

## **Kinesthetic Exchanges between Cinematographers and Dancers: A Series of Screendance Interviews**

*Alexander Petit Olivieri*

### **Abstract**

This paper examines the kinesthetic exchanges between camera operators and dancers, and proposes that their creative methodologies and interpersonal relationships can enhance the making of a screendance. I discuss how I discovered this project, unpack the phrase “kinesthetic exchange,” and identify the cinematographer as the co-creator of a film’s kinesthesia. I also discuss screendances that prioritize mobile camera operation, and I speculate that shared kinesthesia between camera and dancer has the potential to kinesthetically and emotionally affect audiences. Included are six interviews of contemporary dance makers and filmmakers that speak to the kinesthetic connection between the dancer and camera operator, and how that relationship enlivens the two-dimensionality of the frame. It is my intention to offer varying perspectives about kinesthetic exchanges between camera operators and dancers, and how their relationships may influence the creative processes for the creation of screendances.

**Keywords:** *camera operation, camera movement, co-creation, collaboration, improvisation, intimacy, intuition, kinesthetic exchange, light, observational practice, personal histories*

### **Preface**

Since my first days as a contemporary dance student, the intangibles of dancing have gripped my attention and garnered my love of dance’s potential for relationship building. Movement scores have guided me through new possibilities in my physical and emotional range on what feels like a cellular level. Sharing these experiences with others reveals the intimacies of space and time that create a knowing of connection. This awareness comes from a feeling of kinesthetic exchange – a shared connection built upon the actions of the body that emerge in a process of co-creation. I am referring to a mutual offering of attention and care on a kinesthetic and haptic level that occurs between dance collaborators. For many of us, we were deprived of the satisfaction of kinesthetic exchange for the first year and a half of the COVID-19 pandemic. There have been moments of grieving where I’ve imagined not returning to dance gatherings and live performance events.

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Dance of any kind can feel both significant and inexplicable, and yet, its importance deserves a supporting argument that defends this creative channel for those compelled to journey through it. Like many dance artists in 2020, I turned to film out of necessity, as it was the only way to simulate an artistically physical and sensorial experience with other people. I started filming myself without any knowledge about how to compose the frame, record sound from the environment, and explore something filmically choreographic other than the physical act of dancing. With more research and practical experience, I recognized something of primal human value inherent in film and relational to dance-making. Film is saturated with opportunities that invite us into collaborative relationships with the rawness of human exchange, intimacy, listening, and care that feels related to co-creating with other dancers. As a maker of screendances, I feel moved when a dance on camera reveals human motion in coincidence with the movement of nature and the elements of a site. I often wonder about different artists' aesthetics and their processing of merging ideas in a creative process. What gets agreed upon between the collaborators of a film's project? Are the dynamics of their collaboration palpable to the audience? And if so, I am also curious about the ways in which cinematographers and dancers can explore and borrow one another's craft to enhance the viewership of an audience. Furthermore, it is my intention to address myriad types of collaborative relationships that camera operators and performers can have, while acknowledging that their roles are not always clearly defined the same way in every collaborative process.

## **Methods**

To better understand the relationship between camera operator and dancer, a relationship that I was experiencing in my own work as a camera operator, I sought to understand how more experienced screendance makers understand and experience kinesthetic collaboration. I interviewed six dance filmmakers with roots in western European contemporary dance traditions and connections to the Seattle arts community because of their manipulation and flow of the camera, kinesthetically working with the dancers, as well as their proximity to my work as a contemporary dancer and filmmaker. These artists, Corrie Befort, Adam Sekuler, Margarita Bali, Babette DeLafayette Pendleton, Benjamin Kasulke and Dayna Hanson exemplify what feels possible when we invest in "cross-pollinating" ideas, moving with a site to inform the body, co-creating a choreographic relationship between camera operator and performer, co-editing with differences of intuition, and trusting in one another's specialty to help actualize an idea. It is important to acknowledge that no one's creative process is the same and these artists' films speak to myriad types of collaborative relationships that exist in the making of screendances. Depending on budget and labor costs, sometimes their roles are multifaceted, economizing by taking on multiple roles at once as performer, director, choreographer, cinematographer, editor and director of photography. These interviews support the notion that these roles are not always clearly

defined the same way in every collaborative project. Depending on the artist and their role in a given screendance, I also refer to camera operators, cinematographers and directors of photography when there is only one person doing all three roles, and when the roles diverge because there is a larger crew. However, for the purposes of this paper, I generally reference the person behind the camera as the camera operator. Furthermore, it is my intention to share insights about their creative processes as a framework to inquire about the kinesthetic exchanges between camera operator and dancer.

I am also drawn to the incorporation of raw humanistic themes that include the shared labor of intimacy and kinesthetic relationships. The level of care and intimacy cultivated by the camera operators and dancers seem to parallel the subject matters of human connection in their films *Rota* by Corrie Befort, *Agua* by Margarita Bali, *36 Hours* by Adam Sekuler, *Swimming in Air while Rooted in Water* by Babette Pendleton, and *A Moving Portrait of Me and My Dad* by Dayna Hanson and Benjamin Kasulke. Thus, I speculate that the movement and intention to connect between the camera operator and the dancer makes these exchanges meaningful on a human level. I also included a close analysis of their films in conjunction with what these artists shared with me about their creative processes. In the end these interviews were a collaborative endeavor that required an investigation of these artists' works and their histories. It also required my presence to tailor questions about camera operation, and I felt the richness of our conversations reflected their generosity and enthusiasm to share their work. The complexity of all these artists' films is a reflection of their kinesthetic exchanges between camera operators and dancers, and they've given me insights about possible methods for future projects and creative endeavors that may be pertinent to other emerging and seasoned scholars and artists in the field of screendance.

### **Kinesthetic Exchanges**

When I dance, I move to connect, and when I film, I connect with the movement. I believe dancers and camera operators have the potential to feel their way through time and space by contributing choreographically to the rhythmic and kinesthetic elements of a film. When I'm filming dancers, my eyes are drawn to the kinetics of the body's expressivity. As I witness a subject carry another human body, I can imagine feeling the shelf that supports their weight, and my brain gives me the impression of what it must feel like to be weightless. I try to complement this sensation with the camera's handheld motion. I am reminded of what it feels like to partner someone and discover the nuances of another person's body, feeling their breath as a signal sensor to track our movements like a telepathic form of non-verbal communication. Together film and dance share a choreographic language inflected with breath, connective tissues and intuitive sensibilities for movement from both dancer and camera operator. When they find

their flow together, they make the two-dimensional space of the frame simulate a three-dimensional viewing of the film.

According to Douglas Rosenberg, “Screendance is the literal construction of a choreography that lives only as it is rendered in either film, video, or digital technologies.”<sup>1</sup> While I agree that screendance only comes into being in digital space, I began to wonder if the focus on the product of screendance failed to recognize the lived bodily experiences during the creation process. During the early stages of filming and production, I suggest that choreography of a screendance enables both digital and real-life spaces to intersect when a camera operator and dancer kinesthetically collaborate in time and space. Ultimately, this kinesthetic exchange has effects on a film’s final edit because the transposition of live movement to moving images illustrates camera operator’s and dancer’s choreographic structure, logic and rhythm. Thus, this co-creative relationship is essential to the making of a screendance and affects the decision-making of a director and editor in post-production, as well as the perceptions of the viewer.

