

REAL CREATIVE by Nadine Thouin

But certainly for the present age, which prefers the sign to the thing signified, the copy to the original, representation to reality, the appearance to the essence... illusion only is sacred, truth profane. Nay, sacredness is held to be enhanced in proportion as truth decreases and illusion increases, so that the highest degree of illusion comes to be the highest degree of sacredness.

Feuerbach - Preface to the second edition of *The Essence of Christianity*, 1843

Introduction:

This paper on the topic of Aesthetics & Choreography/Creative Works will explore the following points:

- **What is “Real” Creativity:** How creativity affects our lives, its goal and the role of the artist through creativity.
- **How Our Body as a Whole, Creates and Acts to Communicate:** How we teach and use dance choreography/ body language - our inter-relation, the internal/external and its connection to body language.
- **The Role of Creativity Action – Reaction:** The catalyst of communication between the artist and the spectators.
- **Creativity and the Business of Art:** Being a part of the creation/ from an individual to a global point of view.
- **Returning to the Source:** Research in body language to open communication.

What is “Real” Creativity:

Creativity is in all things that enclose the truth of life. It is in each of us from birth and becomes more personalized through the development of our existence. Creativity exists in the present moment and as such it allow us to escape time. Creativity constantly affects our lives as it is a part of us, as we are ourselves creators. It is linked through each of our actions. It stems from the urge to discover the unknown, the intangible. It open the conscience to help understand that which is invisible. The autonomy of mankind determines ones need to create, which is the driving force of the action, whether it be on a personal basis, or on a global scale, the realization of these experiences created, must be transmitted and received (action-reaction) to exist.

The artist’s role is to be a catalyst who sets off an interaction with the world. An artist has the power to mirror society, rousing and stirring our emotions. The truth of art driven by the creativity of artists serves as a voice, a guide, and the direction of humanity along the road to its destiny.

How Our Body as a Whole, Creates and Acts to Communicate:

Our ways to walk, sit, the tone of our voice, our eyes, all speak for themselves. The creativity of the body is unlimited but can sometimes be complex. “To live”, this creativity requires the abandonment of one's self and must be free of linear thought in order to transmit.

We need to live first of all; to believe in what makes us live and that something makes us live – to believe that whatever is produced from the mysterious depths of ourselves need not forever haunt us as an exclusively digestive concern.

Antonin Artaud – preface *The Theater and Culture of the Theater and it's Double*, 1938

INTER-RELATION – Everything is linked. All forms of art are interconnected, like life itself. The air is related to the sea, the sea to the earth, the earth to the creatures which inhabit it, and so forth. Nothing is self sufficient. We are constantly in search of this “inter-relation” whether it be it the arts, or other, human beings search association, therefore search to communicate. In exchange, this desire of association and communication, ceases to exist in the event that the goal becomes individual profit.

The interdisciplinary movement of the arts is today a reflection of this need of interconnectivity. Filmed images mix with dance, dance with theater, theater with visual arts, etc. As such, the idea is not simply to assemble these disciplines as separate “entities”, but to attain a fusion between them. In other words, before communication can be possible, these combined disciplines must first know each other mutually. By abstraction of this knowledge, the action-reaction is not provoked, therefore communication will not take place.

THE BODY INTERNAL & EXTERNAL – All living things are linked to a body. This is the delimitation of the frontiers between the “internal” and the “external”. The internal represents us as an individual “human” and the exterior as an image recreated through ourselves “the World”. We should attempt to better understand this body of “internal” and “external”, as it is the representation of the self. The form of this body is determined by the inner-personal development of the individual. The image that is representative of the world is determined by the development of our belonging as people to that image. In the domain of dance this relation to the “body”, the stem of “body language”, plays a significant role in the face of discovery of the non-discovered, this is to say that which we have not yet discovered of ourselves. People are searching more and more to know each other, as we are separated more and more from the self. We vehiculate in the representation recreated from reality, seduced by the sensational (the body as the temple of the senses), the image of pleasure. Through my teaching practices, I have come to realize that many people, whether from the domain of the arts, or other, are imprisoned in a “body” of the unknown, therefore unknown to themselves and the reality of the rest of the world. I also observed that many are no longer conscious of their breathing, therefore disconnected from their own source of life. It is in this context that I ask the following question: what is our connection as individuals to universal creation?

