1980, and continued his studies with Viola Farber<sup>14</sup> (1931–1998) on his return to France. These experiences presented Preljocaj with a period in which he consolidated vocabularies that included interplays of linear and angular trajectories crafted within an articulate application of planar orientation. These performance traditions have been retained throughout the Ballet Preljocaj's twenty-year history. Today, the company dancers take Cunningham classes on a daily basis as their preparation for their engagement with and performance of Preljocaj's repertory works.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> David Vaughan (in Kostelanetz, 1992) describes the technique as based on the pelvic turnout, the equivalent orientations of the torso to the eight directional points in ballet, as well as the extensions and positions that derive from classical balletic idioms.

<sup>14</sup> Farber was a founder member of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in 1953 and remained with the company until 1968.

<sup>15</sup> A Cunningham-based warm-up is observed in the documentary/showcase of performances in *Dance Celebration: Carte Blanche à Angelin Preljocaj* (2004), broadcast on the French

Another artistic influence can be seen as an important factor in Preljocaj's career.

Between 1982 and 1983, Preljocaj performed for one season with a company led by choreographer Dominique Bagouet (1951–1992), one of the leading artists of the avant-garde movement referred to as French New Dance.<sup>16</sup> As Nancy Reynolds and Malcolm McCormick (2003) note, Bagouet experienced a mixed training of classical ballet and modern dance through training with Rosella Hightower (1920–2008) and Maurice Béjart (1927–2007). This was complemented by his exposure to the contemporary dance scene through the European presence of American postmodern dancer Carolyn Carlson (b.1943) and other New York postmodern dance artists who visited France during the 1960s and 1970s, and it culminated in his postmodern collage of dance styles (Gore in Grau and Jordan, 2000, p.34). Bagouet's experiences of Béjart's Mudra School, together with his early choreographic practices in Montpellier, were an eclectic and postmodern approach to performance making and this no doubt furthered his contribution to French New Dance in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Distinctive elements of Bagouet's work transfers the postmodern trends of French New Wave choreographers into a 'collision of bodies' that exemplified references to both modern and postmodern dance spectra. Typical of early trends of French New Dance in the early 1980s, Bagouet's work was driven by "desire and a sort of drunkenness to create in a field which to them (first wave of contemporary choreographers) appeared as new" (Gore in Grau and Jordan, 2000, p.34). In her analysis of *Assai* (Bagouet 1986), Gore suggests three essential characteristics in Bagouet's choreographic practice, which are identified as a

---

TV Arts Channel, MEZZO TV. In addition, in April 2008 I observed Ballet Preljocaj dancers taking a class in preparation for their performance of *Empty Moves (Parts I and II)* whilst on tour at the Dublin Dance Festival (2008). In conversation, Youri van den Bosch (Preljocaj's assistant director) explained that the company focuses exclusively on a Cunningham-based class as part of the daily training.

<sup>16</sup> Gore describes this 1980s period as the rejection of codified languages, the denial of origins, and the importance of the role of the woman as 'object' often in a strongly sexually charged environment (Gore in Grau and Jordan 2000, p.38).

“sumptuous plasticity” together with a “strongly ‘sculpted’ look of close-to-the-body movements, costumes and stage lighting” (ibid). Moreover, the importance of sources as a referential system together with a particular treatment of “texts” reflects the postmodern condition of intertextual practices. Like *Assai, So Schnell* (1992) exhibits textual references and provides visual impact through references to expressionist cinema. In her review of *So Schnell* in *Dance Europe*, Carol Pratl describes a performance of this work:

“popart primary colours and cartoon-like score, chopped into fragments and interspersed with sounds of factory sewing machines...creating dance mathematically using a personalized grid system”

Pratl, 1998, p.27

Such perspectives arguably left an indelible mark on Preljocaj. Francoise Cruz’s study of the topographical dimensions in Preljocaj’s work offers several references that account for the influence of Bagouet on Preljocaj’s interest in visualising the compositional traits. These include the use of floor patterns from the score of *So Schnell* as well as the annotations of Preljocaj’s movement phrases in *Désert d’Amour* (1984). This also signifies the start of Preljocaj’s passion for challenging the ephemerality of dance. Since the establishment of his company, Preljocaj has been a staunch advocate of the Benesh Movement Notation (BMN) (1955)<sup>17</sup> as a tool to record dance as a written text.

Having surveyed the cornerstones of his choreographic influences, an analysis of Preljocaj’s choreographic work further suggests how these conglomerate influences have been shaped through his artistic ‘apprenticeship’. Works such as *Larmes Blanches* (1985)<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Devised by Joan (b.1920) and Rudolf Benesh (1916–1975), this dance notation system uses a five-line stave that is used to mark the spatio-temporal organisation of the movements in a dance.

<sup>18</sup> Created for four dancers with Preljocaj as part of the original cast, *Larmes Blanches* is a twenty-minute choreographic work set to scores by Henry Purcell (1659–1695) and Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) and it includes lighting by Jacques Châtelet, Preljocaj’s frequent collaborator.

and *Empty Moves* (2008)<sup>19</sup> outline the signature choreographic identities that can be extrapolated as key features within Preljocaj's choreographic practices.<sup>20</sup> These features include the characteristics of the organisation of movement vocabularies and the complex use of musical, narrative and gendered texts, as well as the use of intertextual references within the choreographic works.

*Empty Moves* and *Larmes Blanches* employ a similar organisation of corporeal alignments, stylistic attributes and sense of precision in execution, most notably the linearity from the Cunningham heritage and the plasticity of the expressive body from the Waehner legacy. Both ballets demonstrate Preljocaj's interest in crafting intelligible phrases that embody a uniquely characteristic use of breath as well as spiralling and recovering dynamics. The transposition of the aesthetics from Waehner's movement education is emulated through the dancers' intensity and clarity of corporeal dynamics across a linear and spiral rebound. These dimensions are complemented through the rigorously linear organisation and orientation of body parts, characteristic of the Cunningham technique, across distinct, planar travel directions within the kinesphere. This multiplicity of choreographic idioms suggests one of what Italian dance critic Marinella Guatterini described as Preljocaj's performance-making habits: "ballets that were inspired not only by the most diverse of sources...the use of the academic vocabulary and ignoring it, measured movement or pure dynamism"

(Guatterini, 2004, p.30)

---

<sup>19</sup> Commissioned in its two-part format by Festival Montpellier Danse in 2007, *Empty Moves* is a more recent choreographic essay for four dancers. The first part of the ballet was commissioned by the *Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne* (Biannual dance festival of Val de Marne) in 2004, whilst the second part was commissioned by the Joyce Theater's Weinroth Fund in 2006.

<sup>20</sup> Observations include: live performances of *Larmes Blanches* at the Pavillion Noire (Black Pavillion) in Aix-en-Provence in October 2007 and *Empty Moves (Parts I and II)* at the Dublin Dance Festival (2008) as well as online postings of extracts hosted in the iDoc online database. Extracts of these two ballets can be viewed in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.

Like the complexity of the designed movement components, the visual and aural dimensions in Preljocaj's work denote the shifts between the presence and absence of narratives. *Larmes Blanches* displays a playful intersection of gendered identities in the corporeal through the identical leather trousers and white ruffled shirts worn by the male and female dancers. The choreography also addresses the baroque and classical phrases of the Purcell and Bach scores in the choreographic treatment and organisation of the four dancers. Using meticulously-designed linear blocks of movements along with the selected circular pathways reminiscent of baroque floor patterns, these syntactical designs are exemplified in the duets, trios and quartet. The multilayered use of choreographic organisational structures and the scores, accompanied by a mixture of postmodern layering reminiscent of Bagouet's nostalgic references to past histories, reveal a conglomerate of both modern and postmodern choices.

Another dimension to the work of Preljocaj is the complex presentation of multiple narratives. *Empty Moves* was performed to a recording of John Cage's performance of *Empty Words* (1977) at Teatro Lirico in Milan on 02 December 1977. The recording includes a digital arrangement by Preljocaj's frequent collaborator, Serbian-born but Paris-based Goran Vejvoda (b.1956). The recording of Cage's infamous recital of the quasi-nonsensical reading of journal writings by Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) includes the Milanese audience's feisty reaction to Cage's two-hour performance. A programme note<sup>21</sup> for *Empty Moves* calls attention to a parallel between the chaotic soundscape and the flow of the dance against it; both performances co-exist but find few connections or intersections across both performances. The co-existence of soundscape and movement landscape reflects the Cunningham/Cage postmodern concern with composition in performance. Despite the programme note suggesting that the work is 'free from narrative' and reinforces the

---

<sup>21</sup> The programme note accompanied the performances at the O'Reilly Theatre as part of the Dublin Dance Festival (2008).

audience's decision to watch the dance, the co-existence of these two performances (one live, one recorded) further the performativity of mediatised and textual presences within the progression of the performance. The interplay between live "passive" and recorded "reactive" audiences denotes the heritage of pastiche and collage, and challenges to the boundaries of narrativity in dance. Performances of *Empty Moves* suggest an intertextual performance. The recorded performance of Cage's recital, with its intertextual echo of Thoreau, textually informs the functionality of *Empty Words* as a performance embedded within another event. Such intertextual approaches to performance making are further explored in other works by Preljocaj that range from the late 1980s to more recent times.<sup>22</sup> The legacy of such practices filters through the subsequent commissions.

**Fig. 7** Still moment from *Empty Moves (Parts I & II)* (2007)

<sup>22</sup> In her review of *Paysage après la Bataille*, Anna Kisselgoff (2001) notes the plethora of texts being referenced in Vejvoda's score, including the recital of text from a French translation of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1903).



Three significant influences on Preljocaj's performance and choreographic histories have argued that Preljocaj's heritage can be sourced from four major influences: Waehner's emotive approach; Cunningham's codified vocabularies; in some instances the Cage/Cunningham postmodern concerns with performance and theatricality; and finally, the postmodern New Dance trends emergent from Bagouet's legacies. These dimensions provide a clear understanding of the traits of Preljocaj's background and, as the chapter progresses through the selected points, these features provide one of the layers across the complexity of dance histories and practices embedded in Preljocaj's choreographic work.

### 3.3 A survey of choreographic commissions: 1985–2010

Following the premiere of his first, award-winning choreographic work, *Marché Noire* (1985),<sup>23</sup> Preljocaj's choreographic works have since been produced across diverse national and international performance cultures and dance contexts. During the last two decades, his company and several commissioning European and American companies, such as Lyon Opéra Ballet, London Contemporary Dance Theatre, New York City Ballet, the Bolshoi Theatre and the Paris Opéra Ballet, have given his work international exposure. These commissioned works, summarised in chronological order in the Appendix Choreochronicle, facilitated the transference of Preljocaj's performance-making practices across French, British and American dance cultures as early as the 1990s.

Established in December 1984, Compagnie Preljocaj<sup>24</sup> presented some of the early masterpieces including *Larmes Blanches* (1985), *À nos héros* (1986), *Noces* (1989) and

---

<sup>23</sup> As stated on the Ballet Preljocaj website, *Marché Noire* won the Ministry of Culture's 17th annual Bagnolet International Choreographic Competition titled *Le Ballet pour Demain*.

<sup>24</sup> Compagnie Preljocaj was established in 1984 and renamed Ballet Preljocaj in 1995. The company briefly resided in Châteauvallon until the political tensions and the election of the Front National in July 1995; the company then moved to Aix-en-Provence and established

*Annonciation* (1995). By 1989, the company had become the National Choreographic Centre of Champigny-sur-Marne and Val-de-Marne in the south-eastern suburbs of Paris. Although few written histories account for a second residency, the company briefly resided in Chatéauvallon until the political tensions of immigration escalated and the Front National political party was elected in July 1995.<sup>25</sup> During this same period, his collaborators included artists of marginalised national and cultural descent, including Belgrade-born film and visual artist Enki Bilal (b.1951) and Vejvoda. The political issues and concerns with the Front National's anti-immigration agendas evidently drew attention to Preljocaj's position as a French national of Albanian descent. The company's move to Aix-en-Provence, establishing itself as the National Choreographic Centre of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region in the south of France, came as no surprise.

Renamed Ballet Preljocaj in 1995, the company moved through a prolific and most creative decade from 1996. Preljocaj created ten seminal works that include *Paysage Après la Bataille* (1996), *Le Sacre du Printemps* (2001), *Helikopter* (2001) and *Le 4 Saisons* (2006). These works explore established texts, including Antonio Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* (1723) and Stravinsky's 1913 seminal musical score, as well as the literary work of Joseph Conrad (1857–1924) and the Dadaist heritage of Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968) in *Paysage Après la Bataille*. This period also provided opportunities to collaborate with the German avant-garde sound composer Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928–2007) on *Helikopter*, a digital, choreographic and visual installation.

---

itself as the National Choreographic Centre of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region in the south of France. The decade between 1996 and 2006 highlighted a most creative period for the company. In 2006, Ballet Preljocaj took up residence in the purpose-built Pavillion Noire (Black Pavilion), providing a theatrical and performative space for the company and other guest artists visiting the region.

<sup>25</sup> Although Roslyn Sulcas (1995) and Anna Pakes (2000) support this claim, Ballet Preljocaj does not include this historical fact in the company's history outlined on the website (nor indeed does it appear in any of the other literature such as Leveque's 2011 publication).

In 2006, Ballet Preljocaj took up residence in the purpose-built Pavillion Noire (Black Pavilion), providing a performative and theatrical space for the company to work and perform in. It also provides guest artists visiting the region, and training and educational projects such as the D.A.N.C.E project,<sup>26</sup> with a space for sharing practice and developing the dance cultures.<sup>27</sup> More recent works include *Empty Moves (Parts I & II)*, *Eldorado (Sonntags Abschied)* (2007), *Blanche Neige* (2008) and *Suivront mille ans de calme* (2010).<sup>28</sup> These three recent works demonstrate Preljocaj's interest in the interrogation and superimposition of existing texts including a recording of John Cage's *Empty Words* (1977), further collaborations with Stockhausen and the revision of the nineteenth-century German folk tale of *Snow White*.<sup>29</sup> In *Suivront mille ans de calme*, this most recent collaboration with post-Dadaist Indian visual and performance artist Subodh Gupta (b.1964) explores a post-Apocalypse dimension where references are made to existing texts, such as the Monoliths from Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1969). Evidently, Preljocaj's interests in collaborations and creative passages are still evolving across his recent commissions.

---

<sup>26</sup> D.A.N.C.E (Dance Apprentice Network aCross Europe) project was an educational initiative, based at the Palucca School (Dresden) and Preljocaj (Aix-en-Provence). The central choreographic leaders of this project were Frédéric Flamand (Marseille), William Forsythe (Frankfurt/Dresden) and Wayne McGregor (London) and between 2004 and 2009, it provided a group of young dancers with a professional apprenticeship that allowed them to work with and perform choreographic works by these European-based artists. Between 2006 and 2009, this initiative was supported by funding from the European Union's *Culture 2000*.

<sup>27</sup> During a visit to the Pavillion Noire in October 2007, the diversity and spectrum of the local audiences was noticeable across two evenings.

<sup>28</sup> This contemporary ballet was initially produced by the Bolshoi Theatre as part of the Franco-Russian year in 2010 and was first performed in the Grand Theatre of Provence. Ballet Preljocaj toured this production in the United States and other European cities in 2011 as well as the Edinburgh International Festival in 2012. This production was observed at the Edinburgh International Festival on Saturday 18 August 2012 at the Edinburgh Playhouse as part of Ballet Preljocaj's tour of the festival.

<sup>29</sup> Here I refer to the Grimm Brother's 1812 narrative, later produced in the Disney film titled *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937).

Preljocaj's work consolidated his reputation and credibility as a leading choreographer in France by the start of the 1990s. The works created for both ballet and contemporary dance companies bridge the diverse and overlapping cultural discourses across the indigenous French dance communities. Commissioned by the Lyon Opéra Ballet as a production for twenty-four dancers, *Roméo et Juliette* (1990) revises the Shakespearian narrative viewed through a Balkan/Eastern Bloc interpretation of the traditional text layered with references to the conceptual narrative premise of Jerome Robbins' *West Side Story* (1956); that is, two local groups that clash over territorial perspectives and integration in society. During an interview televised on TVF2 (France),<sup>30</sup> Preljocaj commented on the aftermath of Eastern Bloc political agendas as well as the immediacy of contemporary socio-cultural divides, including intracultural sectarianism in places such as Northern Ireland. Alongside the starkly lit *mise-en-scène* and militia costumes designed by Bilal and Jacques Châtelet, Preljocaj's dramatic adaptation is supported by Vejvoda's electronic composition, which is superimposed over an edited version of the Prokofiev score.

The three-way creative collaboration between Preljocaj, Bilal and Vejvoda informed subsequent commissions, including *Sand skin* (1993)<sup>31</sup> for London Contemporary Dance Theatre (LCDT). The work drew upon extracts from *La Peau du Monde* (1992) and was initially restaged by Dany Lévêque<sup>32</sup> with final adjustments by Preljocaj. Former LCDT dancer Christopher Tudor remembers the meticulous approach that Preljocaj expected with

---

<sup>30</sup> The interview here is a 1996 interview televised on TVF2 (France) now available online on iDoc available via the Ballet Preljocaj website.

<sup>31</sup> Set to a composite score of music by György Ligeti (1923–2006), Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) and Vejvoda, *Sand skin* was commissioned by the London Contemporary Dance Theatre.

<sup>32</sup> Lévêque was, and currently still is, the company's Benesh Movement Notator (Tudor 2009/iDoc). She has recently published a book, *Angelin Preljocaj: De la Création à la mémoire de la danse*, on the role of notation and her experience of recording the work of Preljocaj (2011).

the performance of his work.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, in his contribution to Cruz's publication, Paris Opéra Ballet *étoile* (principal dancer) Wilfried Romoli describes Preljocaj's attitude as methodical and sometimes veering towards a mathematical rigour (Romoli in Cruz, 2008, p.119). A similar insight into the intensity of the rehearsal process can be observed in the documentary extracts of rehearsals for *Le Songe de Médée* in Frederick Wiseman's film, *La Danse* (2009).<sup>34</sup> Enlightened by Tudor's reflections, I also noted Preljocaj's intense attention to detail as he coached younger soloists who were taking on the role of Medea; the 'Preljocaj style' became most apparent as the execution of the choreography illustrated the demanding precision and exactitude required by the choreographic organisation.

**Fig. 8** Preljocaj coaching the Paris Opéra Ballet in *La Danse* (2008)

<sup>33</sup> This was communicated during a telephone conversation with Tudor in January 2009.

<sup>34</sup> This documentary film was a two and a half hour insight into the Paris Opéra Ballet. Filmed during 2008, it outlines various rehearsals of repertoire including Rudolf Nureyev's *La Bayadere* (1992), Wayne McGregor's *Genus* (2007) and other repertoire coached by French choreographers Pierre La Cotte, Partice Bart and former principal ballerina Yvette Chauviré (b.1917).

LCDT's commission remains to date the only work commissioned by a British company. Nonetheless, the exposure of Preljocaj's work was signposted by four Ballet Preljocaj company tours of the UK between the mid 1990s and recent times, performing *Roméo et Juliette* in November 2000 and a double bill (*Helikopter* and *Le Sacre du Printemps*) in May 2001. In 2012, the company performed *Blanche Neige* at Sadler's Wells in May and *Suivront mille ans de calme* at the Edinburgh International Festival later in August 2012. Ballet Preljocaj has also regularly toured the United States. In 1997 it performed *Noces* (1989) and *Le Spectre de la Rose* (1993) at the Joyce Theater in New York. The commissioning of this tour can be connected with the success of revisions of two productions by Ballets Russes (1909–1929) (*Hommage aux Ballets Russes*, 1993) and a full-length ballet, *Le Parc* (1994), created for the Paris Opéra Ballet. On subsequent tours, the company showcased *Helikopter* (2001) and *Sacre du Printemps* (2001). During more recent international tours (2005–2012), the company performed a staging of *Near Life Experience* (2003), *Empty Moves (Parts I and II)* and *Blanche Neige* (2008).

Commissioned by New York City Ballet's Diamond Project and recently revived in 2009 as part of the company's Spring Season, *La Stravaganza* (1997) is thus currently the only original commission by an American dance company, and has been revived three times in the last decade. The ballet is a production for twelve dancers and presents a thirty-minute choreographic essay constructed on narrative binaries and the "theatrical presentation of two groups of dancers".<sup>35</sup> The soundscape is constructed through a recurring interplay of electronic and classical scores drawing upon a range of musical sources including Ficarra's *Source of Uncertainty* and Antonio Vivaldi's *Concerto No.8* (extracts from *Dixit Dominus* and *Laudate Pueri Dominum*). The commission engaged the New York State Theater's

---

<sup>35</sup> This is the description offered by New York City Ballet dancer Amanda Hankes in a NYCB online posting.

resident lighting designer Marc Stanley and French designer Hervé Pièrre.<sup>36</sup> As noted in the recorded performance housed in the New York Public Library, *La Stravaganza* demonstrates a recurring sense of binaries across languages (balletic, modern) and aural compositions (classical, electronic), as well as the diversity of the choreographic organisation for the two groups of dancers.

In France, the connections with a leading ballet company have been regularly reinforced over the last two decades through Preljocaj's associations with the Paris Opéra Ballet. The success of these commissions is largely due to Preljocaj's acutely rigorous choreographic voice characterised by his meticulous choreographic organisation imparted and constructed through his artistic, technical and musical influences. *Hommage aux Ballets Russes* presented an opportunity for Preljocaj to display his company and *Noces* (1989) on the Palais Garnier's main stage. These performances marked a shift of choreographic trends from legacies of the late twentieth-century French New Dance to the more academically-oriented main stage on which Rudolf Nureyev (1938–1993) restaged and reconceived some of the nineteenth-century classics. Preljocaj's work was embraced by the current artistic director Brigitte Lefèvre,<sup>37</sup> and other commissions ensued: three full-length ballets, namely *Le Parc* (1994), *Casanova* (2000) and *Siddharta* (2010), and two short ballets, *MC 14/22: Ceci est mon corps* (2002) and *Le Songe de Médée* (2004), for twelve male dancers and three

---

<sup>36</sup> Pièrre was a collaborator engaged with other 'French' commissions including *Parade* (1993) and *Le Spectre de la Rose* (1993) for the Paris Opéra Ballet.

<sup>37</sup> Following her appointment in February 1992, Lefèvre's directorship presented opportunities for the ballet company to engage with mid to late twentieth-century avant-garde choreography, and explore works by avant-garde European and American choreographers as well as including Preljocaj's ideas of choreographic revisionism, together with his combination of intellectual theatricality.

*étoiles*,<sup>38</sup> respectively. Both *MC 14/22* and *Le Songe* offer interesting insights into Preljocaj's treatment of selected narratives that warrant further investigation.

### 3.4 Contemporary choreographic reflections: myths, sites and bodies

A selection of works created by Preljocaj suggests what Pavis describes as a creative “metatext of discourse of the *mise en scène*” (Pavis, 2004, p.34). Preljocaj created a set of imaginative choreographic revisions of Christian and Greek myths through the use of props and performance sites as well as his signature composite traces of choreographic concerns and organisation of the bodies. The analyses of *Annonciation* (1995/restaged2003), the ballet commissioned by the Paris Opéra Ballet, *MC 14/22: Ceci est mon corps* (2002),<sup>39</sup> and *Le Songe de Médée* (The dream of Medea) (2004) provide an opportunity to interrogate Preljocaj's revisionist stance on significant histories and dogmas and to explore Preljocaj's treatment of the staging or *mise-en-scène*. *Annonciation* alongside *MC 14-22* and *Le Songe de Médée*<sup>40</sup> suggests a connection of dance cultures across the French contemporary and balletic fields as well as providing insights into the treatment of the subject matter associated with revised perspectives of myths and dogma.

Preljocaj's attention to (re)presenting and revising narratives characterises his interest in heritage associated with classical Greek mythologies and early Christian narratives. Preljocaj's endeavours to question, deconstruct and (re)construct these stories culminate in the (re)construction of these narratives, choreographic identities and theatricalised performances.

---

<sup>38</sup> Within the ranks of the Paris Opéra Ballet, *étoile* refers to a principal or leading dancer

<sup>39</sup> *MC 14/22* refers to the gospel according to Mark, chapter 14, verse 22. This reads: “This is my body”.

<sup>40</sup> Extracts of *Annonciation* (1995/2003), *MC 14/12: Ceci est mon corps* (2002) and *Le Songe de Médée* (2004) can be viewed through the interactive Appendix CD-ROM.



In *Le Songe de Médée*, mythological figures such as Medea and Jason are associated with the legacies of the eighteenth-century *ballet d'action* and *Médée et Jason* (Noverre 1763) and thus throughout the ballet Preljocaj plays an indirect homage to the Paris Opéra Ballet, and its heritage and histories of early eighteenth-century ballets.<sup>41</sup> In *Le Songe de Médée*, Preljocaj once again draws upon Zamal's composition of electronic textures to sustain a loosely-structured layering. The dance and dramatic narratives in *Le Songe de Médée* rely on the blocked sections of the choreographic material and textured aural narratives, which in part radically shift the recognition of a specific performance aesthetic as well as proliferating the range of traces surrounding the musical narratives.

*Le Songe de Médée* features three primary characters: Medea, Jason and Créuse. Preljocaj's dramatic narrative makes no visible reference to the Golden Fleece and the surrounding mythological narrative. Yet, despite its absence, several references to golden textures emerge: Jason wears a gold vest whilst Créuse's golden dress and Médée's golden undergarment provide traces of narrative remnants embedded within the choreographic work. The presence and use of buckets, located on the front screen and suspended in the air, metaphorically refer to the dramatic narratives woven into the performance. Medea's two young children play with these buckets and a young, carefree Créuse steps in and out of them. The metaphors implode as Medea catches glimpses of the affair between Jason and the fresh, golden girl. As she dreams of the horrors that are yet to be unveiled before her, she shields her children by placing buckets on their heads. She dreams of destroying everything she loves in a blood bath, unleashing her anger on herself and her young children. Out of her bucket, she slashes red paint across herself and the children. In the final *mise-en-scène*, Medea is lit in the middle of a bucket on front screen. Preljocaj's denotes the 'dreams' which surround the

---

<sup>41</sup>These histories are frequently cited in general history texts including those by Susan Au (2002).

narrative, suggested by the multilayered application of props, colour and organisation of dancers within the theatricality of Médée's jealousy. Similarly, in the two central duets of *Le Songe de Médée*, the recurring stylistic organisation of movement vocabulary clearly presents the cross-planar tracking of extended lower limbs within sagittal and vertical planes, transferring the upper body along the sagittal and horizontal planes. Such examples are observed during the duets presented by Medea and Jason as well as those of Jason and Créuse. The trio further mark the clarity, weight and reliance of vocabularies within the application of these planes.

Few choreographers have challenged the Catholic legacies that surround the Annunciation and presented the Immaculate Conception as an encounter between two women. In *MC 14/22*, Preljocaj explores the Christian ideals of fraternity in order to challenge perspectives on homosexuality and intradependence within the community of the twelve apostles. Through (re)writing the narratives associated with Greek mythological and Christian legacies, Preljocaj's choreographic organisation facilitates layers of metonymy and metaphors across the choreographic tableaux and use of the compositions and scores. The case studies draw upon a composite array of electronic scores which support the music narratives within all three performances. *Annonciation* showcases *Crystal Music* by Stephane Roy (1994) as well as the *Magnificat* (Vivaldi 1737) and multiple interplays of aural textures from everyday life, including the sounds of dripping water and of children playing, overlaid on the *Misericordia* from Antonio Vivaldi's composition. Similarly, *MC14/22* presents a soundscape constructed by Tedd Zamal, one that is primarily based on electronic

sounds interlayered with spoken references of ‘*ceci est mon corps*’, sounds of dripping water and sung text by Sylvain Giroud.<sup>42</sup>

These case studies also denote Preljocaj’s interest in how the composite possibilities of utilising theatrical and alternative non-theatrical spaces, as well as constructing metaphorical landscapes across the choreographic works through the use of props, textures and colours, shape the narrative implications of choreographic tableaux and gender identification. *Annonciation* presents colour as a metaphor: Mary is dressed in virginal white while Gabriel the angel performs in celestial blue.<sup>43</sup> Through challenging the existing narratives that precede the production, Preljocaj presents Gabriel as an androgynous angel and offers a fluidly gendered corporeal identity along with an alternative reading. Preljocaj constructs the dramatic narrative within the corporeal identities of the two female dancers where objects, sites and the construction of relationships are bound by the central narrative.

The filmed version of *Annonciation*<sup>44</sup> takes place in a warehouse and draws the viewer’s attention to the two performers’ engagement with the textures in the landscape. These allow further insights into Preljocaj’s thematic concerns with visuality and ‘theatricalised’ experience. The cinematic treatment of *Annonciation* suggests reflections on the “plasticity of the text” whilst the scenographic and audiovisual components suggest the layering of meta-texts (Pavis, 2004, p.215). As Claudia de Smet<sup>45</sup> enters and exits the space, her reflection on the water surface metonymically suggests the angel. The use of water, sand

---

<sup>42</sup> Sylvain Giroud, former Ballet Preljocaj member, was cast in the Paris Opéra Ballet commission in 2002.

<sup>43</sup> The two female characters present the Catholic narrative surrounding the apparition of an angel and the announcement of the Immaculate Conception.

<sup>44</sup> Originally, *Annonciation* was choreographed in 1995 and awarded a Bessie Award for Dance and Performance following its 1997 performances at the Joyce Theater. In 2003, the work was reconceived as a film.

<sup>45</sup> The role of Gabriel was performed by Claudia de Smet at its premiere, the New York tour of 1997, as well as in the film. De Smet outlines such information during the post-performance talk at the Joyce Theater.

and wind present meta-textual explorations of the *mise-en-scène* and denote the relationship between environmental effects of the choreographic syntax as the two dancers move through the space and carve shapes in the sand.<sup>46</sup>

**Fig. 9** Still moment from *Annonciation* (1995)

Preljocaj's choreographic treatment of gestures provides a spectrum of dance narratives that is closely associated with the humanity of the corporeal body and its disposition within its existence within a community. In *MC14/22*, Preljocaj's choreographic treatment of the dramatic narrative suggests the body as prop. The dancers explore the

---

<sup>46</sup> In Crux's 2008 publication, the extract from the BMN score of *Annonciation* describes the entrance of the Angel Gabriel. The notation clearly depicts the characteristics of the early phrases.

pleasure of being washed, and the vulnerability and strength of the community of twelve males along with their interaction, collision and overlap of individuals as a group. Preljocaj's choreographic treatment denotes the performativity of brutality and eroticism as well as trust. Moreover, *MC14/22* presents a metaphoric application of unison across the eight men on tables and presents references to the body as prop. In the third section, the thumping action of another man's arm against each man's chest suggests flagellation and the early Christians' devoutness within the legacies of the Latin *mea culpa* (my fault).<sup>47</sup> Two solos furthermore suggest manipulation and flagellation; they exemplify the manipulation of bodies using physical force and objects such as packing tape. As the male dancer repeats the same phrase, another dancer begins to tape up various body parts. Building up over a series of tapings, the movement of the dancers digresses towards a significantly restricted performance of the original phrase. By the final stages, the man is significantly impaired and his body displays a multitude of deformities. The physical restraints subjected upon these bodies present Preljocaj's poignant attention to the plethora of the narratives against visualisation of the biblical verse, "this is my body". In other moments of the dance, two solos further manipulate the narrativity of the dancing body: notably, the deconstruction of the spatio-temporal organisation including aural performativity and freedom of limbs. In Giroud's solo, the performativity of the voice is altered through the manipulation of his body. Two other dancers place pressure on Giroud's chest, mouth and abdomen and distort the vocal performance.

In *Annonciation*, the flicking of wrist and forearm along the vertical plane to side right presents references to wings. As 'Gabriel' lifts arched arms with head displaced into the

---

<sup>47</sup> A spectrum of such flagellation can still be seen in Christian rituals. During a Catholic service, this can be seen as a penitentiary action that is comprised of three small taps with the right fist over one's heart. More violent flagellations are associated with extreme marginalised groups, recently explored in Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) and the subsequent film released in 2006.

sagittal plane, a resonant metonymic gesture references the presence of a winged creature over 'Mary'.<sup>48</sup> The three ballets suggest composite 'traces' of Preljocaj's interest in transposing his stylistic concerns across two corporeal landscapes – that of the dancers of Ballet Preljocaj and the Paris Opéra Ballet. The signature trends emerge across these dance narratives and construct overlapping accumulations of recurring trends and patterns within the organisation of body parts within the kinesphere. In *Annonciation*, the recurring use of the sagittal plane characterises the solos and duets performance by Mary and the angel Gabriel.

A similar approach to danced narratives is also readily observable in *MC14/22*. The dancers perform duets along tables as they slide and shift across the horizontal plane. The orientation of the dancers shifts along the table where the corporeal organisation reflects a strong use of parallel limbs within the sagittal plane and a transient use of the vertical or horizontal planes within both upper and lower levels of the body. The final section of *MC14/22* displays similar choreographic organisation; the repetition of a phrase by two of the twelve men suggests the thematic underpinning of this dance narrative within the progression of *MC14/22*. The choreography provides a consolidation of 'layers' across the performance. In *MC 14/22*, this is presented in the opening scene where eight dancers are organised in two columns of four dancers, each replicating the same phrases. In his programme note, Preljocaj describes this ballet as "punctuated by with six tables – an area of questioning, for examining a recurring intensity faced with a world where virtuality is taking over from physical experience" (Ballet Preljocaj, 2001, online). The dramatic narratives are further supported through the subsequent group choreography, presented as a series of corporeal identities located within close proximity and replicated within a series of tableaux in the second section. Here, the choreographic organisation presents a six-part enquiry of gestures,

---

<sup>48</sup> Similar to Note 49, the role of Mary was performed by Julie Bour, another Ballet Preljocaj dancer who performed with the company for over a decade.

corporeal organisation and layering of bodies and narratives through the organisation of the dancers within the performative space, exploring iconic images of interplays and relationships between the men.<sup>49</sup>

The selection of three works, which parallel Pavis's notion of a creative "metatext of discourse of the *mise en scène*" (Pavis, 2004, p.34), outline Preljocaj's imaginative, challenging and in some instances controversial choreographic revisions of Christian and Greek myths. The analysis of the composite use of props and sites, together with the emergent choreographic concerns and organisation of the bodies in *Annonciation* and in the works commissioned by the Paris Opéra Ballet, *MC 14/22: Ceci est mon corps* and *Le Songe de Médée*, offered an opportunity to interrogate his revisionist stance on selected dogmas and myths. This trio of works suggests the shifts and accumulations of his performative and theatrical concerns across two French dance companies and denote the overlaps Preljocaj has fostered between contemporary dance and ballet cultures at the Paris Opéra Ballet and his company, Ballet Preljocaj. Moreover, such choreographic works introduce another facet of Preljocaj's interests: revising established narratives and iconic choreographic works.

---

<sup>49</sup>The extract highlighted in the CD-ROM focuses on the summary outlined in Table. 3.1.

**Table 1** Summary of choreographic tableaux in *MC14/22* (2001)<sup>50</sup>

1. Feast	
2. Internal struggle	
3. Pain and torture	

<sup>50</sup> The images presented in Table 3.1 have been taken from a TV broadcast of the ballet on Mezzo TV channel in 2002.



4. Negotiating and teasing	
5. Sexual pleasure	
6. Playful games	

### 3.5 Revising iconic ballets: *Romeo et Juliette* (1990) and the Ballets Russes repertoire

At the start of the early 1990s, Preljocaj embarked on a series of revisions of iconic ballets. A first project was a revision of *Romeo and Juliet* (Prokofiev, 1935), which he created for the Lyon Opéra Ballet in December 1990, and this production marked the start of a series of collaborations with other Balkan or Eastern Bloc artists<sup>51</sup> based in France. The collaborators include Belgrade-born Enki Bilal and Serbian-born Goran Vejvoda and Angelin Preljocaj, whose own parents were Albanian immigrants from Montenegro in the late 1950s.

*Roméo et Juliette* (1990)<sup>52</sup> depicts a revision of the Shakespearian narrative viewed through a Balkan or Eastern Bloc interpretation of the traditional text, layered with references to the conceptual premise of Jerome Robbins' *West Side Story* (1956).<sup>53</sup> During an interview televised on TVF2 (France),<sup>54</sup> Preljocaj commented on the aftermath and implications of Eastern Bloc political agendas as well as the immediacy of other socio-cultural divides including intracultural sectarianism in geographic locations such as Northern Ireland. In his programme note,<sup>55</sup> Preljocaj makes significant reference to the Berlin Wall (1961–1989) and places his revision of the ballet within the context of a totalitarian Eastern Bloc regime. In Preljocaj's revision, the stark mise-en-scène and contemporary militia costumes designed by Bilal, and Châtelet's austere lighting designs, are supported by Vejvoda's electronic composition superimposed on an edited version of the Prokofiev score.

---

<sup>51</sup> Here I am referring to artists with ancestry from the former republic of Yugoslavia (1929–2003) – a country that is now divided into the countries of Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Macedonia and Croatia.

<sup>52</sup> The ballet was commissioned by the Lyon Opéra Ballet as a production for twenty-four dancers.

<sup>53</sup> Robbins' *West Side Story* takes place in 1950s New York City, and the Montagues and the Capulets are revised into local teenage gangs, the Jets (white-working class teenagers) and the Sharks (the Puerto-Rican young immigrants).

<sup>54</sup> The interview here is a 1996 interview televised on TVF2 (France), now available online on iDoc via the Ballet Preljocaj website.

<sup>55</sup> This is noted in the Ballet Preljocaj programme from the 2001 Sadler's Wells performance tour as well as the Ballet Preljocaj website, online.

Significantly, the historical context of the ballet coincides with the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. The overlaps of militia and marginalisation of the homeless in Preljocaj's ballet remind audiences of the reality of the human condition post-1989, together with the instability of the Balkan region that ensued following the rise of the political leader Slobodan Milosevic (1941–2006) and the resulting Yugoslav Wars (1991–1995).<sup>56</sup> Bilal's stage design, including the large metal wall that engulfs the boundaries of the stage, acts as a reminder of the recent, turbulent past of the Balkan collaborators<sup>57</sup>. Within its French context, Preljocaj's *Roméo et Juliette* can be viewed as a vision of the "other", where the cultural and political concerns of these artists provide a dimension of alterity within both the Lyon Opéra Ballet and Ballet Preljocaj.

Another revisionist trend emerged in the mid 1990s. During a 1997 post-performance conversation,<sup>58</sup> Preljocaj describes himself as a self-confessed admirer of the early twentieth-century Ballet Russes (1909–1929), the company managed by the Russian art impresario Serge Diaghilev (1872–1929). Following his revision of three Ballet Russes' iconic ballets by Michel Fokine (1880–1942), Leonide Massine (1895–1979) and Bronislava Nijinska (1891–1972), Preljocaj revisited the epitome of an iconic twentieth-century modern masterpiece, *Le Sacre du Printemps* (Nijinsky 1913). Through his collaborations with the Paris Opéra Ballet, with the *Hommage aux Ballets Russes* of 1993, Preljocaj created a revision of *Le Spectre de la Rose* (Fokine, 1909) and *Parade* (Massine, 1917). These two commissioned works, together with the restaging of his 1989 revision of *Les Noces* (1923), represented an

---

<sup>56</sup> These are the dates outlined by journalist and author Misha Glenny in his publication *The Fall of Yugoslavia* (1996).

<sup>57</sup> Vejvoda is not particularly proud of his Balkan heritage, but rather aligns his work to a more metropolitan position (Vejvoda in Cruz, 2008, p.117).

<sup>58</sup> This post-performance conversation took place at the Joyce Theater on 16 April 1997, between Preljocaj and company dancers and was led by Joann Robinson from the Joyce Theater with Fay Greenbaum as a translator. A recording of this interview was accessed at the Jerome Robbins Dance Division at the New York Public Library.

opportune moment in Preljocaj's choreographic career as well as a unique moment to share his interest in rethinking the early twentieth-century avant-garde repertoire.

All three revisionist ballets draw upon parts of the music narratives that underpinned the heritage of the Ballet Russes repertoire. Whilst rethinking the dance narratives of this Ballet Russes' canon, the commissions suggest an intricate engagement with the dramatic and music narratives. The revised ballets engage with more direct and darker interrogation aspects of the subject matter such as exotic and escapist identities in *Parade*, sexual desires in *Le Spectre de la Rose* and attacks on bridal dolls in *Noces*.<sup>59</sup> The choreographic idiom within the selected revisions shifts Preljocaj's signature corporeal treatment of linearity, angularity and clarity within the organisation of the limbs working across the three planes.