In the year of 2021, I worked as the cinematographer for two projects with vertical dancer Roel Seeber.<sup>2</sup> Vertical Dance is considered a “hybrid dance form that brings together dance and the equipment of rock climbing. . .” such as a rope and harness to access the vertical space of landscapes that vary from mountain ranges to urban skyscrapers.<sup>3</sup> Together we made two films titled *The Boards* and . . . X . . . Holding the camera in my hands, I spent weeks feeling comfortable moving my body and the camera as one entity to track the flight of Roel’s choreography. Discovering ways to distribute the weight of the device against my body, I used the tension of the neck strap, panned the camera on make-shift dollies and mobile tripods, pulled and dragged the camera with towels across the floor, and eventually got my hands on a camera stabilizer, such as the Zhiyun Gimbal. I experimented with the many ways cinematographers get creative with mobile shooting and tried to simulate the swing and flight of the dancer with my body through the camera’s lens. The thrill of filming Roel came from the freedom to compose the frame with my intuition for the mechanics of his movement as he yielded to the rope’s pendulum-swing rigged from the ceiling. Determining where things are situated in the frame, I continually get excited playing with how long it takes for something to reveal itself on camera.

As I began filming, I also drew inspiration from a vertical dance film titled *Dom Svobode*, a screendance choreographed by Iztok Kovač and filmed by Thierry de Mey.<sup>4</sup> This film led me to seminal works filmed by Thierry de Mey that filmically showcase the kinetics of the three-dimensional world. With films such as *One Flat Thing Reproduced*, choreographed by William Forsythe, and *Ma Mère de l’Oye* and *Rosas danst Rosas*, choreographed by Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, I can feel the choreographic relationship between the camera and the dancers.<sup>5</sup> For instance, in part two of *Rosas danst Rosas*, the cast of four dancers activate the

cafeteria space with a kinetic and visceral movement language that gestures at the psyche and sexuality of the female body. All the while, De Mey reveals the intimacies of coy expressions juxtaposed by trucking, panning and dollying the camera around the thrashing gestures of the dancers to evoke the sensation of surveilling and overlooking their institutionalized sitting.<sup>6</sup> De Mey uses his camera as an extension of his body, creating a method of seeing that is unique to him, and it signals my body with curiosity about the specific mover with the camera that he is. The thought of him filming as a form of choreography, engaging with the performers in time and space, deepens my investment in studying the kinetics of his camera movement. I often wish to emulate his embodied connectivity between what he sees and how he tracks the dancers with his camera.

According to the film theories of Sergei Eisenstein, it is our intrinsic knowing that activates an empathetic response and begs for closeness and relatability to the dancing body and the profilmic elements on screen.<sup>7</sup> The way that de Mey works with dance on camera affects me, and I feel moved to dance beyond the cushions of my seat. All of this to say, I do not seek to universalize my response to his kinesthesia as an experience shared by all. I speculate that my proximity to European dance traditions influences my emotional response in ways that I am inclined to elevate his work over other artists. That is to say that my aesthetics in art-making shift as I work to learn and unlearn patterns of seeing that prioritize a body of work over another. Developing a lens that sees difference, reveals the origins of ideas and how they connect to a person's identity. The lens of a screendance narrows the distance between art that we identify with and art that reveals different perspectives about the nuances of history and culture.

For this project, I interviewed cinematographers, Adam Sekuler and Benjamin Kasulke, who respond to the kinesthesia of performers with the movement of their own bodies. It could be said that their films evoke what some scholars in western European contemporary dance and film traditions would say is "kinesthetic empathy." Early 20<sup>th</sup> century dance theorist and critic John Martin coined the term kinesthetic sympathy for "concerning the sense of immediate and unmitigated contact between dancer and viewer."<sup>8</sup> John Martin explains,

When we see a human body moving, we see movement which is potentially produced by any human body and therefore by our own. . . through kinesthetic sympathy we actually reproduce it vicariously in our present muscular experience and awakens such associational connotations as might have been ours if the original movement had been of our own making.<sup>9</sup>

German expressionist choreographer Mary Wigman shared similar sentiments about the creative process for dance in that, "to experience dance creation means absorbing it through the eye and feeling it kinesthetically."<sup>10</sup> Additionally, this term

has been discussed by dance theorists like Kerr Houston, who defines kinesthetic empathy as an inherent aspect of dance performance. Houston elaborates that,

. . . dance is a communicative art form whose effectiveness relies in the large part upon the processes of inner mimicry and neuromuscular association. While seated and apparently passive, members of an audience at a dance performance respond empathetically to the moving figures onstage, and are thus able to understand and even experience the feelings of the dancers. And, in the process, any notional distinction between viewer and performer arguably dissolves.<sup>11</sup>

The same may be said about film, first articulated by Eisenstein, who concluded that “emotional perception is achieved through the motor reproduction of the movements of the actor by the perceiver.”<sup>12</sup>

What these theorists and scholars are speaking to is that neuromuscular connection between brain and body, a chemical occurrence between our eyes and the movement that the body interprets. Susan Foster describes a body-centered place of knowing that allows us to recognize movement as if “it had been of our own making.”<sup>13</sup> However, our emotional connectivity to others through our shared feelings of kinesthesia is a science we don’t quite yet know how to explain. Foster makes it clear, however, that there is a dichotomy of difference and sameness among people when discussing kinesthetic empathy through the lens of culture and personal histories. Dr. Linda Caruso Haviland’s interview with Foster reveals that identifying empathetic associations between things is, “a political decision, the choice to affiliate with either sameness or difference to the exclusion of the other.” And Foster elaborates that the “choice[s] towards sameness, denying difference. . . or towards difference, denying commonality” are never free from bias because they are steeped in historical, social and political influences.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, it is important to name that the movement relationship between camera operator and dancer doesn’t necessarily imply that everyone will have a kinesthetic response that connects them to the work.

I would echo Susan Foster’s theory that our understanding of kinesthetic empathy does have obvious historical, social and political implications, despite existing in the liminal space between the mystery of art and science. This encourages me to discern the ways that film manipulates my eyes to process kinesthesia as something that I am compelled to feel. The importance of noticing what my eye looks for is a practice of attending to the ways I project my own experiences onto a work of art. In doing so, I am equipped to determine the reasons why I kinesthetically empathize with a particular work of screendance over another. It's safe to ask the question, “do I feel more liveness towards a film or a dance made and performed by people who share my same western European culture?”

Dissecting and understanding my positionality, not only reflects my own unconscious biases, but unlocks the door to nuances of intellectual, emotional and kinesthetic responses from people's histories, politics and cultural identities. Screendance not only becomes a way to translate the kinesthetic exchanges of its makers, but it is also a technology that brings us closer to understanding and valuing one another's differences.

