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DANCE ON SCREEN

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**Thesis submitted to Middlesex University
in partial fulfilment of the requirement
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

Limor Roichman

**School of Art, Design and Performing Arts
Middlesex University
2001**

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DANCE ON SCREEN

THE DANCE VIDEO: Gaia - Mysterious Rhythms

Origin: Betacam SP. Master: Digital Betacam/Beta SP.

Category: Screen Choreography

THE THESIS: DANCE ON SCREEN

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores dance on screen from the artist's point of view following the making of the video GAIA - Mysterious Rhythms (20 min, Digital Betacam). The video and the thesis together form the PhD submission. The interaction of practice and theory, through a process of creative work, analysis and reflection resulted in the structuring of a model with which I claim the autonomy of dance on screen as a hybrid art form, a form which like other creative forms, such as painting, sculpture or even dance, has its own particular aesthetic qualities and limits.

This thesis proposes that dance as a live form ceases to exist in the process of its recreation as a screen form. The argument about dance on screen is based not within the context of contemporary live dance, but within the contexts of film/video, screen choreography and performance, including 'performative' texts and art as performance engaging both artists and viewers.

To locate dance on screen in a contemporary framework, I refer to central developments issuing from the television series Dance for the Camera produced by BBC2 & the Arts Council and the IMZ/ Dance Screen international festivals. I approach choreography in screen terms thereby referring to the expression of movement in the broader sense,

including performance, body language, the motion of objects and natural events, and rhythms and movements created via film/video technology. The moving body on screen is also utilised for the expression of mythical journeys as in Gaia.

Overall, this thesis demonstrates that dance on screen, originating from the contexts of modern and post-modern art and culture, constitutes a unique art form and phenomenon reflecting current concerns with the notions of hybridity and performance.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis on dance on screen is written from the artist's point of view, following the creative practice in the form of a video production titled: Gaia - Mysterious Rhythms (20 min, Beta SP/Digital Betacam). The video and the thesis together constitute the PhD submission. The possibility of integrating the creative practice within the context of theoretical research proved to be invaluable, allowing me, as an artist, to reflect on my practice within the broader context of dance on screen, including inter-media art, performance and 'performative' texts.

The aim of the study programme at the outset was to investigate how the fusion of different media such as dance and film/video results in the creation and evolution of new forms and styles. However the research led to new insights beyond the initial proposition which was primarily concerned with the formal aspects involved in the integration of different media. This thesis originates within the interdisciplinary context of dance and film/video. The formal fusion of these media, as this thesis demonstrates, leads to the constitution of dance on screen as a contemporary and hybrid art form. This proposition which at the outset was an embryonic idea, became a solid argument during the process of research and final stages of analysis. In addition, the passage of time, from the early days of research during 1992 to its completion at the eve of a new century, supports the argument concerning dance on screen as a hybrid art form. This is a view currently expressed in the opening pages of Juice promoting the Dance on Screen festival held in

The Place in London from 7th to 14th, November, 1999:

Gone are the days when film and video were tolerated only as second-rate representations of what dancers and choreographers could achieve on-stage. Dance Film has taken its place as a hybrid form in which movement and film became inextricably linked. Laura Taler, Canadian director and this year's Dance on Screen filmmaker in residence comments: "All over the world people have been inspired to make short dance films. The common denominator in all these films is the exploration of cinematic techniques, from hand processing to dramatic narratives to abstract editing to visual juxtapositions. When the cinematic and choreographic language are intertwined, the results are always fascinating and sometimes even brilliant" (Issue 18, November, 1999: 1-2).

It is important to clarify at this point that the term 'Dance Film' used in the above quotation is currently applied to both dance films and dance videos. Video technology, however, offers a variety of formats in terms of camera and editing which allow independent makers and artists the option of experimenting with the medium outside the commercial or professional sectors.

This thesis approaches dance on screen from the broader perspective of contemporary art, tracing its roots and evolution in the movements which shaped modern and post-modern art and global culture. The in-depth study of dance on screen as exemplified by this thesis demonstrates that it is a form which has emerged from the notions of

modernity in the first half of the twentieth century, and is typical of present-day notions of hybridity and performance. The approach to dance on screen as a hybrid art form in this thesis is linked to my personal development as an artist, and to the routes which led me to be engaged in this practice. Although dance has always been an integral part of my life, I discovered the potential of hybrid art as a BA student of Fine Art, especially within the context of video-art and performance-art. During the mid-1980s performance-art and multimedia performances were a rare phenomena in my native Israel. Nevertheless, being a member of a small group of artists, including Tamar Raban, Dan Zakhem and Anat Schen, all emerging from art schools, and with fine art, dance or music backgrounds, I had the opportunity to explore some vital elements concerning performance and hybrid art. This involved the creation of multimedia performances which were held in art galleries, public spaces and festivals of dance and music. This creative process came to an end due to the lack of support from funding bodies and, more importantly, the lack of theoretical and critical knowledge, with which to base the performance work on solid foundations. This group of artists to which I belonged, and in which each artist produced unique and original live art, has been historically recognised in the 1990s as the 'spinal cord' of a new generation of performance in Israel (Ben Non, 1991: 19), and it has had a profound effect on the development of contemporary dance in Israel during the mid 1980s and 1990s (Ibid.: 16-19) (Eshel, 1998: 37).

The transition of my multimedia performance work to film and video

occurred whilst I was an artist in residence at the October Gallery in London. The multimedia performances which I presented at the gallery attracted the interest of the then ICA video director, Fenella Greenfield, who suggested that we collaborate on a video production, thus shifting the performance work into a video format. We therefore transported the performance space onto location, shooting in the streets of London, capturing urban imagery and performance actions. We soon realised the role of the camera in choreographing the performance and the options, both visual and choreographic, during shooting and editing. We experimented both with video and 16mm film. Our collaborative work came to a conclusion in the video Anima Urbana - The City Spirit (1988), which was screened at the Brighton Video Festival, where it was selected as one of the best entries for its use of video and performance. The creative options that film and video offer to the body in movement and choreography led me to continue research the subject during my MA studies at Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design. This is when I was introduced to the work of Maya Deren and became both intrigued and fascinated by the practice of dance and choreography for the camera.

I perceive the video created as part of the PhD submission as a journey of exploration in which I attempt to discover the creative potential embodied in the art form of dance on screen. Exploring what I value as a hybrid art form, rather than a genre, the result is by no means a demonstration of the full potential of the form. The form of dance on screen, as this thesis demonstrates, is capable of taking on a variety of

styles and contexts. Gaia - Mysterious Rhythms shares with other dance films and videos certain characteristics typical to the form, but its overall audio-visual text is determined by my personal and poetic approach to the form and the subject matter depicted.