*Le Spectre de la Rose* (1993) is a twenty-minute ballet for six dancers, set to Carl-Maria von Weber's score that was originally part of Fokine's 1909 ballet<sup>60</sup> alongside an electronic arrangement by Marc Khamne. Preljocaj makes significant reference to the historical importance of this 1911 ballet; he argues that his revision is a tribute to Nijinsky's iconic histories, the myth of Fokine's work and the start of what became a landmark modern ballet company. The three duets in Preljocaj's *Le Spectre de la Rose* suggest the desires within the dreams of three young girls: two dream of dances with Spanish matadors, and the other of a dance with a man dressed in a cream raincoat and a shower cap covered in pink

---

<sup>59</sup> This will be discussed further in Chapter Five's analyses of *Noces* (1989).

<sup>60</sup> Based on a poem by French poet, dramatist and critic Théophile Gautier (1811–1872), *Le Spectre de la Rose* premiered in April 1911. The ballet was choreographed by Russian dancer, teacher and choreographer Michel Fokine (1880–1942) to music by German composer Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826). The ballet was first danced by Vaslav Nijinsky (1880–1942) in the role of the Spirit of the Rose and Tamara Karsavina (1885–1978) as the Young Woman who returns from her debutante ball, falls asleep on her return and dreams of dancing with a rose.

petals<sup>61</sup>. *Parade*, a twenty-minute choreographic work set to Eric Satie's score for Massine's 1917 ballet of the same name,<sup>62</sup> references the *Fête à Neu Neu* in the Bois de Boulogne, a Parisian tradition dating back to the early nineteenth century and re-popularised in the late 1940s (Ballet Preljocaj Production notes, online). In revisiting and producing his version of *Parade*, Preljocaj demonstrates his interest in the local histories of Paris<sup>63</sup> and Massine's ballet that premiered in Paris. Moreover, in re-creating and performing the role of the Arts Manager, Preljocaj revisits the context and the characterisation of the colourful tonalities that suggest the dramatic weight within the performance.<sup>64</sup>

**Table 2** Scenes from Preljocaj's *Parade* (1993)<sup>65</sup>

--

<sup>61</sup> Here the petals on the shower cap and the scatterings on the coat reference the iconic pink petal-covered unitard worn by Nijinsky in 1911.

<sup>62</sup> *Parade* (1917) premiered in May 1917 at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. With costumes and scenery by cubist Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and music by Eric Satie (1866–1925), the ballet explored a surrealist parade of entertainment personalities (impresarios, gymnasts, a puppet horse and a little girl mocking the sinking of the Titanic) (April 1912). The libretto of the ballet was written by the French artist Jean Cocteau (1889–1963).

<sup>63</sup> It is also suggested here that Preljocaj may also reference memories from his childhood, at the Fair and growing up in the suburbs of Paris.

<sup>64</sup> An extract of *Parade* (1993) can be viewed through the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.

<sup>65</sup> These images of Preljocaj in the Chinese Solo are taken from the extracts of Preljocaj's *Parade* outlined in INA online clips

Nearly a decade later, Preljocaj revised another iconic ballet from the Ballet Russes period – a seminal ballet titled *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913). As a collaboration between Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), Nicholas Roerich (1874–1947) and Vaslav Nijinsky (1889–1950), the ballet was organised into two sections: Part 1: Adoration of the Earth and Part 2: The Sacrifice. The ballet is set in ancient Russia and presents a pagan rite in which a young girl is chosen to dance herself to death. Nijinsky’s balletic idiom is described as “inverted, anti-classical movement style”<sup>66</sup>. Following its initial ten performances and its chaotic reception, the ballet faded into myth (Siegel, 2010, p.370). It also evolved into a historical icon that has been revised by various choreographers, and between 1930 and 2008 there were one hundred and eight-five recorded revisions of the ballet and the score.<sup>67</sup> In 1987 the ballet was reconstructed<sup>68</sup> by American choreographer and dance historian Millicent Hodson and British art historian Kenneth Archer for the Joffrey Ballet.

Preljocaj’s revision, created for Ballet Preljocaj in 2001,<sup>69</sup> contests parts of the legacy of ‘sacrifice’ in the 1913 ballet and presents the narrative as a contemporary social rape, viewing both genders as accomplices and victims of the attitude towards sex and predatory behaviour. Preljocaj’s *Les Sacre du Printemps*<sup>70</sup> can be considered as a sexually-charged rite

---

<sup>66</sup> As described by Jordan and Nicholas in the *Stravinsky the Global Dancer* database.

<sup>67</sup> As accounted for by Jordan and Nicholas in the *Stravinsky the Global Dancer* database.

<sup>68</sup> Hodson used two sources of information: an annotated score from rehearsals with Nijinsky (c.1913) by Marie Rambert (1888–1982) and the drawings sketched during one of the performances in 1913 by French artist Valentine Gross/Hugo (1887–1968).

<sup>69</sup> *Sacre du Printemps* (2001) was co-produced by Berlin State Opera as well as Théâtre de la Ville (Paris). During the year of premiere, the work toured as a stage production for twelve dancers with scenography and sets by Thierry Leproust and visited various European theatres including Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia (Italy) and Sadler’s Wells in London, as well as touring the United States.

<sup>70</sup> *Sacre du Printemps* was observed as live performances at Sadler’s Wells in London (2001) and seen as a recorded performance (Ballet Preljocaj at Teatro Valli on 30 November 2001) at the Teatro Valli archives in Reggio Emilia during a research period in October 2008. Access to iDoc clips presented opportunities to engage with recorded oral histories including an interview with Preljocaj. The interactive CD-ROM provides an extract from *Le Sacre du*

that intricately balances the linearity of Cunningham-based vocabularies, the emotive concerns of Waehner's corporeal shapes and a postmodern revision of Nijinsky's seminal ballet. The dance commences in silence; a woman walks on to the centre of the stage and is observed by six men located at the back on the stage, sitting on an earthy, elevated landscape. The woman pulls down a pair of white knickers until they reach mid-calf. Five other women enter the performance space and follow the first woman as they pull down their white knickers. Relayed as a recording, the Introduction of Stravinsky's score commences and the six women move *sur place* (on the spot) and across the performance space; they flick their knickers off only for them to be collected and kept in their pockets by the six men during *Augurs of Spring*. Other garments become the focus points of the dance narratives. The women masturbate against the men's shirts,<sup>71</sup> and later the men arrogantly strip off the women's shirts. The lust turns to violence; all six women are raped on their blocks by their male partners. However, what ensues demonstrates Preljocaj's revision of the final stages of the ballet as a disturbing collective rape of a chosen woman.

The most brutal scene takes place when the chosen woman, who is also the same dancer who was the first to enter at the start of the dance, is stripped naked by both her female and male counterparts. She is selected by a man who smells her skin and then touches her, as though he is cross-checking that she is the one they want. During *The Sacrificial Dance*, the woman hurls herself across the fluctuating earthy landscape and, in heightened frenzy, she repeats a series of slashes across her body and pressing actions down to the floor. On the final note of Stravinsky's music, Preljocaj's chosen woman does not succumb to the floor. Instead, she directs her gaze out to her audience, as though through her exhaustion, she

---

*Printemps*; these extracts are taken from the recording of a television broadcast of the ballet on French TV channel Mezzo TV in October 2009.

<sup>71</sup> Here could be a reference to the scandalous histories of Nijinsky's *L'Après Midi d'un Faune* (1912), where, at the end of the ballet, the faun pleasures himself with the Nymph's scarf.

has shifted her terror to disgust and anger. The final glance directed towards the audience is menacing, as though she might utter: “Is this what you have paid to see?”

Preljocaj’s revision of the 1913 ballet, the narratives that surround the chosen girl (victim) and the innovative choreographic landscape are heavily dependent on the use of six green blocks. The displacement and reorganisation of the six blocks in *Le Sacre du Printemps* suggest the metaphoric resonance of the mise-en-scène and the emerging narratives. The dancers construct and reconstruct spatio-temporal landscapes that shift, connect and accumulate through the clustering, separating and re-grouping of Thierry Leproust’s six mobile platforms. There are five organisations of these blocks that support the narratives through the dance. At the start, the six male dancers sit on the blocks located at the back of the stage; the men observe the entrance of the first girl as well as those of the other five. Similarly, the females are attacked by their male ‘partners’ on the blocks, arranged in Organisation 2. As the dance unfolds, Preljocaj draws the audience’s attention to the physicality of the dancing bodies; in Organisation 3, the blocks are placed in the wings, semi-visible to the spectators. The complexity of the landscapes in the reorganisation of the blocks in Organisation 4, during the *Mystic Circle of the Young Girls*, provides a plethora of avenues for the weighted walks performed by the rows of dancers that engulf the centre of the performance space. And, in the final stages, the blocks provide a central space for the raped girl to be stripped of her garments by her fellow female and male performers. The poignancy of the final solo, performed in silence, illustrates the final strength of the vulnerable woman. She is lit as a lone figure in the middle of the block formation and her moves are magnified by the overlap of textures, including her bodily presence at the heart of the earthiness of the blocks and the fluctuating surfaces and contours.



**Table 3** Analysis of the organisation of the blocks in *Le Sacre du Printemps* (2001)<sup>72</sup>

Locations of the six grassy blocks	
Organisation 1: <i>Introduction,</i> <i>The Augurs of Spring,</i> <i>Ritual of Abduction</i>	
Organisation 2: (Relocation of the blocks) <i>Spring Rounds</i> and <i>Games of the Two Rival Tribes</i>	
Organisation 3: (Relocation of the blocks) to the <i>Introduction of Part 2</i> (The Exalted Sacrifice)	
Organisation 4: (Relocation of the blocks) <i>Mystic Circle of the Young Girls</i>	
Organisation 5: (Relocation of the blocks) <i>The Naming and Honouring of the</i> <i>Chosen One</i> until the <i>Sacrificial</i> <i>Dance (The Chosen One)</i>	

<sup>72</sup> These images are taken from the 2004 performance filmed as part of *Dance Celebration: Carte Blanche à Angelin Preljocaj* (2004), televised on Mezzo TV channel in 2009.

The analyses of these creative and collaborative revisions demonstrate how Preljocaj's interest in established texts and performance and social/political histories can inform new readings of two iconic ballets, namely *Roméo et Juliette* and *Le Sacre du Printemps*. These works provided an opportunity to interrogate his revisionist stance on selected dance works and dance histories. Both case studies offer diverse shifts and accumulations of Preljocaj's concerns with the performative and theatrical dimensions across French and Balkan contexts. Moreover, Preljocaj's revision of the context of the iconic narratives, together with his theatrical engagement with props such as those in *Le Sacre*, provides a multilayered dimension to further understanding his choreographic histories.

### 3.6 Conclusion

Throughout the sections of this chapter, the body of work of Preljocaj has been analysed as well as set in its historical context. Through a detailed overview of the context of dance in France following the post-war years, the migrated influences of German and American dance practices positioned themselves within the French dance cultures in the twentieth century. Preljocaj's forerunners, including Waehner and Bagouet, illustrated the diversity of choreographic interests. Moreover, his secondment in the United States – something that most French artists did at the time – offered him the possibility of exploring the technical parameters of the rigours of the Cunningham technique. Throughout his career as a performance maker, Preljocaj's diverse interests have also shaped the body of work created between 1984 and recent times. His diverse collaborations have offered him opportunities to revisit established histories, texts and cultures, and when required, he has revisited seminal texts and performances in order to give significant resonance to themes that address sexual aggression as well as his Balkan heritage in order to place notions of 'otherness' within French artistic dimensions.

## Chapter Four

### Mauro Bigonzetti

#### Chapter Outline

- 4.1 Dance in Italy: post-war developments and artistic agendas
- 4.2 Mauro Bigonzetti's training and earlier influences
- 4.3 A survey of choreographic commissions: 1990–2010
- 4.4 Contemporary choreographic reflections: Italian culture, histories and legacies
- 4.5 Revising iconic ballets: *Romeo and Juliet* (2006) and the Ballet Russes repertoire
- 4.6 Conclusion

This chapter traces the performance and choreographic histories associated with Mauro Bigonzetti, outlining his position as an exponent of Italian choreographic commissions throughout the last two and a half decades. The chapter outlines the influential choreographic voices and works that Bigonzetti encountered during the early parts of his career, particularly during his choreographic apprenticeship with Aterballetto (1983–1993). A significantly limited number of sources account for the early influences and choreographic practices associated with Bigonzetti.<sup>1</sup> Recent critical reviews, notably the reviews in *The New York Times* by Alastair Macaulay (2008–2010), demonstrate a lack of understanding of the aesthetic and heritage that has shaped the choreographic work of Bigonzetti. As a result of these issues, this chapter aims to fill the gap in written histories that account for Bigonzetti's performance and choreographic career. In order to achieve this, the analyses of a selection of important commissions<sup>2</sup> created for European companies, including Balletto di Toscana

---

<sup>1</sup> Here I refer to the article written by Silvia Poletti (1999) for the American periodical *Dance Magazine*. The article was published in February 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Tools used in the analysis of recordings of (live) performances include those located in research libraries and company archives at the New York Public Library (USA) and in the Teatro Valli Archives in Reggio Emilia (Italy). Recordings of television broadcasts have been drawn from the author's personal collection as well as from extracts posted online on Ballet Preljocaj's iDoc online database and YouTube.com. Observations of live performances of repertoire took place in Reggio Emilia (Italy), New York (USA) and Sadler's Wells (London). The chapter generates discourses on some of the choreo-historiographic identities read through the analysis of commissions including *Mediterranea* (1993), *Pression* (1994),

(Italy), Staatsballett Berlin (Germany) and the English National Ballet (UK), as well as North American commissions by New York City Ballet and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (USA), are central to the arguments in this chapter. These analyses mark out the signature features implicit within the choreographic commissions created between 1990 and 2010.<sup>3</sup>

#### 4.1 Dance in Italy: post-war developments and artistic agendas

With the exception of Bigonzetti's choreographic practices emergent in recent decades, the establishment of a twentieth-century choreographic Italian identity was arguably an untenable luxury. Giannandrea Poesio argues that, in such an unstable climate, no choreographer managed to spend enough time with the same institution (in Grau and Jordan, 2000). The result of continual changes in directors of opera houses and dance companies alongside the import of foreign artists resulted in a multifarious and fluctuating aesthetic. The *Dance Now*

---

*X.N.Tricities* (1994), *Kazimir's Colours* (1996), *Cantata* (2000), *WAM* (2005), *Omaggio a Bach* (2006), *Oltremare* (2008), *Caravaggio* (2008) and *Festa Barocca* (2008). The enquiry summarises the choreographic identities associated with Bigonzetti's choreographic works (1990–2010). Extracts from the works mentioned in this chapter can be viewed through the interactive Slide Show in Folder 1 of the CD-ROM (Extracts of Choreographic Works). A short list of the extracts is indicated in red on the choreochronicle for Bigonzetti in Appendix Chart 3.

<sup>3</sup> A recording of Aterballetto's 2006 performance of *Pression* (1994) was accessed at Aterballetto's premises in Reggio Emilia, Italy. ENB's commissions, *X.N.Tricities* (1994) and *Symphonic Dances* (1993), were observed as recorded performances at English National Ballet's premises in London. NYCB's *Vespro* (2002) was observed as a recorded performance at the Jerome Robbins Dance Division at the New York Public Library as well as a live performance at the New York State Theater in June 2007. *In vento* was observed as a live performance during NYCB's London Season in March 2007 whilst *Oltremare* (2008) was observed in New York at the State Theater together with extracts of a recorded performance posted on NYCB's YouTube page. AAADT's commission *Festa Barocca* (2008) was observed as an online posting, highlighting an abridged version of the first of the three *pas de deux*, a duet for Clifton Brown and Constance Stamatiou, as well as an entire recorded performance at the New York Public Library in December 2010. *Omaggio a Bach* (2000) and *Rossini Cards* (2004) were restaged for Ballett Dortmund; recordings of subsequent performances of these two ballets performed by Aterballetto were accessed at the New York Public Library. Staatsballett Berlin commissioned *Kasimir's Colours* (1996) and *Caravaggio* (2008); they were observed as online postings on YouTube.com and *Caravaggio* also as a television broadcast; a *pas de deux* from each of these two works was analysed. Extracts of these works can be viewed in the Appendix CD-ROM.

correspondent for Italy, Freda Pitt, argued that “the lack of an internationally famous Italian choreographer...made Italy fertile ground for foreign practitioners” (Pitt, 1999, p.78). Artists such as Roland Pétit (1924–2011), Maurice Béjart (1927–2007) and Rudolf Nureyev (1938–1993) became frequent visitors and through such artistic residencies transferred their choreographic legacies into the country’s flagship ballet companies, including La Scala (Milan) and the Rome Opera Ballet.

In the twentieth century, the influx of visiting choreographers increased during the summer months each year. Post-war cultural initiatives included summer festivals such as the International Ballet Festival at Nervi established in 1955 and the Festival of Two Worlds, launched by Gian Carlo Menotti (1911–2007) in 1958 at Spoleto (Poesio in Grau and Jordan, 2000). These events presented artistic migrations. Pitt describes how the American influence of companies such as Jerome Robbins’ *Ballets USA*, which debuted at Spoleto in 1958, offered an exciting choreographic exposition. The legacy of such exchanges was furthered through the establishment of regional dance festivals in the 1980s, including *Bolzano Danza* (Bolzano Dance), which showcased contemporary dance works including works by Belgian artist Michèle Anne De Mey (b.1959) and Angelin Preljocaj (b.1957) (Vacarino, 1998a). Choreographic platforms such as *Reggio Emilia Danza*<sup>4</sup> (RED) festivals showcased the works of William Forsythe (May 2003), Jiří Kylián, Mats Ek and John Neumier (May 2004), and Bigonzetti, Preljocaj, Sasha Waltz and Russell Maliphant (June 2006).<sup>5</sup> Whilst such artistic platforms underpinned the importation of dance trends, the Italian choreographic interest in experimental choreography can be credited to Vittorio Biagi (b.1941), a graduate of La Scala (Milan) Ballet School and Bejart’s Mudra School. His artistic endeavours in the

---

<sup>4</sup> Reggio Emilia Dance festival

<sup>5</sup> More recent years highlighted the work of Israeli choreographer Ohad Naharin (October 2008), Trisha Brown (October 2009) and, more recently, that of Belgian-Moroccan Sidi-Larbi Cherakoui and South African Gregory Maqoma (October 2010).

late 1970s provided a new choreographic voice within the Italian dance landscape. Biagi's contribution to the development of local choreography included the vision of a new regional company, later named as Aterballetto, with a small and eclectic group of dancers. The academic centres of Rome (Rome Opera Ballet) and Milan (La Scala) provided scope for classical repertoire that strived to retain the legacies of the nineteenth-century canon. As their counterpart, Aterballetto remains a centrally-located, artistic and cultural platform and provides subsequent choreographers, including Bigonzetti, with a creative space for a proportion of their works.

Set up in 1977 and briefly directed by Biagi, Aterballetto is located in Reggio Emilia in the northern region of Italy, and has been described as the "liveliest dance centre in Italy" (Pitt, 1999, p.46). The company promotes itself as the first regionally-funded dance company in Italy. Its choice of the favourable geographic location in the north-central part of Italy reflects the region's heritage of sixteenth-century traditions and a passion for dance and the arts (Carnevali, 2001, p.14). Dance researcher Daniela Carnevali depicts Aterballetto's philosophy as a pioneering spirit, away from the 'academic' centres of Rome and Milan. This geographic and artistic distance proved beneficial in Aterballetto's mission to foster and promote new choreographic identities. Moreover, the municipality of Reggio Emilia presents an ideal creative space; the cultural emancipation of political and cultural regions following political reforms in Italy during the 1950s underpins the acceptance, approval and support for this small but eclectic ballet company. The repertoire presented by Aterballetto steers away from the large corps de ballet productions of classics such as *Giselle* (Perrault 1842) and *Sleeping Beauty* (Petipa 1890) staged by Teatro La Scala Milan or the Rome Opera Ballet.

The early company repertoire was choreographed by Amedeo Amodio (b.1940), Aterballetto's second artistic director (1979–1997). The company's invitations to Glen Tetley

(1926–2006), Alvin Ailey (1931-1989), Lucinda Childs (b.1940) and William Forsythe (b. 1949) shaped the choreographic traditions associated with twentieth-century forms of ballet, modern and postmodern dance. Stagings of works by George Balanchine (1904–1983), Antony Tudor (1909-1987), Hans van Manen (b. 1932) and Pétit also augmented the spectrum of choreographic legacies of Aterballetto. Forsythe's frequent visits to Aterballetto promoted the increasingly influential sensitivity deriving from his early choreographic practices (mid 1980s and 1990s) (*Danza e danza*, 1989, p.3). Forsythe's proliferation of balletic vocabulary and the political and artistic implications of the deconstruction of the spectacle in *Steptext/Artifact 2* (1985)<sup>6</sup> and other later works such as *Four Counterpoint* (1996) reflect the experimental concerns at Aterballetto, in the region and with the subsequently evolving national choreographic aesthetic.<sup>7</sup> During the last two decades, audiences at the Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia have been exposed to a large majority of Forsythe's commissions for Ballett Frankfurt and subsequently the Forsythe Company.<sup>8</sup>

Following the resignation of Amodio in 1997, Bigonzetti's appointment as artistic director of Aterballetto led to a period of reductions in the breadth of commissioned repertoire. Between 1997 and 2007, the company provided a unique and exclusive opportunity to refine, further shape and consolidate its stylistic identities as well as proliferate Bigonzetti's choreographic voice. In 2009, the company celebrated its thirtieth anniversary and today Aterballetto still retains the artistic need to research and experiment and to challenge the established with eclecticism. In recent times, this has been achieved with

---

<sup>6</sup> Subsequently known as *Steptext* for the Royal Ballet (1993) and other European companies, *Artifact 2* (1985) presented challenging choreographic practices within the performances by four Aterballetto dancers led by Bigonzetti and ballerina Elisabetta Terabust (b.1943).

<sup>7</sup> A more detailed study of the influences can be found in the contribution to the 2012 Society of Dance History Scholars' annual conference – see Farrugia (2012).

<sup>8</sup> The archives of the Teatro Valli contain the largest collection of recordings of Forsythe's works between the 1980s and recent times as a result of the frequent visits made by Ballett Frankfurt (1984–2004) and the Forsythe Company (2004–present).

Bigonzetti's choreographic works, alongside other works by the Spanish choreographer Nacho Duato (b.1957) and a selection of Aterballetto dancers, most notably Valerio Longo (b.1976).

The 1980s saw a surge of new regional dance companies which followed the eclecticism of Aterballetto and the proliferation of regional dance festivals (Vaccarino, 1988). Partly and inconsistently state-funded by the Ministero delle Arti dello Spettacolo (Ministry of Performing Arts), the Teatro Nuovo di Torino (New Theatre of Turin), Balletto del Veneto, Balletto di Napoli and Balletto di Toscana are some of the companies which provided opportunities for young dancers and choreographers. These companies operated largely outside the bureaucratic structures of state-run organisations. Amongst these, the most resolutely successful is the Balletto di Toscana. Based in Florence and established originally as the Collettivo di Danza Contemporanea (Contemporary Dance Collective), this group of dancers was led in 1975 by Belgian-born Micha von Hoecke of Béjart's Ballet du XXème Siècle (Poesio in Grau and Jordan, 2000). By 1985, the company had been renamed and was subsequently led by Florence-born Christina Bozzolini<sup>9</sup> (b.1943), a retired principal dancer for La Scala and the Rome Opera Ballet. Bozzolini's directorship was responsible for commissioning Bigonzetti; works like *Turnpike* (1992) and *Pression* (1993) were created within this experimental, yet successful, home ground for Bigonzetti. Moreover, Bozzolini further facilitated creative overlaps by commissioning Preljocaj's *Liqueurs de chair* (1993) during the 1996 season (Vaccarino, 1996).

The 1990s heralded issues concerning the lack of creative spaces available for independent dance artists (*danza d'autore*) working outside the parameters of the regional dance companies. Italian dance critic Vittoria Ottolenghi voiced her frustration with

---

<sup>9</sup> Bozzolini was appointed as the artistic director of Aterballetto in 2008.



choreographic works that did not challenge audiences and those which served only to bring revenue to sustain an 'unsupported' cultural facet of Italian theatre (Ottolenghi, 1993).

Arguably, this frustration culminated during the 1990s, demonstrating the inconsistency and fluctuation in financial stability across regional companies. Aterballetto addressed its choreographic problems in the mid 1990s. Under Amodio, the creative space had become a company of lacklustre and sceptically-reviewed 'revisions' of the nineteenth-century canon. This choreographic emphasis was instrumental in the decline of creative enterprises in the 1990s Italian balletic scene (Vaccarino, 1991). The insecurity of creative spaces together with an inconsistent credibility in the indigenous choreographic sensibilities emergent in the 1990s arguably were rectified by the establishment of the Commissione Danza (Dance Commission) in 1997. The commission's organisation of the distribution of government funds provided dance companies with a political and administrative regulatory framework and an opportunity to restabilise the economic landscape in the arts and the belief in choreographic practices within the Italian theatre dance community (Poesio in Grau and Jordan, 2000).

The early part of the twenty-first century shaped Italian choreographic identities and brought about the emergence of more complex national and cultural identities. Whilst funding issues are still at the forefront of the few regional companies in existence, the Italian dance scene reflects the theatre dance scenes within Europe. The appointment of Bologna as a European City of Culture in 2000 led to the establishment of a dance festival that displayed a vibrant national and cultural exchange reminiscent of the post-war festivals. As a leading exponent from this Italian context, the work of Mauro Bigonzetti offers a remarkable set of histories that will now be explored in depth.

## 4.2 Mauro Bigonzetti's training and early influences

Born in 1960 and raised near Cinecittà<sup>10</sup> in the suburbs of Rome, Bigonzetti undertook an eight-year programme of training at the Rome Opera Ballet School, where he encountered classical ballet technique, *pas de deux* and repertoire of the grand classics.<sup>11</sup> Upon graduating in 1979, he performed with the Rome Opera House ballet company for four years and was subsequently employed as a dancer with Aterballetto in 1983. Significantly, his ten-year period with Aterballetto can be considered as his choreographic apprenticeship. Both his training and periods as a professional dancer informed his interest in neoclassical choreographic practices; his experiences include performing works by twentieth-century choreographers such as George Balanchine (1904–1983), Antony Tudor (1909–1987), Glen Tetley (1928–2007) and Hans van Manen (b. 1932) (Bezzi, 2004, p.12).

Choreographic parallels can be drawn between some of Bigonzetti's creative influences. The early 1980s repertoire of Aterballetto included iconic neoclassical works such as *Apollon Musagète* (1928), *Allegro Brillante* (1956) and *Agon* (1957). His embodied knowledge of Balanchine repertoire becomes central to his choreographic starting points; the emphasis of stylistic features such as the appearance of flexed wrists, counterbalance and syncopated movements are relocated to become the cornerstones of Bigonzetti's signature organisation of movement vocabulary. However, other choreographic voices that inhabited the creative spaces of Aterballetto opened up innovative possibilities for the young Bigonzetti. These influences include a twentieth-century seminal repertoire associated with

---

<sup>10</sup> Translated as City of Cinema, Cinecittà was constructed between 1936 and 1937 and funded by Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini (1883–1945). The film studios offered lower production costs to American production companies in the 1950s and several iconic films were produced there, including *Roman Holiday* (1953) and *Ben Hur* (1959). Subsequent iconic films include those by Sergio Leone (1929–1989) and Franco Zeffirelli (b.1923).

<sup>11</sup> This was outlined during an interview in May 2009. Bigonzetti outlined his familiarity with the classics such as *The Sleeping Beauty* (1980) as well as his admiration for dancers such as Erik Bruhn (1928–1986), Nureyev and Sir Anthony Dowell (b.1943).

the legacies of Leonide Massine (1895–1979)<sup>12</sup>, who choreographed for the Ballet Russes' choreographer (1915–1921), Tetley, William Forsythe (b.1949)<sup>13</sup> and Mats Ek (b.1949)<sup>14</sup>. In order to trace the artistic trends that grounded Bigonzetti's choreographic interests, the analyses of selections from Aterballetto's programmed works from the mid 1980s, as well as other companies' performances at the Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia, will now be explored in detail<sup>15</sup>.

Fundamental stylistic features of Bigonzetti's choreographic approach can be seen to derive from a performance of the solo of the Chinese man in Massine's *Parade* (1917).<sup>16</sup> The angularity at key points in the body such as flexion at ankles, knees and elbows and the predominant use of the sagittal and vertical plane are some of the central features of this choreographic extract performed by Bigonzetti in 1986.<sup>17</sup> The Chinese impresario's solo commences with three leaps, travelling through the arch that frames the entrance to the performance space. With either arm placed in the horizontal plane, in line with the shoulder girdle with elbows flexed, Bigonzetti rotates his flexed right leg inwards and then outwards to extend the working leg into the sagittal plane. A series of sideways leaps follows, and

---

<sup>12</sup> See García-Márquez (1995) for an insight into the life and work of Massine.

<sup>13</sup> See Spier (2011) for more information on the work of Forsythe.

<sup>14</sup> A comprehensive collection of photographs by Lesley Leslie-Spinks with text by Margareta Sörenson (2011) provides a visual history of Ek's choreographic work (1976–2011), commencing with *Saint George and the Dragon* (1976) and concluding with *Ajö/Bye* (2011).

<sup>15</sup> Some of the sources utilised for these analyses include a recording of the 1986 mixed programme that included a performance of Susanna della Pietra's restaging of *Parade* (Massine 1917), *Night Creatures* (Ailey 1974) and *Twilight* (Van Manen 1973). Other resources include video tapes showing Tetley and Bigonzetti in rehearsal for the premiere of *Dream walk of the Shaman* (1985) together with recorded performances of Forsythe's repertory including the Aterballetto commission, *Artifact 2/Steptext* (1985). Other valuable resources include recordings of performances during the frequent visits (1985–1995) by the Cullberg Ballet at *Teatro Valli*, showcasing Ek's repertoire. A recording of *Carmen* (1995) was accessed at the Royal Ballet, London.

<sup>16</sup> This recorded performance of *Parade* from 1986 was a restaging by Susanna Della Pietra, a former dancer with Massine's company (1971–1979) and former ballet mistress under Amedeo Amodio's directorship of Aterballetto (1979–1982).

<sup>17</sup> Poletti (1999) commented on the memorable performance given by Bigonzetti.

Bigonzetti extends his opposite arm and leg. Each extension is performed with a ninety-degree flexion at elbow and knee, highlighting the solo's progression to the 'adage' section of the solo. The following still images illustrate some of the stylistic points made earlier.

**Table 4** Organisation of body parts in The Chinese Solo from *Parade* (1917)<sup>18</sup>

--

Other balletic histories inform Bigonzetti's choreographic practices. Tetley's contribution to twentieth-century western dance is largely based on his amalgamation of modern dance and ballet classicism styles, including the modern dance style of Martha Graham (1894–1991), and the stylistic heritage of British choreographer Antony Tudor (1908–1987) and Cecchetti style<sup>19</sup> teacher Margaret Craske (1892–1990).<sup>20</sup> The close collaborative association between Tetley and Aterballetto resulted in various restagings of

<sup>18</sup> These images of Bigonzetti in the Chinese Solo are taken from the 1986 performance of Susanna della Pietra's restaging of *Parade* (Marsina, 1917).

<sup>19</sup> The Cecchetti style of ballet is associated with the Italian Cecchetti family and in particular with the teachings of Enrico Cecchetti (1850 – 1928). See Beaumont and Idzikowski (2003).

<sup>20</sup> This argument is presented in Barbara Long's evaluation of Tetley's contribution to modern dance in the *International Dictionary of Modern Dance* (1998).

works including *Mythical hunters* (1965) and *Sphinx* (1977),<sup>21</sup> as well as the creation of *The Dream Walk of the Shaman* (1985). It has been possible to trace Tetley's choreographic influences as a significant range of histories that inhabited the creative space at Aterballetto during the 1980s.

Close interrogation of *The Dream Walk of the Shaman* highlights a significant repositioning of choreographic legacies from Tetley's choreographic treatment. Video footage of a rehearsal<sup>22</sup> recorded in 1985 illustrates Tetley coaching the Aterballetto dancers Brunella Buonomo as the Wind girl and Bigonzetti in his role as the Water boy. The video footage highlights Bigonzetti organising and refining the positions of his body with particular emphasis on the recurring use of the sagittal plane, the parallel organisation of limbs and the flexion at ankles and wrists. In addition, archived photographic images of the performances at Teatro Valli suggest transferred legacies including the positioning of the arms in the horizontal/vertical planes, with flexion at the wrists, and, more readily observable, the use of the sagittal and vertical planes. These features can be noted in the images reproduced on the following pages (See Fig. 10 and Fig. 11). These images are digital reproductions from the original prints by Italian photographer Vasco Ascolini and are reproduced by courtesy of the Teatro Valli Archives, Reggio Emilia.

---

<sup>21</sup> This was observed as a restaging by Bronwyn Curry for the Royal Ballet during the season 2010–2011. It was performed at the Royal Opera House by Marianela Nuñez, Edward Watson and Rupert Pennefather.

<sup>22</sup> These observations are noted in the recording of the rehearsal which took place on 11 May 1985, available at the Teatro Valli Archives in Reggio Emilia.

**Fig. 10** Bigonzetti and Buonomo in *The Dream Walk of the Shaman* (1985)

**Fig. 11** Bigonzetti and Buonomo in *The Dream Walk of the Shaman* (1985)

Although none of the sources account for the following connections, it is most likely that Forsythe's associations with Aterballetto came about through his association with Tetley at the Stuttgart Ballet in the late 1970s.<sup>23</sup> As with Tetley, Forsythe's visits to Reggio Emilia and the ballet company left a significant mark on Bigonzetti's interest in challenging the choreographic traditions embedded within the early and later years of the company. Over the course of three decades, Forsythe's presence in Reggio Emilia became a recurring event. Forsythe first staged *Love Songs* (1979) for Aterballetto in 1984, where Bigonzetti performed one of the leading duets, as well as creating *Artifact 2* (1985)<sup>24</sup> and *Four Point Counter*

---

<sup>23</sup> This is established in the conference paper presented at the Society of Dance History Scholars' 2012 conference – see Farrugia (2012).

<sup>24</sup> The ballet premiered on 11 January 1985 at Teatro Ariosto (Reggio Emilia) and was titled *Artifact 2*; there are several quotations of duet material from *Artifact* (1984) that premiered just a couple of weeks before in December 1984. The first cast of the Aterballetto commission included Bigonzetti, Elisabetta Terabust, an Italian ballerina, and two other

(1996). Significantly, Forsythe was invited to contribute to the performance and choreography course in Reggio Emilia during the summer of 1991.<sup>25</sup> Since then, his recurring visits to Teatro Valli resulted in nearly all the repertoire created for Ballett Frankfurt (1984–2004) that the Forsythe Company performed in Reggio Emilia.<sup>26</sup>

*Artifact 2* (1985) and *Steptext* (1997) offered the viewer “a fragmented world of interrupted episodes and multiple interactions” (Jackson in Adshead-Lansdale, 1999, p.122). The series of duets in this ballet, embodied by Bigonzetti and his fellow Aterballetto dancers, allow insights into a spectrum of challenging dynamics and counterpoint of balance. Forsythe reconceptualised duets; the pushing, pulling and dragging of the female dancer, the hyperextension of lines and the pulling away from and sharing of the gravitational centre between the couples feature across the ballet.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, the deconstruction of theatrical components such the fracturing and reconfiguration of the *Chaconne in D minor* (1717–1723), the plethora of stimulating lighting designs and the interruptions by blackouts characterise the inventive challenges to the established performance conventions. *Steptext* thus bridges the gap between Forsythe’s balletic works and Bigonzetti’s early choreographic practices. As Bigonzetti suggested in a conversation, Forsythe’s interest in choreographic dialogues, research and experimentation challenged his own expectations of choreography

---

Aterballetto dancers. The ballet was later renamed *Steptext* and staged for the Royal Ballet in 1997, as *Firsttext*.

<sup>25</sup> Dance writer Eliza Vaccarino (1991) outlines the model of the three-month dance course that paralleled the French model designed by Alwin Nikolais in France. Through her article in *Balletto Oggi* (August 1991), Vaccarino describes the course and suggests that the areas covered movement analyses and Labanotation classes, as well as choreography classes and dance history courses led by Marinella Guatterini and Michele Porzio.

<sup>26</sup> As outlined in *Danza e Danza* (May 1989), several works including *Impressing the Tzar* (1989) and *The Loss of Small Detail* (1991) were performed at Teatro Valli.

<sup>27</sup> These points are offered in Jennifer Jackson’s chapter on Forsythe’s deconstruction of various theatrical, performance and balletic conventions through her analyses of the Royal Ballet’s staging of *Steptext* in 1997.



and performance making.<sup>28</sup> These choreographic features accumulate weight in the early works by Bigonzetti, for example *Pittura per Archi* (1992). A displacement of the choreographic trends takes inspiration from seminal works such as the Ballett Frankfurt's commission, *Artifact* (1984),<sup>29</sup> as well as the Paris Opéra Ballet's commission, *In the middle somewhat elevated* (1987).

The frequent performances by the Cullberg Ballet at Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia (1983–1993) also suggest a displacement of central choreographic points, brought about through the indirect influences of Swedish choreographer Mats Ek. Despite not having performed in any of Ek's work, Bigonzetti noted his admiration for the choreographic inventiveness of the Swedish choreographer.<sup>30</sup> The survey of the archived recorded performances of the visiting companies undertaken at Teatro Valli shows that the earliest performance of Ek's revision of *Giselle* can be traced as far back as 1983.<sup>31</sup> After that, the company appeared as a regular visitor between the early 1980s and 2007. The proximity of the premieres of Ek's seminal works, including *Giselle*, *Rite of Spring* (1984) and *Swan Lake* (1987), and the performances showcased at Reggio Emilia exemplifies the choreographic trends that filtered through Reggio Emilia's artistic hub towards the end of the twentieth century. Following these events, it becomes apparent that such influences had an impact on Bigonzetti, particularly as he demonstrated an interest in revising iconic ballets, resulting in *Les Noces* (2002), *Romeo and Juliet* (2006) and *Le Sacre* (2011).

---

<sup>28</sup> Bigonzetti outlined this in an interview with the author held at Aterballetto's Fonderia, May 2009.

<sup>29</sup> *Artifact* (1984) was Forsythe's first full-length ballet created during his first year as director of Ballett Frankfurt. Restaged by former Ballett Frankfurt ballet mistress Kathryn Bennetts, the ballet was performed by the Royal Ballet of Flanders at Sadler's Wells in April 2012.

<sup>30</sup> This comment was made during a conversation in 2009.

<sup>31</sup> According to the Teatro Valli Theatre Archives, the first performances took place on 10 December 1983.

A fundamental feature associated with Ek's choreographic *oeuvre* is the revision of iconic literary texts as well as of ballets such as *Swan Lake* (1895), *Giselle* (1842) and *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1913). In her article for *Danza e Danza*, Marinella Guatterini outlines the trend of European choreographers, including Maguy Marin, Angelin Preljocaj and Mats Ek, in escaping performance and theatrical routines though the classics remained as points of reference (Guatterini, 1991, p.1). Ek's revisions of iconic ballets provided moments to "reconsider critically cultural dogmas and artistic monoliths in the name of a lively reappraisal of an existing cultural heritage" (Poesio in Lansdale, 2008, p.86). These ballets are characterised by what Poesio describes as 'provocative' revisitations (in Lansdale 2008, p.76), in which the dance narratives are shaped through his signature vocabulary and stark *mise-en-scènes*. In a most radical rethinking of *Swan Lake*, the image of the swans is significantly most challenging: they "enter not as mythical creatures and cross the stage with weighted galops and stamping feet. ...These swans break gender boundaries mixing male and female performers" (Midgelow, 2007, pp.42–43). Furthermore, a recording of the Cullberg Ballet's performance of Ek's *Giselle* indicates a particular choreographic approach, including the parallel treatment of limbs, with flexion at ankles and knees. During the second part of *Giselle*, the spectator is introduced to the residents of the asylum. Here the movement vocabulary is angular; one woman sits with her legs spread wide, knees and ankles flexed. Another woman's movements highlight a folding action of the working leg; her dancing body retains the flexed foot on the elevated working leg. The significant patterns from these two examples reside within the parallel treatment of the limbs, and the similarities of the stylistic treatment of these body parts emerge through observing the repertoire by Ek and Bigonzetti.

As the above analysis has suggested, four choreographic strands emerge as the main influences for the development of Bigonzetti's choreographic voice: the angularity from Massine's choreography, the neoclassical organisation typical of Tetley's hybridised classical

and modern dance forms, the postmodern shifts offered by Forsythe's balletic and theatrical concerns, and the conceptual framework for choreographic revisionism handed down through Ek's production. These significant features underpin Bigonzetti's choreographic treatment of movement vocabularies and some of his approaches for rethinking performances. Bigonzetti can be viewed as an artist who responded to and reflected the creative and revisionist influences at Teatro Valli during the last two decades of the twentieth century. A survey of the works that Bigonzetti created for Aterballetto (1990–present) and other commissioning companies will now offer insights into how the collision of these performance histories has influenced the nature of his choreography.