Thinking back on my experiences collaborating with Roel Seeber, I have enjoyed myself most letting go of a smaller idea for a bigger opportunity for growth and learning. When I'm vulnerable in moments of not knowing, sharing the work, giving credit, assuming the blame when I'm wrong, and making creative space for my collaborators, I have explored connections between the camera and the body in a way that liberates me with opportunity for possible innovation. Collaboration with Roel has resulted in the creation of a space for play, experimentation, questioning and intimacy. In the same way that dance creates a container for vulnerability and connection, screendance integrates kinesthetic and interpersonal exchanges between dancers and camera operators. Thus, Roel and I created visual and kinesthetic artifacts of what we collectively shared, dialoguing with movement and allowing connectivity to tether us between our specialties like threads sewn into the fabric of our film's creative process.

### **Cinematographer As Co-Creator**

American modern dance choreographer, Merce Cunningham is famous for stating that when the camera and the dancer move in agreement, there is a relationship that, "creates a movement experience not possible on stage."<sup>15</sup> Others have previously commented on the symbiotic relationship between the camera operator and the performer, see for example Paulina Ruiz Carballido's discussion of the dance duet between the camera and the performer in the work of Maya Deren.<sup>16</sup> Hence, it is my intention to discuss the kinesthetic exchange between the camera and the body as it relates to my embodied knowledge and speculate about the ways in which the dynamics between camera operator and performer can enhance the viewer's engagement.

Choreography for both live performance and screendance involves identifying the relationship between the moving body and the camera. According to Douglas Rosenberg, when we migrate dance to the camera space,

one participant - the dancer - moves freely, unencumbered, while the other - the camera operator - is tethered by the camera, a prosthetic image-gathering device that by necessity becomes an extension of the body.<sup>17</sup>

In this way, the camera adapts the choreography to the screen, identifying energy in motion with readiness for the unpredictable. Rosenberg states that

improvisation can often be the start of a screendance where the camera's gaze finds the motion in a way that "diversions and details vie for the eye's attention. . . with an engaged looking at the body that is unique to the device."<sup>18</sup> It becomes exciting when this method of seeing feels like dancing - negotiations and permissions to make choices like following or breaking rules of composition to frame the body in space. Screendance maker Tim Glenn qualifies such ideas about cinematography feeling like a dance by saying that the choreography of the camera is an experience of "adding motion to motion. . . to create a kinetically charged experience for the viewer."<sup>19</sup> Additionally, screendance scholar, Karen Wood concludes that film has its own way of activating a viewer's kinesthetic empathy because of its exploration of specific film techniques.<sup>20</sup> Camera motion, close-up shots, different angles that unflatten the two-dimensionality of an image, as well as choreographic editing contribute to the kinesthetic empathy of the viewer. These techniques are designed to invite the viewer to suspend disbelief so that their perceptions can linger between reality and the imaginary.

The advantage of being a dancer with the ability to choreograph or know the score with which the other dancers perform may also allow the cinematographer to move freely inside of a given structure. This knowing can simplify my engagement in a way that my camera movement supports what I see through the lens. When I feel the rhythm of the steps and sense the performer's energy, the spontaneity of an improvisation doesn't feel as difficult to track, and I rely on my sensibility for movement to translate the performer's energy into something conceivably felt on screen. I appreciate the moments when I feel the impetus to breathe in stillness, follow a new trajectory of focus, and shift my orientation to invite the dancer to feel me as a partner with whom they are performing. I am a dancer holding the camera, performing with the artistic agency to compose a visual image by the design of my eye and body, and I get to play an integral role in the exploration of the dance with the performer.

Choreographer, dancer and filmmaker Eiko Otake claims that, "when the camera's movement and our movement do not relate, the result appears uninteresting. . . in other words, the camera and our bodies should complement each other."<sup>21</sup> Eiko's research as both dancer and filmmaker positions her unique perspective in favor of dancers participating as cinematographers of their own films. Eiko describes her partner Takahashi Koma using a tennis ball under the weight of a board and the camera to achieve the desired height and camera movement off the ground. Eiko recalls, "[Koma] flat on the floor, something that was hard for the other cameraman to do. With a bit of practice, the camera rotated, slid, panned and moved ever so gently but not mechanically."<sup>22</sup> Their research supports this notion that dancers as cinematographers are inclined to make important contributions to the world of dance film, "as they are the artists of motion."<sup>23</sup>



Along the same lines, former professor of dance film at the Ohio State University, Mitchell Rose encourages students to “think like filmmakers,” in order to to “make [their] camera movement more right for the scene and the shot.”<sup>24</sup> In his lectures on physicality for cinematography, he reminds students that their training as dancers puts them at an advantage for understanding the attentiveness and sensitivity necessary for mobile shooting. “You’re all dancers,” he exclaims,

...so, you can walk steadily. Do not plod along because the camera is going to jostle. Instead, soften your knees, soften your elbows, soften your breath and move like a ninja with feathered stops.<sup>25</sup>

From the perspective of choreographer and filmmaker, Dayna Hanson, discusses movement and the inherent sensibilities that put the dancer at an advantage for learning the skills of operating and shooting a camera. She elaborates that,

...getting behind the camera, learning those skills, and also trusting and acknowledging what you bring to shooting dance as a mover is something valuable. As in dancers’ experiences with movement prepare them to understand what is happening inside of the performer’s body.<sup>26</sup>

To support this claim, Dayna reflects on a past experience watching the director of photography belabor a specific shot because he lacked movement sensibilities that connected motion to that of the performer.

[watching] directors of photography do their best to keep up with a dancer and struggle to learn bits from the choreographer to understand and put themselves in close proximity to the action, I’ve learned over the years that as a mover and a shooter, dancers behind the camera can potentially go further than more traditional cinematographers because they can do both.<sup>27</sup>

Canadian filmmaker, Marlene Millar says there is nothing she loves more than going out with her camera and dancers, “moving with them and determining those moments of stillness and movement like choreography for live performance.”<sup>28</sup> She sees it as a beautiful way to merge her two paths as dancer and filmmaker to explore the choreography of camera operation for dance films.

Documentary filmmaker Andy Abrahams Wilson, recounts his experience working with Anna Halprin in his essay, “Breaking the Box: Dancing the Camera with Anna Halprin.” He describes relying, “. . . on a ‘structured improvisation,’ using one camera and no shot list. As such, the filmmaker became part of the intimacy of

the dance, creating his own dance with Halprin as she would with the elements surrounding her.”<sup>29</sup> He elaborates,

In working with Anna, I usually hand-hold the camera, freeing up my own movement, emphasizing subjectivity, and allowing the energy of the dance to move me. After all, dance is the movement of energy through the medium of the body, and film is the movement of light through the medium of the lens. When the camera is in synch with the dance, and the filmer with the dancer, energy breaks through the containers of body, stage, camera, screen. We experience a transcendence, or a flow, when the boundaries of subject and object, experience and consciousness, disappear.<sup>30</sup>

Andy’s agency and freedom to dance as the camera operator is one creative experience that I believe dancers are inclined to succeed at given their embodied knowledge as movers. His mention of flow and transcendence when the boundaries between the viewer and the film dissolve is another way of saying that the spectator interprets the two-dimensional experience of the film with a heightened state of awareness for the three-dimensional performance in real time. From first-hand experience, that is how I discovered that I wanted to pursue concert dance, watching VHS tapes of the American Ballet Theatre and imagining that I was embodying Baryshnikov’s performance state, circling my unfinished basement with a never-ending coda of wishful leaps and turns. Furthermore, I speculate that this sensation of knowing from the body coupled with an invested state of watching creates a scenario where both film and live performance bring people together to witness and translate the humanness of the body into something reachable through the screen.