This thesis is divided into six chapters which in stages establish the central argument concerning dance on screen as a hybrid art form. The introduction argues that though it is a form created for the screen, it is neither a film/video genre, nor an extension of contemporary dance branching into film and video. The study of the nature of dance on screen, in this thesis, clearly charts the conditions under which it emerges as an autonomous art form with a coherent, though hybrid, aesthetic identity.

In the second chapter the roots of dance on screen are traced within two separate, though interconnected, fields of modern art and avant-garde film. The primary element which links the two fields is identified as the modern and contemporary approach to performance. The principle of performance is examined and established as a driving force at the core of modern art and culture. The notions of art as performance and artists as performers are demonstrated within the context of modern art in the first half of the twentieth century e.g. Futurism, Dada, Surrealism and Bauhaus. The first half of the twentieth century is marked by the Black Mountain College events involving Merce Cunningham and John Cage. In the sixties and the seventies the principle of performance is dominant within the context of modern art forms, coupled with the emphasis on

the fusion and synthesis of forms and media. A connection is made between the 'performative' and hybrid structure of dance on screen and action painting, process painting, performance art and installation work. The hybrid territory of performing arts, including dance in the media in the 1980s and 1990s, is also established with relation to the avant-garde film. The fundamental principles of avant-garde film making are utilised for the understanding of the formal structure of dance on screen. Avant-garde film language, with its use of non-linear texts, visual juxtaposition, montage and poetic metaphors, is analysed with special reference to the work of Maya Deren, Jean Cocteau and Andrei Tarkovsky. Thus, dance on screen is located within the context of film as art, and within a broader context of contemporary art and performance.

In the third chapter contemporary approaches to dance films and videos are examined, with special reference to the current discourse concerning the formal transition from live performance to screen, and the interaction of dance with the apparatus of film and video. A system of categorisation is provided which isolates dance films and videos into specific areas of expertise, identifying the categories most appropriate for the discussion of dance on screen as hybrid art form. The pioneering video and film work of Merce Cunningham with its links to modern art and contemporary approaches to performance is explored. The issues of performance and 'performative' texts are introduced as central principles at the core of contemporary art forms, at the core of contemporary life and culture. Recent articles and statements from the IMZ/ Dance Screen

99 festival are used to locate the research in a contemporary framework, and within an arena infused with tremendous creativity and hybrid energy, combining the creative powers of contemporary dance/performance and film/video.

Chapter four provides the analysis of selected dance films and videos which have gained critical acclaim, and are used in this thesis as examples of the hybrid art form of dance on screen. The emphasis is on works created in close collaboration with the camera with a remarkable phasing of time, space and movement due to editing and the fusion of sound and imagery. The works analysed were chosen on the basis of research into the arena of dance on screen, including the BBC2 and the Arts Council series Dance for the Camera, the IMZ/ Dance Screen international festivals, the Dance on Screen festivals at The Place in London and the Dance on Camera Festival in New York. The chapter also raises the question as to how one should approach the analysis of dance on screen works as interdisciplinary and 'performative' texts. When the fusion of the elements of performance, camera, editing and sound is total in the sense that they are inseparable, the hybrid aesthetic identity of the form may demand a special methodology for analysis. The methodology used for the analysis of the selected works in this chapter is concerned with the treatment and distribution of movement, time, space and sound in the actual texts, and evaluates choreography in screen terms and as a screen form. The works analysed, Boy (UK, 1996), Golden City (Canada, 1997) and Dust (UK, 1998), take the viewer into three separate inner realms following the journey of a single

protagonist. The analysis of Gaia, in the following chapter, also provides insight into these three poetic and choreographic screen texts and thematic contents concerned with imaginative inner worlds, personal rituals and mythical journeys.

In chapter five an in-depth analysis of the video Gaia - Mysterious Rhythms is provided and supported by Appendix A, a scene-by-scene breakdown of the video. The analysis of the work allows insight into the process involved in the making of the video. This insight is relevant for the understanding of the nature of the work as it differs from (the making of) other film/video genres. The differences lie in the fact that the work incorporates interdisciplinary considerations. The absence of a literal script give rise to other options of scripting and treating the material which are observed. The aspect of choreography is analysed from two different perspectives, involving the protagonist's movements in space and time, and the choreographic treatment of her performance by the camera and editing. The protagonist's character, her role in the work, her persona, and her body in interaction with space and time are all analysed. In addition, the subject matter of the video, the visual style of the work, the particular treatment of time and space, and the overall poetic structure are analysed. In this analysis of the video, references are made to poetic film making, Zen poetry, and performance art. The visual content of Gaia is analysed for its metaphoric and mythical values as expressed by 'a rite of passage and transformation'. The rite is undertaken by a female protagonist who interacts with the natural elements of her surroundings which reflect the sheer power and allure of

the sea. The analysis of content is made with special reference to the publication The Metaphoric Body: Guide to Expressive Therapy through Images and Archetypes (Bartal and Ne'eman: 1993). Special reference is also made to holistic movement workshops developed by Vered Ketter on the basis of Gaia. The interaction of the image-track and the soundtrack is analysed in detail to convey the delicate, though complex, relationship between the two dimensions of sound/music and imagery. Finally, the relationship between the viewer and the text on screen is examined, including the relationship between the writer of the text, the screen text and the reader/viewer. The name I have used for my creative work as an artist, since 1989, and as the producer, director and choreographer of Gaia is Lila Moore.

The sixth chapter provides conclusions to the argument concerning the hybrid art form of dance on screen. The central questions regarding the nature and identity of dance on screen as art raised throughout the thesis are confronted. The opinions of leading critics and makers are also expressed in a survey questioning the issue as to what makes a 'good' or 'bad' dance film. The notion of choreography is also problematic as it is applied to the camera and editing which determine the manner in which the dance or performance actions are portrayed on screen. Other questions analysed relate to the framework of dance on screen are: what is the role of dance, does the quality of the dancing matter, what is dance, who is doing the dancing, can the camera replace human dancers? These questions are at the heart of dance on screen point to the somewhat ambiguous identity of the form issuing from its hybrid nature

and constantly evolving structure. This chapter systematically charts the formal characteristics of dance on screen as a hybrid art form, and locates the form within the historical and creative context of contemporary art and culture. The chapter also demonstrates that this hybrid form is highly dynamic and in a process of development, attracting young choreographers, dancers, film/video makers, computer artists, and a large number of artists employing a variety of media in interaction.

This chapter shows that the analysis of Gaia, including the analysis of selected texts, demonstrates the potential of dance on screen to reveal poetic and imaginative realms, which are rarely captured on screen, and can not be experienced as live performance forms. These dreamlike realms provide insight into personal-mythical experiences in which the moving body is utilised for the expression of intense physical and emotional experiences and for the depiction of visual metaphors and archetypes. Within the context of therapy via body movement and holistic movement workshops, Gaia and the texts analysed in Chapter 4, can help in generating new awareness as to the potential of the moving body to produce visual metaphors which can prompt self knowledge and a deep realisation as to the integration of body, mind and soul.