### 4.3 A survey of choreographic commissions: 1990–2010

Bigonzetti's choreographic career commenced in 1990 and his early works, namely *Sei in Movimento* (1990), *Prova con Mozart* (1991) and *Pitture per Archi* (1992), were created with his peers at Aterballetto.<sup>32</sup> These three early works highlight the diversity of the choreographic treatment in his early choreographic craft. The recurring use of compositions by Johann S. Bach (1685–1785), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) and Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) suggest Bigonzetti's early interests in structural and thematic compositions.

*Sei in Movimento*, a ballet for three couples, provides insights into Bigonzetti's initial approach to devising and experimenting with choreographic structures. The ballet references much neoclassical, Balanchine-based treatment of steps, including flexed *piqué retiré* with a tilt of the pelvis towards the supporting side of the body. The female dancers, dressed in shorts and halter-neck cropped tops typical of 1990s fashion, demonstrate the extended fourth position of the arms with flexed wrists. The male dancers, dressed in burnt orange unitards,

---

<sup>32</sup> Recordings of these three ballets were located and observed at the Teatro Valli Archives in Reggio Emilia. Extracts from *Pitture per Archi* can be viewed in the Appendix CD-ROM.

perform turns (*pirouettes*) on *demi-pointe* with both supporting and working leg flexed at the knee. Similarly, the various groupings within *Sei in Movimento* offer a series of formations in *pas de six*, duets, solos and individual dances for both genders, often connected through a series of pedestrian walks or runs.

Whilst *Prova con Mozart* remains the least complex and accomplished of his early works, *Pitture per Archi* can be considered as Bigonzetti's first significant and accomplished choreographic essay that depicts various tenets associated with his displaced Forsythian performance and choreographic trends. The theatricality of *Pitture per Archi*<sup>33</sup> is substantially indicative of the early Forsythian influences through the treatment of various components within the ballet. The choreographic treatments of the movements and gestures as well as the organisation of the lighting radically reflect the neoclassical postmodern trends marked by works such as *Steptext* and *In the middle somewhat elevated*. Moving through the opening silence, five females dressed in unitards are dimly lit at the front of the stage. The dancers stand with curved arms placed in horizontal and sagittal planes and legs oriented in the parallel position. As they move, they are visible as barely-seen silhouettes that shift in the amber hues of the stage. The five dancers move in unison as they change direction and perform a variety of codified movements juxtaposed with an acutely angular treatment of the lower parts of the body.

Later sections of *Pitture per Archi* reconfirm the legacies surrounding the choreographic treatment within the parameters of the *pas de deux*.<sup>34</sup> Similar to the *pas de deux* in *Artifact 2* and *Steptext*, the male dancers in *Pitture per Archi* provide support for the female dancers, allowing them to displace the extended limbs in extreme counterpoint from the point of balance, equilibrium or point of parallel. Moreover, the male dancers push and

---

<sup>33</sup> As observed in a performance recorded on 19 June 1992 at the Teatro Valli, Reggio Emilia.

<sup>34</sup> Extracts of *Pitture per Archi* can be viewed in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.

pull the female dancers, displacing the choreographic material and dancing bodies.

Subsequently, in a *pas de quatre* for two couples, the choreographic treatment of the partner work suggests the post-classical proliferation of the neoclassical lines. These extended actions are parallels to what Senta Driver described as Forsythe's treatment in his early balletic ballets: the visuality of the multiple points and lines within the body, together with the use of *pointe* work, suggest similar athletic treatment displayed in Forsythe's balletic works from the late 1980s (Driver, 2000, p.3).

**Table 5** Selected moments from the duets in *Pitture per Archi* (1992)<sup>35</sup>

Throughout the early to mid 1990s, Bigonzetti created several ballets across the Italian dance landscape, including those for significant local companies such as Teatro La Scala (Milan), Rome Opera Ballet, Arena Verona, Teatro San Carlo in Naples and Balletto di Toscana. *Turnpike* (1992), a first commission by Balletto di Toscana, was a neoclassical choreographic essay that followed the success of *Pitture per Archi*. This ballet once again drew on Bigonzetti's interest in choreographing quartets. The balletic language in *Turnpike* employs *pointe* work for females. The organisation of the movement vocabulary challenged and, at the same time, embraced post-classical considerations of counter-linearity across the

<sup>35</sup> These images are taken from a recording of a performance on 19 June 1992 filmed at Teatro Valli, Reggio Emilia.

exploration of lines and pathways against a cross-section of planes within the kinesphere.

*Turnpike* is marked with Bigonzetti's signature *ronds de jamb en dedans*; this is a combination of a circular action and articulation of the working leg from flexion to extension in the foot, ankle and knee joints.<sup>36</sup> Following the acclaim of this first commission as well as that of *Mediterranea* (1993), Bigonzetti left Aterballetto and took up the post of resident choreographer at Balletto di Toscana in 1993, creating a third seminal work called *Pression* (1994).<sup>37</sup>

*Pression* was a short ballet for four dancers.<sup>38</sup> Set to and named after Helmut Lachenman's composition of the same title, *Pression* explored a duality of forms across the accompaniment and the choreographic form in the ballet. The juxtaposition of the Lachenman and Franz Schubert (1797–1828) scores paralleled the two genders. The juxtaposition of contemporary and transient vocabularies to the more angular and codified use of vocabularies on *pointe* provides a complex kinaesthetic aesthetic. When the four dancers perform side by side, Bigonzetti arranges the dancers as two couples that replicate the movements side by side. This choreographic organisation recurs in later works including *X.N.Triticities* (1994) and *Kazimir's Colours* (1996).

The consolidation of his performance-making identities in the 1990s heralded a series of commissions by leading European ballet and dance companies including German, French, Portuguese and Austrian companies as well as North and South American dance and ballet companies. The works for the commissioning companies in the late 1990s include the extensive list of works created for Aterballetto as well as those by French companies,

---

<sup>36</sup> This recurring choreographic structure appears in other Balletto di Toscana commissions including *Pression* (1994).

<sup>37</sup> Extracts of *Mediterranea* and *Pression* can be viewed in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.

<sup>38</sup> It was restaged for Aterballetto in 1999 with its first performance in Venice on 26 May 1999.

including Ballet Nationale du Marseille and Ballet du Capitole Toulouse, and English National Ballet (ENB).

Bigonzetti's association with ENB resulted from the connections with Derek Deane (b.1953),<sup>39</sup> the former assistant artistic director of Teatro dell'Opera di Roma and the subsequent ENB artistic director. The invitation by Elisabetta Terabust<sup>40</sup> to restage *Sei in Movimento* (1990) for the Rome Opera Ballet company prompted Deane to commission new work by Bigonzetti. Two works were created for ENB in the mid 1990s: *X.N.Tricities* (1994) and *Symphonic Dances* (1995). *X.N.Tricities* was created for eighteen dancers and was first performed in July 1994 at the Royal Festival Hall in London and restaged in April 1998 for a series of UK regional performances. Set to music by fellow Italian composer Giuseppe Calif (1885–1936), *X.N.Tricities* pushed the neoclassical boundaries through its use of the pelvis and raised limbs within the kinesphere. The ballet reveals a Forsythian, post-classical<sup>41</sup> treatment and, as evidenced by video footage of the company rehearsing *X.N.Tricities*, Bigonzetti was noted for making painstaking clarifications on the positioning of the torso within the sagittal plane. He prompted the dancers to avoid the use of *épaulement* or the counter rotation of the shoulder girdle within the vertical plane. The angularity of limbs underpinned by the flexion within the elbows and knees similarly follows the displacement of performance legacies outlined earlier in this chapter.

---

<sup>39</sup> Deane trained at the Royal Ballet School, danced with the Royal Ballet and subsequently took up a post of Assistant Director and Resident Choreographer at the Rome Opera Ballet (1990–1992). He was also artistic director for English National Ballet between 1993 and 2001.

<sup>40</sup> The company's artistic director, Elisabetta Terabust, was Bigonzetti's former colleague at Aterballetto, and together with Bigonzetti was part of the first cast for *Artefact 2* (1985), later known as *Steptext*, created for Aterballetto.

<sup>41</sup> This is a term used by Senta Driver in *William Forsythe: Choreography and Dance* (2003).

*Symphonic dances* (1995)<sup>42</sup> was set to a composition by Sergey Rachmaninov (1873–1943), and costumed by the flamboyant Italian fashion house designer Enrico Coveri (1952–1990). The ballet presented a series of solos, duets and unison dances for ten dancers. The choreographic language in *Symphonic dances* parallels the angularity observed in *Pression*. A recording of an ENB performance<sup>43</sup> illustrates Bigonzetti's choreographic treatment of the limbs in space: the recurring appearance of dancers in second position, female dancers on *pointe* with the working leg raised high in the vertical plane and flexion at foot and knee. Another female dancer sits on the floor with both legs in a second position in the vertical plane with knees and ankles flexed. Here, the migration of choreographic legacies suggests the composite performative configuration of Bigonzetti's early works.

Other European companies have commissioned works by Bigonzetti; these include Germany's Stuttgart Ballet,<sup>44</sup> Deutsche Oper Berlin and Dresden State Opera. Portugal's Ballet Gulbenkian Lisbon and Turkey's State Ballet Ankara also commissioned restagings of works such as *Kasimir's Colours* (1994), *Cantata* (2001) and *Caravaggio* (2008).

Bigonzetti's association with the German ballet companies resulted from an early commission in the mid 1990s by Danish dancer and choreographer Peter Schaufuss (b.1949), former director of Staatsballett Berlin as well as of English National Ballet (1984–1990). *Kazimir's Colours* (1996),<sup>45</sup> created for Stuttgart Ballet, marks Bigonzetti's first commission for German ballet companies. Bigonzetti's connections to German ballet companies further

---

<sup>42</sup> The ballet was first performed at the Lyric Theatre in Crewe (UK) on 25 April 1995 and was later restaged for the Royal Festival Hall summer season later that year.

<sup>43</sup> This recording was accessed at the archives of ENB at their company premises in Jay Mews, Kensington.

<sup>44</sup> The company commissioned works such as *Quattro danze per Nino* (1998).

<sup>45</sup> Extracts of the duet from *Kazimir's Colours* can be viewed in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.



expanded through invitations to restage select works including *Kazimir's Colours* for Staatsballett Berlin (Berlin State Ballet).<sup>46</sup>

The choreographic inspiration for *Kazimir's Colours* stemmed from visual influences by Russian avant-garde minimalist Kazimir Malevich (1879–1935) and a piano concerto by fellow Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975). The costumes designed for this choreographic work suggested fashion trends typical of the mid 1990s and referenced the tonalities reflective of the organisation of colour in Malevich's works.<sup>47</sup> Dressed in minimalist block-coloured shorts, the female dancer is dressed a white halter-neck top and in yellow and white shorts, whilst the male is in yellow and black.

The choreographic idiom highlights features that are resolutely associated with the Bigonzetti style: the recurring use of the flexed ankle within, the use of the sagittal plane in stationary and parallel positions and the organisation of the dancers in relation to each other and the theatrical space. The central *pas de deux* in *Kazimir's Colours* is seven minutes long, and has been restaged in a variety of contexts across different ballet companies and rendered as choreographic quotations in *Vertigo* (2010).<sup>48</sup> Other recurring choreographic themes in *Kazimir's Colours* are readily observed in other overlapping commissions such as *Pression* and *Symphonic Dances*. The signature *ronds de jambe* with flexion in *Kazimir's Colours* now appears as two variations of the original; one that highlights an *en dehors*, or outwardly, action, and another as a *pirouette en dedans sur pointe*, or with an inwardly turn on *pointe*.

The relocation and expansion of this choreographic feature effectively reaches its creative

---

<sup>46</sup> This ballet was later staged for American ballet company Pennsylvania Ballet in 2008 and the central duet was later staged for the Kirov Ballet's Diana Vishneva and now current Staatsballett Berlin's Artistic Director Vladimir Malakov.

<sup>47</sup> Here references are made to works of art such as *Suprematism* (1916–1917) and *Three Women* (1928–1930).

<sup>48</sup> This ballet was created for Diana Vishneva (principal dancer of the Maryiinsky Ballet) and Marcelo Gomes (principal of American Ballet Theater) in 2010. As the sections appear chronologically in the ballet, *Vertigo* utilises choreographic materials from *Caravaggio* (2008) and *Kazimir's Colours* (1996).

height in works like *Kazimir's Colours*. The proliferation of his interest in *enveloppé* and the transitional period between flexion and extension within one body part is noticeable within the *pas de deux* performed by Staatsballett Berlin. As the recorded performance highlights, the complex structure outlined in Bigonzetti's choreographic treatment of the *pas de deux* exemplifies the recurring signposted choreographic phrases, variants and displaced structures.

One specific example includes the male dancer holding the female by her right elbow. Whilst the male dancer is in a second position making use of the vertical plane, the female pulls away from the male dancer, displacing across the vertical plane and making use of the sagittal plane to organise the flexion in hips, knees and ankle joints. This recurring choreographic landmark is located four times *within* the spatio-temporal progression of the dance; two further occasions highlight a central-location orientation, as well as a third centre of stage right and fourth downstage on stage left.

**Table 6** Key features from the duet in *Kazimir's Colours* (1996)<sup>49</sup>

A more recent Staatsballett Berlin commission, *Caravaggio* (2008), was set to Moretti's compositions on musical themes by the Renaissance composer Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643) and depicts a choreographic interpretation of the artist Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610), also known as Caravaggio. The artist's works are synonymous with

<sup>49</sup> These images are taken from the online posting of an extract on YouTube.com.

the late fifteenth and early sixteenth-century High Renaissance *chiaroscuro* paintings<sup>50</sup> and the ballet highlights an array of references to compositional structures in Monteverdi's scores and Caravaggio's paintings.

*Caravaggio* illustrates a layering of narratives through its use of its theatrical mise-en-scène and the juxtaposed choreography. Carlo Cerri's lighting designs for *Caravaggio* suggest the hues and textures observed in the paintings by Caravaggio. The lighting designs together with the use of a large, framed screen provide overlaps of live and recorded choreographic phrases. These images present a multifaceted collaborative and themed project that presents a Wagnerian *Gesamtkunstwerk*,<sup>51</sup> making *Caravaggio* one of Bigonzetti's most accomplished full-length commissions to date. An analysis of the duet created for the characters of St. Matthew and the Angel<sup>52</sup> suggests that Bigonzetti transforms the nature of this duet into a choreographic metonymy that presents symbols of flight, death and a bound sense of belonging that highlights the fate of St. Matthew. The choreographic organisation of the language recalls previous commissions; most notably, the recent performance heritage reflected in *Festa Barocca*, created later that same year for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater company. The recurring use of the foot as a point of contact with the partner's chest highlights a challenging arrangement of body parts within the kinesphere, as well as furthering the choreographic inventiveness of contact between two dancers in a *pas de deux*.

---

<sup>50</sup> The ballet is heavily reliant on the series of paintings associated with St. Matthew located in local churches across Naples and Rome. The ballet's mise-en-scène is also heavily reliant on the visual tones and hues imparted within works such as *The calling of St. Matthew* (1599-1600) and to works such as *The beheading of St. John* (1609) located in St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta (Malta).

<sup>51</sup> *Gesamtkunstwerk* refers to the concept explored by Richard Wagner (1813-1883) in his endeavours to create a 'total work of art' (Garafola, 1989). In the light of this theoretical framework, the musical, choreographic and artistic compositions work towards a unified artistic vision.

<sup>52</sup> Extracts of the duet between Matthew and the Angel in *Caravaggio* can be viewed through the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.

South American companies including Ballet Teatro Argentino (Argentine Ballet Theatre) and *Balè da Cidade de Sao Paulo* (Sao Paulo City Ballet, Brazil) offered opportunities for exposure in the southern hemisphere. However, North American commissions provided more prestigious exposure for Bigonzetti; these include four commissions by New York City Ballet and one by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, as well as a restaging of *Kasimir's Colours* for Pennsylvania Ballet. The commissions by New York City Ballet<sup>53</sup> and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (2008), together with the restaging some of his early works for Milan's Teatro la Scala (2008), arguably have elevated him from a national choreographer to an international choreographic voice and placed him on the main stages of ballet at the turn of the twenty-first-century.

New York City Ballet, the custodian of Balanchine's and Jerome Robbins' balletic works, provided the creative space for four commissions between 2002 and 2010. The tenth Diamond Project (2002) showcased eight choreographers' new works and included those of Christopher Wheeldon (b.1973) and Bigonzetti. This first invitation came as a result of a showcase of *Mediterranea* (1993) performed by Balletto di Toscana at the Joyce Theater in New York at the turn of the millennium. This showcase allegedly instigated Peter Martins to commission *Vespro* (2002), Bigonzetti's first work for NYCB. Following this collaboration with fellow Italian composer Bruno Moretti, three further commissions were created by Bigonzetti and strengthened associations between NYCB and Bigonzetti's recent choreographic practices.

---

<sup>53</sup> The first commission was for the Diamond Project in 2002. Its success instigated three further commissions – *In Vento* (2006), *Oltremare* (2008) and *Luce Nascosta* (2010) – and a fourth commission for the fiftieth anniversary of the Lincoln Center.

Created for eleven dancers and set to Moretti's composition of the same name, *Vespro*<sup>54</sup> takes 'vespers' or evening prayer as its theme. The ballet explored the particular perspectives on beauty, life and desire that were expounded by Italian Renaissance artist Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564). Crafted through a recurring pattern of solos, duets and group dances, the choreographic organisation highlights the angular signatory language, such as the crossing of raised legs as dancers lie on the floor, which transferred across ballets created during the 1990s, including Balletto di Toscana's *Pression*. The work grammatically evolves through the resolute organisation of language that presents the use of the sagittal plane and the flexion of corporeal identities.

A second commission titled *Oltremare* was first performed at the New York State Theater at the Lincoln Center.<sup>55</sup> The ballet explores the emotional and physical journeys associated with the process of migration by effective mise-en-scènes that include costumes such as dark, uni-coloured dresses and outfits, and the use of props including hand-held suitcases. As the ballet commences, the dancers enter one after the other to create a linear formation across the theatrical space. Here, Bigonzetti's choreographic treatment of the mise-en-scène together with his use of signature handling of the planes, flexion and extension, and effort/shape dynamics consolidates the displacement of choreographic patterns and trends outlined earlier in this chapter.

*Festa Barocca* (2008) was commissioned by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Set to music by Georg Friedrich Handel (1685–1759), *Festa Barocca* represents the long-standing collaboration with Italian lighting designer Carlo Cerri as well as another artistic relationship, that with NYCB head costume designer Mark Happel. The use of bright, block

---

<sup>54</sup> This ballet was first performed on 8 May 2002 at the New York State Theater at the Lincoln Center.

<sup>55</sup> Extracts of *Oltremare* can be viewed through the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.

colours in *Festa Barocca* layers some of the choreographic signatures which appear in works created for Aterballetto between 1997 and 2010. *Festa Barocca* commences with a solo for a female dancer and progresses with a series of dances for the group, three duets, a quartet, solos for male and female dancers and a final arrangement for the whole ensemble.<sup>56</sup>

An online posting of the first duet<sup>57</sup> evidences a choreographic similarity to the organisation of the *pas de deux* in the large collection of ballets by Bigonzetti. The duet suggests an inherent interest in creating a transitioning and fluid series of phrases where the choreographic shapes highlight an undulating, evolving and transient treatment of the arm gestures. The two dancers intertwine their arms and move through the convoluting carriage of the arms. The balanced counteraction of the sustained folding of the arms across the horizontal and sagittal planes marks a choreographic landmark. A second signature point is signposted by the tossing of the female dancer: the male pulls the female towards him, utilising both legs to support the female's roll. In this particular recording, Brown catches Stamatiou horizontally as she flexes her knees within the sagittal plane of her kinesphere. A series of images illustrate the various parts of this signature phrase.

The transitional phases between the repetitions of this phrase suggest Bigonzetti's complex consideration of the relationships between the Handel compositions and his treatment of the choreographic idiom and structure of the choreographic form. Through the commission by this American modern dance company, *Festa Barocca* signifies a cultural shift across another dance culture and positions Bigonzetti's work as another set of migrated practices. Throughout the last two decades, Aterballetto commissions account for the larger percentage of choreographic works created by Bigonzetti. His directorial appointment at

---

<sup>56</sup> Programme notes from the Chicago 2009 April tour and an observation at the New York Public Library of a recorded performance at City Center (New York) outline such a structure.

<sup>57</sup> Extracts of *Festa Barocca* can be viewed through the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM. In this performance, AAADT's Clifton Brown and Constance Stamatiou perform this duet.

Aterballetto in 1997 allowed him to further establish his role as a resident choreographer and refine the signature identities within his choreographic work.


---

<sup>58</sup> These images are taken from the online posting of an extract on the filesharing platform, YouTube.

Following his appointment as director at Aterballetto, Bigonzetti's commissions appear as biannual events in the Aterballetto schedules, and works such as *Songs* (1998), set to compositions by Henry Purcell (1659–1695), and *Furia Corporis* (1998), set to Beethoven scores, further Bigonzetti's preoccupation with the use of baroque and classical music scores. Furthermore, *Comoedia* (1998) showcases early collaborations with fellow Italian composer Bruno Moretti (b. 1952).<sup>59</sup> The turn of the twenty-first century presented Bigonzetti with the opportunity to choreograph three highly theatrical works: *Psappha* (2001), *Les Noces* (2002) and *Rossini Cards* (2004). Later significant creations included *WAM* (2005), *Come un respiro* (2009) and *Sacre* (2010).<sup>60</sup> As outlined in the analyses of these choreographic histories, these commissions suggest the signature tenets of Bigonzetti's choreography. However, a closer look at the thematic concepts explored through the choreographic commissions will offer additional insights into the body of work created between 1990 and 2010.

#### 4.4 Contemporary choreographic reflections: Italian culture, histories and legacies

Significant discourses emerge from the subject matter of Bigonzetti's ballets and transfer across the creative spaces in Reggio Emilia and to their reallocation to other Italian regions, European and American contexts. The themes and their choreographic treatment within the ballets created by Bigonzetti suggest his conceptual preoccupation with local Italian traditions and cultures as well as the Italian baroque heritage in philosophy, composition, narratives and art. However, the classification of Bigonzetti's work as an 'Italian identity' merits further examination.

The body of work created between 1990 and 2010 suggests choreographic migrations of the traditions and legacies of imported national and cultural styles. His work shifts from

---

<sup>59</sup> Several commissions, such as *Oltremare* and *In vento*, were collaborations with Moretti.

<sup>60</sup> Extracts of *WAM*, *Rossini Cards* and *Come un respiro* can be viewed in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 2 of the CD-ROM.



the complexity of 'national' choreographic identities and parallels perspectives that contradict such a decline. Nevertheless, the Italian balletic legacies in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are as complex as the attempt to define the wide-ranging genre of 'neoclassicism' across ballet practices spanning the twentieth century. Social anthropologist Helena Wulff reminds us that "the Italian style is not construed as a national ballet style today... is thus not used as a feature of nationalism like other ballet styles" (Wulff, 1998, p.41). Wulff's statement is somewhat narrow in its focus and it is important to revisit the concerns of Italian dance cultural identities and thereby offer an alternative perspective, underpinned by the context of the choreographic influences and career of Bigonzetti.

The choreographic histories that shaped an 'Italian' choreographic identity, particularly those associated with the multiplicity of traditions surrounding the Italian School of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were reconfigured and largely shifted following the post-war artistic importation of 'foreign artists' and the emergence of regional ballet companies in the 1950s. Effectively, the virtuosity of ballerina Pierina Legnani (1868–1930), the *balon*, or buoyancy of jumps, associated with the Italian School<sup>61</sup> and the pedagogy imparted by the Cecchetti family<sup>62</sup> were largely abandoned in the mid twentieth century. Instigated by the International Ballet Festival at Nervi and Festival of Two Worlds, the cultural importations of American modern ballet in the 1950s facilitated this migration and diasporic proliferation of other national ballet styles. Concurrently, the immediate lack of an internationally-renowned Italian choreographer and the financially-unsustainable position of resident choreographers created a suitable environment for frequent visits by French, Russian and American artists together with their repertoire. It is hardly surprising that

---

<sup>61</sup> Tamara Karsavina (1962) provides an account of the traditions associated with the Italian style of dancing and outlines these key features that characterise the school of thought.

<sup>62</sup> Further information on the Cecchetti training can be found in Livia Brillarelli's *Cecchetti: A ballet dynasty* (1995) and Giannandrea Poesio's *To and By Enrico Cecchetti* (2008).

towards the end of the twentieth century, the balletic trends that emerged from Italian choreographic voices reflected the plethora of cultural imports and the complexities of their nature and identity.

Within the context of Bigonzetti's body of work created during and since the 1990s, his performance and choreographic histories offer a tangible exploration of the definition of an 'Italian' style that emerged through the late twentieth century. The analysis of his work in this study provides a vantage point from which to reconsider Wulff's perspective and redefine the distinct aesthetic associated with the Italian choreographic histories. Bigonzetti's balletic histories are contextualised and situated as an example of the multidimensional interchange and reconfiguration of a plethora of choreographic styles. Outside the context of his own heritage as a dancer for Aterballetto and the rigours of the academic dimensions of the Rome Opera Ballet School, Bigonzetti's movement vocabulary and choreographic forms cite the plethora of choreographers surrounding the balletic traditions he encountered. The impact of the 1958 American 'invasion' at the Spoleto Festival canonised the late twentieth-century Italian style and grounded it as "post-Balanchine ballet" (Vaccarino, 1998b, p.26).

A close analysis of choreographic works by Aterballetto and other ballet companies over the last decade suggest Bigonzetti's affinity towards exploring his Italian heritage, most notably his interest in the Italian Renaissance and baroque periods. In addition to the complex revision and reconfiguration of the choreographic influences explored earlier in the chapter, it becomes most apparent that Bigonzetti brings a sense of 'Italian' identities to the essence of his work, primarily addressing two specific areas: firstly, the histories associated with Italian artists, philosophers and artefacts and secondly, the consideration of contemporary Italian cultural traditions and practices

Bigonzetti's affinity for Italian musical choices as well as his preference for indigenous titles, exported across the various international commissions, offer insights into

some of the Italian cultural dimensions that are of interest to him. His aural muses range from local Italian composers including Armando Gentilucci (1939–1989), Nino Rota (1911–1979)<sup>63</sup> and former Rota student and contemporary film, theatre and dance music composer, Bruno Moretti. In *Quattro danze per Nino* (1998) for the Stuttgart Ballet, Bigonzetti utilised Rota's *Concert for Strings* (1954) to accompany the “pulsating phrases of dance...with their labyrinth of knotted arms” (Soul, 1998, p.41). Moreover, in *Come qualcosa che palpita nel fondo* (1999), Bigonzetti draws upon the composition of the same name by Gentilucci, created between 1973 and 1980 for violin and tape recordings. Collaborations such as *Oltremare* make reference to the use of specific Italian instruments, such as the hand-held accordion, in the bespoke compositions by Moretti. Frequent collaborations with Moretti provide a regular dialogue with a composer who revisits existing music scores and presents a music collage or (re)adaptation of the existing thematic in the compositions. Moretti's adaptations of established scores by composers such as Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643), Mozart and Giacchino Rossini (1792–1868) present a revisionist dimension to works such as *Caravaggio*, *WAM* (2005) and *Rossini Cards* (2004) respectively.

Italian Renaissance art, philosophy and literature are some of the recurring subject matters within Bigonzetti's ballets. This preoccupation is explored through the theatrical narratives that emerge from the parameters of Renaissance themes. The importance of national identities in Bigonzetti's choreographic interests is visible in ballets such as the Aterballetto-commission *In Canto dall'Orlando Furioso* (2006). Here, Bigonzetti demonstrates an engagement with Renaissance poetry including the Italian romantic epic

---

<sup>63</sup> Rota wrote many of the cinematic music scores for films directed by Zeffirelli, including *La Dolce Vita* (1960), *The Taming of the Shrew* (1967) and *Romeo and Juliet* (1968). He also wrote music for Francis Ford Coppola's first two films of *The Godfather* series.

*Orlando Furioso* (1516) by Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533).<sup>64</sup> Set to compositions by Handel, *In Canto dall'Orlando Furioso* showcases Bigonzetti's treatment of the mythical creatures and abstracted narratives from the romantic epic, together with theatrical constructions of the poetic narratives penned by Ariosto. Alongside the engagement with Italian works of art and literature, Bigonzetti also draws upon art philosophy by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519); in *Vespro* (2002), Bigonzetti's philosophical muse stems from a questioning of beauty, death and existence (NYCB Playbill 2007, npn).

In the ballet titled *Caravaggio*, Bigonzetti's interest is consumed by his choreographic development of the subject matter in Caravaggio's paintings as a metaphor through which the ballet constructs insights into the life and work of the artist. Drawing upon Caravaggio's painting of St. Matthew,<sup>65</sup> Bigonzetti extrapolates the narratives associated with Italian national identities and with the Renaissance period. His interests can be seen as an assertion of what Renaissance writer Giorgio Vasari described of the dramaturgy of Renaissance art: "so much more grace, so much more life ... a highly expressive depiction of feelings and physical gestures" (Vasari (1550) in Vasari, Bondanella and Conaway Bondanella (translation), 2008, pp.56–57). The year 2010 marked four hundred years since the death of Caravaggio. Exhibitions at the Quirinale in Rome, between February and September 2010, as well as other creative endeavours, including Bigonzetti's ballet commissioned by Staatsballett Berlin, paid homage to the life of this artist who spent most of his life journeying across what British art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon describes as, "the sacred and the profane".<sup>66</sup> Graham-Dixon hastily reminds his reader that "Caravaggio's hard-won solution

---

<sup>64</sup> Ariosto was associated with Reggio Emilia during the eighteenth-century Italian Enlightenment.

<sup>65</sup> Three paintings are located at the church of San Nicola (St. Nicholas) in Rome.

<sup>66</sup> *Caravaggio: A Life Sacred and Profane* (2010) by British art historian Graham-Dixon

to the challenge of the picture combined theological subtlety with dramatic immediacy and narrative plausibility” (Graham-Dixon, 2010, p.201).

**Fig. 12** *The Beheading of St. John* (1609) at St. John’s Co-Cathedral, Malta.  
This photograph was taken by the author and is reproduced with kind permission.

The life of this troubled artist presented Bigonzetti with an opportunity to reflect on the complexity of a life in art and the art through his life. Alongside Caravaggio’s violent streak and an attraction to both sexes, his art work was inspired by both the irreverent and the sacred. By the end of the 1590s, Caravaggio had produced a new style referred to as *chiaroscuro*, an approach to painting that involves “working from dark to light” (Graham-Dixon, 2010, p.183). This is noticeable in the emergence of characters from the hues of the setting and the triangular organisation typically construed in Caravaggio’s works. The life and art of Caravaggio provided Bigonzetti with creative catalysts for a tapestry of dramaturgical narratives manifested throughout the ballet. Moretti’s music compositions are

based on motifs by Monteverdi, who led the transition from Renaissance to baroque music styles. The third in the triad of Italian contemporary collaborators, Carlo Cerri's lighting designs reference the *chiaroscuro* techniques imparted by the hues of the Caravaggio paintings. Bigonzetti's ballet is structured in two acts; each act commences with a solo for the role of Caravaggio, followed by duets and ensembles as a series of dances which suggest a stream of consciousness and which emerge out of the effect of *chiaroscuro* (light and shade) within the theatricalised performance space. The empty theatrical space renders a dark canvas that brings to light the characters that shape the ballet. The complexity and multiplicity of the structures provide avenues for dramaturgical discourse, allowing the spectator to decode/encode or construct their own set of choreographic catalysts.<sup>67</sup> It is significantly apparent that Bigonzetti depicts an

“assembly of characters, saints and prostitutes, *ragazzi* from the streets and cardinals, hoodlums and angelic youths, whom he has portrayed in devastating realism, his bisexuality and his always walking on a tightrope between prayer and crime, have contributed to his controversial reputation of an outcast”

Koegler, 2008, online

At the start of the second act of the ballet, selected images of Caravaggio's paintings are featured on a hung screen located above the performance space. Here, Bigonzetti introduces a series of references to *The Musicians* (1595), *Judith beheading Holofernes* and *The Deposition* (1602–1604).<sup>68</sup> Hung above the centre of the theatrical space is a large frame which poses as a screen on which these images are reflected, as well as acting as a platform for the muses. The choreography depicts a series of creative catalysts: most notably,

---

<sup>67</sup> German dance critic Horst Koegler (1927–2012) perceived this as a problematical “loose structure”.

<sup>68</sup> Coincidentally brought together at the 2010 exhibition in Rome, these three works currently reside in the National Gallery at the Barberini Palace in Rome, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and the Vatican Museum.

highlighting the role of music, the recurring image of Judith, and Caravaggio as a Christ-like figure, an oxymoronic state of flux for Caravaggio's heritage.<sup>69</sup>

Bigonzetti's *Caravaggio* displays a series of complex narratives including Caravaggio's love affairs with both men and women and the centrality of biblical narratives, as well as the blurring of boundaries between episodes from his life and art. A clear dramaturgical parallel can be made between Bigonzetti's mise-en-scène and Graham-Dixon's thinking: "Caravaggio's art is made from darkness and light. His pictures present spotlight moments of extreme often agonized human experience" (Graham-Dixon, 2010, p.3). German dance critic Horst Keogler describes the central role of Caravaggio as "a person torn by the conflicts ranging in his innermost ... present in the scenes he arranges ... in his encounters with people, his simultaneous existence in two worlds – the real one and the one of his fantasy" (Keogler, 2008, online). In addition, three female muses create pivotal roles within the emergent dramaturgy connecting love, death and inspiration that potentially suggest the narratives of Fillide Melandroni<sup>70</sup>, the character of Judith and other biblical characters.

A detailed analysis of the duet between St. Matthew and the Angel outlines the intricacies across the dramaturgy in the ballet.<sup>71</sup> Whilst Caravaggio's Matthew is "an ordinary, imperfect human being" (Graham-Dixon, 2010, p.236), Bigonzetti's ballet depicts a young man transfixed by the presence of his female counterpart. Matthew and the Angel walk out of the darkness in silence; their introduction theatricalises a parallel between the mortal

---

<sup>69</sup> Caravaggio's art and life brought him fame and misfortune; as early biographer Giovanni Bellori suggests, "the colouring he was introducing was not as sweet and delicate as before, but became boldly dark and black, which he used abundantly to give relief to the form ... a powerful contrast of light and dark" (Bellori in Langdon 2005, pp.63–64).

<sup>70</sup> Histories surrounding the heritage Caravaggio offer creative insights that suggest parallels between his art and episodes from his life. *Judith beheading Holofernes* (1598–1599), showcased at the 2010 exhibition in Rome, offers an insight into his relationship with Siena-born courtesan Fillide Melandroni, who appears in three of Caravaggio's surviving works.

<sup>71</sup> More information on the dramaturgy of the ballet can be found in the conference paper given at the Society of Dance History Scholars, York University/University of Toronto in June 2011 – see Farrugia (2011).

and the spirit. In unison, their arms extend across the horizontal plane and their sustained qualities blur the boundaries between the two identities. Shifting through the vertical plane, the dancers construct a narrative through which Bigonzetti's choreography metaphorically transposes "the embodiment of Christian love" into a duet between the couple (ibid). The dancers retreat backwards, their arms in a sustained carriage of the arms; as their hands briefly meet, the Angel's arms glide across to tap Matthew's knee. He catches and embraces her extended arabesque (*allongée*). The image here suggests an intimacy that summaries the embrace, and one that (dis)places the heritage of Caravaggio's first draft of his painting titled *St. Matthew and the Angel*. Although the first version of this painting was destroyed, the images of these two Caravaggio works suggest overlaps between intimacies of the art and Bigonzetti's choreography. In the duet, the Angel is supported, suspended and rests on Matthew, depicting images of connections and engagement. Images of flight unfold across the corporeal landscape as the duet progresses. In the final moments of the duet, the Angel slashes her forearm across Matthew's spine, creating a dramaturgical parallel to "torture as a misbegotten act of intimacy" (Graham-Dixon, 2010, Plate 72).

**Fig. 13** Images of flight from the duet in *Caravaggio* (2008)  
Image taken from the television broadcast of the ballet on Mezzo TV (Malta).



As outlined earlier, the criteria for an Italian choreographic identity are complex and multilayered. The construction a definition of an 'Italian' choreographic style in the twenty-first century can theoretically be shaped through theories of constructing histories. The pursuit of a 'twenty-first-century identity' is largely informed through the importation of stylistic concerns. The effects of the premise behind companies such as Aterballetto define the state of ballet at the turn of the twenty-first century. The company's political and artistic move away from the legacies associated with academic centres for classicism in the dancing body, repertoire and heritage affirms the cultural and artistic developments within the latter part of the twentieth century. Bigonzetti's practices in performance making and his choices of subject matters suggest representations of Italian identities. Whilst Aterballetto commissions may advocate less frequent and less direct references to Italian culture, it is the commissions created for companies such as New York City Ballet and Berlin State Opera Ballet which export the Italian cultural and artistic identities for which Bigonzetti may be considered a leading figure on the world stage.

The act of labelling Bigonzetti's work as an 'Italian choreographic identity' is validated and also challenged by his very own artistic and cultural heritage. Bigonzetti's work can defined by the choreographic histories which surrounded his development as a choreographer in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, together with his need to fulfil his personal preoccupation with the Italian baroque and Renaissance identities that emerge time and time again within the range of European and American commissions. Thus, his work suggests the nature of his revisionist stance, as choreographer of his cultural heritage.

#### 4.5 Revising iconic ballets: *Romeo and Juliet* (2006) and the Ballet Russes repertoire

Alongside presenting revisions of Italian heritage, Bigonzetti's work and his revision of iconic ballets illustrate references to Catholicism and traditions from Italian cultural trends. In works such as *Les Noces* (2002) and *Vespro* (2002), Bigonzetti draws upon the use of kneelers as a recurring feature in churches and evening prayers. In his revisionist ballet *Romeo and Juliet* (2006), Bigonzetti identifies the choreographic use of the helmet as metonymic references to youth culture in Rome and his collaborators explore the Shakespearian text through a concept of love and speed using costumes and props as metaphors.<sup>72</sup>

Bigonzetti's *Romeo and Juliet* premiered in Reggio Emilia in May 2006. The ballet marked a radical revision of the Shakespearean narrative and traced a tapestry of emotive passions, conflicts, destinies, love and death.<sup>73</sup> This Italian collaboration suggests the realisation of the thematic concept through the visual designs by Reggio Emilia-born Fabrizio Plessi (b.1940) and the musical montage by Bigonzetti's frequent collaborator Bruno Moretti. The musical narratives in Moretti's musical score reference the score by Sergey Prokofiev (1935) and offer a complex dimension through which Prokofiev's compositions are revisited and revised. Similar to their collaboration in other ballets such as *Caravaggio* (2008), where Moretti revisits the musical motifs by the seventeenth century composer Claudio Monteverdi, the 'Prokofiev motifs' provide both the weight of the existing musical scores and the restructuring of themes and musical leitmotifs. *Romeo and Juliet* (2006) challenges the traditional spectacle and provides scope for tracing the revisionist dimensions in the three levels of narratives within this work (Poesio in Lansdale, 2008).

---

<sup>72</sup> This is outlined by film and visual installation artist Fabio Plessi in a 3|SAT interview.

<sup>73</sup> Bigonzetti's vision of the ballet is outlined in his programme notes as well as the 3|SAT interview.

