

Cristina Caprioli

ONCE OVER TIME – a retrospective



Additional context: “Haze”

Tanz im August is devoting a major retrospective to the Stockholm-based choreographer Cristina Caprioli, whose life-long commitment to dancing has consistently informed, influenced and rearranged the discourse of contemporary choreography, particularly in the Nordic countries. As a retrospective, “ONCE OVER TIME” draws on over 22 works from 2002 to the present day and includes performances and one concert by 22 artistic collaborators.

At HAU3, in the installation “partial haze”, a vertical sheet comprised of thin threads of fishing line is strung across the auditorium. Behind the haze, “rigor” is performed by two plus two female dancers. After the performance, the audience is invited to stay for informal “conversations” on the doing and undoing of choreography. Each evening closes with the performance “In Time Over Time”.

The text below, written by Caprioli, complements the evening program for “Haze” with additional context for and insight into the works brought to display.

ONCE OVER TIME | HAZE

If you want to think, or dance for that matter, you better find the proper place for thinking, and dancing too much light might be disturbing, wide open views very distracting personally, I prefer confined spaces with poor sight and a white noise overtone

there you might get on dealing with complexity, in an orderly manner at best running things on parallel lanes even better if on thin threads tracing parallel lanes

*all this will confine your vision
split each thought apart, shred each move into pieces
I find that quite useful
to look ahead through a gap
looking at things from a narrow interstice
besides*

*what a pleasure it is to look from behind
best of all, to get to see the thinnest thickness itself
that which runs between you and the rest of the world
safe and reckless you may dance, and think*

HAZE promotes the thin threading of choreography, suggesting rigor in partial sight as the graphing dancing of precisely performed uncharted moves

HAZE unfolds in four sceneries, the vertical stillness of partial haze, the dancing thrill of rigor, the open field of conversations, and the ‘hands on the table’ of In time over time.



PARTIAL HAZE

Several miles of thin thread weave across the space, one thread after the next, again and again, until it has spun a vertical haze that splits the space in two. Like a warp drive that bends time around a spaceship, the haze bends the space inwards and outwards. Forcing perception to curve into many directions. Audiences may try to avoid the haze (what a shame...). Better for them to take advantage of the limitation and widen their gaze.

Dancing will occur, encounters will occur, despite the haze, thanks to the haze.

Partial haze is a sound image that vibrates imperceptibly, a white noise fantasy, a place within, an intrusion, a low key tonality.

First installed as a horizontal 'flat haze' in Summer 2019 in the Hall in Stockholm Farsta, cancelled as an outdoor installation at Wanås in Knislinge in 2020, vertically rearranged in Spring 2021 at Marabouparken in Sundbyberg and now here at HAU3, the haze is to return to its horizontal flatness in Summer 2023 at MDT in Stockholm.

RIGOR

Rigor and haze by no means stand in opposition, quite the contrary, they are each other's condition. At least in my understanding of dancing. Namely as research-oriented work.

Rigor in research, in qualitative terms, is a way to establish confidence in the findings of a research study. It allows the researcher to establish consistency in the methods used over time. Rigor may be defined as 'a process of adhering absolutely to certain constraints, or the practice of maintaining strict consistency with certain predefined parameters.' In science and research, rigor means to be exact, careful, precise, and controlled. Along with that, rigor requires honesty and an unbiased approach to performing research. There is no science without rigor. No art without rigor... and haze.

Haze is a slight obscuration of the lower atmosphere, caused by fine suspended particles. Haze also means a state of mental confusion. If someone is in a haze, they are not thinking clearly or not really noticing what is happening around them. Hazing can be a way of initiation, and to drive an animal hands-on, such as a horse from his horseback. Mark my words, when it comes to dancing, certainly, all the above is a necessity. More so when dwelling choreography.