CHAPTER 2: DANCE ON SCREEN IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN ART AND AVANT-GARDE FILM

2.1. DANCE ON SCREEN IN THE CONTEXT OF LIVE ART AND PERFORMANCE ART.

For the purpose of establishing the argument concerning dance on screen as a hybrid art form on a solid historical and creative foundation, I searched for the origins of the form in the early days of modern art and avant-garde film. Fresh evidence has arisen from the experience of contemporary artists, which confirms the identity of the form of dance on screen as emerging from the contexts of visual art, live art and performance. The immediate example for the hybrid nature of dance on screen was demonstrated whilst this chapter was written as I attended a talk given by Miriam King, the choreographer of the award-winning film Dust, at 'Insight 2': a panel discussion held at The Place's Dance on Screen festival on 11th, November, 1999. The poetic atmosphere of Dust, created through audio-visual montage of striking images and evocative sound effects, gave rise to questions as to the origin of the piece.

The visual style of the film appears to be structured around the juxtaposition of images and sounds rather than dance movements. However, the film was nominated as best Screen Choreography by the jury of Dance Screen 99 in Cologne. The formal structure of Dust apparently originated from King's position as an artist. At 'Insight 2' King presented herself as a visual artist who has made a transition into

the field of dance and choreography. When talking about the making of Dust, King expressed her interest in handling movement and sound to create visual images. Whilst working as a performance artist creating live art, King became aware of the potential of dance films to combine elements such as texture, detail and the sensuality of the body. Moreover, in comparison to the limited audience of live art, King discovered the potential of dance films to reach a wider audience. King, as a visual artist, choreographer and performer, collaborated with the film maker and sound designer Anthony Atanasio. The collaboration resulted in both artists handling the audio-visual text from two different perspectives. The synthesis of their talents including their awareness of live art's potential to be translated into a screen presentation, eventually produced the hybrid form of the film.

The view of dance on screen as art created by artists employing a variety of media as an integral part of their work, was supported by the panel of 'Insight 2'. The panel was hosted by Clare Carnell, Dance Officer of the Arts Council of England, and included Miriam King, Linda Jasper, Director of South East Dance Agency, and Sian Prime from South East Arts. The panel approached dance on screen within the context of 'integrated arts' and 'integrated artists', a context in which artists do not have to fit into specialised categories such as: dance, film/video, live art, visual art etc., but are hosted under one umbrella. This context encourages the integration of art forms and media, enabling artists to integrate a variety of media and collaborate within an interdisciplinary context. This approach is supported by the view

expressed by the panel that the integration and collision of talents, media and art forms, can result, as in the case of Dust, in the creation of new aesthetics with the communication power to reach large audiences.

The hybrid nature of the form of dance on screen is the result of the interaction and fusion of a performance form (e.g. live dance, movement, ritual, live art etc.) with the apparatus of film or video, including digital computer arts. Regardless of the type of live performance captured by the camera and delivered on screen, a formal transition has been taking place, in each case, shifting the formal identity of live performance as a particular event in a given time and space to that of a screen presentation. The live performance which is captured takes on a new hybrid identity. Although the actual act of performance is still recognised on screen, it appears within a different framework which is not 'live' in the true sense of the word.

In Laurie Anderson's foreword to RoseLee Goldberg's book: Performance: Live Art Since The 60s (1998), the problem of the transition from one medium to another is addressed. According to Anderson, performance art is a form that in principle 'resists documentation' (Goldberg, 1998: 6). Anderson's approach to her work reveals the dilemma involved in the formal transition of live art to a recorded form in which the live event is preserved and conveys her changing attitudes towards the medium of performance and live art:

I myself used to be very proud that I didn't document my work. I felt that, since much of it was about time and memory, that was the

way it should be recorded - in the memories of the viewers - with all the inevitable distortions, associations and elaborations. Gradually I changed my mind about making records of events... I started to keep track of things... When live art is documented through film or audio recording it immediately becomes another art form - a film or record - another rectangle or disk. It's in the can (Ibid.: 6-7).

Anderson addresses the importance of preserving live art which does not get recorded by the mass media. The preservation of live art becomes crucial especially as 'it is the anarchic and experimental arm of our culture' (Ibid.: 7). Although recording live art is a contradiction in terms, not keeping a record of it is somehow peculiar as 'we live in a time in which everything gets captured and processed and made to fit into boxes and categories' (Ibid.). The contradiction involved in the act of recording live art is expressed throughout the body of work produced by Anderson, and in the the introduction to Goldberg's Performance: Live Art Since The 60s (1998), taken from her album Big Science (1982): 'This is the time and this is the record of the time', thus hinting at the contradiction between 'real time' and time existing in a recorded format.

Comprehending the complexity of live art, its reliance on performance and its central position at the core of modern art, is vital for the understanding of dance on screen as hybrid art: 'Performance became accepted as a new art form in the 1970s' (Goldberg, 1988: 7). Goldberg's book was the first to demonstrate 'that there was a long

tradition of artists turning to live performance as one means among many of expressing their ideas, and that such events had played an important part in the history of art' (Ibid.). Laurie Anderson was one of many artists turning to performance in the 1970s. As a young artist involved in the New York downtown scene she was convinced that she and her fellow artists were doing everything for the first time, and that they were inventing a new art form (Goldberg, 1998: 6). Her account demonstrates the position of performance art in the 1970s and the impact of Goldberg's publication:

We were inventing a new art form. It even had a clumsy new-sounding name "Performance Art", and critics and audiences struggled to define this "new" hybrid that combined so many media and broke so many rules about what art was supposed to be. So when RoseLee Goldberg's book Performance: Live Art 1909 to the Present was first published in 1979, I was completely amazed to find that what we were doing had a rich and complex history. Marinetti, Tzara, Ball, and Schlemmer sprang from the pages. Dada and Futuristic manifestos, diagrams, posters, sets, events, happenings, and concerts came alive all in their chaotic and fertile inventiveness (Ibid.).

When Goldberg's book on live art was published in 1998, dance on screen, as exemplified by The Arts Council/BBC2 television series Dance for the Camera, was featured within the context of dance with choreographers experimenting with movement, text, media and architecture (Ibid.: 147-179). The formal transition of dance onto screen is referred to in the description of Enter Achillies (1996, UK) directed

by the Dutch director Clara van Gool: 'shot on location in a London pub and the tow path of the Grand Union Canal. It was remarkable for the visually rhythmic camera work which captured and translated Newson's compelling choreography and the fierce physicality of the dancers' bodies for the small frame of television' (Ibid.: 167). It located dance on screen as a form evaluated within the broad historical and creative context of contemporary art, performance, live art and 'performative' texts.