In rethinking the dramatic context, Bigonzetti and Plessi abandon several of the traditional narrative strands in *Romeo and Juliet*. Their ballet draws upon a cultural 'rebellion' through a representation in which young Romeos and Juliets present a series of solos, duets and group dances that explore a 'biker culture'. Constructed in the same vein as the pluralistic narratives of the ballet *Caravaggio*, the ballet avoids a linear narrative and all the dancers embody the five major narrative strands: passion, conflict, destiny, love and death. Bigonzetti comments on how local youths in Rome travel around the city on *motorini* (mopeds), with their crash helmets perched on the vehicle and a foot placed inside the helmet to secure the helmet against the base of the moped.<sup>74</sup> Instead of wearing their protective head gear on their heads, the youths balance their helmets on their feet and the mopeds. In this creative context, the helmets act as metaphors for instability and recklessness, challenging safety conventions to "viewing perspectives through otherness".<sup>75</sup>

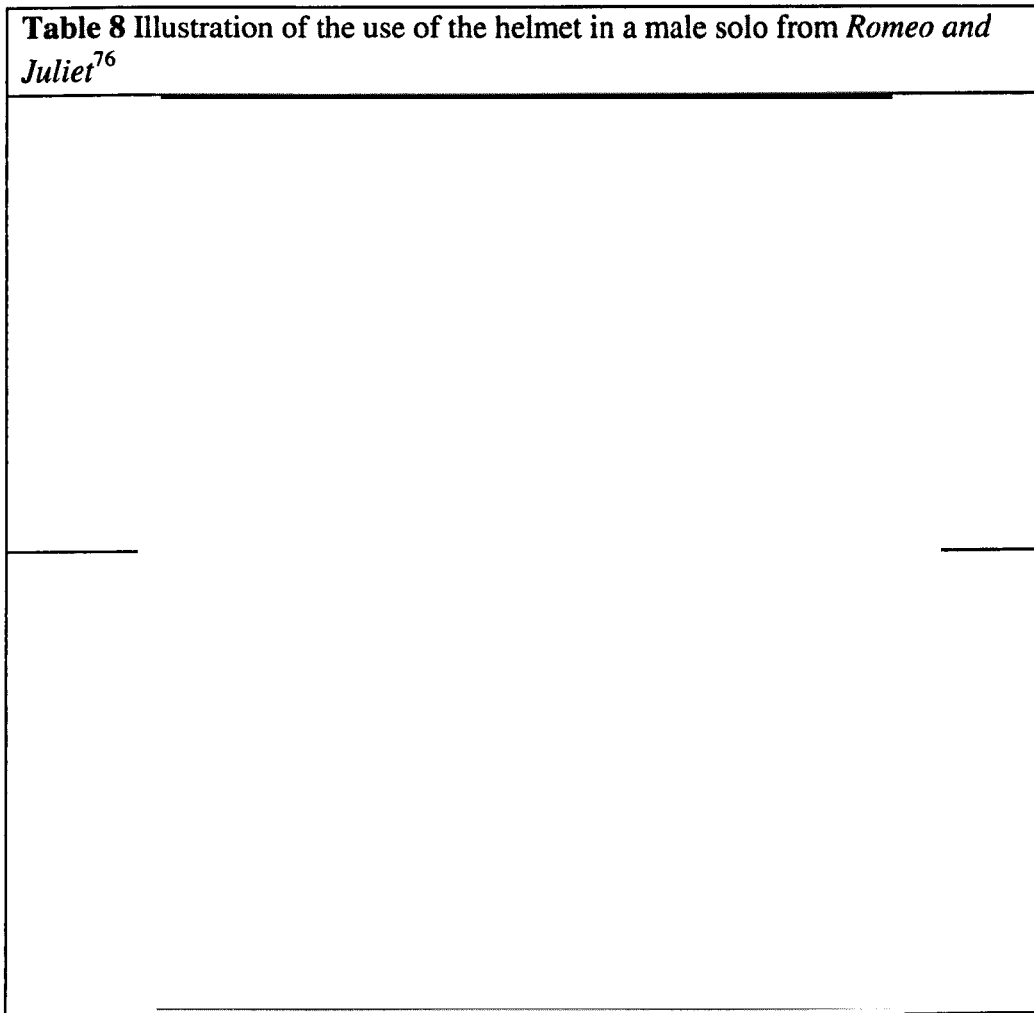
The ballet commences with an introductory solo, typical of many overall meta-structures in Bigonzetti's choreographic *oeuvre*. The solo provides a prelude to the anticipated narratives that emerge throughout Bigonzetti's revision of *Romeo and Juliet*. The male dancer enters the space, wearing a black crash helmet on his left foot. He balances precariously as he performs adage phrases where his supporting leg is engulfed in the helmet and the other unfolds, flicks and extends away from his body. He swivels as he moves through the kinesphere and across the performance space, sometimes with calculated length and sometimes with daring speed. The images illustrate these choreographic points.

---

<sup>74</sup> Bigonzetti outlines this in an interview broadcast on German television channel 3|SAT.

<sup>75</sup> Unlike other versions of *Romeo and Juliet*, the version by French choreographer Jean-Christophe Maillot (1996) comes to mind, where there is neither a leading couple nor a grand narrative.

**Table 8** Illustration of the use of the helmet in a male solo from *Romeo and Juliet*<sup>76</sup>

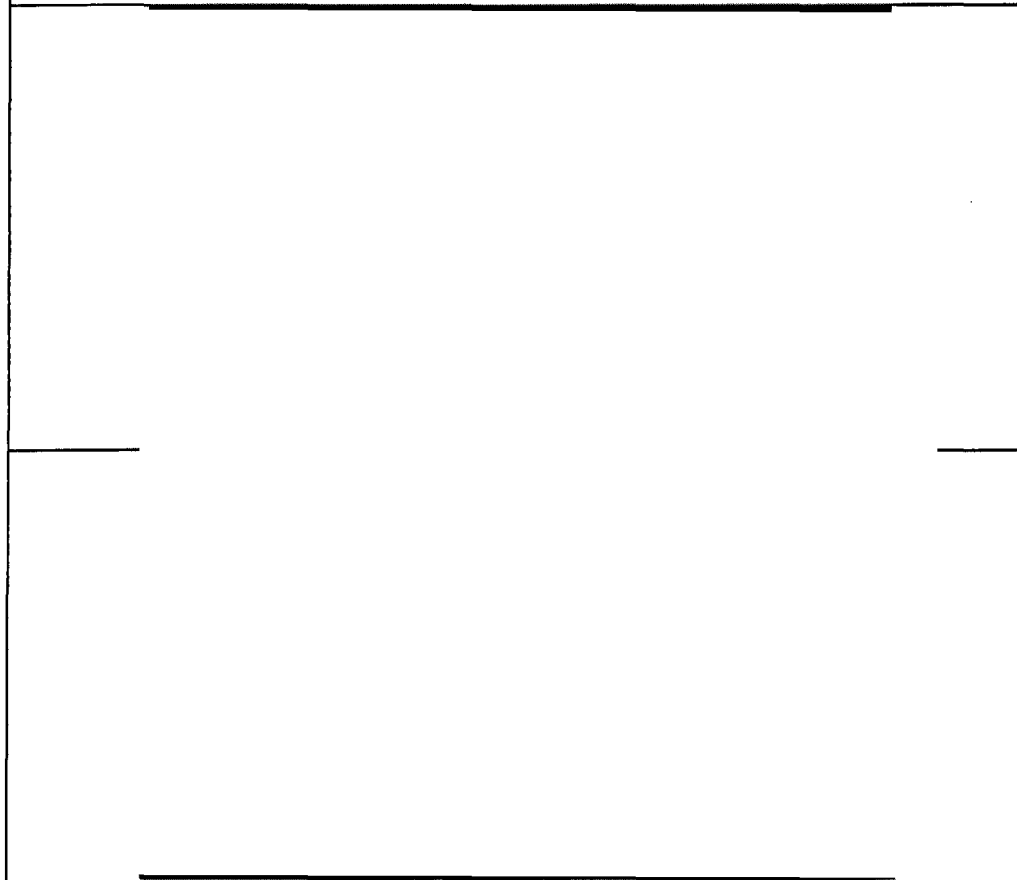


A similar choreographic treatment is also presented for a series of solos for other Romeos and Juliets. One of the female's solos, presented later in the ballet, outlines similar choreographic themes that creatively explore the use of the helmets.<sup>77</sup> As the images below suggest, the female dancer explores the virtuosity that emerged from the circular surface of the helmet. She balances precariously as she unfolds her suspended and extending leg. There is no hesitancy as she pushes her boundaries of balance and negotiates across the sustained movements. These movements open up a series of metaphors associated with the diverse narratives that inform Bigonzetti and Plessi's production.

<sup>76</sup> These images are taken from the recording of the television broadcast of *Romeo and Juliet* (2006), on German channel 3|SAT.

<sup>77</sup> See Table 8 and Table 9 for a visual presentation of some of the points in time and organisation of the body parts within the kinesphere.

**Table 9** Illustration of the use of the helmet in a female solo from *Romeo and Juliet*<sup>78</sup>



The introduction to the youths is consistent with the signature movements associated with the work of Bigonzetti. Wearing parts of biker protective gear, the dancers haul themselves across the space, thrashing out an intense and risk-laden physicality in solo and duet work. When one man reaches a choreographic climax in his solo, a woman forces a helmet onto his head and the group stop in opposition to the conformist nature of such an action. Nonetheless, the more poignant moments of the dance are linked to the four duets that take place throughout the ballet.

---

<sup>78</sup> These images are taken from the recording of the television broadcast of *Romeo and Juliet* (2006), on German channel 3|SAT.

The first duet takes place within the two steel (motor or fan-like) structures that are repositioned by four male dancers. As the couple draw themselves together, a series of overlapping images unfolds through this cinematic version of the production.<sup>79</sup> The couple moves through and along the aperture of the steel structure, a visual representation of Plessi's revisionist interpretation of the dramaturgical concept. Using the internal contours of this platform to support their movements, the dancers mould their bodies and shift across the circular performance space. Here, the choreographic treatment reinforces the thematic revision of the ballet as a broader commentary on the dangers of young, reckless, impulsive love.

Whilst two other duets focus exclusively on the choreographic dimensions of acrobatic, knotting partnerwork, it is the final *mise-en-scène* and the final duet that offer a return to the narrative in the ballet of separation and death. Accompanied by digital projection effects (firstly, red amorphic visuals followed by a blue aqueous waterfall), a fourth/final couple climbs up steel structures that are separated by a blue cascading light. The ballet concludes with the steel structures merging together, engulfed in a red sea of light, as the metaphors of the Shakespearian narrative haunt the final moments of the ballet.

---

<sup>79</sup> See Table 10 for a selection of the images constructed through the positioning of the camera.



Bigonzetti's interest in revising other iconic ballets including those in the repertoire of the Ballets Russes (1909–1929) resulted in a series of revisions that have varied in their degree of critical success. Ballets such as *Petrushka* (Fokine, 1914)<sup>81</sup> and *Les Noces* (Nijinska, 1923) were revised in 2002;<sup>82</sup> however, Bigonzetti's *Petrushka* offered a problematic narrative about a kleptomaniac who struggles with social integration and the ballet remains the least successful of his works. In her review for *The New York Times*, Jennifer Dunning criticises the unintentionally funny scenes and, with particular emphasis on Bigonzetti's revision of *Petrushka*, she concludes that the Aterballetto's contribution to the Next Wave Festival was anything but forward thinking.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, his revision of the ballet *Les Noces* adds to the cluster of seminal choreographic revisions associated with the ballet's histories and warrants a close analysis of the choreographic form.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

Throughout the sections of this chapter, Bigonzetti's body of work was analysed and set in its historical context. The detailed overviews of dance in Italy and identification of the historical contexts of the migrated influences of American ballet and modern dance provided insights into the Italian dance histories across the twentieth century. Bigonzetti's influences, including Glen Tetley, William Forsythe and Mats Ek, suggested the diversity of choreographic dimensions. Throughout his career as a performance maker, Bigonzetti's diverse interests

---

<sup>81</sup> According to Garafola (1998), the ballet *Petrushka* was influenced by the symbolist theatre of the Moscow Art Theatre including works by Vsevolod Meyerhold. The choreographic production by Michel Fokine (1911) for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes refers to the Russian tradition of Shrovetide Fair and the "human condition" of relationships between three puppets: the introverted *Petrushka*, the *Ballerina* and extroverted the *Moor*.

<sup>82</sup> More recently, *Le Sacre du Printemps* (Nijinsky, 1913) was revised in 2011; the ballet premiered at Baden Baden Festival in Germany on 8 April and was performed by Aterballetto.

<sup>83</sup> The review was published on 10 November 2005.



---

have also shaped the body of work created between 1990 and recent times. His collaborations with other Italian artists have offered him opportunities to revisit the histories, texts and cultures associated with his native land, and, with a varying degree of success, he has revisited iconic ballets and their performance histories in order to give light to other dimensions of narrative themes that address his Italian heritage and the conglomerate of artistic practices that place notions of 'otherness' within Italian artistic dimensions.

## Chapter Five

### Two revisions of *Les Noces* (1923)

#### Chapter Outline

- 5.1 Context and parameters of the analysis of the two selected revisions
- 5.2 An analysis of Angelin Preljocaj's *Noces* (1989)
- 5.3 An analysis of Mauro Bigonzetti's *Les Noces* (2002)
- 5.4 Conclusion

#### 5.1 Context and parameters of the analysis of the two selected revisions

The revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) by Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti offer insights into the multidimensional engagement with the performance traditions of the ballet and the musical score. *Noces* utilises Igor Stravinsky's 1923 score and explores the legacy of Bronislava Nijinska's ballet. Moreover, it further consolidates Preljocaj's performance-making trends in Europe that emerged from the middle of the 1980s, presenting a crucial thread to both the stylistic interchanges associated with Preljocaj's choreographic practices and the revision of dramatic and choreographic narratives emerging through selected extracts.<sup>1</sup> Premiered in 1989,<sup>2</sup> *Noces* is characterised by the "speed of the choreography's shifting formal patterns and accelerated courtship ... under five constantly rearranged benches" (Kisselgoff, 1991, online). The revision draws upon the choreographer's Balkan heritage as well as his own feelings about the sombre practice of arranged marriages. It characterises Preljocaj's reflections on pre-arranged weddings. As such, the dance has been

---

<sup>1</sup> Extracts associated with the readings of the Systems of Materials as well as language and syntax can be viewed through the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM (Extracts of Choreographic Works).

<sup>2</sup> *Noces* debuted at the choreographic platform in Val du Marne. Following its American première at the New York International Festival of the Arts (June 1991), Preljocaj revisited his choreography that same year, creating a film version of *Noces* that was reset in a warehouse. The film version of *Noces* captures significant details of the language and syntax, together with close-up details within mise-en-scène. In 1993, Ballet Preljocaj re-staged and toured the theatrical version of *Noces* and more recently the ballet was restaged at the Pavillion Noire (Black Pavilion) between 2005 and the recent seasons.

read as “a funeral in reverse”, the inevitable nuptial conclusion a “consented rape” (Reynolds and McCormick, 2003, p.646).

*Les Noces* premiered in 2002.<sup>3</sup> As a contemporary work for eighteen dancers, Bigonzetti’s ballet brings together Stravinsky’s score, the legacy of Bronislava Nijinska’s ballet and his performance-making trends that have emerged since the mid 1990s. Under dramaturgical supervision by Nicola Lusuardi, this collaboration includes set designs by Fabrizio Montecchi, costumes by Kristopher Millar and Lois Swandale, and lighting designs by Carlo Cerri. The ballet draws upon Bigonzetti’s choreographic accumulations of the heritage and trends associated with his performance-making interests from the past two decades as well as his interest in the creative investigation of perspectives on the aesthetics of beauty.

Through analyses of selected extracts, this chapter will focus on a three-fold evaluation of extracts from recorded performances of *Noces*<sup>4</sup> and *Les Noces*<sup>5</sup>. The analysis of each revision is structured in a similar fashion: firstly, an overview of the structural organisation of each choreographic revision is presented; secondly, the enquiry presents an analysis of costumes, bodies and/as props and lighting states as theatricalised narratives emergent from the extracts from both *Noces* and *Les Noces*; thirdly, the investigation of both

---

<sup>3</sup> Following its Italian première at Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia on 14 June 2002, the ballet toured regional cities around Italy and its UK premiere took place in May 2005 at Sadler’s Wells. Its American premiere took place at Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2005.

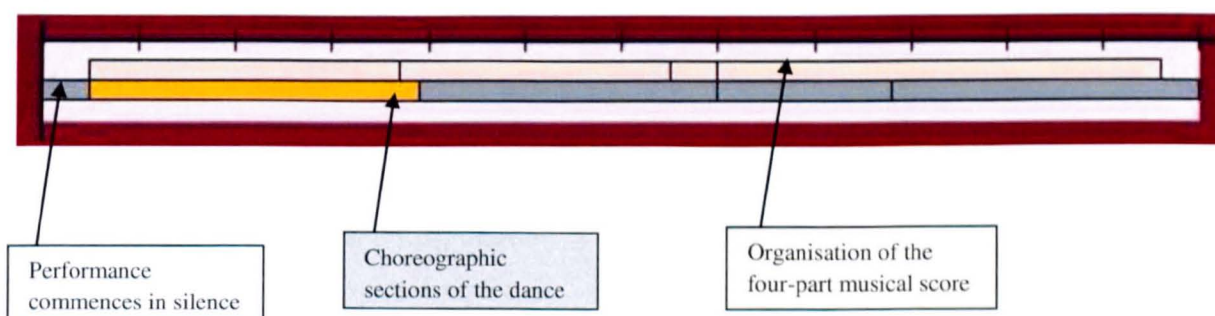
<sup>4</sup> Two recorded performances were used to construct the analyses of this revision. The first version is Compagnie Preljocaj’s performance at Teatro Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 3 March 1994, accessed at the Teatro Valli Archives, Reggio Emilia. The second is Ballet Preljocaj’s performance at Joyce Theater, New York (USA) in April 1997, accessed at the New York Public Library. Two live performances of *Noces* were also observed at the Pavillion Noire in October 2007.

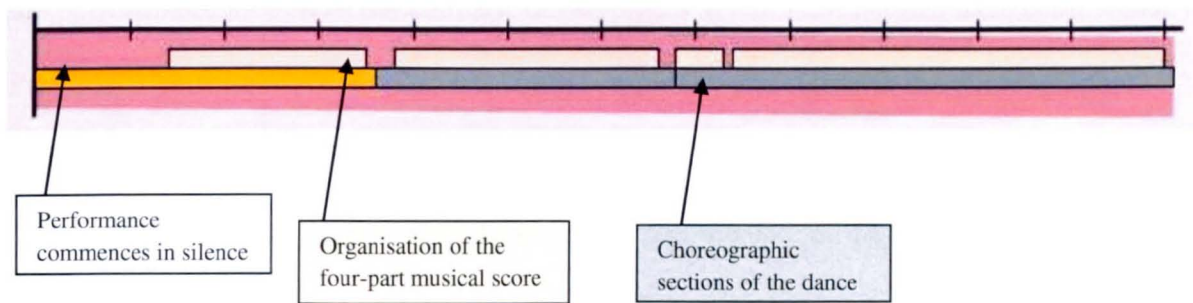
<sup>5</sup> The analyses of *Les Noces* are based on two recorded performances of *Les Noces*: firstly, Aterballetto’s performance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York (USA) from the 10 November 2005. This version was accessed at the New York Public Library. A copy of a later performance, recorded at Teatro Regio, Parma (Italy) on 5 November 2004, was loaned by the Aterballetto company archives.

Preljocaj's and Bigonzetti's stylistic concerns of choreographic organisation, traits and recurring patterns are drawn to the reader's attention. It is through these three dimensions that both choreographic revisions are brought into the analytical discourse in this final section of Part Two.

Before progressing to the main analyses of this chapter, it is useful to pause and gain a clearer insight into the diagrammatic presentation of the structural overviews of the two revisions. Below are schematic diagrams of how the four musical parts of the score are located against the choreographic dimensions of both *Noces* and *Les Noces*. The diagrams outline the structure of the dances and provide an overview of the start of the performances and the commencement of the musical parts, as well as the organisation of the choreographic sections of the revisions. The schematic overviews also indicate the relationships between the musical and choreographic sections including occurrences of when each section comes into play. Such diagrammatic schemes are provided in the analyses in this chapter and correspond to the presentation of the series of examples provided in the Appendix CD-ROM presentation in Folder 3. It is hoped that these tools facilitate the collective analyses and that they also provide an approximate location within the progress of the performance.

**Fig. 14** Organisation of musical and choreographic sections in *Noces* (1989)



**Fig. 15** Organisation of musical and choreographic sections in *Les Noces* (2002)

The selected extracts can also be viewed in the Appendix CD-ROM: they outline a visual dimension to the revisions of thematic and choreographic narratives. It is hoped that the reader will connect the written perspectives in these chapters with the visual images that emerge from recordings of the chosen performances of these two revisions of *Les Noces*. The annotations within the written text will indicate when the reader should make reference to the collections of dance clips in the Appendix CD-ROM folder.

## 5.2 An analysis of Angelin Preljocaj's *Noces* (1989)

As outlined in the introduction to this chapter, the development of the subject matter of the dance is constructed upon the meta-narrative of a semi-reversed event which develops outside the realm of the conjugal ritual and with no actual presentation of "the wedding rite".

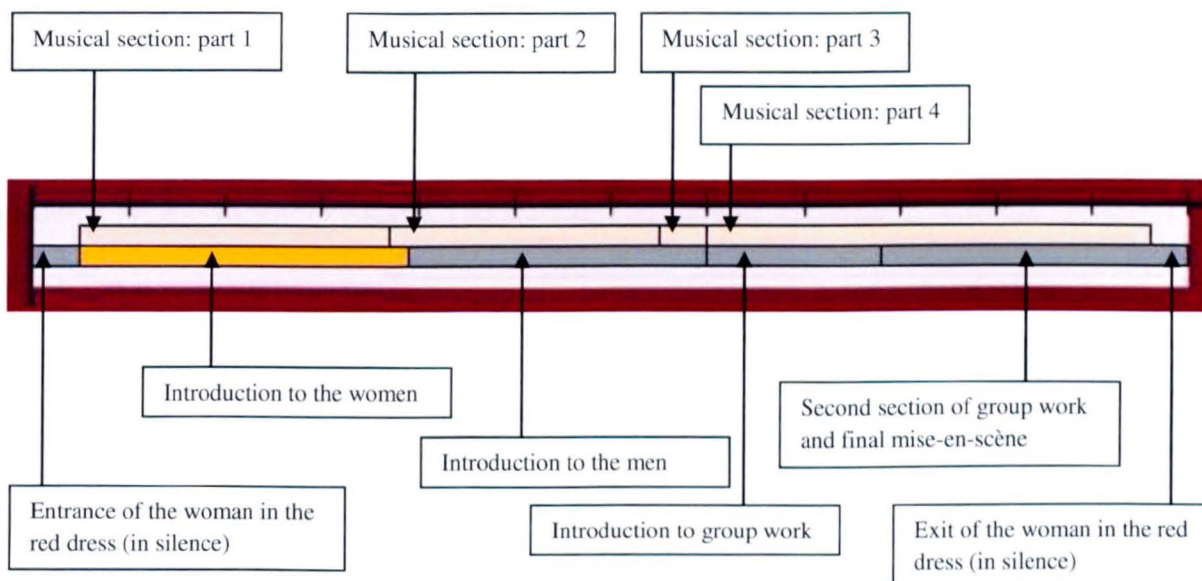
Preljocaj's interpretation of the ballet illustrates "a back-to-front version of a funeral rite, she would walk slowly, her eyes brimming with tears, towards the consented rape" (Catalogue notes on *Noces* in Ballet Preljocaj, online).



5.2.1 An overview of the structural organisation of *Noces*

The opening and concluding constructions of the *mise-en-scène* tie up the overall structure of the performance as well as the thematic development in *Noces*. As critics have commented, Preljocaj's crafting of *Noces* illustrates both complexity and rigour in the choreographic form.<sup>6</sup> The ballet commences with a silent introduction; a reluctant woman in a red dress is blindly led to her fate and this opening statement sets the tone of the choreographic work.<sup>7</sup> The use of the Stravinsky score follows the ordering of the four sections and is summarised in the diagrammatic overview of the organisation of both the choreographic and musical sections of the ballet.

**Fig. 16** Detailed structural outline of sections in *Noces* (1989)



<sup>6</sup> Here references are made to the reviews by Anna Kisselgoff (1991) and Giannandrea Poesio (1995).

<sup>7</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 1 in *Extracts from Noces: Silent Introduction*.

The organisation of the various parts of *Noces*, illustrated on the previous page, demonstrates a silent introduction to a chosen woman. This is followed by the introduction to the women, set to the first musical section of the score, followed by an introduction to the male dancers. The first collective performance of the five women (*unison for five females*)<sup>8</sup> introduces the five female dancers through a complex layering of five individual and replicated movement structures of traditionally modern choreographic vernacular. The introduction to male performers at the start of the second musical section of the score (*circular male sequence*)<sup>9</sup> characterises the qualities and traits of the male dancers' choreographic material in *Noces*. Five male dancers perform a series of phrases which are repeated four times in unison, travelling anticlockwise, loops from the sixth step to back into the first, around the central performance space which is outlined by the peripheral organisation of the benches.<sup>10</sup> The end of the second section of the musical score marks the meeting of the two genders (*unison phrase with complex variants on parallel and symmetry*)<sup>11</sup>, and this is the first time where the ten dancers perform the same choreographic material organised within a layered formation. The choreographic material in this section illustrates a series of units of choreographic themes performed in unison and within a complex setting using parallel symmetry. Moreover, the variations on anticlockwise formations display a complexity within the groupings' organisation alongside an overlay of phrases performed in unison but facing different directions. Performed by both male and female dancers in the performance, this series of combinations is seen as a fundamental recurring structure which will be analysed further in later sections of this chapter. Towards

---

<sup>8</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 2 in Extracts from *Noces: Scene 1: unison for five females*

<sup>9</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 3 in Extracts from *Noces: Scene 2: circular male sequence*

<sup>10</sup> This is illustrated as Organisation 1 in Table 3.5.2

<sup>11</sup> This can be viewed in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 4 in Extracts from *Noces: Scene 2: Unison phrase with complex variants on parallel and symmetry*

the end of scene two, *Noces* presents a recurring choreographic structure, here referred to as the *three couples' phrase*.<sup>12</sup> This is performed by three of the five couples at this given point within the organisation and replicated by four couples at other given points. Here, this example illustrates the tossing of female dancers within the formation of three couples placed in a triangular formation surrounding the centrality of the performance space. Although this is the second occasion where partner work occurs, the unique arrangement of this series presents each couple in a formation that positions them to face the same direction or each other, and maintains the proximity within the relationship as they travel stage right or stage left. In this choreographic example, the three couples prompt the consideration of liminal boundary-crossing of the body as a corporeal dimension and the body as a prop. These points will be discussed further in the following two parts of this analysis.

The third and fourth sections of the musical score are choreographically visualised through a series of group and partnered configurations and include the *repeated unison phrase at bench formation [5]*.<sup>13</sup> The recurrence of the unison phrase presents both connecting and accumulating factors. The repetition of this phrase illustrates the connection between the second and fourth choreographic scenes as well as an accumulation of organised material that consolidates the logic and consistency within the performance. This example describes the choreographic structure performed at the start of the fourth section of *Noces*, where the dancers perform in unison within the placement of benches in the fifth plan of organisation.

A silent conclusion at the end of *Noces* marks the departure of the woman in the red dress and illustrates the poignant use of the final moments of the dance, suggesting a return to

---

<sup>12</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 5 in Extracts from *Noces: Scene 2: three couples' phrase*.

<sup>13</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 7 in Extracts from *Noces: Scene 4: repeated unison phrase at bench formation*.



the opening of the performance.<sup>14</sup> An accumulation of images conjures up inferences of the arranged marriage. The reluctant woman in the red dress is finally led by her groom to her fate. As the dancers abandon the stage, the final images of the performance are dominated by the dolls that are now hanging on the tilted benches. The reminders of such unhappy moments are accompanied by the chiming of the bells in the musical score.

### 5.2.2 Analyses of costumes, lighting states and bodies and/as props in *Noces*

The recorded performances of *Noces* illustrate an explicit interplay between implicit forms of realism and symbolism. What could be referred to as a dramaturgy of the lighting and manipulation of props (dolls, benches and bodies) allows the identification of the inherent characteristics of *Noces*. The bold and realistic effects of the opening sequence facilitate an introduction and development of the work's main narratives. The five benches form the most prominent aspect of the performance's dramatic narratives, as do the dolls, costumes and the way in which the bodies are used, as demonstrated by the following analyses.

The costumes evoke the late 1980s' fashion in popular culture. The male dancers are dressed in white shirts, black trousers and ties, and the women are clothed in short velvet dresses, typical of the fashion in the late 1980s, with "hairdos reminiscent of Toulouse-Lautrec" (Kisselgoff, 1991, online). The costume design of the women's dresses offers a number of interpretations. The woman in the red dress takes the lead role as the bride, and, as such, as the sacrificed woman. The four other colours indicate "already wedded" women. Whilst the costumes refer to the time setting rather the location of the work, the precision of the benches and the manipulation of dolls add to the meta-narratives of the dance. As Poesio suggests:

---

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix CD-ROM. Extracts from *Noces*, Example 8.

“*Noces*... is an energetic choreography that focuses on the man/woman relationship with all its nuances [...] built up by a combination of frenzied movements and a particular use of props, such as benches and dolls. The latter play a significant role, for they can be seen as mementos or forebodings of women’s destiny.”

Poesio, 1995, p.1059

The set includes five benches and five dolls dressed in white, metaphorically denoting spatio-temporal encounters and suggesting passive “brides” in wedding dresses.<sup>15</sup> The lifting and tossing of dolls and female dancers<sup>16</sup> are some of the distinctive choreographic solutions that invite further analytical enquiry. Within the early phrases of the third section of the musical score, the frequency of the tossing corresponds also with the musical arrangement and marks the spatio-temporal experiences with quick and punching actions.

Throughout the second, third and fourth sections of *Noces*, the five men relocate the benches six times, thus creating choreo-narrative episodes that are highlighted with a series of lighting states which also affect and mark the central actions. Out of the six relocations of the benches, five occur between sections 2 and 4 of the musical score.<sup>17</sup> These relocations transform the performative space and bring about the characteristic shifts from one episode to another, while providing a narrative thematic which secures fluid narrative continuity between sections. The following table outlines images of each of the six bench formations.

<sup>15</sup> This is outlined in Appendix Table 3.1 (Systems of Materials) and illustrated in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM (Systems of Materials, *Noces*)

<sup>16</sup> The tossing of dolls occurs briefly in section 2 and predominantly in section 3. These examples are illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Tossing of Dolls (Scenes 2 and 3).

<sup>17</sup> These are illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Bench Formations 1–6.

**Table 11** Analysis of the organisation of the benches in *Noces* (1989)

Locations of the five benches <sup>18</sup>	
Organisation 1: Introduction Section 1	
Organisation 2: Relocation of the benches in Scene 2	
Organisation 3: Relocation of the benches in Scene 2	

<sup>18</sup> These images are taken from the recording of the 1994 Ballet Preljocaj performance held in the Archives of Teatro Valli, Reggio Emilia.

<p>Organisation 4: Relocation of the benches in Scene 4</p>	
<p>Organisation 5: Relocation of the benches in Scene 4</p>	
<p>Organisation 6: Relocation of the benches in Scene 4</p>	

In the first episode and bench formation, the men sit on the benches and their attention is drawn to the entrance of two women. Both women and men introduce themselves in two successive episodes, and as the benches are relocated, the relationships between the couples unfold. Firstly, there is segregation, then, as they slowly come together, the relationships evolve from playful explorations to sexual predatory interactions between the two genders. The climactic end of these interactions is then reached in the final episode, in which the music *leitmotiv* at the end of the performance signals the hanging of the five dolls from the

side-tipped benches.<sup>19</sup> The reflections that emerge from the still image of Bench Formation 6 are poignant; “the final image is effectively harsh: each “bride” having been used hangs like meat on a rack” (Kisselgoff, 1991, online). These particular final images reiterate the meta-narratives embedded earlier in the work and reinforce the connections to the austerity of the 1923 ballet and Nijinska’s vision of marriage within the context of this work.

The dancing bodies in *Noces* are theatrically used as props. The female dancers are swung, flung and turned. The appearance of a motif, that of the females jumping off the benches to be caught by the men, becomes central to understanding the use of the dancing body as a prop in *Noces*. As the performance progresses, the couples sit, slip away and return to the benches. Another example of ‘prop-like’ manipulation of the body is found later on, when the bride and other females fall backwards, like dead weights, into the men’s arms.

**Fig. 17** A collision of images: bodies and/as props in the third section of *Noces*<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> This is illustrated in the extract located in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Hanging of Dolls (Scene 4).

<sup>20</sup> This still image is taken from a recording of the 1991 film of *Noces*.

The meticulous lighting designs by Jacques Châtelet facilitate a transitional journey across an evolving and malleable *mise-en-scène*. The lighting states include squares of overhead lighting as well as a varying range and intensity of colour washes on the benches. Such states highlight the significant movements in the episodic actions, as in the instance of the dolls' "hanging" at the end of the ballet. Significantly, the lighting states facilitate the viewer's spatio-temporal experience of the performance. Each visual change and the progression from one lighting state to another conjure a series of meta-narratives reflecting Preljocaj's compositional habits, as Australian dance critic Alan Brissenden comments:

"Lighting is as important as dancing and choreography in this company, an essential ingredient of its dramatic power and emotional impact"

Brissenden, 1992, p.53

The following table summarises some of the lighting states that facilitate the narrative episodes.

<b>Table 12</b> Examples of Châtelet's lighting designs for <i>Noces</i> <sup>21</sup>	
Scene 1	
Scene 2	
Scene 3	
Scene 4	

<sup>21</sup> These images are taken from recording of the 1994 Ballet Preljocaj performance, held in the Archives of Teatro Valli, Reggio Emilia.

### 5.2.3 Choreographic motifs in *Noces*

The following analyses outline some of the typical choreographic vernacular within the phrases performed by the male and female dancers from the two recorded performances of *Noces* (1994 and 1997).<sup>22</sup> In this section of the chapter, examples are drawn from the introduction to the women (musical section part 1), the introduction to the men (musical section part 2) and the three couples' phrases (musical section part 3). The stylistic characteristics that emerge from these analyses offer the possibility of tracing the migration of the legacies of Cunningham's technique, the corporeal expressivity from Waehner's heritage and the layering of Bagouet's postmodern approaches to performance making within the work of Preljocaj.

The choreographic compositions of the five women outline a diversity of 'voices' within the introduction to these five characters. The choreographic vocabularies of the woman in the red dress, performed at the start of the first section of the musical score, are characterised by a recurring extension of the left leg, travelling and extending forwards in the sagittal plane. This shifting action is accompanied by a clasping of the hands, horizontal at chest level. Drawing both arms to her torso, the woman first flicks, then dabs her arms, and finally unfolds them to end this movement by adopting the overarching arms typified in a traditional performance of *Swan Lake* (Petipa and Ivanov 1895). The vocabulary of the woman in the dark blue dress is a further amalgamated array of dance elements. Her typical range of movement includes a *ronds de jambe à terre*<sup>23</sup> with her right leg. Her right arm is placed level with and across her face, and her left arm is placed across her abdomen. Another

---

<sup>22</sup> These are illustrated in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM (Select icon: Extracts from *Noces*).

<sup>23</sup> This is a circulatory action of the working leg which is kept in contact with the floor



characteristic organisation of the dance vocabulary within this role is the punched extension directed vertically to forty-five degrees.

**Fig. 18** The introduction to the women in *Noces*<sup>24</sup>

The woman in the light blue dress faces stage right and performs a series of walks which travel diagonally backwards. A series of anticlockwise arm circles performed in the sagittal plane end the repetition of walks. These steps are bound to the narrative as they connect to the opening walks at the start of the choreographic work, performed by the woman in the red dress. On the opposite side, the girl in the gold/tan dress performs a series of metaphoric

---

<sup>24</sup> This still image is taken from a recording of the 1991 film of *Noces*. Clarification: It should also be noted that the colours of the dresses in this 1991 production do not correspond to the colours of the dresses in the 1994/1997 performances. The colours of the dresses in recent performances correspond to those outlined in the recordings of the 1994/1997 performances.

movements. In the first instance, a shifting *chassé à la seconde*<sup>25</sup> is performed facing stage right; this is followed by a sideways tilt curving to the left and a flexed left elbow, illustrating references to modern dance vocabularies.<sup>26</sup> As she turns to face the audience, the dancer performs a series of undulations within the hip to head region and completes this series of movements with a rounding of the arms to an angular first position. The fifth member of this group (the woman in the purple dress) punches both hands to her right. As she swivels anticlockwise to face the back of the performance space, the dancer repeats the punched action of the hands; a half turn executes a hundred and eighty-degree clockwise turn. This series of shifting and cutting actions once again furthers the binary existence within Preljocaj's choreographic organisation of language and syntax.

A unison phrase follows the multilayered introductions to the five women.<sup>27</sup> The unifying set of steps typifies the range of language in Preljocaj's choreographic revision of *Les Noces*<sup>28</sup>. The phrases include the following characteristic movements. The dancers' arms are lifted with hands behind the head. Flexion appears at the elbows as the arms leave the vertical plane and travel through the sagittal to swing the right arm to sagittal high, and return once again through the sagittal plane to low back and reverse. As the dancers turn to *plié* or bend in first position, their arms are held in the vertical plane with flexed elbows. A side tilt highlights a contraction on the left side of the body as it recovers, turning to its right. The organisation highlights transient features between the rotation of the upper limbs, particularly the rotation of the arms at shoulder height, and the inward orientation of the right arm during

---

<sup>25</sup> This is a sliding action in an open position, with turned-out legs.

<sup>26</sup> The torso tilts and the angularity of the upper limbs makes clear reference to the technical traditions bestowed by Cunningham-based techniques.

<sup>27</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 2 in Extracts from *Noces: Scene 1: unison for five females*

<sup>28</sup> Performed on right diagonal of the performance space, the unison phrase is repeated in succession in clockwise fashion to perform on the counter side of the same diagonal and is characterised by a contraction in the centre of the body and the shifting arm actions.

the anterior/posterior swing. The lateral rotation of the lower limbs in the traditional first position is accompanied by side contractions and tilts against an upright carriage of the body. This introduction to the five men's movement vocabularies shapes the performative characteristics and the development of the dance motifs.<sup>29</sup> These phrases provide transitions to the partner work that emerge in later sections of the ballet as well as suggesting similar organisation to the body of work created by Preljocaj and discussed earlier in Chapter Four.

The first movement is a double kick with flexion (left first, then right leg) and extension at the height of the raised leg. The body is bent over and remains so during both kicks. The second action is a recovery to shift the weight, with arms across the body with flexion in elbows and wrists overlapping, into the vertical/sagittal alignment. The torsion in the body is complemented by the angularity in both the upper and lower limbs. A clockwise turn to carry the right arm and leg extended away within the limits of the kinesphere traces an overarching curve. Both limbs maintain a parallel relationship and are carried through the vertical plane across into sagittal plane. A circular extension leads into a barrel turn that continues travelling in a clockwise direction with parallel and flexed legs; the impetus of the right arm curves across the middle of the kinesphere, shifting a wringing action that unfolds across a circular pathway. There is a jump with both legs parallel and feet extended. The arms are held in parallel, with flexion at elbows and dropped wrists that are typical of the stylistic treatment of body parts in the choreographic *oeuvre* of Preljocaj. Finally, on alighting, the extended arms travel through sagittal plane to diagonally back low. The phrase is completed with a drop to floor on hands and feet; the knees are flexed and the torso is tilted towards the floor.

---

<sup>29</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 3 in Extracts from *Noces: Scene 2: circular male sequence*

Towards the end of scene two, *Noces* includes a recurring choreographic structure which is performed by three of the couples at this given point within the organisation, and replicated by four couples at other given points. This is identified as the *three couples' phrase*.<sup>30</sup> This example illustrates the tossing of female dancers within the formation of three couples placed in a triangular formation surrounding the centrality of the performance space. Whilst this is the second occasion where partner work occurs, the unique arrangement of this series presents each couple in a formation that positions them to face the same direction or each other, and maintains the proximity within the relationship as they travel stage right or stage left.

The dancers fling their arms through horizontal plane to embrace each other. This gesture is inherently layered with the ritual embraces which are inherent in the nature of the three men's jump onto their partners' shoulders. The men's legs are suspended, with slight flexion in the knees and extended feet, and held in sagittal plane as their upper bodies curve over the females' shoulder girdles. The male dancers then push off the female bodies, instigated through the contact in the upper body. Both arms are once again thrown arms in the vertical plane. The female dancers then take a step backwards whilst the men take one forwards. This makes the three couples shift towards the male dancers' front-facing directions within the performance space.

This is superimposed with an additional couple, located upstage centre, dancing with a doll. Whilst the doll is swayed and tossed around, the transference of narratives across the spatio-temporal performance space coincides with the female dancers, in particular the woman in red, jumping, soaring and spinning. The references to and overlaps between the dolls and the women illustrate this juxtaposition between the dancing body and the body as a

---

<sup>30</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 5 in Extracts from *Noces: Scene 2: three couples' phrase*

prop. In Preljocaj's revision of *Les Noces*, these choreographic dimensions reconsider the heritage of Nijinska's *Les Noces* as well as finding ways in which to weave the performance traditions of both the score and the new dramatic narratives into this choreographic revision.