Ultimately, the collaborative process between cinematographer and performer awakens my feelings of liveness when I am a part of merging both film and dance practices. Admittedly, I entered filmmaking wishing for the technical aspects of the camera and editing not to interrupt the sacred flow, intention, and physical effort of the dancing. Eventually, I realized what was precious to me about dancing could still be present in the production of the film. It would just be communicated through a filmic language of shooting and editing that would not be secondary to the dancing. The creative process instead leaned into a film-forward approach that tapped into the connectivity with my body and the camera as both performer and camera operator.

### **Intuitive Kinesthetic Exchanges**

Corrie Befort’s history of making screendances has brought her into collaborative conversations with cinematographers that inform her on-going research of filmmaking. Her screendances are heavily rooted in her embodied knowledge of

contemporary dance, improvisation and live performance.<sup>31</sup> In my interview with Corrie, she speaks about a dynamic process with her collaborator and cinematographer for her film *Rota*, all the way through its genesis to post-production. She recalls,

I think back to my collaboration with Darrick Borrowski on our film *Rota*, and the way that he and I were both choreographing the scene together, seeing things individually as a dynamic exchange. Because Darrick is an architect and a designer, “the frame” was always a very living thing for him. And as the performer and choreographer I felt like I could exist inside his framing - and I could play off it too. It was an improvisation together - though with very set choreography. When we edited it later together, we’d edit from the standpoint of how he played it in the moment and how I played it in the moment. And looking for the liveliness in that from both of us. Paying attention in that way taught me a lot about choreography and improvisation.<sup>32</sup>

I interpret her collaborative process with Darrick as one that was centered around intuition and experimentation, where the logic of the work supported the methods used to unveil the continuity of the film. The process of filming felt very lively for Corrie, where Darrick’s method of searching for the liveliness in the frame encouraged Corrie to move in a way that enhanced his framing. This kinesthetic exchange allowed Darrick to respond to her movement as she responded to the environment around her. This dynamic exchange allowed the filming process to unfold as an improvisation where listening, sensing, and noticing one another’s part generated a product that felt deeply collaborative.

When she and Darrick co-edited the project, she remembers their dynamic from the shoot day informing the editing. Their collaboration affirmed to her that her participation in the editing room became integral to the actualization of the type of work that interested her. She shares,

I’ve never just handed off footage to somebody and said “edit this please” because I’d feel bad about it. . . I’m not going to expect someone to see the subtle thing that I was hunting for in the footage. Because it’s my hunt. Sean Donovan, an awesome human and very patient editor, once said, “you’ve been making me crazy looking for this weird thing for six months, but now I’m seeing it.”<sup>33</sup>

Corrie mentions that at the computer, they play into their kinesthetic experiences from the shoot day that are visible in the footage and still present in their bodies. Together they make choices that feel integral to their shared experiences of the

work as a way of awakening the two-dimensional space of the film. By intuiting their shared experiences with body and camera, they incorporate choreographic elements of time and space that resonate with their shared sense of co-creation. Sometimes situations create friction between collaborators that get in the way of the desire to chase an interesting idea. In her interview, Corrie described her experiences where the working environments lacked cohesion in the collaborative exchange. This inability to crosspollinate reveals an experience where one artist holds onto an idea so tightly that they diminish the other person's creativity. As a result, not following your intuition may mean sacrificing your voice to move a vision forward that is no longer shared.

In one of Corrie's creative ventures, she describes making a film where the communication between her direction and the work of the cinematographer fell short because his interpretation of the dancers' score wasn't accurate. She shares,

There's a film I made for Suzi Tucker and the Institute for Complex Adaptive Matter called *Slip Cadence* about Alzheimer's disease where there was a kind of breakdown of communication between myself and the camera op., Bronwyn Lewis, who was otherwise doing great work. So, I had to try to capture what I was looking for quickly as the weather was rapidly shifting. I realized that I needed to move with the dancers like I was in a trio with them. I had to wait for the timing and be entirely responsive through knowing the choreography - and let my body guide, support and also somehow stay out of the way. It was a very instructive moment for me and we got the shot we needed in one take.<sup>34</sup>

Essentially, the kinesthetic exchange in this instance would have benefitted from more time integrating the cinematographer into the choreographic process with the dancers. In Corrie's case, this was an impossibility, and when weather patterns alter the plans of a shoot day, sometimes collaboration means setting the ego aside with as much respect for one another's craft as possible with an agreement to switch roles, which in this case was camera operation to ensure that the scene got captured on film.

Subsequently, Corrie's experience operating the camera encouraged her to tap into her intuition as a dancer. Once she had control of the camera, this allowed her to simulate a movement relationship rooted in the concepts of time and space as a duet with the dancer. In this case as well, Corrie's collaborative processes that followed involved the camera person knowing the physical score, "so that they could move and be responsive enough to choreograph with the camera and be in concert with the dancers with live-time choice making."<sup>35</sup> When everyone is working from the same point of reference, artists allow intuition and choice-

making to be a part of filming, and in Corrie's case, this affirmed for her the necessity to direct a cinematographer to dance with the dancer. More specifically, Corrie says that it resembles, "the best kind of contact improv when the camera person physically knows the choreography or the score of the improvisation."<sup>36</sup> This way the camera operator can anticipate the dancer's choices in the frame as a "co-choreographer."<sup>37</sup>

### **Improvisational Kinesthetic Exchanges**

Margarita Bali is an Argentinean award-winning choreographer, screendance and video-installation artist and teacher.<sup>38</sup> Throughout Margarita Bali's career, she has used improvisation as her generative language for story-telling. For her screendance, *Agua*, the production was scheduled for ten days on the coast of Uruguay, where a shipwrecked Chinese merchant vessel laid abandoned and weathered by the waters of its sunken history.<sup>39</sup> Initially, she visited the site by herself and shot footage amidst an incoming storm. The activity of the current created powerful images of waves crashing into the ship's remaining structure. When she went back with the dancers, she subsequently spent five days in the presence of violent winds and undertow shooting and guiding the dancers through improvisational tasks on the ship.

Her own movement and improvisation behind the camera delivered a sense of trepidatious witnessing and explorative play. This improvisational approach to filming left her with a collection of footage that she needed to sift through and study to find a logic and through-line. In the editing room, she realized the first pieces of footage that she took of the storm were compelling enough to logically resolve the film with a message about the forces of nature and the inevitability of impermanence.

While collaborating with dancers, she puts trust in her collaborators with whom she creates an environment that is spacious and open for individual creativity. She reveals that in her early work, she had a history of creating dances by teaching phrases and steps, but realized her work was better served by working "with dancers who can improvise well, otherwise she cannot work because [she] cannot get into their bodies."<sup>40</sup> Her role becomes more about directing them with exercises and time constraints through space.