2.2. ART AS PERFORMANCE

The history of modern art reveals that the underlying principles behind the events and performances produced by movements such as Futurism, Dada, Surrealism and Bauhaus were: the ambition to synthesise art forms and blur the boundaries between visual arts and performing arts, the emphasis on performance and live action, including artists as performers, the prompting of audiences to interact with the performance texts via provocation induced by the artists, especially in the case of Futurist, Dadaist and Surrealist presentations. This tendency towards performance and art as performance was initially promoted by the Italian poet Tommaso Marinetti, the founder of Futurism who, as early as 1909, envisioned 'a new form of theatre that was to become a trademark of the young Futurists in the following years' (Goldberg, 1988: 13). The notion of performance was developed amongst Futurist artists who insisted on 'activity' and 'change' and an art 'which finds its components in its surroundings' (Ibid.: 14). Goldberg demonstrates the

nature of this ideology:

Futurist painters turned to performance as the most direct means of forcing an audience to take note of these ideas. Boccioni for example wrote 'that painting was no longer an exterior scene, the setting of a theatre spectator'. Similarly, Soffici had written 'that the spectator (must) live at the centre of the painted action'. So it was this prescription for Futurist painting that also justified the painters' activities as performers. Performance was the surest means of disrupting a complacent public. It gave artists licence to be both 'creators' in developing a new form of artists' theatre, and 'art object' in that they made no separation between their art as poets, as painter, as performers (Ibid.: 14-16).

The performances of the Futurist performer Valentine de Saint-Point already embodied the notion of dance within a hybrid context. Her performance on 20 December 1913 in Paris is described as:

...a curious dance - poems of love, poems of war, poems of atmosphere - in front of large cloth sheets onto which coloured lights were projected. Mathematical equations were projected onto other walls, while a background of music by Satie and Debussy accompanied her elaborate dance (Ibid.: 18).

The description of this Futurist dance exemplifies the beginning of a process involving art forms in interaction and synthesis: the dance performance transformed into a hybrid text whereby the walls of the stage became screens with the dancer interacting with the projected imagery as she moved in that space. The audience was introduced to a

multidimensional experience needing to interact with live dance, projected imagery and music. Dancing in front of projection screens with images as part of the visual impact and design of the dance performance is at present a common phenomenon. However, in 1913 this type of performance, inspired by the spirit and ideology of Futurism, was an innovative breakthrough as a combined arts experience, for its formal structure and visual concept embodying the seeds of contemporary 'performative' texts as employed by a woman artist within a male dominated avant-garde movement. Despite Saint-Point's unique position as a female Futurist, her performances can be evaluated within the broader context of futurist Ballets insisting on the merging of actors, dancers and scenography integrating sound, scene and gesture (Ibid.: 24).

Performance was not attributed to the human body alone but also to machines and objects. Giacomo Balla's performance based on Stravinsky's Fireworks was presented as part of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes programme at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome in 1917. It 'experimented with the 'choreography' of the setting itself... the only 'performers' in Fireworks were the moving sets and lights' (Ibid.). Futurist ideology concerning performance aimed to penetrate all forms of creative activity and into the context of modern life and culture. By interacting with theatrical ballet Futurist notions of performance found their way into the arena of dance and theatre. Although, Balla's Fireworks lasted for five minutes only, it was presented within a dance theatre context and can be seen as a seminal presentation embodying the

modern approach to performance and the transformation and synthesis of art forms whereby choreography and dance are applied to lights and objects and to paintings which 'come to life.' The performance is described by Goldberg:

The set itself was a blown-up three-dimensional version of one of Balla's paintings and Balla himself conducted the 'light ballet' at a keyboard of light controls. Not only the stage, but also the auditorium, was alternately illuminated and darkened in this actor-less performance. In total, the performance lasted just five minutes, by which time, according to Balla's notes, the audience had witnessed no less than forty-nine different settings (Ibid.).

Another essential element of Futurist performance was the notion of 'simultaneity' within the context of Futurist 'synthetic theatre' i.e. 'to compress into a few minutes, into a few words and gestures, innumerable situations, sensibilities, ideas, sensations, facts and symbols' (Ibid.: 26). Synthetic theatre emphasised improvisation rather than extensively rehearsed material. The intention was to give an expression to the chaotic 'fragments of interconnected events' encountered in everyday life (Ibid.: 28). This particular approach to performance which synthesises fragmented time, space and action can be compared to a filmic montage, and is particularly relevant for the study of dance on screen as hybrid art form. As the analysis of the film Dust in Chapter Four demonstrates, the film's short text (8 min) and formal structure embody those early notions of fragmentation, synthesis and simultaneity within a contemporary framework.

Finally, the Futurists' ideas concerning sound and music had a profound influence on the development of modern music as exemplified by the work of John Cage and in his collaborative work with Merce Cunningham. In the Futurist manifesto The Art Of Noises (1913), Luigi Russolo called 'for a liberation of the musical possibilities of noise in general, especially the diverse and unsynthesizable complexity of sound in the city' (Connor, 1997: 168). Rossolo's ideas aimed to enlarge the scope of music and its experience as he envisioned the creation of new noises and sounds in new and innovative combinations. He urged both composers and music audiences to find the sources of sound in the noises of modern life and in newly created music/noise instruments. Rossolo's ideology is explained by Steven Connor in Postmodernist Culture: An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary:

The pleasures of the arts of noises are the pleasures of enlargement, of an amplification of attention to the sounds of everyday experience. This amplified attention involves two kinds of enrichment; first of all, there is the expansion of the limits of the audible, as previously unheard events and aural objects become available to be heard; secondly there is the thickening of attention required of the modern subject, the capacity to hear the complex simultaneity of modern auditory existence (1997: 168).

The enlargement of the scope and experience of sound and music within the framework of soundtracks and sound design for dance on screen is apparent in the films and videos analysed in Chapter Four. Futuristic ideology concerning the hybrid nature of music and its sources which can be found within the vast landscape of modern life and technology,

has penetrated into the fabric and the making of contemporary 'performative' texts.

According to Levia Stern in her article 'Forgotten Pioneers of Performance', the principles of multimedia were born during the days of the Futurist performances. These include the notions of interaction between performers, performed material and audiences, the performance of disconnected though simultaneous actions in a single event, and the interaction of various media such as photography, film, television, specially designed voices and sounds within a technologically advanced performance context. Futurist artists tended to create in an interdisciplinary context and to collaborate with artists working in different media. Already in those early days before the emergence of Dada, Futurist artists were crossing the boundaries between the arts and blurring them (Stern, 1993: 25). Marinetti, who admired variety theatre for its 'variety', envisioned the theatre of the future as a 'mixing of film and acrobatics, song and dance, clowning and 'the whole gamut of stupidity, imbecility, doltishness, and absurdity, insensibly pushing the intelligence to the very border of madness'. That made it an ideal model for Futurist performances (Goldberg, 1988: 17), a model which illustrates the qualities of the ultimate multimedia performance. According to Stern, the revolutionary Futurists' ideology had a profound influence on the activities of Dada, Surrealism, Fluxus and Happenings in the 1960s, Performance Art in the 1970s, and the interdisciplinary multimedia performances of the 1980s and the 1990s. In fact Stern suggests that the influence of Futurist ideology was present throughout

the twentieth century (1993: 24).