BODY LANGUAGE – Expression through the body is the all revealing truth. The language of the body is without limits in its abstraction from spoken words. Therefore instilling by its presence. The body is the liberator of mental blockage which affects our development. A free expression of this fashion helps the circulation of life by diffusing in order to generate new life. In the case of the practice of dance, one may deepen this knowledge through one's own practice. One must first discipline the urges of the body and mind (meditation is a perfect example of this mastery) in order to completely access the numerous possibilities of the expression of ones instrument the “body”. From this realization one may then gain access to the dimension of creativity. In opposition, it remains in the form of the known.

The scholastic techniques of dance, regardless of its origins or style, serve as an accompaniment for self discovery as a dancer. The diversity of acquired knowledge, in turn, will serve the diversity of the subject to transmit. The inter-personal development of a dancers own gesture is essential. This would allow for more rapid progression, as the dancer is engaged in the process of discovery. The authenticity and originality of creativity hails from a personal development using one's own references in the goal

of communicating. The art of “observation” is crucial in the theory of communication by the body before being able to cultivate a rich lecture.

Just as supremacy passed from immediate artistic practice to theory as such so now theory cedes before self-begetting, synthetic, post-theoretical praxis whose unprecedented vocation is to be the basic and truth of art as well as of philosophy.

August Von Cieszkowski - Prolegomena to a Historiosophy, 1838

The Role of Creativity Action – Reaction:

Creativity is the unknown and the unknown make us feel insecure. Attached to the model of formality and cognizance, how could we be receptive to creativity if we are blind in the spectacle of the mass media of “images” that is today's reality?

The images detached from every aspect of life merge into a common stream in which the unity of that life can no longer be recovered. Fragmented views of reality regroup themselves into a new unity as a separate pseudo-world that can only be looked at. The specialization of images where even the deceivers are deceived. The spectacle is a concrete inversion of life, an autonomous movement of the nonliving.

Guy Debord - Society of the Spectacle, 1967

During 2003, I was invited to the Shanghai International Arts Festival, where a piece I directed and choreographed was subject of an open discussion with the audience after the representation. *Bone* was the first co-production in modern dance between Canada and China.

One of the question was asked by a man; “After seeing your show I felt very confused. How is it that a cultivated man like myself, who knows the arts of Michael Angelo, Leonardo de Vinci, Van Gaugh...” He proceeds with a long enumeration of the geniuses of past centuries. “...cannot see the beauty in your work, a beauty which I could recognize in their's”.

At the time I could not understand Mandarin, so during his question I was able to profit from this time dedicated to the observation of his person. I watch as the man expressed himself. I observed his breathing, the tone of his voice, the expressions of his face, the energy and movement of his body, etc. Before the translation of his question began, I possessed my answer. I was tempted to respond that not all the greats to which he made reference were appreciated or understood during their time, some passing away in isolation and misery. However, I chose to respond by another question. I asked him if it was the first time he had seen a modern dance performance. His response was an obvious, yes. This man had participated at the premier and felt uncomfortable in this unknown.

The same night, a women came back stage to speak to me. Crying and trembling, she looked far more confused than the other man. She told me, what she saw in that piece, changed her life.

These were two examples of how the action-reaction provoked and challenged the audience. One spectator was challenged because of what he knew, hence his comparison. The second was possibly in question of the unknown and that moment helped her to make sense of it, hence her emotional reaction.

The action-reaction must “exist” before communication can occur. Whether it be positive or negative, confused or clear, it is without importance, as long as the action-reaction takes place. Provoking reflection accentuates the action-reaction of communication, therefore engenders exchange and diversity of thought. That which drives us to innovate.

Can we recognize beauty in the unknown?
What do we know about the unknown?

Known : The known is secure like a shield. We use the known as the standard to define the external body. When what is known to us is challenged, or different from our standards, one may often feel insecure. The known leads to expectation, which can become disappointment. Knowing is good, but knowledge often forgets that the unknown still has all the answers, hence the known will always remain the predecessor of the unknown.

Unknown : The unknown has terrified and amazed people since the dawn of our existence. It is the source of all creativity. The unknown is in the past, present and future, containing both positive and negative outcomes. It is how we perceive and use the unknown which will ultimately determined the results.

Creativity and the Business of Art:

We live today in a world of extreme rapidity, which leaves little room for attention hence observation. How does this affect our development and our actions as creators? How can we preserve fidelity towards our creativity in a global movement of overproduction?