**Fig. 19** Three couples' phrase in *Noces*<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> This still image is taken from a recording of the 1991 film of *Noces*. Clarification: It should also be noted that the colours of the dresses in this 1991 production do not correspond to the colours of the dresses in the 1994/1997 performances. The colours of the dresses in recent performances correspond to those outlined in the recordings of the 1994/1997 performances.

### 5.3 An analysis of Mauro Bigonzetti's *Les Noces* (2002)

In this analysis of the second choreographic revision of *Les Noces*, the development of subject matter of the dance is constructed upon a series of choreographic episodes which once again develop outside the realm of the conjugal ritual. An analysis of Bigonzetti's interpretation of the 1923 ballet and musical score illustrates a variety of dimensions which provide several strands of discussion, including those associated with the structural organisation, the use of props, the body and lighting states as well as insights into a sample of the choreographic idiom.

#### 5.3.1 An overview of the structural organisation of *Les Noces*

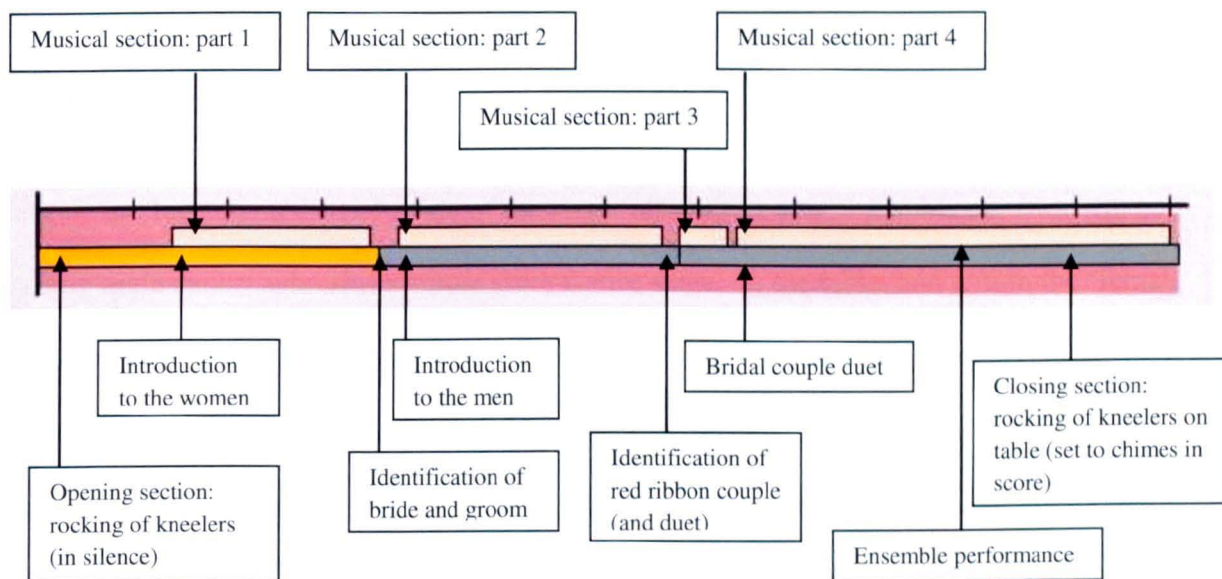
The opening and concluding sections of the ballet tie up the overall thematic structure of the performance in *Les Noces*. Such a premise unfolds through the performative use of kneelers, both in the opening scenes and in the final moments of the performance. As indicated by the diagrammatic overview of the treatment of the musical score and the choreographic sections, *Les Noces* presents parts of the performance in silence. These sections pace out and offer the score an extension of choreographic interjections. As an overall structure, the performance of *Les Noces* commences with an extended introduction, an introduction to the women as in the first musical section, the identification of the bridal couple and the introduction to the male dancers, followed by two additional duets. The use of the Stravinsky score follows the ordering of the four sections. The bridal duet spans the third and fourth musical structures. The rhythmic and choreographic structures of the dance suggests a strong performative relationship between the emergent narratives and suggest:

“tauntingly wild percussive rhythms and unmelodic singing of the Stravinsky score. His portrayal of marriage is thus fairly nightmarish, for the dance questions whether the ceremony is truly the ‘unique rite which unites two lovers’.”

Poesio, 2005, online

The use of the Stravinsky score follows the ordering of the four sections and is summarised in the following chart.

**Fig. 20** Detailed structural outline of sections in *Les Noces* (2002)



The silent introduction establishes the ballet's mise-en-scène as well as the locations of the two genders at the start of the performance.<sup>32</sup> The prelude of the rocking kneelers illustrates the poignant use of the darkness and can be heard as the curtain is raised. Both groups of dancers sit on top of the kneelers, the women are located on the left side of the stage and men on the right, and they rock forwards and back across the sagittal plane. As Giannandrea Poesio argues:

“Perched on sharp-edged chairs, the dancers are divided by gender into two facing groups. The noises made by their rocking on the steel chairs at the beginning of the work are a prelude to the kind of now violent, now languorous fight between the groups that develops as soon as the music starts.”

(Poesio, 2005, online)

<sup>32</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 1 in Extracts from *Les Noces*

A percussive note is struck and this reveals two groups of dancers. The dancers abruptly pause from their rocking actions; their gaze is directed towards their apparent opposition. The first notes of a recording of Stravinsky's score are coupled with the first collective performance of female dancers as a choreographic chorus set to the first section of the musical score (Use of kneelers (I)).<sup>33</sup>

The organisation of the female dancers' unison section suggests an underlying force which connects the choreographic and the musical narratives. In the first scene, nine female dancers are located on the right side of the stage, alternating choreographic phrases with a leading male dancer who shifts across from centre stage, on the table, and within the 'female territory' within the performance space. Unison marks the emergent organisation of the group. The dancers commence by sitting on kneelers, repeating their movements against the musical structure. The identification of the bride and groom occurs towards the end of the first musical section. This duet takes place during the period of silence between the first and second parts of the musical score. As the two dancers run towards the table, this short duet outlines the theatricalised contact between these two dancers. The groom hoists the bride up; her feet are flexed over crossed legs and her upper body tilts backwards into sagittal/head tilts backwards. The groom lifts the bride and drops her "like a sack" and this lift and drop is repeated several times throughout this duet.

The introduction to the male performers occurs at the start of the second musical section. Here, the male dancers can be viewed as a choreographic chorus (use of kneelers (II)).<sup>34</sup> Similar to the choreographic treatment of the female dancers, the second scene introduces the nine male dancers located on the left side of the stage and the presence of a female dancer who transitions across from centre stage to the 'ungendered' or neutral

---

<sup>33</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 2 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

<sup>34</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 3 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.



territory, also identifiable as the table. Similar to the previous example, unison marks the emergent choreographic narratives for the male group. A second duet takes place during the period of silence that follows the end of the second musical section and lasts the duration of the entire third music scene. This duet, identified as the red ribbon couple's duet in Scene 3,<sup>35</sup> is the choreographic encounter between the woman with the red ribbon and her male counterpart. Similar to the initiation of the first duet between the bride and the groom, the male dancer lifts the woman with the red ribbon up towards the table, using a similar hoisting action together with pronation of the legs and flexion at feet. An additional percussive musical note marks the start of this duet, and develops through a series of lifts. The male dancer lifts the woman across his right shoulder; she dangles across his arms, metonymically hanging like a sack.

A second duet for this couple emerges as the main *pas de deux*, and this is known as the bride and groom's duet.<sup>36</sup> This takes place at the start of the fourth musical section of the score and can be broken down into a series of eight parts. The bride and the groom walk to centre stage during an extended silence, a pause in the music score before the fourth scene. Similar to the 1923 ballet, both genders are united together during Scene 4 and this is identified as the section of the seven couples and all dancers in Scene 4.<sup>37</sup> Two extracts prompt a set of unison phrases with seven couples, located at the opening, and a second, floor-bound phrase, at the end of Scene 4. In Bigonzetti's *Les Noces*, the choreographic narratives emergent in the extracts from Scene 4 arguably retain the heritage of the 1923 production.

---

<sup>35</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 4 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

<sup>36</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 5 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

<sup>37</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Examples 6a & 6b in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

The chimes in Stravinsky's score herald the final moments of *Les Noces*, which offer a multilayered organisation of the two couples against the swinging of the kneelers against the table<sup>38</sup>. Three levels mark the final tableaux and the emergent analysis that mark the final moments of Bigonzetti's interpretation of Stravinsky's score. These include the bridal couple located on the table, fourteen dancers who reposition the kneelers and the red ribbon couple who perform a rendition of their earlier duet, performed during the third musical section. Each of these layers further the relationships between the choreographic, dramatic and musical narratives.

### 5.3.2 Costumes, bodies/props and lighting states in *Les Noces*

The emergent characteristics of *Les Noces* highlight a dramaturgy of the lighting design and manipulation of props, including kneelers and table, as well as of the dancers as theatricalised corporeal entities. As one critic suggests, "Aterballetto's design elements are first rate and assume a vital importance in sustaining the momentum of Bigonzetti's work" (Lobenthal, 2005, npn).

The costumes illustrate significant references to a contemporary setting and evoke high culture contemporary fashion. Millar and Swandale's designs place the woman in a white dress and the men's formal attire into the context of a contemporary wedding. The male dancers are dressed in velvet jackets and black trousers. The women, with the exception of the bride, are dressed in long velvet individually-designed black dresses. It is the woman in white who takes the lead role as the bride, as the "sacrificed woman" in a dark, almost funeral-like setting.

---

<sup>38</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 7 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

A theatrical emphasis is placed on the manipulation of the kneelers, table and bodies of the dancers. The value of these 'props' is constructed through the manipulation of choreographic phrases as well as the placing and relocating of tables and kneelers. The long steel table provides the setting of a theatrical landscape across the performance space. In the first two scenes, the table divides the stage in two 'gendered' parts, as well as references accumulating the narrative impacts of the two couples' duets that take place on the tables throughout and in the mid-scene silences that occur between the musical scores outlined as the first and second sections of Stravinsky's score. As the bride and groom drag the table anticlockwise, the displacement of the table to its repositioned centre stage location allows for a thematic shift across the performance space.<sup>39</sup>

Throughout the ballet, the bodies of the dancers act as corporeal props and suggest the importance of the partner work within Bigonzetti's choreography. The two duets which occur in the mid-scene silent period provide thematic weight to the choreographic material that unfolds within the ballet. The duets present weighted lifts and emphasize Bigonzetti's interest in the destruction of marital love, where, in the duet between the bride and the groom, the groom lifts the bride and drops her like a sack.<sup>40</sup> Recurring as a thematic concept, this choreographic interaction is repeated by the woman with the red ribbon and her partner in the third section of the choreography, where the leading male lifts the woman on his left shoulder, once again as though she were a doll.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> This is illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Use of Tables (Scenes 1 and 2).

<sup>40</sup> This is illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Table Duet: Bride and groom.

<sup>41</sup> This is illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Table Duet 2: Red ribbon couple.

**Fig. 21** The Groom lifts the Bride up in *Les Noces*<sup>42</sup>

Italian dance critic Marinella Guatterini comments on the introductory noises and the angularity of the movement created through the rocking of the *inginocchiatoi* (kneelers) (Guatterini, 2005, p.44). Often misinterpreted as ‘chairs’ by other critics, the kneelers are a crucial part of the opening moments of the ballet. Their metonymic references offer connections to the religious rites and the location of the wedding ceremony in Catholic churches and representations within Italian and Christian cultures. Both male and female dancers sit on top and rock the kneelers. The females jump around the kneeler, rotate it and then weave their way through the three-dimensional L-shaped steel structures<sup>43</sup>. Performing a slow spin on the base of the kneelers, the female dancers move on and around the kneelers in unison. As the kneelers are shifted across the lit space, the female dancers replicate the musical score’s choral canon and, effectively, act as catalysts for the reflections of the light

---

<sup>42</sup> This still image is taken from the recording of the 2004 performance at Teatro Regio, Parma.

<sup>43</sup> This is illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Female’s use of the kneelers.

off the steel structures. This organisation, repeated by the male dancers at the end of Scene 2, further consolidates the thematic and choreographic use of these props within Bigonzetti's ballet.

The eighteen kneelers are relocated four times within the thirty-minute ballet. There are two repositionings at the end of the musical scores of Scenes 1 and 2, and two further rearrangements in the musical score of Scene 4. The kneelers are relocated to the sides of the table when eight couples form a 'V' position at floor level in front of the table where the bride and groom are located in the earlier parts of Scene 4, offering a multiple layering within the performance<sup>44</sup>. In the final moments of *Les Noces*, the male and female dancers alternatively align themselves along the table, placing the kneelers on its base and resting on the edge of the table. As the last chimes are heard, the females simultaneously rock the kneelers and in canonical fashion are followed by the males<sup>45</sup>. In summarising the final use of kneelers:

“The chairs [*kneelers*], now hanging from the table, take on the appearance of huge bells, the same ones that toll for a wedding or a funeral.”

Caparrotti, 2005, npn

---

<sup>44</sup> This is illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Choreographic landscapes.

<sup>45</sup> This is illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Reflection of Rocking kneelers.

**Table 13** Analysis of the organisation of the table, kneelers and bodies in *Noces* (2002)<sup>46</sup>

<p>Organisation 1: Organisation of dancers, kneelers and table in Section 1</p>	
<p>Organisation 2: Relocation of the table in silence before the start of Section 3</p>	
<p>Organisation 3: Relocation of the kneelers in Scene 4</p>	

<sup>46</sup> These images are taken from a recording of the 2005 Aterballetto performance at *Teatro Regio* in Parma, stored in the Archives of Aterballetto, Reggio Emilia.

<p>Organisation 4: Relocation of the kneelers in Scene 4</p>	
<p>Organisation 5: Final organisation of the kneelers at the end of Scene 4</p>	

Finally, the organisation and design of the lighting provide opportunities to direct the spectator's attention to the dancers' manipulation of and engagement with the props and bodies. The analyses provide insights into narrative dimension that appears within the recorded performance. In the opening moments of the dance, the lights fade in and reveal the female dancers as well as the leading male who is located on the side of the table. The gradual fade-in of the lights reveals the shift from darkness to a lit space and provides a symbolic representation of the first scene.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, at the start of the second choreographic section, a retrograde effect ensues and illuminates the male dancers and the table. Here, the lighting designs create an organic connection between the traditions of Nijinska's *Les Noces*, where the first two musical parts introduce both genders, and Bigonzetti's treatment of the score. The identification of the bride and groom is brought about through two profile spots that draw the spectators' attention towards these two individuals, sitting on the kneelers amongst the other dancers<sup>48</sup>. Equally, a similar effect comes from the lighting design for the final moments of the ballet.

The rocking kneelers, which balance on the edge of the table, reflect the light and conjure a juxtaposition of haunting and other-worldly states that parallel the chimes in the Stravinsky score. As the bride and groom stand back to back, the kneelers metonymically toll and chime, and canonically reflect Bigonzetti's concern with layering the narratives within the ballet. The following table outlines some of the key features of the use of the lighting design to illuminate the focal points in the performance space.

---

<sup>47</sup> This is illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Rocking of kneelers in silence.

<sup>48</sup> This is illustrated in the extracts in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM, labelled as Identification of the bride and groom.



Example of lighting designs Scene 1	
Example of lighting designs Scene 2	
Example of lighting designs Scene 4	

<sup>49</sup> These images are taken from a recording of the 2005 Aterballetto performance at Teatro Regio in Parma, stored in the archives of Aterballetto, Reggio Emilia.

### 5.3.3 Choreographic motifs in *Les Noces*

Similar to the analyses of Preljocaj's *Noces*, the following analyses outline some of the typical choreographic vernacular within the phrases performed by the male and female dancers from the two recorded performances of *Les Noces* (2004/2005). These analyses of chosen sections also explore the choreographic treatment of the introduction to the section dances by females (section 1) and males (section 2), as well as outlining specific examples of group and partner work<sup>50</sup>.

The introduction to the female dancers as a choreographic chorus in the first choreographic section (*Use of kneelers (I)*)<sup>51</sup> illustrates the women performing in unison as a reflection of the rhythmic organisation of the Stravinsky score. The dancers jump to place their legs in second position, with feet perched on either of the kneeler and their hands holding on to the top of the steel frame. This action is further characterised through a tilt in torso, with their heads dropped back and arms parallel to each other with elbows perpendicular to floor. The second part of the phrase is a quick leap to balance both feet on the short raise of the chair. When the body is slightly tilted forward and elbows are held back, the dancers then turn the kneeler on its left side whilst sitting on its base.

A subsequent phrase of similar interest suggests the recurring use of unison as theatrical and narrative aspects within the early parts of *Les Noces*. More importantly, this extract significantly outlines the engagement of the body and prop (kneeler) where the dancers place and relocate, and enter and move through the three-dimensional structure. Through their movements, they transition from vertical across through to floor work and return back to a vertical standing position. Commencing in an upstage direction facing stage

---

<sup>50</sup> The selected extracts are illustrated in the interactive Slide Show in Folder 3 of the CD-ROM (Select: Extracts from *Les Noces*).

<sup>51</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 2 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

left with their kneeler located beside them, they shift their weight across a diagonal plane, counterbalancing and pressing the top bar of the kneeler. The dancers then drop to the floor along the initial line of direction. The kneeler is then dropped onto its right side, making a ninety degree drop along the vertical plane. The dancers shift their legs diagonally across and through the kneeler, with their legs pressing away from steel kneeler. Rotating through the right side of the body to sit up with the kneeler now oriented upside down, the dancers' legs become central within the three-dimensional structure of the steel prop. The recovery from the floor is instigated by the placement of the legs in the side vertical plane, together with the flexion in the feet that suggests references to the signature features in Bigonzetti's work that were outlined earlier in Chapter Four. As the dancers recover to a vertical standing position, they contract their upper bodies over the kneeler and present a choreographic link to the repetition of this phrase.

**Fig. 22** Rethinking the position of the kneeler and the female dancers in *Les Nocces*<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> This still image is taken from the recording of the 2004 performance at Teatro Regio, Parma.

The male dancers' signature traits as a choreographic chorus in Scene 2 (use of kneelers (II))<sup>53</sup> create contrasts within the movements and the manipulation of the kneelers performed by the female group of dancers. The males' choreographic variation illustrates a phrase which is performed with directional variation, and an emphasis of the musical stresses through longer pauses after each action. Similarities between the materials are directed towards the use of the same diagonal shift across to the left as well as dropping the kneeler on its right side. Primary variations include the recurring feature of the back flip and the orientation of the legs in second position with flexed feet that characterises this phrase.

There are four developments from the phrase performed to the first section of the musical score. Firstly, the backward flip is performed in the sagittal/vertical plane on the diagonal facing stage right. This movement concludes with the body in posterior sagittal plane with arms in parallel within the anterior sagittal and the repositioning of the body within the kneeler. The variations in the placement of kneelers within the phrase are clearly visible during the backward roll, particularly in the moment where legs are placed in second. At these points, the kneeler is placed on its short front and held upside down. A third development is visible in the rocking action on the dancers' backs, with feet supporting the front of the kneeler. The fourth development includes a series of shuffles in parallel using the legs as a driving force. At this point the kneeler is placed upside down, held with legs through the middle and arms in parallel at shoulder height. The dabbing and accumulating actions that ensue are performed in a canonical order where dancer #7 and dancer #8 commence, each performing a quarter turn which is executed in an accumulating fashion across a diagonal succession. This organisation of material provides choreographic connections across the dancers. In the final musical scene, the two gendered groups perform extracts from their individual phrases alongside each other and present both, providing opportunities to connect

---

<sup>53</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 3 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

the latter part of this revision of *Les Noces*. Cumulatively, the choreography suggests the position of the emergent performative and theatrical narratives in Bigonzetti's *Les Noces* and the heritage associated with the first two musical scenes in Nijinska's *Les Noces*.

The red ribbon couple's duet in the third choreographic section<sup>54</sup> offers further insights into Bigonzetti's choreographic traits. The dancer rocks across the vertical plane, gliding and shifting across a corporeal landscape. The recurrence of this position, trajectory and choreographic layering suggests the network of choreographic connections and accumulations across the performance of Bigonzetti's *Les Noces*. The dramaturgical moments that emerge from the sitting duet illustrate the woman's short-lived coercive control over her male counterpart, typified by the spiralling hand/finger gestures. Sustained across the transition of the table (instigated by bride and groom), the couple rest at the centre of the elevated platform; a quiet period follows before the couple recover and the woman is dragged across the table to stage left. A second series of lifts is characterised by the use of flexed feet around the male's neck.<sup>55</sup> The lifts demonstrate the woman suspended on the right shoulder of one of the leading males, with contact around the thoracic spine [shoulder girdle]; the positioning of lower limbs highlights an asymmetrical in the configuration of body parts, particularly across the legs and the reappearance of parallel flexed feet. Followed by three swings, the woman is contorted in a 'Y' position, and their bodies face away from each other. The female dancer's legs are flexed at the hips, knees and feet; with legs crossed over, the wringing to pressing effort presents connecting and accumulating vectors that reference the choreographic practices typical of Bigonzetti's *oeuvre* that have been outlined in Chapter Four. This couple conclude their duet during the final tableaux in Scene 4. Whilst the kneelers are reflecting light away from the bridal couple, the two dancers return to some of their

---

<sup>54</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 4 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

<sup>55</sup> This choreographic feature can be traced in other works such as *Pression* (1994), *Symphonic Dances* (1994) and *In Vento* (2007).

choreographic material seen earlier in the performance. Their final performance posits accumulations and connections across the theatricalised dance narratives in this revision of *Les Noces*.

**Fig. 23** The couple with the red ribbon and the bride at the foot of the table<sup>56</sup>

The bride and groom's duet commences at the start of the fourth musical section and can also be considered as another important part of Bigonzetti's choreographic work.<sup>57</sup> The two dancers move from the table and walk to centre stage. These walks are followed by an adage section, primarily led by contact work and the repetition of an undulating phrase that

---

<sup>56</sup> This still image is taken from the recording of the 2004 performance at Teatro Regio, Parma.

<sup>57</sup> This is illustrated in the Appendix CD-ROM. See Example 5 in Extracts from *Les Noces*.

connects these movements to their first duet on the table.<sup>58</sup> The duet evolves into two distinct choreographic themes: firstly, two undulations with right elbow leading to place high; secondly, a lift where the legs are oriented in parallel alignment with right angle flexion at knees. The groom lifts the bride across two accumulating successive lifts. During a third lift, the bride's feet are flexed and offer further accumulating features to the heritage of Bigonzetti's choreographic practices. The couple then travel across to stage right, shifting the held position across the performance space.

Two recurring choreographic sections follow: a section of floorwork and a second phrase of adage, or sustained movements. This second series of contact work illustrates the bride rolling along and up towards the groom as he tosses and catches her.<sup>59</sup> The bride then recovers to unfold, or *developpé*, her right leg, where the flexed foot of the working leg extends through along the vertical/sagittal plane. The groom grabs control and pushes against the bride's foot.<sup>60</sup> During the diagonal walks in the following section, the groom pushes the bride along her walking action; he supports the bride's shoulder girdle as her head, upper body and torso are placed in anterior sagittal plane. The bride performs three runs towards the groom and is then lifted by the groom's flexed feet; the kicks are flicked into the sagittal plane. The final choreographic organisation illustrates the groom grabbing her left ankle, with flexion in the raised foot and further flexion at the knees. The return to the foot section marks the commencement of the chimes. During the coda, the bride is lifted, carried from flexed feet and returned back to the table. As the bride's upper body arches over the groom, this transference suggests a connection to the arching action over the kneeler that was illustrated in earlier parts of the performance.

---

<sup>58</sup> This takes place during the mid-scene silence between musical sections 1 and 2.

<sup>59</sup> This phrase connects to the legacies apparent in *WAM* (2005) and *Festa Barocca* (2008).

<sup>60</sup> This is a significant connection to other recurring habits within Bigonzetti's practices such as those visible in *Oltremare* (2007), *Caravaggio* (2010) and *Luce Nascosta* (2010).

**Fig. 24** An image of the overlapping choreographic heritage in *Les Noces*

#### 5.4 Conclusion

The analyses of the two selected revisions of *Les Noces* outline the characteristics and traits of these two performances. Three-fold enquiries on the selected extracts from recorded performances of *Noces* and *Les Noces* outline the thematic uses of costumes, bodies, props and lighting states, together with the identification of stylistic concerns in terms of choreographic traits emergent from the extracts from both choreographic revisions.

*Noces* presents a vital link to both the stylistic interchanges associated with Preljocaj's choreographic practices as well as the revision of choreographic narratives that emerge from the selected extracts. The signature traits that were outlined in Chapter Three are once again reinforced across the choreographic idiom in *Noces*. The choreographic treatment of the dramatic narratives illustrates both multidimensionality and rigour in the choreographic form



as well as a progressively sinister use of Stravinsky's musical score. The heritage of the austerity of the 1923 ballet is thus revised across the treatment of the engagement with the 'bridal' dolls as well as that of the partnering of both male and female dancers. Similarly, the theatrical use of the benches offers the episodes a variety of narratives, from the flirtatious groping to the aggressive attacks on the women. The reorganisation of the bench formations provides further insights into the fluidity of progression across the dramatic narratives. Thus, Preljocaj's revision of *Les Noces* demonstrates explicit connections and accumulations of the weight of the 1923 ballet, alongside the intricate weaving of several characteristics from his engagement with choreographic influences.

Bigonzetti's austere interpretation of the wedding offers an equally bleak insight into the thematic use of the bodies, props and choreographic material in the episodic narratives. The notable distinction from Preljocaj's revision is the frequent use of periods of silence between the various components of the sections in Stravinsky's score. Bigonzetti's rethinking of the aural dimensions of the performance offers an additional dimension to the heritage of the work. The use of the kneelers and the table provide a variety of compositional levels and dimensions through which the dramatic narratives unfold. Through these levels, the choreographic treatment of the group work, duets and other episodic materials are heightened as a result of the intense theatricality that emerges from the moments in the dance. Nevertheless, as with Preljocaj's revision, Bigonzetti's rethinking of *Les Noces* is also rendered as a fabrication of the various choreographic influences that amalgamate together to create a multifaceted choreographic idiom.

Both Preljocaj and Bigonzetti offer intriguing insights into their engagement with the heritage of the 1923 ballet as well as their use of the musical sections of the Stravinsky score. The commonalities between their work suggest that the choreographic treatment of the first two sections of the musical score adhere to the heritage of the introduction to the bride and

---

her female companions and later the bridegroom and his companions. The diversity of their interpretations of the third and fourth musical sections illustrates the malleability of the heritage of the ballet. Nonetheless, their unique choreographic signatures shape their revisions of the ballet and provide a multidimensional choreographic work. It is in the light of these two productions that theories of transmodernism will be offered as developments for dance studies. The final part of this thesis takes the enquiry on the final leg of its journey. The following and concluding chapter will utilise the analytical examples raised in this section of the enquiry in order to explore and understand the phenomenon of transmodernism in dance.

## Part Three

# Theoretical Developments

This final section of the thesis proposes some of the theoretical resolutions of the research questions that underpin the nature of this thesis. What are the benefits and challenges of adopting a transmodern framework through which to analyse recent dance histories? How do the negotiated theories transfer effectively from one field to another and how can dance histories be considered through constructs such as transmodernism? How do transmodern differ from postmodern practices? And finally, can revisionist (dance) practices be aligned with a transmodern framework? In Chapter Six, the transference of theories from film and literature studies aims to contribute new perspectives on these recent choreographic practices, that to date have had little or no direct consideration within past or current discourses in dance studies. In conclusion, the three sections in this chapter construct the argument that the work of Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti and their revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) may be considered as transmodern dance practice.

## Chapter Six

### Theorising transmodernism in dance

#### Chapter Outline

6.1 Theories of transference and evaluations of *Noces* (1989) and *Les Noces* (2002)

6.2 Recent (transmodern) dance histories: Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti

6.3 Conclusions for the chapter and the study: Transmodern dance practices

#### 6.1 Theories of transference and evaluations of *Noces* (1989) and *Les Noces* (2002)

In the consequence of the analyses in Chapter Three to Five, the potential of a transmodern dance framework offers an opportunity for theories to transfer from one field to another. The negotiation of theories, or the act of transferring theories of transmodernism in dance, does not simply mean borrowing theories from film and literature studies and attaching them to dance, nor does it occur without its challenges. The concerns and examples raised in the earlier two parts of this thesis have underpinned the nature of this study. As outlined early in the introduction to this thesis, the issues with complex choreographic histories prompted the potential rethinking of postmodern dance practices. Selected choreographic histories, particularly those associated with Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti and their revisions of *Les Noces*, appear not to be exclusively postmodern. Whilst their practices appear to reference some elements of postmodernism, the choreographic artefacts that collectively mark their body of work offer insights into other dimensions of artistic practices. Moreover, a response to the concerns about revisions of *Les Noces* and the multidimensionality offered in the choreographic *oeuvres* of Preljocaj and Bigonzetti culminated in the analyses outlined in three chapters of recent dance histories.

Other concerns that emerged from the theoretical contexts of this thesis include the uncharted connections between transmodernism and choreographic revisionism. Chapter Two

proposed the prospect and possibilities of considering choreographic revisionism as practices compatible with the applications of transmodern theories in dance. The partial resolution of the exhaustion of postmodernism can provide new pathways to realise a tangible reality as the prospect of revisionism in dance is realigned to this new theoretical positioning. These theoretical perspectives provided the scope for investigating the field further. However, as Chapter Two concluded, none of the examples raised in the historical overview and recent applications of transmodernism dealt with the notion of revisionism. Indeed, the prospect of considering the application of some of the transferable characteristics of the current frameworks of transmodernism highlighted the viability of exploring pathways to consider the complex nature of revisionist practices in dance. Transmodernism's overarching features included the notions of pluralistic possibilities through the recognition of 'otherness' as diversity and the elimination of monopolies and hierarchy. Moreover, the connecting strategy of weaving and twisting shards of sources together with the potential possibilities of viewing remnants of postmodernism against new emergences of modernism further characterised the theoretical dimensions of this new theory.

The theoretical frameworks of dance and revisionist choreographic histories seem to be closer to the transmodern theoretical offering. Giannandrea Poesio's distinction model of revising critical components of the performance traditions of a historical artefact becomes central to the emerging discourse (Poesio in Lansdale, 2008). However, the progression into the analyses of the interstitial components of these historical revisions warrants a closer look at the minuscule points that connect within and across the narrative layers. The intricate weaving of shards of sources appears to accumulate through treatment of the choreographic idiom. Within the context of the subsequent revisions of *Les Noces*, the heritage of the unrelated Russian folk stories, the austerity of Nijinska's ballet and the choreographic idiom

and the rhythmic textures of Stravinsky's compositional arrangements transition into a web of connections surrounding the iconic status of the 1923 ballet.

The histories of the choreographic revisions of *Les Noces* represent a multilayered diversity of unrelated choreographic idioms set against their connections to the performance histories of these revisions. At the intersections of revisionist practices, transmodernism in dance may imply border-crossing and globality together with the recognition of alterity from past dance practices, histories and artefacts. Both *Noces* (Preljocaj 1989) and *Les Noces* (Bigonzetti 2002) depict revisions of the iconic ballet, and offer labyrinthine connections of multidimensionality including border-crossing and alterity within the choreographic narratives. *Noces* and *Les Noces* present deposits of several layers of choreographic traces. The two revisions reflect the heritage of the 1923 ballet, largely through the austerity of the development and treatment of the narratives. The overlaps between the theatricalised narratives typified by the introduction of the female and male dancers and the separation of genders in the first two scenes of both productions suggest the weight of the performance traditions of Bronislava Nijinska's *Les Noces*. These connections offer insights of globality as alterity from past dance histories, where Russian traditions overlap into these French and Italian choreographic concerns.

The significant use of the musical score acts as a further connection with the performance histories of the ballet. Both productions revel in the weight, ordering and treatment of Igor Stravinsky's score, and their connections to the historic organisation of the four musical parts offer a definitive grounding to the heritage of past practices. Nonetheless, both choreographic works make use of periods of silence to further augment the emergent narratives, like shards of interjecting episodes that may be comparable to Chico Buarque's

texts<sup>1</sup>. In *Noces*, transmodern connections occur across the opening and concluding choreographic mise-en-scènes, where the woman in red is led to the centre of the stage at the start by a female companion and in the final moments is led off stage by her male counterpart. Similarly, in *Les Noces* the opening series of rocking in silence, the identification of the two couples and the final rocking of the kneelers on the table offer metaphoric shards that present a non-linear approach to the narratives.

Whilst the adherence to the introductions of both genders in the first parts of the productions is weighted to the heritage of the ballet and the musical score, it is the intensity of the fluidity of choreographic episodes within both works that offers the transmodern connections with non-linearity. As the analysis of both works in Chapter Five suggests, the organisation of the dramatic, choreographic and musical narratives are composite constructions which allow the spectator to consider the overlapping features of modern and postmodern traits as well as the objectification of props and bodies across the two performances. This is evidenced through the interweaving of complex movement phrases, and the use of the props and the body as structural and thematic tools.

Multidimensionality affects both productions through the connecting and accumulating references to modern and postmodern practices. As outlined in Chapter Two, the extrapolation of Szaniawski's theory of transmodernism here infers a hybridity of modernist and postmodernist dimensions. In *Noces*, the five females' choreographic section illustrates a composite layering of traditionally modern dance vocabulary as well as individual moments of a postmodern weight of established heritage. As the woman in the red dress shifts both arms to her torso and flicks her arms and dabs them successively, the

---

<sup>1</sup> Here references are made to the author's own readings of *Benjamin* (1995) and *Budapest* (2003).

unfolding and shifting gesture signifies an overarching organisation of the arms typified in performance traditions of *Swan Lake* (Petipa and Ivanov 1895)<sup>2</sup>.

Choreographic thematics that are typical of modernist compositional structures emerge from the analysis of Bigonzetti's *Les Noces*. The choreographic use of the kneelers, used by both the female and male dancers in the first two musical scenes of *Les Noces*, highlights a thematic variation of the first phrase as the male dancers perform a variation on a combination of the phrases performed by the female dancers. *Les Noces* alters the weight of existing texts through the extended duet for the bride and groom as well as the red ribbon couple. The bride and groom's duet in the fourth musical scene suggests insights into the nineteenth-century canonisation of the *pas de deux*; the codified *entrée* visible in most *pas de deux* is constructed on the heritage of the nineteenth-century canon, developing in clear, distinct choreographic sections. Moreover, the choreographic idioms and vernacular suggest a multidimensional condition of alterity brought about through traces of the migrated and juxtaposed practices. *Les Noces* (2002) references the displacement of Glen Tetley's legacies, the layering of postmodern concerns linked with Forsythe's early theatricality of the dancing body and Ek's heritage of revising historical texts. Similarly, *Noces* demonstrates traces of other dance histories in Preljocaj's choreographic *oeuvre*, including those of Cunningham's legacies and expressivity from Waehner's heritage. Furthermore, the layering of Bagouet's postmodern values is also present in the engagement with established texts as well as the treatment of the bodies and dolls as props.

The objectification of bodies as props and the sense of otherness achieved through the choreographic treatment of the props posits other layers of multidimensionality and alterity. Preljocaj's theatrical manipulation of the five dolls dressed in white enriches the theatricality and enhances the subject matter of the ballet. The tossing of the dolls and the female dancers

---

<sup>2</sup> This is also illustrated in Chapter Five with a still image from the 1991 film of *Noces*.



articulates the musical composition, marking the spatio-temporal experiences with quick, punching actions, and suggests the objectification of the dancing body. In *Noces*, this choreographic treatment re-kindles the subject matter alongside the meta-narratives embedded in the choreographic score and performance, returning to the postmodern weight of the heritage of the ballet's sombre and sinister approach to the wedding. In Bigonzetti's *Les Noces*, the repetition of angularity of the actions and the introductory noises, created through the rocking of the kneelers (*inginocchiatoi*), accumulates collectively as a menacing omen of what lies ahead of the couple and revisits the connections with Italian and Christian cultures. The employment of such props in *Les Noces* reconsiders the heritage of the ballet, the Italian cultural context and the postmodern weight of the steel structure as an integral narrative tool.

In the same vein as Lewis's analyses of the Santiago Nazarian texts that were outlined in Chapter Two, multiple connectivity across a series of works by an author offers additional transmodern accumulations. Other moments in *Noces* outline transmodern features of multiple connectivities across the body of work created by Preljocaj. One example discussed in Chapter Five is the choreographic structure of the male circular sequence located at the start of the second part of Stravinsky's *cantata*. This combination of phrases is composed of a series of steps: a jump off both legs, parallel with feet extended, is typically marked by arms held in parallel with flexion at elbows and dropped wrists; on alighting, extended arms travel through sagittal to diagonally back low in an anticlockwise direction. This choreographic vernacular can be traced in earlier works such as *Larmes Blanches* (1985) and later works such as *Roméo et Juliette* (1990) and *Le Songe de Médée* (2004). Similarly, the choreographic signature of foot flexion in Bigonzetti's *Les Noces* and other works appears as an accumulating effect and a postmodern weighting of existing choreographic texts in the two couples' duets. In the red ribbon couple's duet in the third choreographic scene, the second

series of lifts is characterised by the use of flexed feet around the male's neck. This can be connected to other works such as *Pression* (1994), *Symphonic Dances* (1994) and *In Vento* (2007). In another example, the groom lifts the bride in two accumulating successive lifts and, in a third lift, the bride's feet are flexed. Essentially, the 'foot section' significantly suggests the recurring habits within Bigonzetti's practices, particularly those visible in *Oltremare* (2007) and *Caravaggio* (2008), which are explored in further detail in Chapter Four.

Both *Noces* and *Les Noces* offer ways to explore the conceptualisation of transmodernism in dance as a multilevel theory. The examples from both choreographic revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) offer ways through which to characterise transmodernism in dance. These examples suggest transmodernism in dance as a complex form that crosses the boundaries of dance histories and practices and reconvenes through the intricate and multifarious intersections and diversities of planes within choreographic writing and performance making. The premise of a transmodern framework for dance offered here in this thesis is concerned to recognise a complex scaffolding of transferred traces of dance histories, emancipated through constructions of globality and alterity, as well as multidimensionality and non-linearity through the presence of both modern and postmodern dance genres. The model proposed here outlines intricate and non-linear (re)organisations of migrated practices, and a renewed sense of alterity within globality and border-crossing through the exchanges of choreographic histories within the emerging practices.

In the light of the intricacies of the emerging influences within the work of Preljocaj and Bigonzetti, the thrust of the model offered in this study adopts non-linear trajectories and intersections of points, such as the mutual presence of dance modernism and postmodernism from different historiographic and geographic points. Like its cinematic and literary counterparts, transmodern dance practices foster a "modern loop" that does not neglect its

postmodern past. Transmodern dance practices thus arise as a result of a creative response to the plethora of values from migrated practices that have found their way into fluid, multifaceted and – to borrow from Rodríguez Magda’s metaphor – scaffolded dance cultures.

Thus, the preoccupation with understanding these revisions of existing performance histories results in the advancement of a theoretical framework of these histories. These revisionist performances assist in addressing the matter of the ‘elusive’ traits and they revisit the reconsideration of the nature of revisionism. In doing so, the process casts further afield across other disciplines to recruit this new theoretical framework and pursues a more in-depth understanding of choreographic revisionism. The robustness of this theoretical application can be tested across a secondary field of study within this thesis. As a further offering on the construction of transmodernism in dance, the following section of this final chapter evaluates the body of work by Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti as recent transmodern dance practices. In doing so, this model of analysing dance suggests differences between postmodern hybridity, where the work of art offers a melting point of references and the contrasting disposition of the distinct traces in transmodern dance. In defining transmodernism in dance, these creative connections proliferate beyond the discourses of hybridity.<sup>3</sup>

## **6.2 Recent (transmodern) dance histories: Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti**

The analyses of the performance histories outlined in Chapters Three and Four allow for consideration of two exponents of transmodern dance practices – notably, the choreographic

---

<sup>3</sup> The effect of cultural hybridity has recently been investigated in other contexts of dance and performance studies. In her recent doctoral thesis, Royona Mitra (2011) draws upon the post-colonial theories of Homi K. Bhabha, notably his seminal concept of the “third space”, as a theoretical underpinning for analysis and documentation of recent choreographic works by Akram Khan (b.1974), London-born and of Bangladeshi heritage. Her thesis explores this framework of hybridity as “an interstitial and fertile space of aesthetic and critical enunciation” (Mitra, 2011, p.1). Her enquiry moves beyond the metaphoric space of diasporic identity formation offered by Bhabha; she extends the concept from its literary origins to a performative realm and argues that Khan’s performance is of the third space.

practices of Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti. Within the reconfiguration of distinct choreographic features, these recent dance histories outline multifaceted exchanges through border-crossing and collisions of national and cultural identities, as well as explorations of the shifting dimensions of alterity. In the light of established theories,<sup>4</sup> transmodern dance practices foster a “modern loop” that does not neglect its postmodern past but demonstrates an avoidance of centrality, cultivated through the presence of traces across both modernist and postmodern histories. The choreographic “present-ness” (Jenkins, 2009, p.18) of these traces draws a parallel between the characteristics of their work and practices and the theoretical constructs of this thesis, significantly through the methods and media of the resourced histories taken from live and recorded performances at the many research locations.