A contemporary artist known to embrace Futurist ideology openly is Laurie Anderson who in 1992 performed before a screen with a quote from Marinetti: "War is the Highest Form of Modern Art" (Britberg-Semel, 1993: 24). In an interview with Sara Britberg-Semel, Anderson confessed her fascination with Marinetti's ideology and the fact that she shared his interest in the aesthetics of advanced technology, including the aesthetics of advanced military systems. In The First Manifesto of Futurism, published on the front page of the Le Figaro, in February, 20th 1909, Marinetti used the language of poetic metaphors to express his vision of art and modernity. He advocated the dynamics of speed as a new aesthetic language introducing metaphors such as of a racing car which is about to explode and a rocket crossing the earth's axis, spinning around the planet, arriving at infinite speed within an infinite time and space. He praised war, militarism, anarchy, violence, cruelty whilst emphasising his aggression towards the notion of 'the female', femininity and anything which is associated with the attributes of the feminine. Marinetti's understanding of 'the female' can be reduced to what he perceived as disturbing 'female notions' e.g. softness, passiveness, inward rather than outward actions, nurturing rather than destroying, etc. Although, Anderson rejects Marinetti's tendencies towards violence and fascism she has been inspired by his use of language and his formal approach to art and performance adapting what are termed 'macho-art' qualities e.g. coherence, angularity, sharpness, and which can be found, in terms, for example, used to describe a

highly sophisticated-electronic military system (Britberg-Semel, 1993:24).

Laurie Anderson's fascination with technology is relevant for the analysis of the hybrid form of dance on screen: a form emerging from the context of modern and contemporary art and realised via technological means involving audio-visual technology and computerised systems. In technological terms, dance on screen as an evolving art form has been developed alongside advances in film, video and sound technology. The vision of Futurism, according to which art and modern technology are intertwined can be applied to contemporary art forms including dance on screen. However, the notion of technology as a masculine concept proposes that the notion of femininity is reduced to primitivism or to pre-modern mode of existence. It reflects the twentieth century legacy of wars and the technology of wars including the atom bomb and human sufferings on a grand scale. Dance on screen as an art form is based on technological devices, and as such it is a contemporary art form made of video/film, sound and computer technology which, as I propose, is neither feminine or masculine but the assimilation of both trends. The idea of hi-tech based art as both feminine and masculine form is relevant for the understanding of dance on screen as hybrid art form and text with hybrid generic identity and aesthetics. This issue is discussed in the concluding chapter.

2.3. THE PRIMAL ACT OF PERFORMANCE

In order to approach dance on screen as a hybrid art form and a

'performative' text it is essential to comprehend the act and the element of performance as a major principle which is embodied at the core of the form. Understanding the role of performance in modern art can assist in the analysis of the contemporary 'performative' texts chosen for analysis in this thesis. The analysis of these film/video texts in Chapters Four and Five approaches their form as an active structure which manifests a dynamic process of performance, that is the text comprising performance acts is being performed on screen whilst the viewer performs as the recipient and reader of the performed material. The 'performative' quality of the form and its hybrid nature as an interdisciplinary activity correspond to the early notions of performance as a primal act expressed by Dada and Surrealism during the first half of the twentieth century, notions which also subsequently shaped the form and the structure of surrealist and avant-garde films.

Performance activity was at the heart of Dada's Cabaret Voltaire from its opening night in 1916 in Zurich. Hugo Ball, who initiated the cabaret form, described the art he anticipated as a living art, irrational and primitive (Goldberg, 1988: 55). To attempt to describe or analyse the Dada experience is an approach which, in fact, negates the anarchic spirit of the phenomenon it represented. According to the painter Marcel Janco, one of the original members of Dada during the days of Cabaret Voltaire, Dada represents a stage in the development of modern thought. It is not a philosophy as it has no borders, or limits, or definitions, and as such it is 'eternal' (Janco, 1991: 8). Nevertheless, the best way to depict a Dada event with a programme of music, dance,

theory, poetry, pictures and costumes is to compare it with a film montage comprising irrational collection of volatile and shocking performance actions, images and sounds. Dada events attracted the leading personalities in the arena of modern art, modern dance and psychology such as Rudolf von Laban, a regular visitor at the cabaret, and students of Swiss psychologist C. G. Jung who came from Vienna to study the phenomenon (Ibid.: 8-9). Janco also describes with great admiration the dances of Sophie Taeuber, who worked with Laban and Mary Wigman, at the cabaret (Ibid.: 9) Taeuber's dances, according to Janco, already embodied the freedom of movement and expression associated with contemporary dance (Ibid.).

In addition, the Dadaists' interest in the fusion of art forms, within the framework of performance activity, was motivated by the ambition to explore a mode of creativity which is beyond rationalist thought and reason. The works of artists such as Janco, Hans Arp, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, as well as the activities of Dada, can be evaluated as 'an attempt on the part of Western artists to retreat from "reason" and thereby gain access to the sources of creativity itself, which they believed was exemplified in the most authentic and liberated form in the minds of children, tribal people and the insane' (Rhodes, 1994: 133). The interest in 'the sources of creativity' was also generated by the need to understand 'the character of the primitive creative impulse' (Ibid.). This primal creative impulse was perceived as evolving from a primordial source linked to the origins of humanity, which is lost to the majority of modern people. To penetrate into this resourceful terrain of

primal creativity and thereby gain 'primitive ways of seeing and primal modes of thought' (Ibid.). Dadaists and Surrealists turned art into nihilistic and ritualised performance activity as exemplified by Dada's interest in the tribal and the primitive ritual (Ibid.: 148-149), and the French Surrealists' fascination and research into the irrational performance of dreams and the unconscious mind (Goldberg, 1988: 88-89).