This is the same level of spaciousness that she offered the composer for the film, Marcelo Moguevsky. She describes editing the film's visual sequence to its entirety before sending it to the composer. This process of editing without the guidance of sound is similar to David Hinton's direction for the editing of *Birds*, for which he is famous for saying, "I began with the idea that you have got to start with the rhythms of the action itself ... purely as visual music first of all, just images and no sound."<sup>41</sup> This film-forward approach was the foundation of Margarita's collaborative exchange with the composer. She credits the reason for

the film's power to the composer who "knew how to build the situation to the end," using the film as a guide to create a soundtrack that supported the visual story-telling. Thus, trusting everyone's intuition and their commitment to their craft helped bring the work together. The process of filmmaking has the potential to be something shared and built upon each persons' specialties shaping an idea. As director, she guides with a vision that speaks to the contributions of her dancers with equal exchange.

When I interviewed Margarita about this film, her memory for details seemed to focus on the process of filming the dancers by herself, editing the film months later and then working with a composer for the first time. She had little recall about the choreographic information she derived with the dancers, considering she wore many hats for this film as the director, editor, cinematographer and choreographer. But her memory of *Agua* told a different story about how invigorated she was filming her dancers with her camera. Her kinesthetic exchanges with the dancers and the incoming storm are portrayed in the footage from the last day of shooting. These moments capture the essence of the storm in a way that is unique to her style of improvisation, and rightfully so, the footage is visceral and evocative of her collaboration with the dancers. She shares,

I know that when I go out with a camera, those actions - I loved that moment. I don't know why, but I like being behind the camera. Also, many times I just work with camera people, but I love to see what is in the frame.<sup>42</sup>

I could hear her enthusiasm about moving with the camera, exploring improvisation with intuition about how to transpose the performance into the two-dimensional frame. In doing so, she involved her kinesthesia in the filming, playing with time and space as a choreography of impulse to improvise with the environment and her dancers. She focused the camera, capturing the dance between the performers, the ocean and the ship. The final moments of the film begin with a long shot of four dancers holding onto the sides of the ship's wreckage. I can sense her weight shifting in the water, stabilizing her camera against her body with the support of her team bracing her from behind. As the waves crash, the four dancers depreciate to three as we feel her camera jolt upward towards the sky, losing focus of the fourth dancer under water. The scene reveals the third dancer getting swept away as the two others retreat from the current and grab hold of the ship for another round of impact. She details, "I also wanted to go in the water, but I had somebody holding me from the back so that I could be sure that I wasn't going to end up completely taken by the waves." We can see the water batter the sides of the ship, destabilizing her posture that ricochets her movement through the lens. Salt water and sea foam pelt the dancers duetting, falling, rolling, gathering and bracing one another for another tussle in the foam. The final duet finds cover against a nook in the ship's side as

the waves crash over them one last time, surrendering in a slow-motion dissolve of the camera's fade to black. Margarita's footage is raw and heart-racing, capturing the strength of the storm and its unforgiving rhythms of retreating and advancing over the sand and everything else in its grips.

### **Kinesthetic Exchanges In Observational Practice**

Adam Sekuler is a filmmaker, curator, educator and programmer based in New Orleans, Louisiana.<sup>43</sup> Kinesthetic exchange for Adam Sekuler involves finding people who understand his approach and what interests him in the filmic process. I realized observational practice is deeply important to Adam, and the quality of his work speaks to his level of specificity that his collaborators must also believe in. When he is behind the camera, Adam always looks for moments that bookend the events in the frame, which informs his kinesthetic approach to filming. He organizes shots and searches for the instance that something begins and ends, and he qualifies that because his sense of time is slower than most screendance filmmakers. He says that he just hasn't "met a lot of folks who really get the level of patience that [he] brings into the work."<sup>44</sup> Along with this observational practice, he mostly works with the constraints of a static frame until he feels compelled to move with the dancer. Every movement is motivated by the focus of investigating the history of sites in his films. He says that his approach allows dancers' movements to interpret the idiosyncrasies and personalities of a site "with an aim at world-building."<sup>45</sup>

Adam discusses that both dance and film work with time, and "how you use that time is important for both dance and film." How you allow that time to unfold in ways that excite and expand the audience's experience is where the commonality between both film and dance align for Adam. He adds that, "...collaborations with dancers stem from the fact that actors tend to work in short and isolated moments, and the dancers [he] works with cherish space and time in the same way that interests [him]." I infer his statement to mean that dancers and other filmmakers work with time differently than he does, and that difference motivates him to work with dancers that explore duration in a way that allows the environment to reveal itself through the body's investigation of that space. Thus, for Adam, kinesthetic exchanges with dancers orbit around the common aesthetics that interest his creative team such as duration, patience, and unearthing the histories of sites as dancers become the animators of the storytelling.

In 2019 Adam worked with a friend named Angelle Hebert on a project in New Orleans titled *36 Hours*.<sup>46</sup> Their collaborative relationship began with a dance film titled *Pontchartrain* back in 2016 that became the spring board for this feature film about Angelle's experience of giving birth. Adam notes that Angelle became inspired by the prospect of filming her dancing in a remote location in the woods in the days leading up to giving birth, while also documenting her labor in the

hospital a few days later. Adam agreed, thinking he was making two separate projects, one that investigated a primal state of pregnancy framed by the elements of a remote Louisianan forest, as well as a short documentary about her process of giving birth. As he started editing, he realized that he, “foolishly thought it would be a two-minute gift to a friend that turned into a feature film.”<sup>47</sup>

The cinematography takes the intimate approach of documentary film while tracking Angelle’s experience of waiting and enduring the side effects of a natural labor. The logic of the film moves to and from Angelle’s intrapartum experience and the Bayou forests. At the start of the film, Adam’s camera uses a static long shot to establish Angelle and her pregnant figure, centering her dancing under a green covered canopy of mature living oaks. While she dances, she moves with a primal and animal physicality that manifests the physical reality of carrying a child in the days leading up to giving birth. Sounds of insects and bristled pines juxtapose the beeps of monitors tracking her and her baby’s heartbeats. In the forest, Adam’s camera begins to move, complementing Angelle’s improvisation and revealing her perspiring body duetting with her unborn baby inside her energetic and epidermal kinesphere. Through the obstruction of trees and foliage, Adam seeks to kinesthetically relate to Angelle’s somatic improvisation, tracking her spine with every flexion and extension. I witness her tap into a realm of the feminine only a woman in labor could share, but my body’s response reveals Angelle’s proximity and engagement with Adam’s camera, and I am brought close enough that I imagine the humidity that dampens her hair, softens her joints and constricts her breath. Their collaboration reveals the resilience of the body and its ability to manifest the psychological and physical work of pregnancy. Eventually, the film cuts back to the hospital and her partner’s therapeutic touch supports Angelle’s endurance through the suspense of her first pregnancy. In the end, Adam’s closeups of the infant’s birth both reflect the raw human experience that I witnessed earlier in Angelle’s dancing, and his role as witness is palpable through his posture and control of the camera throughout these moments of buildup.

Adam co-creates from the perspective of camera operation and adapts the choreography to the screen with his own movement sensibilities. His film techniques are designed to evoke a kinesthetic response in the spectator’s body, and I can feel my brain making sense of what my body feels to elicit the experience of moving from a primal state of being. In the end, Adam’s closeups of Angelle’s performance reflect the raw human experience of her return to a primal state of connection with the earth and her body. I chose to interview him about this work because their co-creation is palpable in Adam’s role as a witness through the emotionality of his posture, breath and control of the camera.