Border-crossing dialogues and exchanges in post-war France and Italy provide a foundation for the transmodern dance practices that emerged in the 1980s, including the practices of Preljocaj and Bigonzetti. The ‘rapid expansion in dance’ through the importation of German expressionist dance and American modern and postmodern dance was furthered through the establishment of an American Centre in Paris in the 1960s (Gore in Grau and Jordan, 2000, p.29). This artistic space provided French artists with a platform for the ‘latest’ trends in contemporary American arts between the mid 1950s and the 1970s. The presence of companies led by Alvin Ailey (1931–1989), Martha Graham (1894–1991), Paul Taylor (b.1930) and Merce Cunningham (1919–2009) heralded a collision of a diversity of existing paradigms that radically altered the French dance scene. Moreover, the presence of Wigman- and Leeder-trained dancers and teachers in Paris offered a diversity of exchanges in dance histories. Similarly, the artistic migration of post-Balanchine traditions in the Italian dance scene was largely instigated by the importation of American modern ballet in the 1950s

---

<sup>4</sup> Here I refer to the models provided by Szaniawski (2004) and Lewis (2011).

through the International Ballet Festival at Nervi and the Festival of Two Worlds. This multifaceted dimension of artistic migration provided a foundation for the complex and shifting forms of alterity between the displacement of the migrating traces of global dance histories and the emergence of the recent dance histories of those 'second generation' choreographic practices.

The interweaving reorganisation of the choreographic traditions is seen through Preljocaj's engagement with the principal characteristics of the choreographic legacies of Karin Waehner (1926–1999), Merce Cunningham (1929–2009) and Dominique Bagouet (1952–1991). In transmodern terms, these features provide initial manifestations of dialogues and exchanges across the traces of histories in Preljocaj's performance-making practices. In *Empty Moves (Parts I & II)* (2007), the distinctly emotive use of the breath as a mechanism for driving the movement, together with the linear and angular trajectories of the Cunningham techniques, is superimposed with a kaleidoscopic treatment of "texts" that reflect the postmodern condition of intertextual practices. Here, each characteristic present in the performance retains its identity whilst colliding with other performance histories. The choreography of *Empty Moves* is performed alongside a recording of John Cage's performance of *Empty Words* (1977).<sup>5</sup> Extracts from Cage's two-hour performance suggest the invisibilised traces of mediatised and textual presences within the progression of the performance of *Empty Moves*. The condition of transmodernism in works such as *Empty Moves* suggests the manifestation of a fabricated and complex network of performance and choreographic histories, the layering of narratives and the treatment of historical performances, aural traditions and texts. Other postmodern trends, such as the reference to existing texts and the co-existence of different performances, are visible across several works

---

<sup>5</sup> Cage's infamous recital of the quasi-nonsensical reading of journal writings by Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) included the Milanese audience's feisty reaction at Teatro Lirico in Milan on 2 December 1977.

by Preljocaj. In this way, the quotations from the literary work of Joseph Conrad (1857–1924) and the Dadaist heritage of Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968) in *Paysage Apres la Bataille* (1997), as well as the most recent collaborations with Subodh Gupta in *Suivront mille ans de calme* (2010), explore a plethora of references fabricated into the topographies of the performances of these Preljocaj works. Thus, the references to the post-Apocalyptic Monoliths from Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1969) characterise some of the referential texts that cross boundaries from film into dance.

Another dimension is the multifaceted treatment of narratives and musical scores, together with the collision of forms within the choreographic work created by Preljocaj. *Annonciation* (1995/restaged 2003), and the work commissioned by the Paris Opéra Ballet, *MC 14/22: Ceci est mon corps* (2002), constructed on pre-existing myth and motifs from religious and ancient traditions, provide an opportunity to interrogate the multifaceted dimensions in Preljocaj's treatment of the narratives and mise-en-scène. Both choreographic works suggest the blurring of boundaries between gender and gender relations. Preljocaj's interpretations revise the heritage of the narratives, reconfigure the relations between the characters and construct a sense of otherness. Similarly, the Balkan/Eastern Bloc interpretation of *Roméo et Juliette* (1990) reconfigures the Shakespearian narrative, viewing it through the traditional text layered with references to the conceptual narrative of two local groups that clash on territorial perspectives, and of integration in society through references to militia and the marginalisation of the homeless. Preljocaj's ballet outlines the complex reality of the human condition post-1989 and the instability of the Balkan region in the 1990s. Within the context of both Lyon Opéra Ballet and Ballet Preljocaj, *Roméo et Juliette* presents a transmodern vision of "otherness" that echoes the cultural and political concerns of Preljocaj within his adoptive country.

The revisions of the Ballets Russes (1909–1929) repertoire also provide scope for suggesting transmodernism in dance. The references to the Parisian tradition of the *Fête à Neu Neu* in Preljocaj's *Parade* (1993) suggest cultural importation and a dimension of 'otherness' within the complexity of the heritage of the ballet. Similarly, the explicit desires in the dreams of three young girls in *Le Spectre de la Rose* (1993) and the sexual explicitness in *Le Sacre du Printemps* (2001) reflect a series of alternative dimensions to the heritage of the ballets and the new vocabularies that are brought into the reconfiguration of the ballets. The 'sacrifice' in the 1913 ballet is represented as a contemporary social rape, where both genders collude as accomplices and victims of the predatory behaviour. In transmodern terms, Preljocaj's *Le Sacre du Printemps* provides another network of connections and forms of alterity. The work balances the linearity of Cunningham-based vocabularies, the emotive concerns of Waehner's corporeal shapes and a postmodern revision of Vaslav Nijinsky's seminal ballet against a sexually-charged rite. The performance is shadowed by the postmodern concerns of the rethinking of the 1913 ballet through an accumulating set of choreographic narratives: the introduction to the two genders, the sexual attraction and the identification of the victim. As with his theatrical endeavours with the benches in *Les Noces*, *Le Sacre du Printemps* (2001) further consolidates Preljocaj's interest in the potential of the theatricalisation of the props as an intrinsic part of the choreographic work. The choreographic form is rendered through the shifting landscapes, primarily led by the engagement with the six blocks. The dancers shift the six blocks, reconfiguring the theatrical space and altering the distinction between the performative organisation and the visualised treatment of Stravinsky's score. The structured choreographic treatment of the theatrical landscape is asserted as the dance progresses through the six formations, and the organisation of the six blocks is shifted across imaginary landscapes that outline a narrativity surrounding the dance of the 'chosen one'.

Similarly, *MC14/22* (2001) furthers the co-existence of the postmodern narratives and structural choreographic compositions within the work. The choreographic tableaux and the use of the eight tables suggest a series of frames that denote the various relationships between the men. The structured organisation of the eight tables allows for the multidimensionality of the choreographic tableaux, working across, beneath and through the tables as well as framing the corporeal treatment and the impact of the theatrical dimensions of the work. In *MC14/22*, the second male solo is significantly informed through corporeal concerns of postmodernity. The dancer embodies and explores the biblical subject matter “This is my body”. As each body part becomes strapped with packing tape and progressively impaired by the constrictions of each successive taping, the theatrical dimension of the body is altered and progressively restricted through each repetition of the same phrase. Moreover, as the choreographic tensions climax towards the end of the performance, the triangular structure allows the male dancers to walk up it and jump off the apex, replicating the corporeal dissonance and structural choreographic layering within Preljocaj’s performance-making trends. In *Le Songe de Médée*, the complex use of the bucket presents a multilayered approach within the progression of both modernist and postmodernist narratives. The pedestrian use of the bucket outlines the flexibility and malleability of the prop as a source for constructing modernist narratives in Preljocaj’s body of work. In this production, the bucket offers a hindrance to sight and acts as a source of nourishment, as well as suggesting the metaphor of the human sacrifice of blood. The narratives implode as Medea catches glimpses of the affair between Jason and the fresh, golden girl. As she dreams of the horrors that are yet to be unveiled before her, she shields her children by placing buckets on their heads.

The transmodern treatment of texts in Preljocaj’s work is further characterised by the composite and non-linear interchanges of musical and aural sources within a performance. In



*Annonciation*, the musical texts vary between interjections of *Crystal music* by Stephane Roy (1994) and sections from the *Magnificat* (Vivaldi 1737). Unlike a postmodern pastiche or collage, the soundscore is an amalgam form of musical sections that are shaped in a non-linear and composite fashion, interjected with a set of aural textures from everyday life, including the sounds of dripping water and children playing, alongside the *Misericordia* from Vivaldi's composition. The juxtaposition of the diverse sources implies the collision of alterity and the fluid interchange between each musical source. Similarly, in *La Stravaganza*, the soundscape is constructed through a combination of electronic and classical scores drawing upon a range of musical sources including Ficarra's *Source of Uncertainty* and Antonio Vivaldi's *Concerto No.8* (Extracts from *Dixit Dominus, Laudate Pueri Dominum*). Moreover, *Le Spectre de la Rose* (1993) demonstrates a transmodern connection with Carl-Maria von Weber's score, originally a major component of Fokine's 1909 ballet, accompanied by an electronic arrangement by Marc Kanne. The complexity of the sources within this production outlines the transmodern feature of revisionist heritage that references the historic 1911 ballet within Preljocaj's revisionist ballet. *Roméo et Juliette* (1990) also presents a transmodern reading of Prokofiev's classical score through Goran Vjevoda's additional development of a hybridised soundscape. The musical shifts across the choreographic landscapes in the ballet typify transmodern practices associated with the creative practices at the centre of Preljocaj's work. These examples render it possible to consider the effect of transmodern practices where multiple sources are brought together, carefully organised so as to retain their characteristics but with each source fitting into the complex, non-linear and hybridised soundscape. Within the context of Preljocaj's work, transmodernism is displayed through the importation and reconfiguration of discrete themes or motifs that result in a complex interplay of alterity of musical forms.

The transmodern features of Preljocaj's signature treatment denote a complex fabrication of modern and postmodern genres. A close analysis of Preljocaj's choreography elicits the transmodern reading of the treatment of the choreographic organisation, particularly through the use of props within the *mise-en-scène*, and creates a complex interplay of collision through the non-linear organisation of the modern and postmodern tendencies and patterns. A large proportion of the choreographic works in Preljocaj's *oeuvre* highlight the meticulous attention to the structural organisation of the dancers and the movement material within the performance space. The cumulative organisation of the phrases, combinations and larger sequences resonate the presence of structured thinking across the identification of motif, development and reorganisation. Moreover, the relationships between the organisation of the choreography and the engagement with the props and the musical score offer an integrated approach that also references the postmodern concerns of corporeality. The performative dimensions in Preljocaj's work thus resemble a plethora of malleable landscapes that outline a complex set of contexts, locations and occurrences. These recurring features appear across a variety of choreographic works created for Compagnie Preljocaj (1985–1995) and Ballet Preljocaj (1996 onwards), together with other commissioning ballet and dance companies created by Preljocaj between 1985 and 2010. These transmodern choreographic practices can be located across the indigenous French sub-cultures of ballet and modern dance and other (non-French) corporeal landscapes such as those of London Contemporary Dance Theatre and New York City Ballet in the 1990s, and the commissions for the Paris Opéra Ballet (1993–2010). The complexity of the treatment of dance, dramatic and musical narratives that exemplifies Preljocaj's innovative transmodern approach relocates and proliferates across the boundaries of native French and international dance companies.

Chapter Four characterised an opportunity to explore the transmodern accumulations of recent dance histories in the body of work (1990–2010) created by Mauro Bigonzetti. Transmodernism in the work of Bigonzetti highlights the composite balletic trends that reflect the spectrum of choreographic imports through the reorganisation and exchanges of the traditions linked with Leonide Massine (1895–1971), Glen Tetley (1926–2007), William Forsythe (b.1949) and Mats Ek (b.1949). Nonetheless, other transmodern shifts emerge from the complexity of ‘national’ choreographic identities and contradict the concerns about a decline in the pursuit of unified and generic Italian dance styles (Poesio in Grau and Jordan, 2000; Wulff, 1998). It is through the conglomerate of performance histories that consideration of transmodernism can first be explored in Bigonzetti’s *oeuvre*. The close collaborative association between Tetley and Aterballetto, resulting in restaging works including *Mythical hunters* (1965) and *Sphinx* (1977), as well as the creation of *The dream walk of the shaman* (1985), highlights significant shifts of choreographic legacies from Tetley’s signature choreographic treatment that has become repositioned in Bigonzetti’s choreographic histories. Similarly, Forsythe’s visits to Reggio Emilia offered moments of border-crossing and the significant transference of theatrical characteristics in Bigonzetti’s treatment of various performance elements embedded within the early and later years of the company.

The transmodern configuration of choreographic features in Bigonzetti’s commissions includes tangible qualities that signify layers of alterity: the predominant use of sagittal plane; the recurring organisation of parallel limbs with flexion in foot, where the arms are placed in the vertical plane with arms tracing flexion/extension; and, finally, a recurring trend of the female’s *ronds de jamb en dedans* (with progressive flexion of foot). The signature *ronds de jambe* with flexion and variations of the original appear as relocated and expanded features of this choreographic signature that reaches its creative height in works like *Kazimir’s Colours*.

The choreographic proliferation of Bigonzetti's interest in *enveloppé* and the transitional period between flexion and extension, the recurring signposted choreographic phrases and their variants and displaced structures operate as a hybridised web of interconnectedness and instil the transient liminalities across performance histories exemplified by dancers from New York City Ballet, English National Ballet or the Staatsballett Berlin. These stylistic concerns within Bigonzetti's choreographic *oeuvre* offer transmodern references in works including *Pression*, *X.N. Tricities*, *Oltremare* and *Caravaggio*. These features echo overlaps, intimacies and proximities that suggest complex yet distinct identities that mark Bigonzetti's choreographic craft and suggest the interconnections between one work and another. The spatio-temporal connections between early commissions such as *Pression* and more recent works such as *Caravaggio* prompt a progression of choreographic patterns reflecting multiple narratives and traditions within transmodern displacement.

Bigonzetti's exposure to Ek's seminal approach to revising historic and iconic works, including *Giselle* (1982), *Rite of Spring* (1984) and *Swan Lake* (1987), denotes the connections that traversed Reggio Emilia's creative and theatrical spaces towards the end of the twentieth century. As witnessed in his rethinking of *Les Noces*, the revision of iconic ballets as well as those connected to the heritage of the Ballets Russes (1909–1929) provides multilayered, conglomerate connections to the rethinking of the central narratives of the ballets, as well as the dialogic exchanges between the imported and reconfigured features of movement that are at the heart of his signature features. In his revision of *Romeo and Juliet*, Bigonzetti's choreographic treatment of the movement vocabulary suggests the border-crossing of the intricate exchanges of choreographic idioms, and the multifaceted use of helmets metaphorically comments on the perils of youth, speed and death as the dancers pivot, balance, and daringly extend the use of the helmet. Similarly, the use of large props, such as the large fan structure, creates the 'micro-site' of the *mise-en-scène* of the

choreographic revision on the proscenium arch stage. These steel structures not only suggest speed but also challenge the verticality of the dancing body by allowing one of the Juliets to move within and across the proximity of the confined performance space and proliferate the theatrical movements in the final duet.

The use of Moretti's compositional traits in his collaborations with Bigonzetti also suggests transmodern habits. Moretti's treatment of the musical score offers a similarly complex dimension through which the music composition is revisited and revised. The exchanges associated with the weight of existing musical scores and texts and the structural organisation rendered by Moretti are visible in the references to and revision of Sergey Prokofiev's 1935 score in *Romeo and Juliet* (2006) and the thematic restructuring of Monteverdi's music in *Caravaggio* (2008), where Moretti's composition revisits the musical motifs by Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643). The 'Prokofiev motifs' provide both the weight of the existing musical scores and the restructuring of themes and musical leitmotifs. Moreover, the structural and thematic use of accompaniments to Bigonzetti's choreographic treatment of the musical scores denotes the interest in identifying relationships between the choreographic composition and the music score that are inherent in the use of timbre and music/choreographic structure. Works such as *Festa Barocca*, *In Canto*, *Pression*, *Caravaggio* and *Kazimir's Colours* illustrate Bigonzetti's meticulous attention to the choreographic treatment of the accompaniment. Each work augments the subject matter of the ballet whilst paying significant attention to the syntactical organisation of the choreographic idiom, together with the organisation of dancers in the theatrical space alongside the metric, instrumentation and dynamics within the selected soundscape. Other complex explorations of musical and sound choices, including the use of voice to augment the soundscape, suggest the dialogic relationships between the diverse sets of musical sources. In *Oltremare*, the dancers embed aural textures and timbres within the soundscape

interspersed with Moretti's compositions. In *Rossini Cards*, the duality of the overall identity of the performative treatment of the musical narratives is comprised of the exchanges between the heritage of Giacomo Rossini's score and the interjections of a leading dancer's spoken text.

The constructions of transmodern practices and Bigonzetti's interest in baroque art, philosophy and music, together with the treatment of subject matters associated with Italian traditions, are transposed as identities of alterity across the commissions generated by American and European ballet and dance companies. In Chapter Four, Bigonzetti's balletic histories were presented as examples of the complex interchange and reconfiguration of the histories associated with Italian artists, philosophers and artefacts. For example, drawing upon Caravaggio's painting of St. Matthew that is located in the church of San Nicola (St. Nicholas) in Rome, Bigonzetti extrapolates and abstracts the narratives of Italian national identities associated with the Renaissance period through the projection onto a large framed screen of recorded movement that furthers the narrative dimension within the choreographic treatment of the subject surrounding Caravaggio's paintings.

The complex exchanges between modern and postmodern features offer interpretative strategies in order to understand the transmodern treatment of the choreographic form and use of props in the body of work created by Bigonzetti. Choreographic works such as *In Vento*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *InCanto dall'Orlando Furioso*, and more recent ones such as *Festa Barocca* and *Caravaggio*, highlight Bigonzetti's interest in structural approaches of the choreographic form commencing the choreographic structure with a solo. Another structural feature is the recurring trend of a diagonal line of dancers placed in an ordered and successive formation, one that resembles a connecting 'human chain'. Lit by a diagonal beam of light, the 'human chain' within *Rossini Cards* presents a distinctly creative interaction with Rossini's musical composition as the group of dancers sways in and out of the lit space and

renders a visualisation of the chordal and metric organisation of the score. In works like *Cantata*, this diagonal organisation of lights and dancers culminates in this final tableau representing the community's final farewell to its audience, as the dancers exhale on a final musical note that is closely followed by a fading out of the lights. However, the use of props also suggests a pedestrian use of tools within the performance of the work. In *Oltremare*, the use of travel cases suggests references to travel and the choreographic use of unison enhances the group's sense of migration as they journey across the performance space. In *Rossini Cards*, the use of tables, candlesticks and chairs suggest the metonymic associations that form the choreographic intention within the work. Within *InCanto dall'Orlando Furioso*, the props include a longbow, sticks and a large armoured headdress located in the middle of the theatrical setting; these props not only identify references to the narrative of Ariosto's poem, but also provide reference to the influences of the mythical creatures' use of bows and sticks in *The Dream Walk of the Shaman* (Tetley, 1985).

The commonalities of transmodern practices across the body of work by Preljocaj and Bigonzetti offer connections not only to their revisions of *Noces* and *Les Noces* but also to their collective choreographic *oeuvre*. The connections between the trajectories of their choreographic careers suggest recurring traits that allowed for the recognition of trends and practices that were in significant need of an accountable, theoretical underpinning. As a result of writing these recent choreographic histories, it is hoped that the application of transmodern dance practices offers new pathways for defining and situating such work within the proposed theoretical framework.

### 6.3 Conclusions: Transmodern dance practices

Theories of transmodernism in dance offer a new way of understanding recent dance histories and practices and further the opportunities for situating the work of recent choreographers and performance makers. The liberating and forward-thinking qualities of such a theoretical positioning provides a means of reconciling what André Lepecki once suggested was “an epistemological crisis of writing in motion, writing as a body moving in the interstices of visibility, which is to say, writing in between the threads of the mnemonic/technological matrix” (Lepecki, 2004, p.5).

In the light of perspectives derived from film and literature studies, this final chapter positioned transmodernism in dance through a matrix of traces. The proposed notion of transmodern dance practices aims to (re)address the blanket label of ‘postmodern’ and (re)think those performance histories that were immersed in “a representational field that is perhaps too excessive to be regimented, contained, tamed” (ibid). Here, this framework is constructed through the descriptions and analyses of two selected revisions of *Les Noces* (1923) and, more broadly, the body of work by Angelin Preljocaj and Mauro Bigonzetti. New transmodern speculations are offered in the analysis of revisions of *Les Noces* (1923). Both works, namely *Noces* (Preljocaj 1989) and *Les Noces* (Bigonzetti 2002), engage with the weight of the Stravinsky musical score and shift across the four-part *cantata* through the organisation of the respective divisions of the dance. These speculations offer possible applications of transmodernism in order to make sense of multidimensional performances created as a result of choreographic exchanges, and help to consider the other choreographic histories that surround both performance-making careers of Preljocaj and Bigonzetti.

In addition, the proposed parameters of transmodernism that emerge from this study should help dance scholars to make sense of complex performances, including those practices



informed by notions of multidimensionality through alterity and border-crossing, together with the characteristic feature of non-linearity. At this stage of development of the theoretical framework, the proposed theoretical stance is largely constructed from the emergent features of the body of work created by the two specific European choreographers. The historical contexts and the artistic climates in France and Italy that gave rise to the shaping and exportation of their choreographic work, advocate the invasion of artistic 'alterity' and the multiple connotations of artistic otherness. Transmodern dance practices exhibit an avoidance of centrality and cultivate the presence of both modernist features and postmodern trends rendered through the presence of traces of histories.

The transference of theories from film and literature studies contributes new perspectives on recent choreographic practices that to date have had little or no direct consideration within the discourses on dance studies. One of the benefits of the application of transmodern theories to dance is the prospect of critically revisiting and rethinking some historically-informed misconceptions. Jeremi Szaniawski responds to one such misconception in film studies by arguing that "unlike some observers, I do not believe that cinema is over" (Szaniawski, 2004, p.179). In the field of dance studies, the theorisation of transmodernism provides a unique opportunity to challenge some recent perspectives on the decline of dance in the last few decades.<sup>6</sup> Theories informed by transmodernism in dance also address the alleged stagnation in contemporary dance practices at the turn of the twenty-first century. Hence, the proposition and application of theoretical models further expand and refine current understanding of historical trajectories in the field of dance and across the latter end of the twentieth century.

---

<sup>6</sup>This is particularly directed towards a critique of Jennifer Homans' theory on the death of ballet (Homans, 2010).

This model contributes to the field of dance studies by radically shifting new theoretical positionings in the same way that Sally Banes' argument on postmodern dance altered perceptions of theoretical applications and classification in the 1980s. Of course the main challenge of proposing such a theoretical framework is that it entails a radical rethinking of the modern/postmodern canon, most notably the body of work created between the 1960s and recent times. The implication of proposing a 'transmodern' narrative infers a revisiting of the continuum of theories. This infers moving beyond the theories on modernism in dance imparted by John Martin (1893–1985)<sup>7</sup> and the postmodern model offered by Banes. The work of the Judson Dance Theater in the 1960s, including that of Yvonne Rainer (b.1934), David Gordon (b.1936) and Steve Paxton (b.1939), radically challenged the basic units of composition and pioneered the nature of postmodern performance in dance. A subsequent generation of choreographers who were influenced by historic, artistic and cultural migrations, largely as a result of the activities in Europe across the middle of the twentieth century, offers a renewed interest in modern values and a preoccupation with revisiting historical sources as well as the remnants of the postmodern artistic condition. This generation can be described as the transmodern generation.

This thesis limits the enquiry to the creative practices embedded in the work of Preljocaj and Bigonzetti. Nonetheless, the construction of these transmodern dance histories warrants a further expansion of enquiry across other areas of interest. Potential further applications of the framework include the analyses of other performance traditions of twentieth-century dance works and choreographers. Parameters include the consideration of other dance makers' practices as transmodern, including those in Pina Bausch's *Rite of Spring* (1975), Paul Taylor's *The Rite of Spring: The Rehearsal* (1980) and other recent performance practices, such as *RoS Indexical* (2007) by Rainer. Additionally, an expansion of

---

<sup>7</sup> Here I refer to Martin's theorisation of American modern dance in his seminal text, *The Modern Dance* (1933).

this thesis would be to consider the breadth of transmodern dance practices through analyses of other revisions of *Les Noces*, including practices by Jean-Christophe Maillot (2003) and Michael Parmenter (2003).

Transmodernism in dance offers a model that is timely and necessary. It is through such a framework that the body of work by Preljocaj and Bigonzetti, and notably their revisions of *Les Noces* (1923), has been evaluated and considered as transmodern dance practices. The central case studies of *Noces* (1989) and *Les Noces* (2002) encapsulate and epitomise the parameters of transmodernism in dance. The intricate weaving of shards or deposits of several layers of choreographic traces accumulates in the choreographic idiom present in *Noces* and *Les Noces*. At the intersections of transmodern or revisionist practices, both *Noces* and *Les Noces* demonstrate labyrinthine connections through border-crossing, multidimensionality and alterity against past and recent dance practices, histories and artefacts, where Russian traditions overlap with these complex representations of French and Italian choreographic contexts. In *Noces* and *Les Noces*, the heritage of the unrelated Russian folk stories, the hint of the austerity of the Nijinska's ballet and the utilisation of the rhythmic textures of Stravinsky's compositional arrangements transform into a web of connections surrounding the iconic status of the 1923 ballet. As the interweaving of complex movement phrases, the props and the body unfold as structural and thematic tools, both choreographic revisions accelerate and heighten the multidimensional factors through the connecting and accumulating references to modern and postmodern practices. Moreover, the intensity of the fluidity in the choreographic episodes within *Noces* and *Les Noces* typifies the non-linearity characteristics of transmodernism. The plethora of traces and dimensions replicates multi-levelled choreographic writing that is distinctive of transmodernism.

At the intersections of revisionist practices, transmodernism in dance implies border-crossing and the recognition of particular stances on 'globality', notably as alterity from other

and past dance histories. As witnessed in *Noces* and *Les Noces*, transmodern dance practices respond to the values from the interstitial transference of migrated practices that find ways of reconnecting through a composite and non-linear scaffolded effect. Thus, the application of a theoretical construct of transmodernism in dance provides new trajectories for dance scholars and allows for a rethinking of the parameters of postmodern dance practices. In the aftermath of a “post post-structural” period (Schechner, 2000a, p.7), this transmodern framework provides the beginnings of a new theoretical paradigm that offers the facilitation of understanding such recent dance histories.

# Appendices

## Explanatory Notes

### CD-ROM

#### **(Folder 1) Extracts from selected revisions of *Les Noces* – Kyliàn**

These interactive electronic Appendices provide the reader with brief insights into the works discussed in Chapter One. To commence, the user must double click on the Slideshow; the main menu of the Slideshow provides the opportunity to interact with the samples from the selected revisions. To exit, follow the prompts on the screen. The digital clips have been sourced from personal archives and dance company archives and have been edited by the author.

#### **(Folder 2) Extracts from choreographic works by Preljocaj and Bigonzetti**

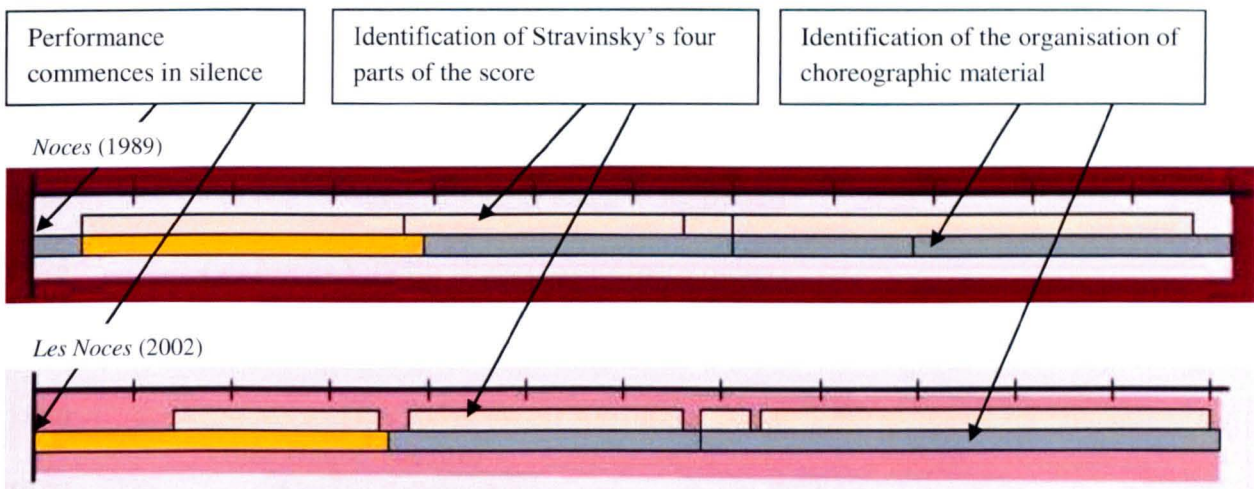
These interactive electronic Appendices provide the reader with brief insights into the works discussed in Chapters Three and Four of Part Two. To commence, the user must double click on the Slideshow; the main menu of the Slideshow provides two further sub-menus that offer the opportunity to interact with samples of Preljocaj's and Bigonzetti's work. The extracts can be accessed by double clicking on the icons; hyperlinks are provided to return to the sub-menu or main page. The digital clips can be viewed by placing the cursor in the centre of the screen; one click will activate the digital recording and a second click will pause the media. To exit, follow the prompts on the screen. The origin of the digital materials (dance company websites or research libraries/dance company archives) is duly acknowledged; the original materials have been edited and digitally re-mastered by the author. Sources provided by Teatro Valli Archives are edited and reproduced with kind permission.

#### **(Folder 3) Extracts from *Noces* (1989) and *Les Noces* (2002)**

These interactive electronic Appendices provide the reader with brief insights into the works discussed in Chapter Five in Part Two. To commence, the user must double click on the Slideshow; the main menu of the Slideshow provides two further sub-menus that offer the opportunity to interact with the selected samples from the two selected revisions. These extracts of *Noces* (1989) are taken from a performance at Teatro Valli, Reggio Emilia (3 March 1994). The extracts of *Les Noces* (2002) are taken from a recorded performance at Teatro Regio, Parma (5 November 2004). The extracts drawn up for readings of *Systems of Materials* and the *Vectorisation of Language and Syntax* can be accessed by double clicking on the icons; hyperlinks are provided to return to the sub-menu or main page. The digital clips can be viewed by placing the cursor in the centre of the screen; one click will activate the digital recording and a second click will pause the media. To exit, follow the prompts on the screen. A time frame bar illustrates the approximate location of the extract in the ballet (see the explanatory notes for the time frame bar on the following page). The digital clips have been sourced from research libraries/dance company archives and edited by the author. Sources have been provided by Teatro Valli Archives and Aterballetto, and have been edited and reproduced by the author, with kind permission.

### Explanatory notes for time frames in Slideshow 3 in the CD-ROM

These time frame bars identify the organisation of the four-part cantata of Stravinsky's composition together with the organisation of the choreographic sections. Chapters Eight and Nine refer to 'sections' in the light of the musical organisation. Yellow sections identify the location within the performance. These notes can also be found in the interactive Slideshow.



### Chart 1: Revisions of *Les Noces* (1923): Select revisions (1950 and 2009)

This chart lists a selection of revisions of Bronislava Nijinska's ballet across a period from 1950 to 2010. The selection includes some works which have been discussed in Chapter One as well as others which are worthy of signposting, particularly in the light of some radical revision to any of the three narratives (dance, dramatic and music). The list was collated from the online database *Stravinsky the Global Dancer*, as well as from independent research for missing entries (2007). There were no known revisions created between 2008 and 2010.

### Chart 2: Choreochronicle: Angelin Preljocaj

This choreochronicle provides a series of events and commissions associated with the career of Preljocaj. The data stems from Preljocaj's biographical information on Ballet Preljocaj's website as well as the information given by Freschel and Delahaye (2003). Sources cited in red are illustrated by digital media in CD-ROM Folder 2.

### Chart 3: Choreochronicle: Mauro Bigonzetti

This choreochronicle provides a series of events and commissions associated with the career of Bigonzetti. The data stems from Bigonzetti's biographical information on Aterballetto's website as well as from information collated from programme notes and playbills. Sources cited in red are illustrated by digital media in CD-ROM Folder 2.

### Chart 4: Live events and other oral/embodied sources

This chart outlines sources of histories which, due to academic conventions, may not have been listed in the bibliography. These sources of histories include lectures, live performances and post-performance talks as well as telephone conversations and interviews. Selected recordings of interviews and post-performance talks are available as digital materials in the author's personal archives; some materials can only be accessed the Jerome Robbins Dance Division at the New York Public Library.



## Revisions of *Les Noces* (1923)

Select revisions (1950 and 2010)

- 1952** *Les Noces* Merce Cunningham (Brandeis College, Massachusetts USA)
- 1962** *Les Noces* George Skibine (Aix-en-Provence, France) with new Gontcharova designs; *Les Noces* Maurice Béjart (Ballet du XXème Siècle, **1965** revival for Paris Opéra)
- 1965** *Les Noces* Jerome Robbins (American Ballet Theater)
- 1966** *Les Noces* Leonide Massine (La Scala Opera Ballet) with Gontcharova designs
- 1966** *Les Noces* Aurel Miloss (Vienna State Ballet)
- 1975** *Les Noces* Vittorio Biagi (Lyon Opéra Ballet)
- 1976** *Les Noces* Lar Lubovitch (Lar Lubovitch Dance Company)
- 1977** *Les Noces* Ugo dell'Ara (Teatro della Fenice, Venice)
- 1980** *Les Noces* Don Asker (West Australian Ballet; 1982 recreated for Human Voice Dance Theatre)
- 1982** *Svadebka* Jiří Kylián (Nederlands Dans Theater)
- 1983** *Les Noces* Kim Brandstrup (London School of Contemporary Dance; 1985 revision)
- 1989** *As Bodas* Christopher Bruce (Gulbenkian Ballet); *Noces* Angelin Preljocaj (Compagnie Preljocaj)
- 1990** *Les Noces* Heinz Spoerli (Basel Ballet)
- 1994** *Les Noces* Stephan Thoss (Stuttgart Ballet) with additional music (Arvo Part)
- 1997** *All Visitors Bring Happiness, Some by Coming Some by Going* Javier de Frutos (Ricochet Dance Company); *Les Noces* Kim Brandstrup (ARC Dance Company)
- 1999** *Les Noces* Michael Smuin (Smuin Ballet, San Francisco)
- 2001** *Noces* Jacopo Godani (Rhine Opera Ballet)
- 2002** (*but if a look should*) *April me* Anna Teresa de Keersmaecker (Rosas) with new score by Thierry de Mey; *Les Noces* Mauro Bigonzetti (Aterballetto)
- 2003** *Les Noces* Michael Parmenter (Commotion Dance Company; **2006** restaging for Royal New Zealand Ballet); *Les Noces* Jean-Christophe Maillot (Ballets de Monte-Carlo)
- 2005** *Les Noces* Pascal Rioult (Pascal Rioult Dance Company)
- 2006** *Les Noces* Aletta Collins (Opera North, Leeds)
- 2007** *Los Picadores* Javier de Frutos (Phoenix Dance Company); *I do* Michael Clarke (Michael Clarke Dance Company)
- 2008–2010** No further revisions

Source: *Stravinsky the Global Dancer* (A Chronology of Choreography to the Music of Igor Stravinsky)

[http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/stravinsky/short\\_musicalphabeticalcompositionsingl.as](http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/stravinsky/short_musicalphabeticalcompositionsingl.as)

## ChoreoChronicle: Angelin Preljocaj

- 1957 Born  
Studies with Karin Waehner at the Schola Cantorum (Paris)
- 1980 attends the Merce Cunningham school in New York
- 1982 joins Dominique Bagouet's company
- 1984 choreographs his first ballet, *Aventures Coloniales*, for the Montpellier Dance Festival in July  
sets up Compagnie Preljocaj in December.
- 1984 *Marché Noire* (Compagnie Preljocaj)
- 1985 *Larmes Blanches* (Compagnie Preljocaj)
- 1986 *À Nos Héros* (Compagnie Preljocaj)
- 1987 studies Butoh in Japan  
*Le Petit Napperon Boug, Hallali Romée*
- 1988 *Liqueurs de Chair* (Compagnie Preljocaj)
- 1989 *Noces, Un Trait d'Union* (Compagnie Preljocaj, for Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne)
- 1990 *Amer America* (Compagnie Preljocaj for the Biennale de la danse in Lyon), *Roméo et Juliette* (Lyon Opéra Ballet)
- 1992 Residency at the *Théâtre National de la Danse et de l'Image* (TNDI) in Châteaувallon  
*La Peau du Monde* (Compagnie Preljocaj)
- 1993 *Parade, Le Spectre de la Rose* and *Noces* (Ballets Russes programme for the Paris Opéra Ballet)
- 1994 *Le Parc* (Paris Opéra Ballet)
- 1995 *Petit Essai sur le Temps qui Passe, L'Anoure, Annonciation* (Compagnie Preljocaj), *Firebird* (Munich Ballet)
- 1996 Compagnie Preljocaj is renamed as Ballet Preljocaj and resettles in Aix-en-Provence
- 1997 The company performs *Annonciation, Le Spectre de la Rose* and *Noces* at Joyce Theater (New York)  
*La Stravaganza* (New York City Ballet)  
*Paysage Après la Bataille* (Ballet Preljocaj for the Festival d'Avignon)
- 1998 *Casanova* (Paris Opéra Ballet)
- 1999 *Personne n'épouse les Méduses* (Ballet Preljocaj for the Festival d'Avignon)
- 2000 *Portraits in corpora* (choreographic installation)
- 2001 *MC/22 (Ceci est mon corps), Helikopter, The Rite of Spring* (Ballet Preljocaj)
- 2002 *Annonciation* (restaged by La Scala Milan), *Noces* (ABC Dance Company of St Pölten, Austria)
- 2003 *Annonciation (film), Near Life Experience*
- 2004 *Empty Moves (Part I)* (Ballet Preljocaj for Biennale nationale de danse du Val-de-Marne), "N" (Ballet Preljocaj), *MC 14/22 (Ceci est mon corps)* and created *Le Songe de Médée* (Paris Opéra Ballet) **restagings:** *La Stravaganza* (Ballet of Lorraine), *Noces* (Nederlands Dans Theater), *Liqueurs de Chair* (Sao Paulo Balé de Cidade), *Le Spectre de la Rose* (Ballet d'Ankara)
- 2005 *The 4 seasons...* (Ballet Preljocaj)
- 2006 Restages *Noces* and the company moves to into the Pavillion Noire
- 2007 *Eldorado (Sonntags Abschied), Empty Moves (Parts I & II)* (Festival Montpellier Danse)
- 2008 *Blanche Neige* (Ballet Preljocaj for Biennale de la danse in Lyon)
- 2009 *Le funambule* (solo for Montpellier Festival)
- 2010 *Siddharta* (Paris Opéra Ballet), *Suivront mille ans de calme* (Ballet Preljocaj)

Sources: <http://www.preljocaj.org/menu.php?lang=fr&m=1&a=1>

\*Extracts from choreographic titles identified in red are highlighted in the Appendix CD-ROM.