French Surrealism before the second world war thrived on performance activities. One of the major examples of surrealist principles applied to performance was the ballet Parade (1917), which was based on the collaborative work of four artists, each master in his own field: Erik Satie, Pablo Picasso, Jean Cocteau and Léonide Massine (Goldberg, 1988: 77). According to Guillaume Apollinaire Parade 'promised to modify the arts and the conduct of life from top to bottom in a universal joyousness' (Ibid.). In Parade Serge Diaghilev welcomed the opportunity to incorporate the young French avant-garde artists in his company's ballet programme, taking advantage of the controversy over Cubist painters which was at its height during that time whilst seeing 'the possibility of another succès de scandale' (Clark & Crisp, 1992: 117). Parade as a concept for a ballet was conceived by Cocteau and was a radical idea of 'a comedy of modern movement which would directly mirror the world of its audience', incorporating Satie's music of popular idioms, jazz syncopations and contemporary sounds (a real typewriter, a siren and pistol shots)' (Robertson & Hutera, 1988: 52). However, Cocteau's ambition to include spoken voice was refused by

Diaghilev (Clark & Crisp, 1992: 117). Picasso created a Cubist set of cityscape and Cubist costumes, dressing the dancers portraying the theatre managers as animated billboards, with the American manager as a 'montage of a skyscraper with fragmented faces' (Ibid.). Parade was indeed received by critics with outrage. The use of a non-conventional music score involving noises of typewriters, sirens, aeroplane propellers, etc., was regarded as 'unacceptable noise' (Ibid.). Furthermore, critics rejected the use of Cubist costumes which gave the impression of the dancers as enormous living sculpture pieces, 'which they felt made nonsense of traditional ballet movements' (Ibid.). (See images: 1-4).

Nevertheless, Parade became a landmark in the history of performing arts, promoting the modern tendency to cross the boundaries which artificially divide art forms into strict categories, encouraging artists to break the limits of their media through collaboration with other artists and a process of synthesis of different art forms and disciplines. In addition, Parade constituted a text including performance of ballet, acrobatics, sculpture, a collage of sound and music, and the comic assimilation of absurd events typical of surrealism and of Cocteau's vision of a 'new mixed media genre' (Ibid.: 81). According to Goldberg, Parade set the tone for the performance of the postwar years (Ibid.). Clark and Crisp imply that 'to Parade can be traced a number of today's so called innovations in music, design and choreography' (1992: 117).

Avant-garde film was introduced into the realm of theatrical ballet

within the context of surrealism, and surrealist principles applied to performance, as exemplified by Relâche (1924), a surrealist ballet conceived by the painter and writer Francis Picabia and the composer Erik Satie. The ballet was the result of a collaboration and the team included Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, the film maker René Clair and the director of the Ballets Suédois, Rolf de Mare (Goldberg, 1988: 90). Goldberg's account of the ballet reveals a revolutionary modern text which relies on performance actions to cross the boundaries between art forms and to break the structures of conventional forms, inducing shocking effects which provoke the audiences and encourage their interaction with the performance as they attempt to decipher the event:

First they saw a brief cinematic prologue, which indicated something of what was to follow. Then they were confronted by an enormous backdrop comprising metal discs, each reflecting a powerful light bulb ...The first act consisted of a series of simultaneous events: downstage a figure (Man Ray) paced up and down, occasionally measuring the dimensions of the stage floor. A fireman, chain-smoking, poured water endlessly from one bucket into another. A woman in an evening gown sauntered onto the stage from the audience, followed by a group of men in top hat and tails who proceeded to undress. Underneath they wore one-piece suits. (These were Ballets Suédois dancers). Then came the interval. But it was no ordinary interval. Picabia's film Entr'acte, scripted by him and filmed by the young cameraman René Clair, began rolling... (Goldberg, 1988: 90-92).

The second act included 'gloomy and oppressive' dances (Ibid.: 95)

performed by Borlin, Edith Bonsdorf and the corps de ballet. 'For the final curtain-call, Satie and other creators of the work drove around the stage in a miniature five-horsepower Citroën' (Ibid.).

The Cubist painter Fernand Leger, the maker of the film Ballet Mechanique, 1924, praised Relâche as a ballet in which 'the author, the dancer, the acrobat, the screen, the stage, all these means of "presenting a performance" are integrated and organised to achieve a total effect (Ibid.). The ballet constituted the ultimate surreal experience enhanced by the violence of unpredictable performance actions. The surreal text of the film Entr'acte, projected as a part of the ballet is a cinematic ballet, and an early example of 'screen choreography' integrating comic dance, performance actions, and the motion of modern life within a chaotic, fragmented and irrational structure.

The principle of performance was reinforced by Marcel Duchamp in an interview with Joan Bakewell on BBC TV in 1968. The interview was featured in the documentary film Dada and Surrealism (1978), directed and written by Mick Gold and produced by The Arts Council of Great Britain. In the interview Duchamp proclaimed that 'art' means action e.g. to do something, to act but not necessarily to produce. Art, therefore, means activity of any form or kind. When Duchamp was asked by Bakewell what he meant when he announced in the 1920s that 'art is dead', his answer exposed his commitment to the idea of art as activity. Thus, according to Duchamp, the 'death of art' means that art is a universal and human factor, and the division between artists and art

forms by categories is artificial and false. According to Duchamp, art is to be found in life, allowing each individual to be an artist primarily by choice and by action. Duchamp's approach highlights the notion of art as performance or performed action, and of performance as a primal act at the core of art as a dynamic system.

The principle of chance as a dynamic process which interlinks art, life and nature is another Dadaist notion which has shaped modern creativity and had a profound influence on the work of John Cage, Merce Cunningham, and the new generations of artists emerging during the second part of the twentieth century. Between 1916 and 1919 the Dadaist artist Arp produced collages composed from random arrangements of pieces of paper. According to Anna Moszynska in Abstract Art:

The pieces of paper were torn rather than cut, and probably assembled through trial and error, treading a path between accident and design. ... this work... introduces an element of chance into Arp's compositions - a factor which was an important matter of principle to Dadaists... Tristan Tzara advocated cutting words from a newspaper and pasting them together at random to make chance poetry. ... By abandoning normal ordering processes, random configurations offered a whole new set of possibilities, a new order. This concept was later taken up by the surrealists; following Freud's diagnosis in The Psychopathology of Everyday Life (1901), they believed that chance actions were relevant for their demonstrations of unconscious motivation (1990: 65-66).

Arp believed that the 'the law of chance' was unfathomable, 'like the primal cause from which all life arises', thus, 'nature's higher irrationality seems to replace the limitations of human rationality' (Ibid.: 66). According to Arp: 'Dada aimed to destroy the reasonable deceptions of man and recover the natural and unreasonable order' (Ibid.).

Dadaist and surrealist views concerning the operation of the conscious and unconscious mind are, of historical and creative value in the context of this thesis, as they can assist in deciphering the poetic and imaginary 'performative' texts of the contemporary films and videos chosen for analysis. Although these texts are not surrealist creations, their poetic form successfully merges dream and reality thus creating imaginary worlds. Furthermore, it is through performance activity that these imaginary worlds are depicted and revealed. It is appropriate at this stage to quote a statement from the Berlin Dada manifesto according to which 'the soul can only reveal itself through direct action' (Gold's film, Dada and Surrealism 1978, UK). This statement highlights the central principle of art as action and performance as primal act at the core of twentieth century 'performative' texts.