I suspect their artistic relationship allowed Adam to film permissively in this documentary-style approach. His camera movement and editing choices demonstrate support and care towards Angelle’s vulnerability and artistry in the



film. In the hours leading up to a life-risking procedure, her humanity to share the rawness of her primal movement is an offering so profound that I have not seen work of this kind before. Her collaboration with Adam speaks volumes about the level of connectivity shared between her and Adam's kinesthetic exchange and demonstrates artmaking that can transpire when connection and vulnerability become the shared language of a screendance.

### **Kinesthetic Exchanges With Documentary-Style Camera Techniques**

Babette DeLafayette Pendleton creates multidisciplinary work as an artist, choreographer, director, curator-producer, and researcher. At the core of Babette's artwork, emphasis is placed on the liveness of the materials available, the interactions between land, and body - human or animal, and the exploration of solastalgia, the distress caused by environmental changes. Her projects, often shown in chapters, build on one another becoming roving physical collages that are visual narratives involving performance, sculpture, photo, and video.<sup>48</sup>

In my interview with Babette, the subject of kinesthetic exchange between cinematographer and performer extended to her role as director relative to that of the camera person. For *Swimming in Air While Rooted in Water*, Babette's approach to this documentary-style film adopts the ideas of witness to allow the bodies to reveal events of real life as they unfold in relationship to the site. During Babette's collaboration with cinematographer Rodrigo Valenzuela, she describes a way of working that allowed her as the director to be in duet with his control of the camera. For this film, she knew the dance so well that she was, "constantly choreographing the movement of the cinematographer. . . able to anticipate and provide cues as to how [she] wanted the footage to be seen and captured."<sup>49</sup> In essence she moved in concert with Valenzuela, understanding the importance of following his instincts about composition and light passing through his camera lens.

Babette goes on to explain as part of her process, she was interested in exploring a documentary style of filming and then subverting it slightly through the editing process. Part of what is considered to be crucial to documentary filmmaking is "to get familiar with the face [or body] and the environment," to match up their vibes that you can compose and organize through the framing elements like leading lines, the line of thirds, headspace, leading space, etc.<sup>50</sup> Kris Truini, a documentary filmmaker specifies that with regards to camera movement, "it becomes a predicting game of matching what the subject might say [or do] and how that might fit into the story."<sup>51</sup> Even though he isn't talking about dance, the communication of the body can be applied to capturing the dancing subject. He details the benefit to starting the shot with a wider focal length to give the viewer more information to feel comfortable gradually acclimating to the scene, "to place the subjects and to give an understanding of their environment."<sup>52</sup> Babette describes that, "we did things where the movements lasted long enough so we

could start rolling from further away and then approach and come closer to the [dancers].”<sup>53</sup> This method of approaching the dancers from a distance created this feeling of stepping into a world already in motion, where the viewer arrives as a voyeur to witness the relationships building between the dancers and the site. Valenzuela eventually changed focal lengths to get a tighter shot, allowing the camera to witness the intimacies of the movement on the black sand beaches of Washington’s coast. I can sense the fatigue of their bodies’ as they are scraped by the flesh of their partner’s seat on their shoulders. This idea of tightening the frame is not only from the work of the lens, but also from the proximity of the cinematographer’s body to the subject. It is considered to be an effective way to allow the viewer to feel the emotional impacts of the subject, as the scene “becomes more intimate.”<sup>54</sup>

When I asked Babette about how she approaches choreography from the perspective of the camera, she revealed that for this particular project

“the filming for me [was] just filming, and I [wasn’t] interested in choreographing at that moment. That moment, I am capturing what is happening for real. I am not distorting the true effort of what these [dancers] are doing. Or faking it like that thing of filming it from one angle for five seconds, and we’re going to stop, then we’re going to film from this other angle for five seconds. No, for me I wanted to capture what is really happening, but then in the editing I want to choreograph that.”<sup>55</sup>

This informed her choice-making to collect raw footage of the dancers with a lot of breathing room before and after perceived beginnings and endings so that she could make choreographic choices in the editing room.

Although some artists are more inclined to observe the cinematographer work while the camera is rolling, Babette’s approach involved choreographing the movement of the cinematographer from an established place of trust between them. Their working relationship allowed them to achieve her vision with his expertise. Their relationship of director and cinematographer functioned in such a way that their kinesthetic exchange was defined by Babette’s directions for his movement to be an extension of her choreographic instructions. For them this created an opportunity for teaching movement sensibilities to the cinematographer that translated her vision into the making of this film. In exchange, she was able to learn the tricks of the trade from his expertise in shooting the camera.

### **Kinesthetic Exchanges With Light And Personal Histories**

Dayna Hanson is a Seattle-based artist, dance filmmaker, accomplished writer, director, choreographer and educator.<sup>56</sup> Dayna performed and produced *Measure*,

a short film she directed with Gaelen Hanson, which has been considered a seminal work in screendance for its crisp diegetic sound and the measured rhythms of soft-shoe unison between her and performer, John Dixon.<sup>57</sup> During our interview, we discussed her film *A Moving Portrait of Me and My Dad*, which touches on a unique collaboration with her father, Vern, aging with Alzheimer's Disease and cinematographer and friend, Benjamin Kasulke.<sup>58</sup> This portion of the interview reveals the outcome of kinesthetic exchanges that came from deeply personal, artistic and familial relationships.<sup>59</sup>

This film began with her father's practice of Tai Chi, and for many years Vern tried to teach it to her. She admits to "never taking him up on the offer," but she in turn invited him to perform in one of her films.<sup>60</sup> At the early stage of his disease, Tai Chi was one of the things he could still do well. During the film's creative process, Dayna realized that she was unable to teach him movement, and instead, she says, "He did an interpretation of visual images that [she] gave him, with which he moved with serenity and equanimity."<sup>61</sup> His movement juxtaposed her percussive staccato and sharp intensity, restlessly appearing and disappearing in and out of the frame. This is an example of creating space for your partner to access their strengths in a collaboration. A redirection of her choreographic plans, he could instead visualize images to track his body's memory of the physical practice of Tai Chi. She recalls him smoothing the air with his softening impact, moving with her in a loop of shared connection of unison gestures. As personal as the film was to her, this sharing of art between father and daughter exemplifies the type of intimacy that collaboration can inspire in art-making. She says,

When someone is in early stages of illness, and you haven't even developed a language for processing or discussing it as a family, I think one coping mechanism is to imagine that they will live a very long time and that the disease will progress slowly and somehow won't be so bad. Or even that the diagnosis isn't certain and that the person won't die. *A Moving Portrait of Me and My Dad* captures Vern in a clear, authentic, exquisite state—and it also captures my desire to honor and evoke and crystallize our relationship, maybe before the disease began to overtly diminish him.<sup>62</sup>

The personal nature of this work also feels evident in the interaction between light, sound, and camera operation. The music has a driving pulse that is unsettling yet intimate. The electric guitar complements the edges of Vern's fluid and meditative movement against the physically urgent and rhythmic pulse that Dayna signifies as a race-against-time.