Structure, consistency, evidence, madness, abandonment, all stand at the core of **very very** (2006), and **of my lips (from speaking)** (2002), two choreographies, which testify for over time consistency.

very very

Sharp and speedy, two dancers spin themselves out of conventions. Vortex unleashed, very very is a conceptually driven choreography which claim the upright condition of the dancer/feminine figure and her narrow territory. Via a study of the spiral, both physically and metaphorically. Ordered in minimalistic terms, highly compressed, this choreography moves over two parallel lanes, always divided, only in depth, as if horizontality wasn't an option. Also, two lanes tightly overlapping, spiraling inwards, outwards, crossing different planes. Two female dancers moving as one, one choreography splitting in two. Gazing in depth, vertically. This piece is a scientific study, and a technically advanced achievement, a celebration of the dancer as 'machinery' in consistent emotional overcharge. Control and unconsciousness at once. Science and art intertwined.

Dancers: Annika Hyvärinen and Kristine Slettevold

Music: alva noto and Ryoji Ikeda

Premiered at Dansens Hus Stockholm 2006, rephrased in 2007, the piece has been performed in München, Umeå and Gothenburg. Resumed fall 2021, it is now re-presented as fully current.



my lips (from speaking)

my lips (from speaking) mimic the behavior of animals, suggesting dancing by no means fits spoken language, rather needs the ultra-human polyglot to speak its form forth by. Cinematically structured, the piece slides from one image to the next in a both linear and discontinuous manner, each move standing for the footage and choreography for the montage. Methodical, unaffected, all dancing is highly edited, contained, constricted. Audiences come and go, eat, and drink, stare at two cyber-rabbits, envy a bullfinch. All the while some lions gaze over the Savanna, horses browse in erratic hybrids. Male guests hold onto a fence. Marilyn Monroe sings a tune. Who is speaking and what is being told remains uncharted, no linear narrative is provided, everyone perceives more than something.

Here at HAU3, only one excerpt from my lips (from speaking) is shown, namely the sequence '666 shifts' performed on the floor by two female dancers.

Dancers: Johanna Klint, Morgane Nicol

First performed at Kulturhuset in Stockholm 2002, restaged at Dunkers Helsingborg 2004, set on the GöteborgsOperans Danskompani 2005, my lips (from speaking) is now recognized as a paradigm shift in cc's choreographic journey.

Appurtenant text (Cristina Caprioli, December 2002)

my lips (*from speaking*)'s concerns are language and excess. Plethora and at the same time forced reduction, my lips moves between mimesis and abstraction in continuous series of a-symmetrical, overlapping displacements (666), words (129), simulated nudity, aggression and vulnerability. Speed, exclusions, and precise references to an original but also total absence of originals, sequences without a beginning, middle or end, everything simultaneously and nothing secondary.

my lips (*from speaking*) segregate the body from ordinary language, and constraints it into limited flat surfaces, limited territories in which dancing is, only allowed to travel between determined points, from one point to the next, from one cluster to the next. Then again, the body knows how to resist its own constraint, by interrupting motion, restraining flow, rearrange texture and contain structure. Methodically and with meticulous precision, the body constructs a network of self-sufficient semantic systems, auto-poetic syntactic structures whereby it gains access to a non-idealized image of self. The dancing body formulates a kind of poetics of necessity, also topography of time, which maps out space not in geometrical/topographical terms, but rather by the employment of a-rhythmical patterns, syntactically, linguistically strictly ordered yet foreign. Series of details, very short curves, corners, angles, accents, apostrophes, question-marks, and words, all keep distributing themselves a-synchronously in the body, disregarding spatial fences or normative chronology.

Mimesis as practice of identification, abductive constructions as practice of singularization. With focus firmly directed towards punctuation, the dancer dwells her body and its own surrounding.

This choreography uses cinematic editing methods to transform space and imagery into a kind of chrono-photographic (*), artificially constructed live-animation. Built upon double surfaced checkered fabric, my lips forces movement (extension in space) first into geometry and then into fictional timely structures: rhythms and a-rhythms (**). To achieve these two transformations, the piece works with the dancer as a highly specialized technological body/measuring/machine. The choreographed body functions here as the very aesthetics of *techné*, in the *Foucaultian* sense of technologies of self, that is, as the materialization of subjectivity and therefore as the 'speaking' voice able to enact multiplicity, and hospitality.

my lips (from speaking) working modes are compression of space by high-speed derailing and elongated time on the spot. Perfect system for resistance, invented language for critique and seduction, the work proposes the event of choreography as a social event, and as a satisfying display to be shared, as a kind of celebration, provocative, but very generous.