## ChoreoChronicle: Mauro Bigonzetti

1960	Born
1971	enters Rome Opera Ballet School
1979	joins Aterballetto
1990	choreographs his first ballet, <i>Sei in Movimento</i> , for Aterballetto
1991	<i>Prova con Mozart</i> (Aterballetto), <i>Turnpike</i> (Balletto di Toscana), <i>Très Bien</i> (Aterballetto)
1992	<i>Pitture per Archi</i> (Aterballetto) <i>Del doman non v'è certezza</i> (Balletto di Toscana)
1993	<i>Mediterranea</i> , <i>Foreaction</i> (both for Balletto di Toscana)
1994	<i>Seraphitus</i> , <i>3D</i> , <i>Turbulence</i> , <i>Pression</i> (for Balletto di Toscana), <i>X.N.Tricities</i> (English National Ballet)
1995	<i>Voyeur</i> (Balletto di Toscana), <i>Le streghe di Venezia</i> (Balletto della Scala), <i>Coppelia</i> (Balletto dell'Opera di Roma), <i>Symphonic Dances</i> (English National Ballet)
1996	<i>Don Giovanni</i> (Balletto di Toscana), <i>Interference</i> (Toulouse Opéra Ballet), <i>Sinfonia entrelazada</i> (Julio Bocca – Ballet Teatro, Argentina), <i>L'anfiparnaso</i> (Corpo di Ballo dell'Arena di Verona), <i>Kazimir's Colours</i> (Stuttgart Ballet)
1997	appointed as artistic director for Aterballetto <i>Blue note</i> (Balletto di Toscana), <i>Canzoni</i> , <i>Pèrsephassa</i> , <i>Songs</i> (for Aterballetto)
1998	<i>Comoedia</i> , <i>Furia Corporis</i> , <i>Constructions</i> (for Aterballetto), <i>Quattro danze per Nino</i> (Stuttgart Ballet)
1999	<i>Omaggio a Nino Rota</i> (Balletto della Scala), <i>Comoedia canto secondo</i> (Aterballetto)
2000	<i>Come qualcosa palpita nel fondo</i> , <i>Closed hands</i> , <i>Sogno di una notte di mezza estate</i> , <i>Comoedia canto 3</i> , <i>Omaggio a Bach</i> , <i>Comoedia Canti</i> (for Aterballetto), <i>Mahler</i> (Ballet Dresden –Semperoper)
2001	<i>Jimi jimi</i> , <i>Psappha</i> (for Aterballetto), <i>Cantata</i> (Gulbenkian Ballet, Portugal)
2002	<i>Vespro</i> (New York City Ballet), <i>Les Noces</i> , <i>Petrushka</i> , <i>Turbulence</i> (for Aterballetto), <i>Zona Mina-da</i> (Bale' de Cidade, Sao Paulo)
2003	<i>Who gets this one?</i> , <i>Sciarada</i> , <i>Serenata</i> (for Aterballetto)
2004	<i>Orma</i> (Stuttgart Ballet), <i>ToBeOrNotToBe</i> , <i>Rossini cards</i> (for Aterballetto)
2005	<i>Passo continuo</i> , <i>WAM</i> (for Aterballetto), <i>Duo per tre</i> (Ballet Landestheater Linz)
2006	<i>Vertigo</i> , <i>Absolutely Free</i> , <i>Après-midi d'enfant</i> , <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (for Aterballetto), <i>Vespro</i> (New York City Ballet)
2007	<i>InCanto – dall'Orlando Furioso</i> (Aterballetto)
2008	Resigns as artistic director and appointed as principal choreographer for Aterballetto <i>Terra</i> (Aterballetto), <i>Festa Barocca</i> (Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater), <i>Caravaggio</i> (Berlin State Opera Ballet)
2009	<i>Almost Blue</i> , <i>Come un respiro</i> , <i>Certe Notti</i> (Aterballetto)
2010	<i>Luce Nascosta</i> (New York City Ballet), <i>H+</i> (Aterballetto)

Sources: <http://www.aterballetto.it/english/produzioni/archivio/>

\*Extracts from the choreographic works identified in red are included in the Appendix CD-ROM.

**Live events and other embodied sources**

*Absolutely Free* (2006) chor. Bigonzetti [Observation of live performance] for Aterballetto as part of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala at Fonderia (Aterballetto centre), Reggio Emilia on 19 May 2009.

Bigonzetti, M. & Farrugia, K. (2009) Interview held on 30 May 2009 at Aterballetto Fonderia, Reggio Emilia, Italy.

*Cantata* (2000) chor. Bigonzetti [Observation of live performance] performed by Aterballetto in double bill (*Les Noces & Cantata*) on 4 June 2005 at Sadler's Wells, London.

*Come un respiro* (2009) chor. Bigonzetti [Observation of live performance] performed by Aterballetto in mixed bill (30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Performance) on 30 May 2009 at Fonderia, Reggio Emilia.

*Digital Archives of the Dance* (2010) Conference on 22 November 2010. Palatine/Siobhan Davies Dance, London.

*Empty Moves Parts 1 & 2* (2008) chor. Preljocaj [Observation of live performance] performed by Ballet Preljocaj at Dublin Dance Festival, on 29 April 2008 at O'Reilly Theatre, Dublin.

*Helikopter* (2001) chor. Preljocaj [Observation of live performance] performed by Ballet Preljocaj in double bill (*Helikopter & Sacre du Printemps*) on 19 October 2001 at Sadler's Wells, London.

*I Do* (2007) chor. Michael Clark performed by Michael Clark Company as part of Stravinsky Project (2007). Performed live at the Barbican (London) on 31 October 2007.

*In vento* (2007) chor. Bigonzetti [Observation of live performance] performed by New York City Ballet at London Coliseum on 18 March 2008.

*Larmes Blanche* (1985, 2007) chor. Preljocaj [Observation of live performance] performed by Ballet Preljocaj double bill (*Larmes Blanche & Noces*) on 29 October 2007 at Pavillion Noire Theatre, Aix-en-Provence.

*Les Noces* (1964) chor. Bronislava Nijinska, 1923, performed by the Royal Ballet. Live performance at Royal Opera House (London) on 28 April 2001.

*Les Noces* (2002) chor. Bigonzetti [Observation of live performance] Aterballetto performing double bill (*Les Noces & Cantata*) on 4 June 2005 at Sadler's Wells, London.

*Los Picadores* (2007) chor. Javier de Frutos, performed by Phoenix Dance Theatre. Live performance at Sadler's Wells (London) in June 2007.

*Noces* (1989) Chor. Preljocaj [Observation of live performance] performed by Ballet Preljocaj double bill (*Larmes Blanche & Noces*) on 29 October 2007 at Pavillion Noire Theatre, Aix-en-Provence.

*Oltremare* (2008) chor. Bigonzetti [Observation of live performance] performed by New York City Ballet as part of triple bill (*Rococo Variations, Oltremare & River of Light Concerto DSCH*) on 29 May 2008 at the New York State Theater, New York.

Preljocaj, A. and McGlone, J., 2012. *In conversation with Angelin Preljocaj*. Post-performance talk as part of Edinburgh International Festival on 18 August 2012.

*Sacre du Printemps* (2001) [Observation of live performance] performed by Ballet Preljocaj in double bill (*Helikopter & Sacre du Printemps*) on 19 October 2001 at Sadler's Wells, London.

*Suivant mille ans de calme* (2010) [Observation of live performance] Performed by Ballet Preljocaj on 18 August 2012 at Edinburgh Playhouse, Edinburgh International Festival.

Tudor, C. & Farrugia, K. (2009) Telephone interview held on 24 January 2010.

Van den Bosch, Y. and Scott, J., 2008. *In conversation with Ballet Preljocaj*. Audio-recording of post-performance talk as part of Dublin Dance Festival on 29 April 2008.

*Vespro* (2006) chor. Bigonzetti [Observation of live performance] performed by New York City Ballet as part of triple bill on 7 June 2007 at New York State Theater, New York.

**PAGE  
NUMBERING  
AS  
ORIGINAL**

# Bibliography

## Printed Sources

- Acocella, J., Garafola, L. and Greene, J. (1992) The Rite of Spring Considered as a Nineteenth Century Ballet, *Ballet Review*, 20 (2), pp.68–100.
- Acocella, J. and Garafola, L. (1991) *André Levinson on dance: writings from Paris in the twenties*. Hanover, London: Wesleyan University Press/University Press of New England.
- Anderson, J. (1963) The Fabulous Career of Bronislava Nijinska, *Dance Magazine*, August 1963, pp.40–46.
- Anderson, Z. (2005) Les Noces/Cantata, *The Independent*, 6 May, npn.
- Andreotti, M. (2006) Un matrimonio sulle punte: L'Aterballetto in Les Noces di Stravinskij e Rossini Cards. *Corriere della Sera*, 17 January, npn.
- Anthony, W. (1997) Reviews – Austria, *Dance International*, 25 (3), pp.48–50.
- Apostolka, A. (1993) Angelin Preljocaj: Capricorne, *Saisons de la danse*, 244, pp.46–47.
- Appleby, J., Hunt, L. and Jacob, M. (1994) *Telling the Truth about History*. London; New York: Norton & Company.
- Ashton, F. (1930) A word about Choreography, *The Dancing Times*, May 1930, pp.124–125.
- Ateljevic, I. Transmodernity: Remaking our (Tourism) world? in Tribe, J. (ed.) (2009) *Philosophical issues in tourism*. Channel View Publications, pp.278–300.
- Attridge, D., Bennington, G. and Young, R. (1987) *Post-structuralism and the question of history*. Cambridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- Au, S. (2002) *Ballet and Modern Dance*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Balletto Oggi* (1997a) News: Bigonzetti all'Aterballetto, April 1997, p.5.
- Balletto Oggi* (1997b) News, September 1997, p.5.
- Balletto Oggi* (1998) News, February 1998, p.9.
- Banes, S. (1987) *Terpsichore in sneakers: Post-Modern Dance* (2nd ed). Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, pp.1–19.
- Banes, S. (1989) "Terpsichore" Combat Continued, *TDR*, 33 (4), pp.17–18.
- Banes, S. (1998) *Dancing Women: Female bodies on stage*. London; New York: Routledge.

- Banes, S. and Manning, S. (1989) Terpsichore in Combat Boots, *TDR*, 33 (1), pp.13–16.
- Barnes, C. (1973) Dance Scrapbook: Company style – each one has it, *New York Times*, 24 June, npn.
- Barnes, C. (1974) Dance Scrapbook: The search for style in ballet, *New York Times*, 20 January, npn.
- Barnes, C. (1987) Pioneers or Madmen? Clive Barnes sees a problem for modern dance, *Dance & dancers*, June 1987, pp.24–26.
- Barnes, C. (1998) Big Brother is watching this Romeo and Juliet, *New York Post*, 24 October, p.50.
- Barnes, C. (2008) Somewhat opinionated, *Dance Now*, Spring 2008, pp.65–72.
- Barry, P. (2002) *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Second edition). Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Beaumont, C. and Idzikowski, S. (2003) *The Cecchetti Method of Classical Ballet: Theory and Technique*. New York: Dover Publications.
- Benjamin, A. Cabbages and Kings: Disability, dance and some timely considerations, in Carter, A. and O'Shea, J. (eds.) (2009) *The Routledge Dance Studies Reader (2nd edition)*. London; New York: Routledge, pp.111–121.
- Bentivoglio, L. (1987a) Punto spettacolo: *Ercolano* (Aterballetto), *Balletto Oggi*, August/September 1987, p.23.
- Bentivoglio, L. (1987b) MARS: la danza come industria cultural, *Balletto Oggi*, December 1987, p.37.
- Bentivoglio, L. (1990) Europe 1992: New Paths for New Dance? The Mediterranean Situation, *Ballet International*, January 1990, pp.104–108.
- Bentivoglio, L. (2006) Aterballetto: Danzando danzando tra ironia e erotismo, *La Repubblica*, 14 January, npn.
- Berg, S. (1988) *Le Sacre du Printemps: Seven Productions from Nijinsky to Martha Graham*. Michigan: Ann Arbor Press.
- Bertozzi, D. (2006) Aterballetto, la classe in punta di piedi, *Il Messaggero*, 18 January, npn.
- Bezzi, R. (2004) Mauro Bigonzetti: Il coreografo dallo stile 'umano', *Expression*, February 2004, pp.12–15.
- Bizzarri, M.C. (2006) Ecco Romeo and Juliet senza Montecchi e Capuleti. Luci e ombre sullo spettacolo di Bigonzetti e Plessi che invertono la cronologia della tragedia., *Il Giornale di Reggio*, 22 May, npn.

- Bleeker, M. (2008a) Passages in Post-Modern Theory: Mapping the Apparatus, *Parallax*, 14 (1), pp.55–67.
- Bleeker, M. (2008b) *The Visuality of Theatre: The locus of looking*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bleeker, M. (ed.). 2008c. *Anatomy Live: Performance and the operating theatre*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Bollack, J. (1992) *Angelin Preljocaj*. Paris: A. Colin.
- Bonelli, V. (2006) Romeo and Juliet per sempre: Respiro internazionale per il drama riscritto 'a ritroso' da Bigonzetti, *Gazzetta di Parma*, 22 May, npn.
- Boner, B. (1990) Avant Premieres, *Danser*, 84, pp.18–19.
- Bonis, B. (1988) The Shaping of French Dance – a phenomenon and its history, *Ballet International*, 11 (8/9), pp.29–34.
- Borek, T. (1996) Disparate cultural influences on art and dance, a contextual reappraisal of global art: did global art exist before we were aware of it? A meditation. *Green Mill Dance Project, 4th edition, World Dance '96: new dance from old cultures*. Melbourne: publishers unknown, pp.144–148.
- Bremser, Martha (ed) (1993). *International Dictionary of Ballet* (Vol 2, L-Z). London: St. James' Press, 1993, pp1025-1027.
- Brennan, M. A. Every little movement has a meaning all its own: Movement Analysis in Dance Research, in Fraleigh, S. & Hanstein, P. (eds.) (1999) *Researching Dance: Evolving modes of inquiry*. London: Dance Books, pp.283–308.
- Brissenden, A. (1992) Dance with impact, *Dance Australia*, 59, pp.52–53.
- Brown, I. (2005) The wedding party that turns into a battle of the sexes, *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 May, npn.
- Buarque, C. (1995) *Benjamin*, translated by C.E. Landers, 1997. London: Bloomsbury.
- Buarque, C. (2003) *Budapest*, translated by A. Entekin, 2004. London: Bloomsbury.
- Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies that matter: On the discourse limits of "sex"*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Trouble*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Caparrotti, L. (2005). Bigonzetti Dance Troupe at BAM Next Wave Festival: Explosive Return of Aterballetto, *US Italia Weekly*, 20 November, npn.
- Carnevali, D. (2001) *L'Aterballetto di Amadeo Amodio*. Master's dissertation: Università degli Studi, Parma, Faculty of Linguistics & Philosophy.

- Carter, A. Bodies of Knowledge: dance and feminist analysis, in Campbell, P. (ed.) (1996) *Analysing Performance: a critical reader*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp.43-55.
- Carter, A. Destabilising the discipline: critical debates about history and their impact on the study of dance, in Carter, A. (ed.) (2004) *Rethinking dance history: a reader*. London; New York: Routledge, pp.10-19.
- Catton, P. (2005) Loving Stravinsky, from the Cradle to the Stage, *New York Sun*, 11 August, p.12.
- Claid, E. (2006) *Yes, No, Maybe...Seductive Ambiguity in Dance*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Clarke, M. and Crisp, C. (1974) *The Making of a Ballet*. London: Studio Vista.
- Cole, M. (2005) Transmodernism, Marxism and social change: Implications for Teacher Education, *Policy Futures in Education*, 3 (1), pp.90–105.
- Compagnie Preljocaj. (1993) *Hommage aux Ballets Russes (Parade, Le Spectre de la Rose, Noces)*. Paris: Autographe.
- Conley, T. Translator's Introduction, in De Certeau, M. (1988) *The Writing of History* (translated by Tom Conley). New York: Columbia University Press, pp.vii–xxiv.
- Constanti, S. (1987) American *Glob*, French Kisses and British Love Letters (Dance Umbrella 1986), *Dance Theatre Journal*, 5 (1), pp.16, 25–26.
- Constanti, S. (1989) Previews – Angelin Preljocaj, *Dance Theatre Journal*, 7 (3), pp.2–3.
- Copeland, R. (1983a) Postmodern Dance. Postmodern Architecture. Postmodernism, *Performing Arts Journal*, 7 (1), pp.27–43.
- Copeland, R. (1983b) Genre & Style, *Contact Quarterly*, 8 (2) Winter 1983, pp.11–16.
- Copeland, R. Beyond Formalism: Three decades of postmodern dance, in Ross, J. and Steinberg S. (eds.) (1989) *On the Edge: Challenges to American Dance*. San Francisco Performing Arts Library: Dance Critics Association, pp.56–61.
- Cunliffe, E. (1986) Notating Hans van Manen's choreography: Distinctive features, in Adshad, J. (ed.) (1986) *Choreography: principles and practice, Study of Dance Conference 4*. Guildford: University of Surrey, pp.127–138.
- Cruz, F. (2008) *Angelin Preljocaj: Topologie de l'invisible*. France: Naïve.
- D'Adamo, A. (1999) *Danzare il rito: Le Sacre du Printemps attraverso il Novecento*. Rome: Bulzoni Editori.
- D'Adamo, A. (2002) *Mats Ek*. Rome: L'Epos.
- Daly, A. (ed.) (1992) What has become of Postmodern Dance? *TDR*, 36 (1), pp.48–69.



- Danza e danza* (1989) Aterballetto in USA, October 1989, p.3
- Davies, M. and Devlin, M. (2007a) *Interdisciplinary higher education: implications for teaching and learning*, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne.
- Davies, M. and Devlin, M., (2007b) *Interdisciplinary higher education and the Melbourne Model*, Conference Presentation to the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia 2007 at the Open Polytechnic, New Zealand.
- Davis, T. and Postlewait, T. (eds.) (2003) *Theatricality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- De Certeau, M. (1988) *The Writing of History*, translated by Tom Conley. New York: Columbia University Press.
- De Lauretis, T. (1987) *Technologies of Gender: Theories of Representation & Difference*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Diènis, J.C. (1992) Livres (Angelin Preljocaj/Roman Polanski), *Danser*, 102, pp.54–55.
- Diènis, J.C. (1994) Entretien, *Danser*, 120, pp.30–32.
- Diènis, J.C. (1997) Angelin Preljocaj: un contemporain en terre classique, *Danser*, 157, pp.44–46.
- Doniger, W. (1999) *The Implied Spider: The politics and theology in myth*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Driver, S. (2000) *Choreography and Dance: William Forsythe*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Press.
- Duerden, R. (2003) *The choreography of Antony Tudor: focus on four ballets*. New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickenson University.
- Dunning, J. (2005) Next Wave Festival Review: Early 20th Century, but Modern. *The New York Times*, 10 November, npn.
- Dupuy, D. (1991) The presence of French Dance, *Ballet International*, 14 (5), pp.25–28.
- Dussel, E. (2008) *Twenty Theses on Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Eagleton, T. (1996) *The illusions of postmodernism*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Eddy, G. (2000) Brilliance or Baloney? Glen Eddy comes to terms with Eurotrash, *Dance Europe*, August 2000, pp.30–31.
- Faricelli, V. (2006) L'Aterballetto torna al Teatro Olimpico con due 'classici' del repertorio, *La Discussione* (Rome), 13 January, npn.

- Farrugia, K. (2005) *Gender Morphology in Les Noces: prismatic choreological and musicological occurrences*. Master's thesis: School of Arts, University of Surrey.
- Farrugia, K. (2009a) (Dis)placing choreographic traditions: tracing the legacies, traditions and export in Mauro Bigonzetti's choreographic endeavours, Society for Dance History Scholars, 17–22 June 2009, Stanford University, San Francisco.
- Farrugia, K. (2009b) Moving beyond and in between: Implications of cross and transdisciplinary methodologies for twenty-first century pedagogies for teaching dance studies, Congress for Research in Dance, 24 June 2009, De Montfort University, Leicester.
- Farrugia, K. (2009c) *Haka* (Preljocaj, 2007): tracing transnational and transcultural legacies, Transnational Film Histories Course Presentation, 17 December 2009, London Metropolitan University, London.
- Farrugia, K. (2010a) Transdisciplinary approaches to constructing choreographic histories: Charting recent transnational and transcultural histories with particular reference to Angelin Preljocaj's choreographic work (1984–2009), Transform@work, Arts & Humanities Research Council Postgraduate Symposium, 24–25 March 2010, University of Surrey.
- Farrugia, K. (2010b) *Migrating Choreographic Traditions: Tracing the heritage and migration of twentieth-century performance traditions in Mauro Bigonzetti's work*, 'Migrancy and the Text' Postgraduate Symposium, 6 November 2010, Kingston University, London.
- Farrugia, K. (2011) *Creative catalysts and choreographic dramaturgy in Mauro Bigonzetti's Caravaggio (2008)*, Dance Dramaturgy: Catalyst, Perspective and Memory, Society of Dance History Scholars, 6 June 2011, York University/University of Toronto.
- Farrugia, K. (2012) *Dancing through the archives in Reggio Emilia: tracing the heritage of Aterballetto and William Forsythe within the Teatro Romolo Valli Archives*, Dance and the Social City, Society of Dance History Scholars, 16 June 2012, University of the Arts, Philadelphia.
- Fischer-Lichte, E. (2008) *The Transformative Power of Performance: A new aesthetics*, translated by Saskya Iris Jain. London; New York: Routledge.
- Fisher, N. (2007) Reviews, first night, Opera Les Noces/Dido and Aeneas. *The Times*, 10 May, npn.
- Foster, S. L. (1986) *Reading Dancing: Bodies and Subjects in Contemporary American Dance*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Foster, S. L. (ed.) (1996) *Corporealities: dancing knowledge, culture and power*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Foster, S. L. (ed.) (1998) *Choreographing History (Unnatural acts: Theorizing the Performative)*. Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

- Foster, S. L. 'Where are you now?': Locating the body in contemporary performance, in Bleeker, M. (ed.) (2008b) *Anatomy Live: Performance and the operating theatre*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, pp.169–179.
- Frater, S. (2005) An unhappy marriage. *The Evening Standard*, 4 May, npn.
- Freschel, A. and Delahaye, G. (2003) *Angelin Preljocaj*. Arles: Acts Sud.
- Furlani, A. (2002) Postmodern and After: Guy Davenport, *Contemporary Literature*, 43 (4), pp.709–735.
- Garafola, L. (1998) *Diaghilev's Ballets Russes*. New York: Da Capo Press.
- Garcia-Marquez, V. (1995) *Massine: A Biography*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Genova, J. (1979) The Significance of Style, *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 37 (3), pp.317–324.
- Gibbs, J. (2002) *Mise-en-Scène: Film style and interpretation*. London; New York: Wallflower.
- Gilpin, H. Lifelessness in movement, or how do the dead move? Tracing displacement and disappearance for movement performance, in Foster, S. L. (ed.) (1996) *Corporealities: dancing knowledge, culture and power*. London; New York: Routledge, pp.109–132.
- Glenny, M. (1996) *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War*. London; New York: Penguin.
- Goldman, P. (2004) Ballet Preljocaj: *Near Life Experience*, *Backstage*, 3 December, p.11.
- Gore, G., Louppe, L. and Piollet, W. France: effervescence and tradition in French dance, in Grau, A. and Jordan, S. (eds.) (2000) *Europe Dancing: perspectives on theatre dance and cultural identity*. London; New York: Routledge, pp.28–54.
- Gradinger, M. (1997) Paris: Ballet à la carte; Hommage aux Ballet Russes, *Ballett Journal/Das Tanzarchiv*, 45 (3), p.9.
- Graham-Dixon, A. (2010) *Caravaggio: A Life Sacred and Profane*. London: Allen Lane.
- Green, A. S. (1994) *The Revisionist Stage: American directors reinvent the classics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Grimm-Weissert, O. (1986) Autrement...et ailleurs, *Saisons de la danse*, 187, p.19.
- Guatterini, M. (1985) Punto spettacolo: Reggio Emilia – Aterballetto, *Balletto Oggi*, February 1985, p.26.
- Guatterini, M. (1989) Forsythe controcorrente, *Danza e danza*, 33, pp.1–2.
- Guatterini, M. (1991a) I nuovi rileggono i classici, *Danza e Danza*, 59, pp.1–2.

- Guatterini, M. (1991b) *I sei e Satie: neoclassico nella francia degli anni venti e oggi*. Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori Arte.
- Guatterini, M. (2003) Shampoo, Pizza – and dance at last, *Ballet2000*, July/August 2003, pp.38–39.
- Guatterini, M. (2004) Preljocaj, the original eclectic, *Ballet2000*, September 2004, pp.30–31.
- Guatterini, M. (2005) I balletòmani vanno a Noces, *Il Sole 24 Ore*, 1 May, npn.
- Guatterini, M. (2005) In Scena: Aterballetto; Monteverde & Bigonzetti, per Bach, *Ballet2000*, April 2005, p.44.
- Guzzo-Vacarina, E. (2002). Bigonzetti tries his hand at Stravinsky. *Ballet2000*, July/August 2002, p.37.
- Guzzo-Vacarina, E. (2004) Essereononessere Bigonzetti, *Ballet2000*, October 2004, p.50.
- Guzzo-Vaccarina, E. (2006) Beautiful Muscles: Romeo and Juliet. *Ballettanz*, October 2006, npn.
- Hall, F. (1983) Jiří Kylián's Svadebka, *Dance Gazette*, 182, March 1983, pp.14–15.
- Hammergren, L. (2004) Many sources, many voices, in Carter, A. (ed.) (2004) *Rethinking dance history: a reader*. London; New York: Routledge, pp.20–31.
- Harpe, B. (2007) Opera North in 'Les Noces' and 'Dido and Aeneas', *Dancing Times*, June 2007, npn.
- Hauptenthal, U. (1989) Oskar Schlemmer's Projekt einer szenischen Aufführung von Igor Starwinsky's "Les Noces", *Ballett Journal/Das Tanzarchiv*, 37 (4), pp.56–68.
- Hering, D. (1977) Making this a memorable evening, *Dance magazine*, July 1977, pp.24, 26, 28, 72–74.
- Hersin, A. P. (2003) Relectures, *Saisons de la danse*, 246, pp.11–12.
- Houseal, J. (1987) Chicago. *Ballet review*, 25 (3), pp.11–12.
- Hutcheon, L. (1988) *A poetics of postmodernism: history, theory, fiction*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Hutchinson-Guest, A. (1998) Style in dance, *Proceedings of 21st Conference, Society of Dance History Scholars*, University of Oregon, pp.211–213.
- Hutera, D. (2005) Artfully arranged marriage. *The Times*, 5 May, npn.
- Jackson, J. William Forsythe's challenge to the balletic text: Dancing Latin, in Adshead-

- Lansdale, J. (ed.) (1999) *Dancing Texts: Intertextuality in interpretation*. London: Dance Books, pp.104–129.
- Jameson, F. (1990) *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Jardine, A. (2002) Dolphins, Dying Rooms and Destabilized Demographics, or: Loving Anna in a Transmodern World, *Tulsa Studies In Women's Literature*, 21 (2), pp.333–345.
- Jays, D. (1995) ENB on the South Bank: A first look at two programmes, *Dancing Times*, September 1995, p.1165.
- Jenkins, K. (1991) *Rethinking history*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Jenkins, K. (1995) *On "What is history?": From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Jenkins, K. (ed.) (1997) *The postmodern history reader*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Jenkins, K. (2009) *At the limits of History: essays on theory and practice*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Johnson, R. (1987) Ritual and Abstraction in Nijinska's *Les Noces*, *Dance Chronicle*, 10 (2), pp.147–169.
- Jordan, S. (2000) *Moving Music – Dialogues with Music in the Twentieth-Century Ballet*. London: Dance Books.
- Jordan, S. (2003) Wedding Bouquet, *Dance Now*, 12 (2), pp.73–78.
- Kale, S. H. (2005) Spirituality, religion, and globalization, *Journal of Macromarketing* 24(2), pp.92–107.
- Kappel, M. (1998) *Balletto di Toscana* makes New York debut, *Attitude*, 13 (3), pp.11.
- Karsavina, T. (1962) *Classical Ballet: Flow and Movement*. London: A & C Black.
- Kisselgoff, A. (2000) Physicality and Polish imported from Europe, *New York Times*, 24 January, pp.9–10.
- Kolocotroni, V. Goldman, J. and Taxidou, O. (1999) *Modernism: An Anthology of Sources and Documents*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kostelanetz, R. (ed.) (1992) *Merce Cunningham: Dancing in space and time*. New York: Da Capo Press.
- Langdon, H. (2005) *The Lives of Caravaggio (Mancini, Baglione, Bellori)*. London: Pallas Athene.

- Lansdale, J. (2007) *The struggle with the angel: a poetics of Lloyd Newson's Strange Fish*. Alton: Dance Books.
- Lansdale, J. (ed.) (2008) *Decentring Dancing Texts: The Challenge of Interpreting Dances*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lawton M. (2000) Karin Waehner: How American Modern Dance and German Absolute Dance met in France in *Dancing in the Millennium*, Society of Dance History Scholars, Conference Proceedings, pp.298–301.
- Lechte, J. (1994) *Fifty Key Contemporary Thinkers: from structuralism to postmodernity*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Lepecki, A. (2004) *Of the presence of the body: Essays on Dance and Performance Theory*. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
- Lepecki, A. (2006) *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the politics of movement*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Lepecki, A. and Joy, J. (eds.) (2009) *Planes of composition: Dance, theory and the global*. London; New York, Calcutta: Seagull Books.
- Leslie-Spinks, L. and Sörensen, M. (2011) *Mats Ek*. Stockholm: Bokförlaget Max Ström.
- Levene, L. (2005) Synchronised spasms, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 8 May, npn.
- Lewis, C. T. (2011) 'When the glass slips: Building bridges to transmodern identity in the novels of Santiago Nazarian and Chico Buarque'. PhD thesis: Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.
- Lobenthal, J. (2005) Adding Chrome to Classics, *New York Sun*, 10 November, npn.
- López-Calvo, I. (ed.) (2012) *Peripheral Transmodernities: South-to-South Intercultural Dialogues between the Luso-Hispanic World and the "Orient"*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Luyckx Ghisi, M. (1999) The transmodern hypothesis: Towards a dialogue of cultures, *Futures* (31), pp.971–982.
- Lyotard, J.F. (1984) *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Mackrell, J. (2005) Compagnia Aterballetto, *The Guardian*, 4 May, npn.
- Manning, E. (1994) Too long in Exile, *Dance Australia*, 74, pp.57–58.
- Manning, E. (1995) The French New Wave, *Dance Australia*, 80, pp.44–48.
- Manning, S. (1988) Review: Modernist Dogma and Post-Modern Rhetoric: A response to Sally Banes' "Terpsichore in Sneakers", *TDR*, 32 (4), pp.32–39.
- Manning, S. (1993) German Rites Revisited: An Addendum to a History of *Le Sacre du Printemps* on the German Stage, *Dance Chronicle*, 16 (1), pp.115–20.

- Marmin, O. (1989/90) Décentralisation, a series of articles and interviews with choreographer in the regions, *Saisons de la danse*, pp.206–213.
- Marvin, J. (2004) *Nietzsche and Transmodernism: Art and Science beyond the Modern in Joyce, Stevens, Pynchon and Kubrick*. PhD thesis: The State University of New York, Buffalo, Graduate School.
- Mathieu, M. Angelin Preljocaj, in Benbow-Pfalzgraf, T. (1998) *International Dictionary of Modern Dance*. Detroit; New York; London: St. James Press, pp.641–642.
- Mazo, M. (1990) Stravinsky's "Les Noces" and Russian Village Wedding Ritual, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 43 (1), pp.99–142.
- McAfee, N. (2004) *Julia Kristeva*. London; New York: Routledge.
- McHale, B. (1992) *Constructing Postmodernism*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Meisner, N. (1989) Different sensibilities, *Dance and Dancers*, October 1989, pp.16–17.
- Meisner, N. (1991) Nijinska: The Making of a Choreographer, *Dance and Dancers*, June–July 1991, pp.17–21.
- Meyer, L. Towards a methodology of style, in Lang, B. (ed.) (1979) *The Concept of Style*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.
- Midgelow, V. (2007) *Reworking the ballet: Counter-narratives and alternative bodies*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Miller, J. (1986) *Subsequent Performances*. New York: Viking Penguin Inc.
- Mitra, R. Dancing Embodiment, Theorizing Space: Exploring the 'Third Space' in Akram Khan's 'Zero Degrees', in Lepeki, A. and Joy, J. (eds.) (2009) *Planes of composition: Dance, theory and the global*. London; New York; Calcutta: Seagull Books, pp.40–63.
- Mitra, R. (2011) *Akram Khan: Performing the Third Space*. PhD thesis: Royal Holloway, University of London.
- Montgomery, M. (1999) Is dance losing its identity? *Dance Europe*, April/May 1999, pp.22–27.
- Morris, G. (1993–94) Late Bloomers, *Dance View*, 11 (2), pp.15–18.
- Morris, G. (2000) *A Network of styles: discovering the choreographed movement of Frederick Ashton (1904–1988)*. PhD thesis: University of Surrey, Roehampton, Department of Dance.
- Nijinska, I. and Rawlinson, J. (eds.) (1992) *Bronislava Nijinska – early memoirs*. Durham; London: Duke University Press.

- Nugent, A. (1993/4) Through a wide-angled lens, *Dance Now*, 2 (4), pp.22–27.
- Nugent, A. (1994) Opening out the Umbrella, *Dance Now*, 3 (4), pp.22–28.
- Nugent, A. (2000) *The architexts of Eidos: Telos. A critical study through intertextuality of the dance text conceived by William Forsythe*. PhD thesis: University of Surrey, School of Performing Arts.
- Orr, M. (2003) *Intertextuality: Debates and Contexts*. Cambridge, Malden: Polity Press.
- Ottolenghi, V. (1989) Punto Spettacolo: Reggio Emilia – Aterballetto, *Balletto Oggi*, June 1989, p.20.
- Ottolenghi, V. (1991) Pulcinella, di casa nel mondo, *Balletto Oggi*, 75, pp.12–16.
- Ottolenghi, V. (1992) Punto Spettacolo: Roma – Preljocaj, *Balletto Oggi*, January 1992, p.30.
- Ottolenghi, V. (1993) Sarà vera crisi? *Balletto Oggi*, December 1993, pp.12–15.
- Ottolenghi, V. (2002) European Choreography for Aterballetto, *Balletto Oggi*, March 2002, p.37.
- Ottolini, G. (2003) *Reggio Emilia Danza Book 1: Forsythe: ieri oggi domani*. Reggio Emilia: Fondazione I Teatri di Reggio Emilia.
- Ottolini, G. (2006) *Reggio Emilia Danza Book 2: Incontri con i coreografi contemporanei: Kylian, Ek, Neumeier*. Reggio Emilia: Fondazione I Teatri di Reggio Emilia.
- Ottolini, G. (2007) *Reggio Emilia Danza Book 3: Indentita e memoria: la generazione di mezzo (Bigonzetti, Cosimi, Horta, Maliphant, Preljocaj, Waltz)*. Reggio Emilia: Fondazione I Teatri di Reggio Emilia.
- Pakes, A. (2000) Contemporary dance, cultural policy and the Front National: The Chateavallon Affair, 1995–1998. Conference proceedings of Laban Centre Research papers *Dance, Culture & Politics Conference* held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2000. London: Laban Centre.
- Pakes, A. (2001) *Dance Interpretation and the Cultural Institution: Exploring the condition(s) of British and French contemporary dance in the 1990s*. PhD thesis: Laban Centre (London) & City University.
- Pariset, P. (2006) Notti di ritmo e di fascino con Aterballetto. *Il Tempo*, 20 January, npn.
- Parker, R. (2006) *Remaking the Song: Operatic Visions and Revisions from Handel to Berio*. Berkely and London: University of California Press.
- Parry, J. (1994) Angelin Preljocaj, *Dance Theatre Journal*, Autumn 1994, pp.6–9.
- Parsch-Bergsohn, I. (1994) *Modern Dance in Germany and the United States: Crosscurrents and Influences*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.



- Pasi, M. (2006) Romeo e Giulietta in 10 coppie: I protagonisti si moltiplicano nel balletto di Bigonzetti. *Corriere della Sera*, 12 June, npn.
- Pasi, M. (2007a) Romeo and Juliet: balletto innovativo e impeccabile, *Corriere della Sera*, 31 March, npn.
- Pasi, M. (2007b) Continuità e invenzione. *Danza & Danza*, April 2007, npn.
- Passet, D. (1986) Profile of Angelin Preljocaj (Preljocaj roule pour vous), *Danser*, 38, October 1986, pp.36–37.
- Pavis, P. (2003) *Analyzing Performance: Theater, Dance and Film* (translated by David Williams). Michigan: University of Michigan Press.
- Pedroni, F. (ed.) (2007) *Identità e memoria: La generazione di mezzo (Bigonzetti, Horta, Maliphant, Preljocaj, Waltz)*. Reggio Emilia: Fondazione I Teatri di Reggio Emilia.
- Pedroni, F. (1992) Bigonzetti: pitture per archi, *Danza e danza*, 64, p.8.
- Perks, R. and Thomson, A. (eds.) (2006) *The Oral History Reader* (2nd edition). London; New York: Routledge.
- Pforsich, J. (1978) Labananalysis and dance style research, *CORD Dance Research Annual*, 9, pp.59–72.
- Pini, F. (2006) Fabrizio Plessi: La mia Giulietta ama il techno. *Corriere della Sera – Magazine*, npn.
- Pioli, G. (2005) Ovazioni e tutto esaurito al BAM: E l'Aterballetto conquista New York. *La Nazione: Il Giorno*, 14 November, npn.
- Pitt, F. (1999) Dance in Italy, *Dance Now*, 8 (3), pp.74–79.
- Plouchard, J.M. (1991a) Angelin et Shakespeare! *Saisons de la danse*, 222, March 1991, p.26.
- Plouchard, J.M. (1991b) Entretien avec Angelin Preljocaj, *Saisons de la danse*, 230, December 1991, pp.6–7.
- Poesio, G. (1995) Ballet Preljocaj at Sadler's Wells, *Dancing Times*, August 1995, p.1059.
- Poesio, G. (2000) Italy – The cinderella of the arts, in Grau, A. and Jordan, S. (2000) *Europe Dancing – perspectives on theatre dance and cultural identity*. London: Routledge, pp.100–118.
- Poesio, G. (2008) Elusive Narratives: Mats Ek, in Lansdale, J. (ed.) (2008) *Decentring Dancing Texts: The Challenge of Interpreting Dances*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.73–88.
- Poletti, S. (1991) Bigonzetti Prova con Mozart, *Danza e danza*, 56, July/August 1991, p.7.

- Poletti, S. (1992) Nuovi coreografi: Mauro Bigonzetti, *Danza e danza*, April 1992, p.4.
- Poletti, S. (1999) Mauro Bigonzetti: Italy's new Maestro of Dance, *Dance Magazine*, February 1999, pp.76–79.
- Portelli, A. What makes oral history different, in Perks, R. and Thomson, A. (eds.) (2006) *The Oral History Reader* (2nd edition). London; New York: Routledge, pp.32–42.
- Potter, M. (1994) Hommage aux Ballets Russes, *Dance Australia*, 70, Feb/March, 1994, p.51.
- Pratl, C. (1998) Casanova, Vaslav and Bagouet, *Dance Europe*, June/July, pp.26–27.
- Preston-Dunlop, V. (1998) *Looking at Dances: Choreological perspectives on dance*. London: Verve Publishing.
- Preston-Dunlop, V., Sanchez-Colberg, A. and Rubidge, S. (eds.) (2002) *Dance and the Performative: A Choreological Perspective – Laban and Beyond*. London: Verve Publishing.
- Reynolds, N. and McCormick, M. (2003) *No Fixed Points: Dance in the Twentieth Century*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press.
- Richardson, P. J. (1923) Paris Notes (by the Sitter Out), *Dancing Times*, June 1923, p.1000.
- Rigotti, D. (2007) La danza dà gioia a Shakespeare, *Avvenire*, 1 April, npn.
- Roberts, G. (ed.) (2001) *The History and Narrative Reader*. London; New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
- Robinson, J. (1997) *Modern Dance in France: An Adventure 1920–1970*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Press.
- Rodes, C. (1983) Lyon: Le Ballet de L'Opéra de Lyon, *Pour la danse*, No.87, February 1983, p.38.
- Rodríguez Madga, R. M. (1989) *La Sonrisa de Saturno: Hacia una teoría transmoderna*. Barcelona: Anthropos.
- Romanelli, E. (1991) Romeo e Giulietta secondo Preljocaj, *Danza e danza*, No.54, May 1991, p.15.
- Rossi, L. (1989) A Reggio Emilia tutto. *Danza e danza*, 37, pp.1–2.
- Rüegger, E. (2004) Bigonzetti, Lee and Galili. *Ballet 2000*, June/July 2004, p.52
- Sadler's Wells (2005) *Compania Aterballetto – press release 1 March*. London: Sadler's Wells.
- Sanchez-Colberg, A. (1992) *German Tanztheater: traditions and contradictions. A*

*choreological documentation of Tanztheater from its roots in Ausdrucktanz to the present.* PhD thesis: Laban Centre for Movement and Dance, London.