Cinematographer and Director of Photography, Benjamin Kasulke discusses his process with Dayna and Vern as "[making] plans to shoot this in one week. The

next weekend, we showed up early in the morning, and we were done in a few hours.”<sup>63</sup> Prior to meeting Dayna, he says,

I never thought I would work with choreographers. I didn't know anything about dance; I don't even know how to classify modern dance. I just knew that I met this person that was making stuff, and we made each other laugh a lot. And she seemed to embrace the ideas I had about how the camera might interact with her movement, and how we could work together to draw the audience's attention, or to just showcase the movement with a still frame as needed and let things play out.<sup>64</sup>

Benjamin's filmic plan of action with Dayna began pragmatically with room for play and exploration. He mentions that when filming set choreography, he often begins filming screendances by setting up a shot, recording everything from head to toe to construct a timecode of choreographic events. This serves as a “script with bookmarks.”<sup>65</sup> As common practice as this may seem, its advantages create space for conversation with his collaborators around isolating specific events for a more three-dimensional illustration of each moment. He says,

There'll be a movement with a hand at two minutes and thirteen seconds, and we need to figure out how that gets shown to the audience. What does that do, and what was the meaning of that? With film, there's ways to break that down. I can't imagine shooting this way without thinking of the camera like a dancer as well.<sup>66</sup>

Benjamin also discusses interacting with the light as a fourth choreographic element of the film. He shares that when he arrived for the day of shooting, he knew he'd be using a primitive video camera, “ ... and knowing that this was a film about Dayna and Vern's relationship, [he] knew that the camera looked good if [he] put lights really far away, pointing, right down the barrel, as in right into the lens.”<sup>67</sup> He says this approach creates two scenarios, “It gives a good kinetic energy when the camera lines up Vern and Dayna with a light deep in the background. And you get a sense of not only the choreographed movement, but there's the extra bonus of the light as part of the choreography.”<sup>68</sup> By embracing the shallow focus from the darkness in the theater, Benjamin incorporated cinematic flairs as a choreographic element, suggesting that,

The flickering may help force an edit if you need to get out of something, elapse time or add an ellipsis and stretch things out. You can use the flares as cut points in a way that you might not be able to do in a narrative scene where two characters are

sitting stationary at a dinner table and you're editing around reactions, natural pauses or blinks.<sup>69</sup>

As the camera movement duets with the light sources, Dayna is framed catching up to the reality of her father's condition. It is as if he's communicating words of comfort and assurance about their togetherness as collaborators and father and daughter. At the end of the film, Dayna and Vern join together in a unison phrase of circular hand gestures that create spheres around their bodies. This image feels symbolic of their connection, and as the camera journeys away and tilts upward, we see them united by a bond that we imagine will last them beyond this realm of borrowed time.

In terms of the film's list of shots, the camera cuts between a static establishing long shot where we see both Vern and Dayna dancing in the wings of a theater, a site for Vern to cross over into Dayna's the realm of expertise as a performer. Closeups with the camera are handheld, evoking uncertainty about time and what tomorrow will bring. When the camera cuts between a series of extreme closeups and medium shots, we follow aspects of Dayna's body that illustrate her wariness in the rhythms of her gestures. Dayna's dancing goes in and out of her own repetitive and percussive phrase work adjacent to her father's slow-moving gestures. The tension between their movement intensifies from Vern's perspective, revealing Dayna through the camera's over-the-shoulder angles paired with the intentional lens flares from the Fresnel lanterns hanging above them.

In the end, the strength of this work lies in Dayna and Vern's intentions to move with Benjamin from a place of shared sensitivity about the weight of Vern's diagnosis. Their kinesthetic exchange reveals all sides of the performers with a gentle and sensitive gaze. Benjamin's camera movement invites me to watch Dayna and her father fixed in the distance, framing the theater space in a way that feels balanced and rich with depth as a metaphor for their relationship. In and around Dayna's gestures, twists of her spine and the sounds of her percussive foot patterns, Benjamin also directs my eyes to Vern's steadiness in the soft bokeh of the frame. The three dimensionality of their movement is revealed by the camera's steady pans, different angles and focal lengths that feels supportive like a third dancer in the space. The camera's directions also feel choreographed to the extent that I imagine Benjamin designing a figure-eight around Dayna and Vern's dancing. Through a kinesthetic exchange, Benjamin's movement narrates the emotionality of Vern's predicament through the undercurves of his steps with soft arrivals and easy departures. Details of Vern's hands carve through space as we catch Dayna running in and out of the frame to pull us into a new thought, taking in Vern's gentle response.

This collaboration resulted in a work that is not only visually compelling both cinematically and kinesthetically, but it reveals something recognizably sacred about what took place that day of filming. The level of intimacy captured by Benjamin's expertise revealed Dayna's aesthetic for authentically raw and vulnerable humanism, as well as Vern's essence as performer and father. This film would serve as a foundational jumping off point for a piece of live performance titled, *We Never Like Talking About the End* that Dayna premiered the following year in 2006. The live work contained a section where Vern enters the space and performs a solo based in his expertise of Tai Chi. He sat on stage, observed the cast and then exited as the rest of the dancers stood still, swinging their arms in circles. Dayna refers to this moment as an important "image" that lives on in her memory. Vern's kinesthesia came back to her in the wake of his death, and she states, "I became aware that I had created a precious, extremely helpful image of him that I could refer to later in my grief over his passing."<sup>70</sup>

This reference that Dayna made about "that image" of Vern stayed with her, and the seeds of this live performance began in the making of *A Moving Portrait of Me and My Dad*. This film would come to represent a kinesthetic exchange between Benjamin, Vern and Dayna that would become a spring board for future collaborations and continued advancement in their respective careers in cinema and screendance. This film not only speaks to the possibility of collaboration between cinematographer and performers, but reveals the outcome of a kinesthetic exchange that generated a work of art from a shared place of connection and personal histories.

## **Conclusion**

Screendance incorporates choreography from both digital editing and the kinesthetic exchanges between camera operators and dancers with a kinesthetically collaborative approach that strengthens interpersonal and creative relationships. The joining of dance and film brings artists of different mediums together, and the magnetism of a screendance's multidisciplinary nature pull us towards the intersection of world-building and human connection. Problem-solving and troubleshooting ideas between the camera and dancer enable collaboration in the presence of our perceived differences. Camera operator and dancer can nurture the seeds of a collaboration with a kinesthetic exchange that merges one another's movement histories and artistic differences into a helix of complexity and possibility.

The evidence that I have presented suggests that kinesthetic exchanges during the filming process may be translated into kinesthetic empathy for viewers, even if the way viewers respond is different depending on their experience, such as a woman who has given birth will respond differently to Adam Sekuler's film *36 hours* than me. Examining my positionality, not only reflects my own unconscious biases, but reveals the nuances of intellectual, emotional and kinesthetic

responses from people's histories, politics and cultural identities. In this way, screendance is a technology that brings us closer to understanding and valuing one another's differences when we examine it through the lens of self-reflection.

Screendance also teaches us that collaboration depends on trusting one another's exploration of knowns and unknowns that involves calculated risk-taking. Together, film and dance share a choreographic language inflected with breath and a flow of beginnings and endings that make the two-dimensional frame simulate a three-dimensional viewing experience of the film. One can integrate the mind and body to move with active attention and grounded sensitivity, supporting the other person's idiosyncrasies and creative spontaneity. With dexterity for listening and feeling each other's movements, both camera operator and dancer can connect and attentively gauge one another's rate of motion to dialogue with creative impulses. This kinesthetic conversation builds a heightened sense of liveness that controls the gears of adaptability in response to what is unpredictable.