2.4. CHOREOGRAPHY IN SPACE AND TIME: CANVAS, SCREEN AND ENVIRONMENT

The term choreography is often applied within the context of cinema (film/video) and within the framework of fine art with relation to painting and even sculpture. The use of the term outside the activity of

dancing differs from its conventional association with the making of dances or dance compositions. When the term choreography is applied to non-dance art forms, it is used to emphasise a formal connection to the elements which are at the core of dance and are the building blocks of any form of choreography i.e. movement, space and time.

The human ambition to record movement, according to Stephenson and Phelps in The Cinema as Art, 'seems to have been appreciated millions of years ago, and throughout its long history static art has tried to imitate movement' (1989: 134). Although any record of movement which is static by nature would always be an 'unsuccessful' rendering of the original phenomenon, it can become another form of aesthetic representation of the phenomenon as movement in space and time. The fascination of artists with choreographic principles involving the arrangement of movement in space and time are accounted for by Stephenson and Phelps:

Recent research, by filming and animating successive cave drawings of bison, has shown that put together they represent a continuous movement. The same technique applied to a Greek vase shows us an acrobat doing a somersault - a moving picture created over two thousand years ago! Then there are medieval and Renaissance painting showing successive incidents in the life of a saint on the same canvas, paintings in series (Hogarth's Rake's Progress), sporting prints of a day's hunt, and strip cartoons. Early in this century futurist painter Giacomo Balla experimented with the rendering of movement by painting in such canvases as

Dynamism of a Dog on Leash, Rhythms of a Violinist and Abstract Speed Wake of a Speeding Car (Ibid.).

Within the context of Abstract Expressionism the American action painter Jackson Pollack revealed a new dimension in the rendering of movement in space and time by employing the canvas as an arena for action. The American critic Harold Rosenberg, in the essay 'The American Action Painter' (1952), proposed that 'the canvas wasn't a canvas anymore. Instead it was an arena in which to act. The painting wasn't a painting any more but an action and the act was the thing not the aesthetics' (Collings, 1999: 50). The notion of the canvas transforming into a 'performance space' in which the artist performs actions is particularly relevant for the exploration of contemporary 'performative' texts such as the hybrid art form of dance on screen. Action painting and dance on screen as an art form are both restricted by a frame. i.e. the canvas dimensions as a restricted area for action. Both forms deliver performance actions in a recorded form. Action painting remains a static art form in the sense that the viewer is confronted with the trace and the result of the original action performed and not the action itself, and dance on screen despite its moving imagery remains a record of the original performance, the trace and the result of the original action. Moreover, some of the qualities of action painting as exemplified by the drip paintings of Jackson Pollock can assist in comprehending the creative potential of dance on screen as a contemporary 'performative' text concerned with the expression of performance actions. By analysing some of the qualities of Pollock's

action painting, a connection is made to the art form of dance on screen especially within the framework of choreography. (For further insight into Pollock's work see: "The "Pollockian Performative" in Jones, 1998: 53-102).

In the 1990s Pollock's work is still highly influential and some of its principles have been explored by contemporary artists. The physical interaction of Pollock with the materials with which he worked and his approach to painting as an open platform for performance actions, has gripped the imagination of painters exploring the physicality of the medium. In the last decade the physical dimensions of painting have been explored from two main angles: the physicality of the painted surface including the physical qualities of materials used for painting, and the physical trace of the artist's body movements within the painted composition. This exploration and its highly physical and choreographic attributes are described by Anna Moszynska:

Given art's recent concern with the body, it is not altogether unexpected that one of the most obvious links to Pollock should be found in the physical interaction between artist and support and in the choreography of the trace. However, there is currently also a comparable focus on surface qualities; on balancing apparent spontaneity with control; on investigating risk (often through the operation of gravity); on working on the floor, and on the exploration of industrial or trade materials. In Britain these concerns are particularly evident in process painting (1999: 48).

Moszynska argues that Pollock in fact generated this 'interest in recording the movement of the body and its trajectory' (Ibid.), an interest which also derives from the cult status of Hans Namuth's photographs of Pollock at work (Ibid.). (See image: 5) However, the gestures of the body were also important to Pollock for reasons more personal rather than formal: 'He compared his method of working on the floor, working on all sides of the painting at once, to American Indian ritual sand paintings' (Collings, 1999: 45). This had a profound influence on his perception of art as 'shamanic self-discovery' (Rhodes, 1994: 190). Pollock's famous statement from 1947 clearly defines the physical and psychic interaction of the painter with the painting:

My painting does not come from the easel... On the floor I am more at ease. I feel nearer, more a part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides and literally be in the painting. This is akin to the method of the Indian sand painters of the West... I have no fears about making changes, destroying the image, etc., because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through. It is only when I lose contact with the painting that the result is a mess (Ibid.: 190-191).

Moreover, there are other elements of choreography which are implied in the act of looking at Pollock's work. Choreographic factors which are to be found also in the work of contemporary process painters such as the American painter David Reed and the British painter Jason Martin. The sheer size of Pollock's paintings (See image: 6) created a new type of experience for the spectator. According to Moszynska:

Because of its physical size the canvas could not be assimilated in a single look; it required the participation of the observer, who was encouraged to walk along its length in order to engage with the energy and the scale of the painting. To get something from the work, Pollock advised that that people should 'not look for, but look passively' (1990: 152).

A similar choreographic factor is involved in the viewing of Martin's work whereby the scale of the large final paintings and the play of light on their surfaces introduce new 'channels for the viewer to engage physically and actively with the experience of looking' (Moszynska, 1999: 50). Furthermore, Pollock, Martin or Reed's paintings can be perceived as 'performative' texts; each text begins with the painter's performance and its trace within the finished painting, and is completed as the viewer is physically and kinetically engaged with the choreographic elements of the composition. Thus, the painting is created both by the artist and the viewer who completes the picture according to his/her perception of the visual information. Although the artist provides a visual record of performed actions and their result, it is the viewer who finally travels along the painted surface, whilst physically and visually absorbing choreographic elements of movement in space and time. For example, Reed's work reflects 'the trace of the body through space' (Ibid.: 48) as the movements of the painted strokes reveal the gestures of his body. In Martin's case (See images: 7-8) the emphasis is on the process of movement i.e. 'the dragging of paint across the surface with a dried brush or steel comb of comparable scale' (Ibid.: 50) (See images: 9-11). The focal point of the painting as a process involves

'the physical exertion of working the paint through strenuous, repeated movements of the entire body until he feels that the painting is finished' (Ibid.). However, the finished product is the result of Martin's performance and not the performance itself which is, nevertheless, a fascinating phenomenon. What remains of the performance is only the trace of the body's movement through space and time.