Other times, my lips (from speaking) overindulge in seriality; 3873 toys, 385 magazines, 16 live- & pre-recorded body-clones and 64 micro-speakers, lined-up females at display, squatting low, moving at shoe level, then rabbits and horses, a lion, alligators, a robin, 37 men, Marylyn Monroe and a giraffe moving about in the zoo of the urban space. Audiences are invited to look at close sight. And then she SEES, enthusiastic tourist as she is, probably unaware of the fact that this choreography is forcing her to be an excellent voyeur, a consumer, as well as an obedient inhabitant of public space. Unsettling, yet optimistically soothing, my lips titillate our common (normative) craving for pleasure, then shuffles you around, promises you the 'world', finally refusing to deliver a climatic/succulent peak.



Forced abstraction, queer-speech-act: my lips (from speaking) 'screams' violently without speaking out loud, by displaying signs of pleasure and discontent, by embodying the deviated time of feminine scripture. my lips is a critique of body, sight and space consumerism, of misuse of language, of the segregation of the dancing body to the politicized territory of codified entertainment.

my lips (*from speaking*) is a very private event brought to the public space; an irregular event for measurement and re-definition of both body and architectural/political space; it encourages the regulated body of the dancer, the beholder and the zoological-space of the social environment to walk each other through and SEE as a way of not not SPEAKING.

[*] Chrono-photography, a predecessor of cinematography, was developed with the specific aim to capture and notify movement. It used dance for its experiments and established a new, technological approach to the body and to movement, directly related to dance, which was, at the time, developing into a 'modern' form of expression. Today, when cinema has taken over almost entirely the function of dance as theatrical kinesthetic event, dance is showing a new interest in a cinematographic approach to herself, and here, in the piece my lips, dance is forcing her own 'organic flow' into a chrono-photographic system of notation, which resists and manipulates chronology.

[**] In the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition, number was known as 'arhythmos' and, besides being the tool for counting, 'arhythmos' carried a more elevated meaning as a paradigm of unity in multiplicity. Such an understanding of number, as 'arhythmos', brought the practice of mathematics close to the practice of 'logos', to the deep structure of our experience, the metaphorical articulation of analogies, and dialectical reasoning, in turn to the very nature of syntax or grammar in language.

PS. The work, such as this text leans upon to the writings of Helene Cixous and Luce Irigaray.

CONVERSATIONS

I say, let's talk about points of view. About how things are perceived differently, depending on where we view them from. Let us try a parallax type of view. And take a stand for the (multiple) distance that might bring us closer.

During the conversations, horses and other animals will rest over the field (excerpt from my lips (from speaking)). Audiences and colleagues are invited to chat over serious issues and talk about the weather. Or just listen to the haze, tune into the horses. It will be my pleasure.

Performers/facilitators: Sophie Augot, Philip Berlin, Johanna Klint, Oskar Landström, Cilla Olsen

IN TIME OVER TIME

In time over time departs from the short film In ti, part of the solo performance I Ti. (2001). The film shows two hands dancing over a table. Here, the dancing spreads to several hands, multiplying the fingers and their overlapping trajectories. The piece directly refers to the '666 shifts' sequence from the piece my lips (from speaking) (2000), which concept, shapes, and dynamics stand as models for the finger dance. Both pieces are dealing with time as a series of peak of intensities, irregular, discontinuous, and yet linearly aligned. Both employ dancing as a polymorph, polyglot scripture, specifically, as an *écriture* feminine on the move. Rigorous in concept, illimited in appearance. A strategy of speaking, stating minimal difference in kind. A dancing graphing scripture leaving a ragbag of traces behind.

Performers: Sophie Augot, Annika Hyvärinen, Oskar Landström, Morgane Nicol, Cilla Olsen, Kristine Slettevold

First performed Summer 2021 in the Hall in Stockholm Farsta. Now repeated with the addition of the graphing onto thin paper sheets for the audience to carry home.

Good Luck and Good Night

Buona notte e grazie

Tack för mig

Mrawrrrr...

cc