- Schechner, R. (1988) *Performance Theory*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Schechner, R. (1992) A new paradigm for theatre in the academy, *Tulane Drama Review*, 36 (4), pp.7–10.
- Schechner, R. (2000a) Post post-structuralism? *Tulane Drama Review*, 44 (3), pp.4–7.
- Schechner, R. (2000b) Performance as a “formation of power and knowledge”, *Tulane Drama Review*, 44 (4), pp.5–7.
- Schechner, R. (2002) *Performance Studies: An Introduction*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Schechner, R. The Five Avant Gardes or...or None? in Huxley, M. and Witts, N. (eds.) (2002) *The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader* (2nd edition). London; New York: Routledge, pp.342–358.
- Schechner, R. (2003) *Performance Theory*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Schoonejans, S. (1999) Avignon Festival: No wedding for Preljocaj, *Ballet2000*, September 1999, p.25.
- Schoonejans, S. (2002) Ballet Preljocaj: a feminist Sacre, *Ballet2000*, February 2002, p.39.
- Schoonejans, S. (2004a) CCN Ballet de Lorraine – From the Ballets Russes to Preljocaj, *Ballet2000*, July/August 2004, p.3.
- Schoonejans, S. (2004b) A tunnel: N stands for what? *Ballet2000*, September 2004, p.31.
- Schoonejans, S. (2004c) Preljocaj Double Bill, *Ballet2000*, December 2004/January 2005, p.52.
- Schoonejans, S. (2005) Ballet Preljocaj: Jubilation à tous crin, *Ballet2000*, September 2005, pp.38–39.
- Siegel, M. (2010) *Mirrors and Scrims: The Life and Afterlife of Ballet*. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.
- Simpson, J. (2008) Moving On, *Dance Now*, Summer 2008, pp.45–47.
- Sloterdijk, P. Mobilization of the Planet from the spirit of self-intensification, in Lepecki, A. and Joy, J. (eds.) (2009) *Planes of composition: Dance, theory and the global*. London; New York; Calcutta: Seagull Books, pp.3–14.
- Sorley Walker, K. (1983) *De Basil's Ballets Russes*. London: Dance Books.
- Soul, H. (1998) Mauro Bigonzetti's *Quattro Danze per Nino* in Stuttgart, *Dance Europe*, June/July 1998, p.41.

- Souritz, E. (1990) *Soviet Choreographers in the 1920s* (translated by Lynn Visson and edited by Sally Baner). London: Dance Books.
- Squires, P. (2005) From Italy's Aterballetto, Touches of Classical and Kinky. *The Washington Post*, 7 November, npn.
- Sulcas, R. (1993) Compagnie Preljocaj/Bouvier-Obadia, *Dance and Dancers*, Nov/Dec 1993, p.27.
- Sulcas, R. (1995) French funding overlooks classicists, *Dance magazine*, March 1995, pp.40–41.
- Sullivan, L. (1982) *Les Noces*: the American Première. *Dance Research Journal/CORD*, 14 (1), pp.3–14.
- Szaniawski, J. (2004) Transmodernism or the resurgence of modernism in contemporary cinema and popular culture, *Belgian Journal of English Language and Literatures*, 2004, pp.167–183.
- Tannenbaum, M. (2006) Ballando fra pretini e ironici virtuosismi. *Corriere della Sera*, 21 January, npn.
- Taussig, M. (1993) *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Taylor, D. (2003) *The archive and the repertoire: Cultural Memory and Performance in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Testa, A. (1991) Giovani coreografi, *Danza e danza*, 53, April 1991, p.8.
- Thomas, H. (1995) *New Formations in Dance Studies: A Critical Appraisal*, Proceedings of the Fifth Study of Dance Border Tensions: Dance and Discourse, April 1995. University of Surrey, pp.305–324.
- Tobias, T. (1997) Hot Copy. *New York Magazine*, 12 May, pp.66, 68.
- Tozzi, L. (2006) Con Aterballetto Stravinsky e Rossini a passo di danza. *Il Tempo*, 18 January, npn.
- Traiger, L. (2005) A Fine Italian Import, *The Washington Post*, 4 November, npn.
- Trombetta, S. (1989) I festival francesi, *Danza e danza*, no.36, September 1989, p.5.
- Trombetta, S. (1990) Angelin Preljocaj il neo barocco, *Danza e danza*, April 1990, p.13.
- Trombetta, S. (1993a) Parigi: Preljocaj et les Ballets Russes, *Balletto Oggi*, May/June 1993, p.24–25.
- Trombetta, S. (1993b) Amodio: il futuro non è chiaro, *Balletto Oggi*, December 1993, pp.14–15.

- Trombetta, S. (1996) Danse à Aix: il Romeo e Giulietta di Angelin Preljocaj, *Balletto Oggi*, October 1996, p.26.
- Trombetta, S. (2006) Il Balletto di Mauro Bigonzetti a Reggio Emilia: Tra Romeo e Giulietta la passione è 'fetish', *La Stampa*, 1 June, npn.
- Uno, R. and Mae-San Pablo Burns, L. (ed.) (2002) *The Color of Theater: Race, Culture and Contemporary Performance*. London; New York: Continuum.
- Vaccarino, E. (1988) Benvenute, compagnie regionali, *Balletto Oggi*, August 1991, p.29.
- Vaccarino, E. (1990a) Punto Spettacolo: Spoleto – A. Preljocaj, *Balletto Oggi*, August 1990, pp.34–35.
- Vaccarino, E. (1990b) Punto Spettacolo: Marina di Pietra Santa – Aterballetto, *Balletto Oggi*, October 1990, p.30.
- Vaccarino, E. (1990c) Punto Spettacolo: Lione – Preljocaj, *Balletto Oggi*, December 1990, p.22.
- Vaccarino, E. (1991) Coreografi si nasce or si diventa? *Balletto Oggi*, August 1991, p.29.
- Vaccarino, E. (1992a) La giovane danza cerca casa, *Balletto Oggi*, May/June 1992, p.31.
- Vaccarino, E. (1992b) Forsythe, il coreografo-star, *Balletto Oggi*, October 1992, pp.12–17.
- Vaccarino, E. (1996) *Balletto di Toscana* – Bigonzetti: Don Giovanni, *Balletto Oggi*, October 1996, pp.35–38.
- Vaccarino, E. (1997) Ballet Preljocaj: La narrative sensuale di Preljocaj, *Balletto Oggi*, June 1997, p.27.
- Vaccarino, E. (1998a) Bolzano Dance: Brumachon, de Mey, and Preljocaj on tour, *Ballet2000*, October 1998, pp.26–27.
- Vaccarino, E. (1998b) Aterballetto: from Forsythe to Bigonzetti, *Ballet2000*, October 1998, pp.26.
- Vaccarino, E. (1999) Aterballetto: Bigonzetti in Purgatory, *Ballet2000*, May 1999, p.34.
- Vaccarino, E. (2001) The state of Contemporary Dance, from Pina Bausch onwards. *Ballet2000*, January/February 2001, pp.24–26.
- Van Dyk, J. (2010) Vanishing: Dance Audiences in the Postmodern Age, *Dance Chronicle*, 33 (2), pp.208–230.
- Van Norman Baer, N. (1987) *Bronislava Nijinska: A Dancer's Legacy*. San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.
- Van Zile, J. (1974) Energy uses: an important stylistic element in dance, *CORD Dance*

*Research Annual*, 8, pp.38–46.

Van Zile, J. (1985) What is the Dance? Implications for Dance Notation, *Dance Research Journal*, 17(2) and 18(1), pp.41–47.

Veroli, P. (1990a) The choreography of Aurel Milloss, Part One: 1906–1945. *Dance Chronicle*, pp.1–46.

Veroli, P. (1990b) The choreography of Aurel Milloss, Part Two: 1946–1966. *Dance Chronicle*, pp.193–240.

Veroli, P. (1991) The choreography of Aurel Milloss, Part Three: 1967–1988. *Dance Chronicle*, pp.368–392.

Verrière, P. (1990) Spectacles: Le vires d’Amer, *Saisons de la Danse*, December 1990, p.18.

Verrière, P. (1994a) Ballet du Nord, *Saisons de la danse*, 256, May 1994, pp.8–9.

Verrière, P. (1994b) Oh le beau lot! *Saisons de la danse*, 260, September 1994, p.44.

Verrière, P. (2005) *Où va la danse: l’aventure de la danse par ceux qui l’ont vécue*. Conference proceedings of the 25th Festival of Avignon. Paris: Seuil-Archimbaud.

Vasari, G. (1550) *The Lives of the Artists*, translated by Julia Conaway Bondanella and Peter Bondanella, 2008. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Walsh, S. (1993) *The Music of Stravinsky*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Walter, T. (1965) Dance scrapbook: The Triumph of ‘Les Noces’, *New York Herald Tribune*, 2 May, npn.

Werner, F. (2001) Four Choreographers and the Berlin Ballett, *Ballett International/Tanz Aktuell*, July 2001, p.11.

White, H. (1973) *Metahistory: the historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Wulff, H. (1998) *Ballet Across Borders: Career and culture in the world of dancers*. London; New York: Berg, Oxford International Publishers.

**Electronic Sources**

- Anon. (2006) Ballet Company brings la Dolce Vita to China, *China Daily*. Available at: <http://www.china.org.cn/English/culture/159468.htm> (Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Anon. (2006) Compania Aterballetto, *Dance Magazine*. Available at: [http://www.dancemagazine.com/dance\\_magazine/reviews/sjow\\_review.php?f=Janua](http://www.dancemagazine.com/dance_magazine/reviews/sjow_review.php?f=Janua) (Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Atchison, C. (2001) Preljocaj questions art through intense dance, *Daily Arts Review – Michigan Daily*. Available at: <http://www.michigandailly.com/media/storage/paper851/news/2001/02/21/Arts/Preljocaj> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Ballet Preljocaj (nd) *Biographie Preljocaj – Angelin Preljocaj Biography*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.preljocaj.org/Pages/uk/prel/bioprelj.htm> (Accessed: 3 March 2006).
- Ballet Preljocaj (nd) Productions. [Online] Available at: <http://www.preljocaj.org/menu.php?lang=fr&m=1&a=4> (Accessed: 12 August 2012).
- Ben-Itzak, P. (2000) Technique +Emotion= Paris Opéra Ballet, *Danceinsider.com*. Available at: [http://www.danceinsider.com/f1023\\_1.html](http://www.danceinsider.com/f1023_1.html) (Accessed: 10 May 2006).
- Ben-Itzak, P. (2001a) Preljocaj Goes Eurotrash, *Danceinsider.com*. Available at: [http://www.danceinsider.com/f2001/f502\\_1.html](http://www.danceinsider.com/f2001/f502_1.html) (Accessed: 10 May 2006).
- Ben-Itzak, P. (2001b) Preljocaj's Rite. The Hazards of Art by commission, *Danceinsider.com*. Available at: [http://www.danceinsider.com/f2001/f1212\\_1.html](http://www.danceinsider.com/f2001/f1212_1.html) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Berry, H. (1998) Science Blog – France's Celebrated Ballet Preljocaj Performs its North American Premiere of Romeo and Juliet September 17–19, 1998. [Online] Available at: <http://www.scienceblog.com/community/older/archives/O/a/uc10692.shtml> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Bisley, C. (2006) Aterballetto, *The Lumière Reader*. Available at: <http://www.lumiere.net.nz/reader/item/412> (Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Broili, S. (1995) Page Auditorium and Reynolds Industries Theater, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina (June 9–July 22). Available at: [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1083/is\\_n11\\_v69/ai\\_17491526](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1083/is_n11_v69/ai_17491526) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Brown, I. (2005). The wedding party that turns into a battle of the sexes, *Telegraph Arts*, 7 May [Online] Available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/arts/main.jhtml?xml=/arts2005/05/07/btisme.xml&sSheet> (Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Caparrotti, L. (2003) Explosive return of Aterballetto, *USitalia*, 2 March. [Online] Available at:

[http://www.usitalia.info/dettaglio.asp?Art\\_Id=1060&Art\\_tema=%09%09%09%09%...](http://www.usitalia.info/dettaglio.asp?Art_Id=1060&Art_tema=%09%09%09%09%...)  
(Accessed: 23 March 2006).

*Caravaggio Exhibition* (2010) Le Scuderie del Quirinale, Rome (Italy) 20 February–13 June.  
[Online]  
<http://english.scuderiequirinale.it/MEDIACENTER/FE/CategoriaMedia.aspx?idc=77>

Cori, G. (2002) Saper creare rinnovando la tradizione (Knowing how to create whilst renewing the tradition), *Drammaturgia*, 16 June. [Online] Available at:  
<http://www.drammaturgia.it/recensioni/recensione1.php?id=191> (Accessed: 23 March 2006).

Dunning, J. (2005) Next Wave Festival Review: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, but Modern, *The New York Times*, 10 November. Available at:  
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9804E2D7153EF933A25752C1A9639C8B63> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).

Dunning, J.. (2006) With new visions of the classical, choreographers embrace their inspirations, *The New York Times*, 28 April. Available at:  
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B02E7D8133FF93BA15757C0A9609C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).

Dunning, J. (2007) Russian, American-style and a Loner on a Quest, *The New York Times*, 19 January. Available at:  
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9503E5DF1E30F93AA25752C0A9619C8B63> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).

Dunning, J. (2008) O Rose, Thou Art Energetic! New Look for a Fokine Classic, *The New York Times Archives*, 4 March. Available at:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/04/arts/dance/04wals.html> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).

Dussel, E. (nd) Transmodernity and Interculturality: An Interpretation from the Perspective of Philosophy of Liberation. Available at:  
<http://www.enriquedussel.org/txt/Transmodernity%20and%20Interculturality.pdf>  
(Accessed: 14 August 2010).

Feliciano, R. (2001) Intellect and Kinetics collide – Angelin Preljocaj, choreographer, *Dance Magazine*. Available at:  
[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1083/is\\_5\\_75/ai\\_74293893](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1083/is_5_75/ai_74293893) (Accessed: 5 August 2006).

French Culture. (2004) Ballet Preljocaj – *Near Life Experience* – Brooklyn and Los Angeles. Available at: <http://www.frenchculture.org/perfor/events/04preljocaj.html> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).

Hutera, D. (2005) Aterballetto's maverick choreographer is about more than style, *Timesonline*, 2 May. Available at: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/printFriendly/0,,1-47-1591695,00.html> (Accessed: 23 March 2006).

International Arts Festival (2006) *Italian contemporary ballet – From tarantula bites to*



- Bach*, 5 March. Available at: <http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/CU0603/S00127.htm>  
(Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Jarrett, S. (2001) Italian Origin. With an edgy rep, a diverse mix of dancers and a hip company outlook, Aterballetto has come into its own, *Pointe magazine*. Available at: [http://www.pointe.magazine.com/backissues.spring01/dw\\_aterballetto.shtml](http://www.pointe.magazine.com/backissues.spring01/dw_aterballetto.shtml)  
(Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Jordan, S. and Nicholas, L. (2002a) Dance Record [1989 ch: Angelin Preljocaj] in *Stravinsky the Global Dancer – a chronology of Choreography to the Music of Igor Stravinsky – Roehampton University*. Available at: <http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/stravinsky/viewrecord.asp?indent=1296> (Accessed: 3 March 2006).
- Jordan, S. and Nicholas, L. (2002b) Dance Record [2002 ch: Mauro Bigonzetti] in *Stravinsky the Global Dancer – a chronology of Choreography to the Music of Igor Stravinsky in Roehampton University*. Available at: <http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/stravinsky/viewrecord.asp?indent=188> (Accessed: 3 March 2006).
- Jowitt, D. 2005. Makeovers – oh those old stories! Call in the decorators, *The Village Voice*, 23 November. Available at: <http://www.villagevoice.com/dance/0547.jowitt,70393,14.html> (Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Joyce Theater. (nd) Compagnie Preljocaj – 15–20 April. Available at: <http://www.joyce.org/preljocaj.html> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Keogler, H. 2008. Where genius meets crime, *Tanznetz.de*, 10 December. [Online] Available at: <http://www.tanznetz.de/en/kritiken.phtml?page=showthread&aid=171&tid=13867>  
(Accessed: 29 July 2010).
- Kirkup, J. (1992) Obituary: Dominique Bagouet. *The Independent*. Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-dominique-bagouet-1564389.html>  
(Accessed: 19 November 2009).
- Kisselgoff, A. (1983) Dance Review: The Carolyn Carlson Troupe, *The New York Times Archives*. Available at: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C06EFD91539F931A25752C1A9659>  
(Accessed: 12 June 2006).
- Kisselgoff, A. (1991) Dance Review: A French Company's Version of 'Noces', *The New York Times Archives*. Available at: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9D0CE7DD123BF931A15755C0A96>  
(Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Kisselgoff, A. (1993) Dance Review: Myth and Metaphor in 'Peau du Monde' by Angelin Preljocaj, *The New York Times Archives*. Available at: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CE0DF153EF930A35754C0A96>

(Accessed: 5 April 2006).

- Kisselgoff, A. (1995) Dance Review: An Erotic Dream for Seamier Times', *The New York Times Archives*, 3 July. Available at: <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=990CE0DF153EF930A35754C0A96> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Kisselgoff, A. (1998) Dance Review: Power struggles under the sun, *The New York Times Archives*, 19 March. Available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/1998/03/19/arts/dance-review-power-struggles-under-the-sun.html?ref=anna\\_kisselgoff](http://www.nytimes.com/1998/03/19/arts/dance-review-power-struggles-under-the-sun.html?ref=anna_kisselgoff) (Accessed: 14 August 2009).
- Kisselgoff, A. (2000) Dance Review: Physicality and Polish imported from Europe, *The New York Times Archives*, 24 January. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/24/arts/dance-review-physicality-and-polish-imported-from-europe.html> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).
- Kisselgoff, A. (2001) *With Wit and Some Surprises, A Beast Emerges From Within*. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/02/20/arts/dance-review-with-wit-and-some-surprises-a-beast-emerges-from-within.html?pagewanted=2> (Accessed: 26 March 2012).
- Kisselgoff, A. (2002) Ballet Review: Spaghetti suppleness, Neo-Dada and a toast in a showcase of new works, *The New York Times Archives*, 10 May. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/10/movies/ballet-review-spaghetti-suppleness-neo-dada-toast-showcase-new-works.html> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).
- Lee, A. (2001) France Moves/Cinémathèque de la Dance à la cinémathèque Française, *Dance Magazine*. Available at: [http://www.dancemagazine.com/dance\\_magazine/reviews/show\\_review.php?f=sept](http://www.dancemagazine.com/dance_magazine/reviews/show_review.php?f=sept) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Luyckx Ghisi, M. (2001). Beyond Modernity, The Patriarchy and Capitalism. Available at: [http://www.auroville.org/journals&media/books&cds/knowledge\\_society.htm](http://www.auroville.org/journals&media/books&cds/knowledge_society.htm) (Accessed: 17 July 2012).
- Macaulay, A. (2008a) Bound for New Life, Set to Music of the Old World, *The New York Times Archives*, 25 January. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/25/arts/dance/25ball.html?scp=7&sq=bigonzetti&st=cse> (Accessed: 7 July 2010).
- Macaulay, A. (2008b) The Glow of Balanchine, the Wit of Tharp, *The New York Times Archives*, 8 November. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/05/arts/dance/05ball.html> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).
- Macaulay, A. (2008c) Colorful Skirts That Dress Up Handel for a Sexy Charm, *The New York Times Archives*, 15 December. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/15/arts/dance/15aile.html> (Accessed: 7 July 2010).

- Macaulay, A. (2009) The Tried, the New, the Mixed, *The New York Times Archives*, 9 February. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/09/arts/dance/09baro.html> (Accessed: 14 August 09).
- Mackrell, J. (2004) Ballet Preljocaj – Dome, Brighton, *The Guardian: Arts Unlimited*. Available at: <http://arts.guardian.co.uk/critic/review/0,,1220660,00.html> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Mackrell, J. (2005) Compagnia Aterballetto, *The Guardian: Arts Unlimited*, 4 May. Available at: <http://arts.guardian.co.uk/critic/review/0,,1476029,00.html> (Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Mattingly, K. (2000) Dance: Nurturing creativity, within a worldwide view, *The New York Times Archives*, 16 January. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/16/arts/dance-nurturing-creativity-with-a-worldwide-view.html> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).
- Meisner, N. (1999) Obituary: Karin Waehner, *The Independent*. Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/obituary-karin-waehner-1073025.html> (Accessed: 19 November 2009).
- National Choreographic Centre Aix-en-Provence. (nd) Angelin Preljocaj, CCN. Available at: [http://www.bnpparibas.com/en/foundation/angelin\\_preljocaj.asp](http://www.bnpparibas.com/en/foundation/angelin_preljocaj.asp) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Ng, K. (2005) Compagnia Aterballetto, *Ballet.co.uk*. Available at: [http://www.ballet.co.uk/magazines/yr\\_05/apr05/kn\\_rev\\_compagnia\\_aterballetto\\_0305](http://www.ballet.co.uk/magazines/yr_05/apr05/kn_rev_compagnia_aterballetto_0305) (Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Online Review London. (2002) Ballet Preljocaj – *Helikopter* and *The Rite of Spring*. Available at: <http://www.onlinereviewlondon.com/reviews/rightofspring.html> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Parry, J. (2005) Count your Blessings, *The Observer Online*, 19 June. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/reviews/observer/story/014467133991000.html> (Accessed: 31 October 2009).
- Poesio, G. (2005) Clash of Images, *Spectator*, 14 May. [Online] Available at: [http://www.spectator.co.uk/politics/all/18863/part\\_3/clash-of-images.shtml](http://www.spectator.co.uk/politics/all/18863/part_3/clash-of-images.shtml) (Accessed: 7 August 2010).
- Poletti, S. (1995) Bigonzetti on the rise – Italian choreographer Mauro Bigonzetti, *Dance Magazine*. Available at: [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1083/is\\_n5\\_v69/ai16885321](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1083/is_n5_v69/ai16885321) (Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Poletti, S. (1999) Mauro Bigonzetti: Italy's New Maestro of Dance – Aterballetto artistic director and choreographer who will premiere part 2 of his Dance trilogy *Comoedia*, *Dance Magazine*. Available at:

- [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1083/is\\_2\\_73/ai\\_53663451](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1083/is_2_73/ai_53663451)  
(Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Priomprintr, A. (2002) Ballet Preljocaj – *Helikopter* and *The Rite of Spring*, Barclay Theater, Irvine, California, *Critical Dance*. Available at:  
[http://www.criticaldance.com/reviews/2002/Preljocaj\\_Rite-021026.html](http://www.criticaldance.com/reviews/2002/Preljocaj_Rite-021026.html) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Renouf, R. (2002) Ballet Preljocaj – *Helikopter* and *Rite of Spring*, *Ballet.co.uk*. Available at:  
[http://www.ballet.co.uk/magazine/yr\\_02/nov02/rr\\_rev\\_preljocaj\\_1002.htm](http://www.ballet.co.uk/magazine/yr_02/nov02/rr_rev_preljocaj_1002.htm) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Roca, O. (2001) Battle of Ideas – Ballet Preljocaj’s ‘Paysage’ features stunning dancing in sprawling, unruly..., *San Francisco Chronicle*. Available at:  
<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2001/02/10/DD768>  
(Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Rockwell, J. (2006) New York City Ballet presents ‘Il Vento’ by Mauro Bigonzetti (Correction Appended), *The New York Times Archives*, 6 May. Available at:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/06/arts/dance/06vent.html> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).
- Sadler’s Wells. (2002) Ballet Preljocaj, *Sadlers Wells.com*. Available at:  
[http://www.sadlerswells.com/whats\\_on/sprin2002/Preljocaj.asp](http://www.sadlerswells.com/whats_on/sprin2002/Preljocaj.asp) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Sulcas, R. (1995) Preljocaj takes up residence at Chateauvallon – French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj, *Dance Magazine* [Online] Available at:  
[http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1083/is\\_n7\\_v69/ai\\_17618454](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1083/is_n7_v69/ai_17618454) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Sulcas, R. (2008) Blues, Masekela Memories and Festive Exuberance drive an Ailey Season, *The New York Times Archives*, 29 December. Available at:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/29/arts/dance/29aile.html> (Accessed: 14 August 2009).
- Sumi, G. (2002) The Rite Stuff – Rite of Spring gets a feminist update, *Dance Preview*. Available at: [http://nowtoronto.com/issues/2002-11-07/stage\\_dancepreview2.php](http://nowtoronto.com/issues/2002-11-07/stage_dancepreview2.php)  
(Accessed: 3 March 2006).
- Sweeney, S. (2003) Autumn in Tallinn, *Criticaldance*. Available at:  
<http://www.criticaldance.com/magazine/200402/articles/AutumnTallinn20031200.html>  
(Accessed: 23 March 2006).
- Tomalonis, A. (2002) Ballet Preljocaj, *DanceView: a quarterly review of dance*. Available at:  
<http://www.danceview.org/writers/Tomalonis/Preljocaj.htm> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).
- Ulrich, A. (2002) Aterballetto presents: A Midsummer Night’s Dream, *Voice of Dance*. Available at:  
<http://www.voiceofdance.com/insights/features.text.cfm?LinkID=285000000000000100>  
(Accessed: 23 March 2006).

Upadhyaya, B. (2009) *Amma's Daughters: A Transmodern Study of Personal, Gender, Cultural and Religious Identities amongst women in the Amma Community in United States*. PhD thesis: The University of New Mexico Albuquerque, New Mexico. Available at: <https://repository.unm.edu/dspace/bitstream/1928/10286/1/dissertation-final-bhavana%20upadhyaya.pdf> (Accessed: 15 August 2010).

Vlaemyneck, F. (1997) *Dance, Body and Soul – Angelin Preljocaj, La danse à bras le corps*. Available at: [http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/label\\_france/English/ART/DAnse/danse.html](http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/label_france/English/ART/DAnse/danse.html) (Accessed: 5 April 2006).

Wallach, M. (1991) *Angelin Preljocaj: Choreographer of Two Cultures*. Available at: <http://www.wolrdandi.com/specialreport/1991/October/Sa19588.htm> (Accessed: 5 April 2006).

### Audiovisual Sources

*Absolutely Free* (2006) chor. Bigonzetti. Extracts performed by Aterballetto posted online. Available at: [http://www.aterballetto.it/video\\_absolutely\\_free.htm](http://www.aterballetto.it/video_absolutely_free.htm) (Accessed: 10 January 2010).

*Angelin Preljocaj – video and interview*. Available at: [http://www.arte-tv.com/fr/art-musique/Dance\\_20Celebration\\_202\\_20/694582.html](http://www.arte-tv.com/fr/art-musique/Dance_20Celebration_202_20/694582.html) (Accessed: 21 July 2005).

*Annonciation* (1996, 2003) chor. Preljocaj. [TV Broadcast] Dir. unknown Chor. Preljocaj (2001) with members of the Paris Opéra Ballet; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 27 December 2003.

*but if a look should, April me* (2002) chor. Anna Teresa de Keersmaeker, performed by Rosas. Extracts in rehearsal and performance at unknown location, as part of *Dance Notes* (2002). VHS produced by Arte, France and observed at the New York Public Library. (Accessed: June 2007).

*Cantata* (2000) chor. Bigonzetti. Extracts performed by Aterballetto. Available at: [http://www.aterballetto.it/video\\_cantata.htm](http://www.aterballetto.it/video_cantata.htm) (Accessed: 10 October 2010).

*Caravaggio* (2008) chor. Bigonzetti. Extracts performed by Staatsballett Berlin. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UPEebXtGzE> (Accessed: 25 November 2009).

*Caravaggio* (2008) chor. Bigonzetti. [TV Broadcast] Performed by Staatsballett Berlin; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 9 May 2010.

*Come un respiro* (2009) Bigonzetti. Extracts performed by Aterballetto. Available at: [http://www.aterballetto.it/video\\_comeunrespiro.htm](http://www.aterballetto.it/video_comeunrespiro.htm) (Accessed: 10 October 2010).

*Dogville* (2003) Dir. Lars von Trier [Commercial DVD] includes Nicole Kidman, Lauren Bacall, John Hurt and Paul Bethany and produced by Icon Home Entertainment.

- Empty Moves Part I* (2004) chor. Preljocaj. Available at:  
<http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/empty-moves-part-i-noces-ina-2006>.  
(Accessed: 25 November 2009).
- Eldorado* (2007) chor. Preljocaj. Dir. Assayas, O. [Commercial DVD of recorded performance] performed by Ballet Preljocaj and produced by MK2.
- Extracts from *Portrait Angelin Preljocaj*, INA 1987. Available at:  
<http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/portrait-angelin-preljocaj-ina-1987>  
(Accessed: 25 November 2009).
- Festa Barocca* (2008) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at the New York City Center, New York on 2 January 2009, lodged at the New York Public Library.
- Festa Barocca* (2008) chor. Bigonzetti. [Online posting of recorded performance] Extracts performed by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Available at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1t-Y7m57V8&NR=1> (Accessed: 25 November 2009).
- Helikopter* (2001) chor. Preljocaj. Extracts from *Helikopter/Sacre du Printemps*, INA, 2001. Available at: <http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/helikopter-le-sacre-du-printemps-ina-2001> (Accessed: 23 November 2009).
- Helikopter* (2001) chor. Preljocaj. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Ballet Preljocaj in double bill (*Helikopter & Sacre du Printemps*) on 30 November 2001 at Teatro Romolo Valli, lodged at the Archives, Reggio Emilia.
- In Canto* (2007) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 14 December 2007, lodged at the Archives, Reggio Emilia.
- In Conversation with Angelin Preljocaj* (1997) Preljocaj, A. & Robinson, J. (Ballet Preljocaj: *Annonciation, Noces*). Video recording of post-performance talk at Joyce Theater, New York on 16 April 1997, lodged at the New York Public Library.
- In vento* (2007) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by the New York City Ballet at the New York State Theater, New York, lodged at the New York Public Library.
- Karin Waehner* [extract from film] Dir. Lawton, M. and Ghibaud, S. (2001) Available at:  
[http://www.apiam.com/pages/fiche-videos.php?id\\_film=166](http://www.apiam.com/pages/fiche-videos.php?id_film=166) (Accessed: 4 April 2012).
- Kazimir's Colours* (1996) chor. Bigonzetti. Posting of extracts from recorded performance performed by Staatsballett Berlin. Available at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chcyUZLnGqk&feature=related>. (Accessed: 25 November 2009).

- Kazimir's Colours* (1996) chor. Bigonzetti. Posting of extracts from recorded performance performed by Diana Vishneva and Vladimir Malakov (2009). Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W89oOyGwK7I&feature=related> (Accessed: 13 April 2012).
- Kill Bill* (2003) Dir. Quentin Tarantino [Commercial DVD] includes Uma Thurman, Daryl Hannah and Lucy Liu and produced by Miramax.
- La Danse: Paris Opéra Ballet* (2008) Dir. Wiseman, F. [Commercial DVD of recorded performances] Performed by Paris Opéra Ballet and produced by Soda Pictures.
- La Stravaganza* (1997) chor. Preljocaj. Extracts of recorded performance by Ballet du Lorraine, Season 2008–2009 at Pavillion Noire, Aix-en-Provence. Available at: <http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/videoprogramme-pavillon-noir-2008-4x3-avec-interviews> (Accessed: 23 November 2009).
- La Stravaganza* (1997) chor. Preljocaj. Extracts of recorded performance by New York City Ballet, Season 2009 at David K. Hoch Theater, New York. (Accessed: 25 November 2009).
- La Stravaganza* (1997) chor. Preljocaj. [Recording of live performance] Performed by the New York City Ballet at the New York State Theater, New York on 22 May 1996, lodged at the New York Public Library.
- Larmes Blanche* (1985, 1997, 2008) chor. Preljocaj. Extracts of recorded performance by Ballet Preljocaj, Season 2008–2009 at Pavillion Noire, Aix-en-Provence. Available at: <http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/portrait-angelin-preljocaj-ina-1987> (Accessed 23 November 2009).
- Le Parc* (1994) chor. Preljocaj. Dir. Gall, H.R. [Commercial DVD of recorded performance] Performed by Paris Opéra Ballet and produced by Telmondis.
- Le Songe de Médée* (2004) chor. Preljocaj. Dir. unknown [TV Broadcast of recorded performance] with members of the Paris Opéra Ballet; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 27 December 2003.
- Le Spectre de la Rose* (1993) chor. Preljocaj. Extracts from *Musique au Coeur, Angelin Preljocaj et les Ballets Russes, INA* (1993); TV Broadcast TV2 (France). Available at: <http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/musiques-au-coeur-angelin-preljocaj-et-les-ballets-russes-ina-1993> (Accessed: 25 November 2009).
- Les Noces* (1964) chor. Bronislava Nijinska. Performed by Royal Ballet. Recorded performance in *Firebird & Les Noces* (2001) DVD directed by Ross MacGibbon.
- Les Noces*, restaged by Irina Nijinska after B. Nijinska. Performed by Paris Opéra Ballet. Recorded performance at Palais Garnier as part of *Paris Opéra Ballet Dances Diaghilev* (1993) commercial VHS.

- Les Noces*, restaged by Irina Nijinska after B. Nijinska. Performed by Ballets de L'Opéra National de Bordeaux. Recorded at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 13 April 2007.
- Les Noces* (1965) chor. Robbins. [Recording of live performance] Performed by American Ballet Theater at the New York State Theater, New York in Season 1975–1976, lodged at the New York Public Library.
- Les Noces* (1976) chor. Lar Lubovitch. Performed by Lar Lubovitch Dance Company. Recorded performance at the Roundabout Stage One Theater, New York, on 25 February 1977.
- Les Noces* (2002) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto at Teatro Regio, Parma (Italy) on 24 May 2005, lodged at the Archives, Aterballetto.
- Les Noces* (2002) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto at Brooklyn Academy of Music (New York) as part of the Next Wave Festival (2005) on 20 June 2005, lodged at the Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library.
- Les Noces* (2002) chor. Mauro Bigonzetti. Performed by Aterballetto. Recorded performance at Teatro Regio, Parma (Italy) on 9 November 2005.
- Les Noces* (2002) chor. Mauro Bigonzetti. Performed by Aterballetto. Recorded performance at Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York as part of the Next Wave Festival (2005) recorded on 20 November 2005.
- Les Noces* (Maillot, 2003) chor. J.C. Maillot. Performed by Les Ballet Monte-Carlo. Recorded performance at Monaco, 11 December 2003. Available as loaned copy.
- Les Noces* (2003) chor. Michael Parmenter. Performed by Royal New Zealand Ballet. Recording of live performance in Melbourne (Australia) 2006. Available as loaned copy.
- Les Noces* (2005) chor. Pascal Rioult. Performed by Rioult. Recorded performance available at: [http://www.prdance.org/rep\\_noces.htm](http://www.prdance.org/rep_noces.htm) (Accessed: 9 November 2008).
- Les Noces* (2007) chor. Collins. Recording of live performance by Opera North in May 2007, available at Opera North Archives.
- Les Noces* (2007) chor. Collins. Performed by Opera North. Recorded at Leeds Grand Opera House (Leeds) on 4 May 2007.
- Los Picadores* (2007) chor. Javier de Frutos. Performed by Phoenix Dance Theatre. Recorded performance at Sadler's Wells (London), June 2007.
- Preljocaj, A. & Robinson, J. (1997). *In Conversation with Angelin Preljocaj* (Ballet Preljocaj:



*Annonciation, Noces*), post-performance talk at Joyce Theater, New York on 16 April 1997.

*MC 14-22* (2001) Dir. unknown, chor. Preljocaj. [TV Broadcast of recorded performance] with members of the Paris Opéra Ballet; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 27 December 2003.

*Mediterranea* (1993) chor. Bigonzetti. [TV Broadcast of recorded performance] With members of La Scala Ballet Milan; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 29 September 2009.

*Musique au Coeur, Angelin Preljocaj et les Ballets Russes, INA* (1993) chor. Preljocaj. Online posting TV Broadcast TV2 (France). Available at: <http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/musiques-au-coeur-angelin-preljocaj-et-les-ballets-russes-ina-1993>. (Accessed: 25 November 2009).

*Mythical hunters* (1965) chor. Tetley. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto as part of triple bill (*Parade, Mythical hunters, Twilight*) at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 1 July 1986, lodged at the Archives, Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia.

*Noces* (1991) Dir. unknown, chor. Preljocaj. (1989) [TV Broadcast of recorded performance] With members of Compagnie Preljocaj; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 27 February 1995.

*Noces* (1989) chor. Preljocaj. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Ballet Preljocaj, double bill on 14 October 1991 at Teatro Romolo Valli, lodged at the Archives, Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia.

*Noces* (1989) chor. Preljocaj. Performed by Ballet Preljocaj. Recorded performance at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 3 March 1994.

*Noces* (1989) chor. Preljocaj. Performed by Ballet Preljocaj. Recorded performance at Joyce Theater, New York on 16 April 1997.

*Noces* (1989) chor. Angelin Preljocaj. Performed by Ballet Preljocaj. Recorded staging in George Pompidou Centre; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta), date unknown.

*Omaggio a Bach* (2000) Dir. Morell, A., chor. Bigonzetti. Extracts from entry for Dance Films Association's 34th annual Dance on Camera Festival (2006), lodged at the Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library.

*On the traces of Merce Cunningham* (2009) [TV broadcast] Dir. Plouchard, J. M., with Angelin Preljocaj, Jean-Claude Gallotta and recorded interviews with Cunningham; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 21 December 2009.

*Parade* (1917) chor. Massine, restaged by Della Pietra, S. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto as part of triple bill (*Parade, Mythical hunters, Twilight*) at

Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 1 July 1986, lodged at the Archives, Teatro Romolo Valli.

*Pitture per arche* (1992) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 19 June 1992, lodged at the Archives, Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia.

*Parade* (1993) chor. Preljocaj. [Online posting of extracts] Extracts from *Musique au Coeur, Angelin Preljocaj et les Ballets Russes, INA* (1993); TV Broadcast TV2 (France) posted online. Available at: <http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/musiques-au-coeur-angelin-preljocaj-et-les-ballets-russes-ina-1993> (Accessed: 25 November 2009)

*Pression* (1994) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 13 June 2001, lodged at the Archives, Aterballetto.

*Prova con Mozart* (1991) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 2 July 1991, lodged at the Archives, Teatro Romolo Valli.

*Romeo et Juliet* (1990) chor. Preljocaj. [TV Broadcast of recorded performance] With members of Lyon Opéra Ballet; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 16 April 1996.

*Romeo and Juliet* (2006) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 20 May 2006, lodged at the Archives, Aterballetto.

*Rossini Cards* (2004) Dir. Morell, A., chor. Bigonzetti. Extracts from entry for Dance Films Association's 34th annual Dance on Camera Festival (2006), lodged at the Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library.

*Sacre du Printemps* (2001) chor. Preljocaj. Extracts from *Helikopter/Sacre du Printemps, INA*, 2001. Available at: <http://www.idocpreljocaj.org/doc/audiovisuel/helikopter-le-sacre-du-printemps-ina-2001> (Accessed: 23 November 2009)

*Sacre du Printemps* (2001) chor. Preljocaj. [TV Broadcast of extracts of recorded performance] With members of Ballet Preljocaj; televised on Mezzo TV (Malta) on 25 October 2009.

*Sacre du Printemps* (2001) chor. Preljocaj. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Ballet Preljocaj double bill (*Helikopter & Sacre du Printemps*) on 27 November 2001 at Teatro Romolo Valli, lodged at the Archives, Reggio Emilia.

*Sei in Movimento* (1991) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 16 January 1991, lodged at the Archives, Teatro Romolo Valli.

- Svadebka* (1982) chor. Jiří Kylián. Performed by Nederlands Dans Theater. Recorded performance televised on Rai Uno (Italy), date unknown.
- Turnpike* (1993) chor. Bigonzetti. [Online posting of recorded performance] Extracts performed by *Balletto di Toscana*. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQDiRnDLeY>. (Accessed: 25 November 2009).
- Twilight* (1972) chor. Van Manen. [Recording of live performance] Performed by Aterballetto as part of triple bill (*Parade, Mythical hunters, Twilight*) at Teatro Romolo Valli, Reggio Emilia (Italy) on 1 July 1986, lodged at the Archives, Teatro Romolo Valli.
- Vertigo* (2006) chor. Bigonzetti. [Online posting of recorded performance] Extracts performed by Diana Vishneva and Marcelo Gomes at the Kremlin Palace, Moscow (2010). Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQ1ZjSCdAGQ> (Accessed: 13 April 2012).
- WAM* (2005) chor. Bigonzetti. [Online posting of recorded performance] Extracts performed by Aterballetto. Available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2jYZLMrkXU> (Accessed: 25 November 2009).
- X.N. Tricities* (1994) chor. Bigonzetti. [Recording of rehearsal] Performed by English National Ballet at Jay Mews, Kensington (London) on unknown date, lodged at the Archives, ENB.

### Photographs

- Les Noces* (1952) chor. Cunningham [Photographs] includes Cunningham, Charlip and students of Brandeis College. Photographs loaned by Lou Lindauer (former student of Brandeis, 1952).