Admittedly, I initially thought that, for me, film would be a temporary replacement for live performance, but what I found was a rich creative path for dance-making in a new medium that has all the ingredients of community-building and skill acquisition. It awakens my desires to express, connect and feel communion with others that I missed in 2020 and 2021. In the end, I've acknowledged that film has an artistic expression of its own right that appeals to my desires to collaborate kinesthetically with other artists.

### **Biography**

Alexander Petit Olivieri is an Assistant Professor of Dance at the University of Central Oklahoma. Alexander holds an MFA from the University of Washington in Dance and a BA from Boston College in Theatre Arts & Philosophy. He teaches contemporary dance technique, contemporary dance history, creative dance-making, and screendance. His research interests include pedagogy, screendance, site and place, and modes of collaboration in creative processes. Alexander is also an active contemporary dance choreographer, video artist, and performer in the United States.

email: [apolivieri@gmail.com](mailto:apolivieri@gmail.com)

[www.alexanderpetitolivieri.com](http://www.alexanderpetitolivieri.com)

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1 Rosenberg, 4

2 Roel Seeber is a performer with the Oakland, California - based Vertical Dance Company, Bandaloop.

3 Lawrence, 91

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- 27 ibid
- 28 Marlene Millar, Zoom Interview with Author
- 29 Andy Abrahams Wilson, 233-234
- 30 Andy Abrahams Wilson, 234
- 31 Corrie Befort: As a dance artist working between choreography, visual and textile design, Corrie translates sensation-based ideas into performances, objects, sets, films and scores. Her award-winning films, performances and sets have been presented and commissioned in the United States, Japan and Belgium. She is also a teacher and advocate of inclusive dance practices, and she works with Dance for Parkinson's programs in Seattle and Anacortes, Seattle's Path with Art that supports people recovering from homelessness, addiction and trauma, Seattle Festival of Dance and Improvisation, *Start Where you Are*, Velocity Autism Movement Therapy and Fidalgo Island Elementary School District in Anacortes, Washington.
- 32 Corrie Befort, Zoom Interview with Author
- 33 ibid
- 34 ibid
- 35 ibid
- 36 ibid
- 37 ibid
- 38 Margarita Bali has co-directed with Susana Tambutti, the Argentine contemporary dance company NUCLEODANZA for twenty-five years, touring her choreographic work in over 100 venues in Europe, North and South America, India, Korea and Australia. She also concentrates her interests in the production of multimedia and interactive works, site-

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specific architectural video performances and sculptural video installations for museums, galleries, and alternative performance spaces.

39 Margarita Bali, dir. *Agua*, 1997. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3Y2d-unfm4>

40 Margarita Bali, Zoom Interview with Author

41 McPherson, *Making Video Dance*, 179-180.

42 Margarita Bali, Zoom Interview with Author

43 Screening in forums and film festivals throughout the US and internationally, Adam Sekuler's many alternative films strike a delicate balance between stylization and naturalism, creating a poetic and lyrical form of visual storytelling. He has produced short works for Barry Jenkins, Lisandro Alonso, Josh and Benny Safdie, Valerie Massadian, Amie Siegel, and Joe Swanberg. Recently, he edited Robinson Devor's feature length documentary *Pow Wow*, which premiered at Locarno Film Festival. He holds an MFA in Studio Arts from the University of Colorado, Boulder, he is Founder and Programmer of Radar: Exchanges in Dance Film Frequencies, Associate Director of Zeitgeist Multi-disciplinary Arts Center, and he was Program Director for Northwest Film Forum (Seattle) for 8 years. His work has screened at International Film Festival Rotterdam, Film Society of Lincoln Center, Anthology Film Archives, Walker Art Center, Seattle Art Museum, Northwest Filmmakers Festival, Museum of the Moving Image, and dozens of other venues around the globe.

44 Adam Sekuler, Zoom Interview with Author

45 *ibid*

46 Adam Sekuler, dir. *36 Hours*, 2019. <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/36hours/290503209>

47 Adam Sekuler, Zoom Interview with Author

48 Babette is also the director of Yellow Fish, a durational performance art festival which aims to bring awareness to the significance and study of time through cultural practices and artistic mediums, while facilitating community involvement in historical and contemporary thought surrounding Durational Performance. Babette holds a BFA in Dance from Cornish College of the Arts, and an MFA in Curatorial Practice from Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) with a minor in Critical Theory.

49 Babette DeLafayette Pendleton, dir. *Swimming in Air While Rooted in Water*, 2017. <https://vimeo.com/249592589>

50 Truini, <https://youtu.be/smE69BTB7Mc>

51 Babette DeLafayette Pendleton, Zoom Interview with Author

52 *ibid*

53 *ibid*

54 Truini, <https://youtu.be/smE69BTB7Mc>

55 Babette DeLafayette Pendleton, Zoom Interview with Author

56 Dayna is an award-winning filmmaker whose dance films have screened at festivals internationally, including Los Angeles International Short Film Festival, Dance Camera Istanbul, and Festival Internacional de Videodanza de Buenos Aires. She is a 2006 Guggenheim Fellow, a 2017 MacDowell Colony Fellow, a recipient of the 2010 United States Artists Foundation Oliver Fellowship in Dance and a 2012 Artist Trust Arts Innovator Award. Dayna wrote, choreographed and directed an episode of HBO's *Room 104*—"Voyeurs," starring Sarah Hay and Dendrie Taylor—that was hailed as one of the top television episodes of 2017 by multiple outlets, including *The New York Times* and *Vox*.

57 Dayna Hanson, *Measure*, 2009, <https://vimeo.com/85267019>

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58 Benjamin Kasulke became a negative films cutter with The Image Treasury, Seattle, Washington from 1999-2005. His shooting career began when he started working extensively with the dance film community in the Pacific Northwest and particularly with the Seattle based performance group '33 Fainting Spells'. While employed as the staff cinematographer for the Seattle based Film Company, he began running collaborations with award winning filmmakers Guy Maddin and Lynn Shelton. In 2011, he was invited by the Sundance Institute to join the Feature Film Director's Lab as a doph. He has received awares such as Slamdance FF 'KODAK Vision Award for Best Cinematography' [2006] & Toruń FF [Poland] Honorable Mention 'Best Cinematography' [2006] for '*We Go Way Back*'; The Seattle Stranger 'Genius Award in Film' shortlist [2007]; Independent Spirit Award nom 'Best Cinematography' [2012] for '*The Off Hours*'; Genius Award Film [by the Seattle weekly newspaper '*The Stranger*'] [2013].

59 Dayna Hanson, dir. *A Moving Portrait of Me and My Dad*, 2009.

<https://www.daynahanson.com/filmtv/amovingportrait>

60 Dayna Hanson, Zoom Interview with Author

61 ibid

62 Dayna Hanson, Written Correspondence with Author

63 Benjamin Kasulke, Zoom Interview with Author

64 ibid

65 ibid

66 ibid

67 ibid

68 ibid

69 ibid

70 Dayna Hanson, Written Correspondence with Author