Just as thought and reflexion surpassed fine arts so the deed and social activity will now outstrip true philosophy. Consequently, at this very moment consciousness hastens to penetrate everything and, hardly having attained itself, now seeks to precipitate the deed.

August Von Cieszkowski - Prolegomena to a Historiosophy, 1838

The term creativity, originality, or even innovation is today ever so present in our discussions, whether it be politics, economy, social or cultural. Is it perhaps because in reality it is a commodity that is rare. The networks of communication (ex: YouTube, Facebook, Linked-In, Twitter, etc) flourish from all around. Is it perhaps because we have never been so alone. Through the research for identity, we search to associate with the whole. Being a part of the process automatically generates content.

Secure= Recipe : This is the most common scenario today, the reasons for which business favors the copy. As world falls further into the bottomless pit of greed and comfort, those who hold an established practice have a choice to make. Continued innovation at the risk of criticism or continue the pattern that

has defined their success. Profit does not favor creativity, and in opposition, creativity does not favor profit. Hollywood, the American film idol, is a perfect example of repetitive sequences and business models, whose sole aim is profit, although it is packaged as “film” which itself is a valid art form. Hollywood uses artists to build the breathtaking images we see, yet the final product itself is often an empty relic of recycled ideas, that once disassembled often reeks of stale propaganda and the sale of national image. The business of art is the same, and was in fact the precursor of the Hollywood syndrome, favoring networking, development, and profit, over creativity, reflection, and social advancement.

Risk= Advancement : Just as the first arthropods made their initial journey on to land, risking their lives in the goal of survival, and the search for abundance. These tiny creatures paved the way for the rest of the terrestrial world as we know it today. If they had no initiative, or the desire to feed had already been satiated, would we even exist? If we refuse to take risks and deny access to the unknown does it mean we will forever spin in a vortex of redundant profit cycles, grinding positive social evolution to a halt.

The desire to serve collectivity is moving towards the desire to serve individuality. Conversely if we serve this collectivity we must generate its diversity. We know this diversity is provoked in a large part by creativity and it is solely by its abundance that the global market will fructify. Will we nurture this creativity, which necessitates time and reflection, in a world racing at an extreme pace. Our time favors the copy. It demands little effort and sells quickly. Where is the originality? Have we forgot? Without originality how can we maintain creativity, diversity and social advancement.

That which we consume, no longer has the time to be absorbed.

The society which rests on modern industry is not accidentally or superficially spectacular, it is “fundamentally spectaclist”. In the spectacle, which is the image of the ruling economy, the goal is nothing, development everything. The spectacle aims at nothing other than itself.

Guy Debord – Society of the Spectacle, 1967

Return to the Source:

Before the invention of spoken languages, what was our primary method of communication? Body language was our original form of communication. We later invented spoken languages in order to facilitate communication. However in doing so we also neglected body language, and have since forgot how to speak with it. We gained knowledge of speech, but lost that of the body. When we realize the validity of unspoken knowledge, we will have reunited two halves of the whole.

We are vertically connected to the earth through our roots and origins (identity, traditions and culture). By fusing all of our mediums of expression and by liberating the mind of thought and judgment, this trance of the present moment is possible and exists.

Through the abstraction of the external distraction (image) an internal rebirth of ourselves would permit a rediscovery of the self, therefore rediscovering our connection to the world. An essential return to the search for unity.

Body language is a powerful, unlimited, universal language. Silence, for example, is a great communicator which opens the dimension of the unsaid, and reveals the unrevealed. Would it not be interesting to be able to read inside the beings around us, to be able to communicate between each other without worrying about cultural barriers and linguistics. Would it not be interesting to compare the complexity of the psyche through the voice of observation of corporal expressions and energies as a whole. Our time is nearing an apogee of distraction. Would it not be beneficial for humanity to take time for reflection in the goal to rediscover itself. Could we today imagine a return to the language of silence? In other words, to body language.

Conclusion:

Mankind is in search of the things it does not possess. We live in a duality of true and false, reality and illusion, becoming evermore difficult to discern. The recreated representation of reality separates us from the inter connection of universal creation. Searching in the past and the future the provenance of our origins and of our destiny, we are distancing us from ourselves, as we are not acting in the present moment. Our body being the frontier between the dimension of the non-tangible and ourselves, must serve as a passage to gain access to knowledge. I believe this openness, will provoke the unique equilibrium of life, that is to say the harmony between all things.