The forms of dance on screen as art and action or process painting both share the limitation of being produced within the format of a frame i.e. the canvas's limited 'performance space', and the dance or performance framed by the camera and finally viewed within the limits of a screen. The screen on which the choreographic experience of dance on screen is delivered obviously depends on the viewing conditions. Nevertheless, the scale of the screen can affect the viewer's experience and it is for this reason that all major festivals for dance in the media hold traditional theatrical screenings, in addition to video libraries, using the traditional cinema setting for the current formats of film and video. During, 'Insight 2' the issue of the screen as an element which can enhance the viewing experience was raised with relation to the film Dust: viewing Dust on a large video screen enabled the viewers to appreciate the visual qualities of the film. However, viewing the same film on a smaller television screen reduces the viewing pleasure and the impact of the aesthetic experience.

The notion of dance on screen as an environmental art, and the notion of the screen as a device which can create environments, can be

evaluated within the framework of modern art, installation art and mixed media (dance) events. The creative potential of the form of dance on screen, its alliance with other art forms and its technological nature open up new channels for creativity, a vision expressed by the IMZ organisation responsible for the Dance Screen 99 festival in Cologne:

In recent years, artists from many different disciplines, have made varied and decisive contributions to developments in the hybrid genre that has been derived by combining dance and motion picture media. Distinguished performing artists and musicians are presently utilising the newest technologies to create installations and environments that reach far beyond any modes of presentation or perception that we have known to date. Currently, when the arts seek to portray or represent the theme of movement, they are no longer confined by the possibilities of the human body. Everything before the viewer's eyes today, even the surrounding space, can be set in motion (Dance Screen 99 Catalogue: 34).

The common grounds which dance on screen as environment shares with action or process painting can be found in the process of viewing the works. The large paintings by Pollock, Reed, or Martin demand the viewer to move physically along the space which they occupy. As a result, the large painting engulfs the viewer. The painting transforms into an environment, and the choreographic experience involves the viewer's movements in the environment created by the painting, coupled with an intellectual process whereby the viewer comprehends the kinetic happenings on the canvas. Similar experience is created when the

canvas is replaced by a screen on which kinetic experience unfolds. The movements of the viewer in the surroundings which the screen occupies, coupled with the continuous choreographic experience portrayed on screen, can produce a stimulating interaction between viewer and screen and environment. The use of moving images as opposed to painted images is a choreographic experience which differs from the interaction of viewer with a canvas as environment.

The following description of an installation, by the artist Nicolas Desponds, and the experience created through the interaction of screens, moving images, spectator and environment, demonstrates the creative potential of such work. Light Shapes - Floating Compositions was created by Desponds and exhibited at Dance Screen 99 as part of the Multimedia Installations which took place in the basement of the Cologne Filmhaus:

In a darkened space, body fragments are floating, drifting, sliding along the walls, gliding in the darkness. Hand, foot, arm, leg, head. The projected images distort as they encounter obstacles in the relief of the surrounding background. They momentarily elude focal confines and spread out in a blur, slowly shrink and reaffirm the precision of their outlines. Currents of air breathe in and out softly through the whole space. They provoke the random movement of floating pictures, and simultaneously influence the ballet: appearance and disappearance, superimpositions and distortions. The dramatic thread develops like an improvised live editing session: a single take constantly recomposed and

continually evolving. The collisions, knockings, chafings, brushings that one hears as underlying counterpoint are reminiscent of flesh, they refer inexorably to matter and its mass. They remind mankind of its terrestrial condition. The sound of the spectator's steps and movements as he travels through the space mixes with the recorded sounds in the installation: here we find no interaction, simply participation, fusion. The visual corollary is obvious: through his simple presence and his motions in the space, the spectator participates in the choreographic event (1999: 34).

This description clearly demonstrates a choreographic experience which is a product of floating moving pictures on screens as a landscape forming within a dark space, with the accompaniment of a soundscape, including spectators travelling through the environment. This 'performative' text highlights the creative potential of performance or any form of choreography expressed via the medium of the screen outside the realm of live dance.

A formal connection can be made between the 'performative' texts of dance on screen and action or process painting as the two forms are concerned with giving expression to the passage of the body through space and time, an expression also concerned with the portrayal of movements of any kind performed or created by people, objects or technological devices. The choreographic components of the art forms are never true presentations of a live performance in the sense that they are the result of performance activity. However, by being 'performative' texts they embody performance elements and explore choreography

outside the context of live dance. For example, 'the choreography of the trace' in action or process painting (Moszynska, 1999: 48), whereby the painting reveals the trace of the artist's body in action through space and time, is a notion also explored in dance on screen in a variety of ways. In Gaia - Mysterious Rhythms the trace of the protagonist's body is depicted as she turns into a rock formation (See image: 12), and as her body becomes a gliding silhouette travelling through a space of moving waves and patterns (See image: 13). The protagonist of Gaia, constantly merges into the landscape which surrounds her, thus the textures of the natural environment and the protagonist's body are often formally integrated (See image: 14).

The separate art forms of dance on screen, installations and painting can be seen as representing contemporary art's concern with the two major issues of 'the body' (Ibid.) and performance actions. Dance on screen, however, with its use of motion picture media allows the exploration of movement in space and time beyond the limits of static arts such as painting, or the physical constraints involved in live dance or performance. Dance on screen cannot replace or suppress live dance and performance, but by employing choreographic principles the form introduces new perspectives with which the viewer can perceive the art of choreography on screen.

A strictly formal investigation of choreography is the subject of the dance and media work produced by Merce Cunningham. This interest in choreography as a pure form free of narrative, emotion or subject matter

is in alliance with modern art's concern with pure form and material empty of story, emotion, or any other content outside the physical components of the work. Thus, a connection can be made between the media work of Cunningham and the work of his contemporaries, Rauschenberg, Johns and Cage, and that of the new artists of the 1990s, such as Reed and Martin. However, choreography as a screen form is also employed for the depiction of emotionally charged subject matters tackling cultural and social issues as is demonstrated by Camera Re-works such as Witnessed and Contrecoup. Moreover, screen choreography as an art form gives rise to contemporary texts which explore the realm of the unconscious mind using media technology which was unavailable to Dadaists or Surrealists. The Pollockian interest in Jung's psychology and the Abstract Expressionists' fascination with 'the unconscious as a dark, primordial and subterraenean realm populated by mythic and religious symbols' (Rhodes, 1994: 190), is a field explored by contemporary and award winning screen artists.

2.5. LIVING ART: DANCE, PERFORMANCE AND MIXED MEDIA

Modern art's concern with the fusion of art forms and performance was a notion cultivated at the Black Mountain College in North Carolina, through a method combining the Bauhaus's principles of inventiveness and discipline (Goldberg, 1988: 121). Josef Albers who taught at the Bauhaus prior to its closure by the Nazis, and later joined the college community, stated that: 'Art is concerned with the HOW and not the WHAT; not literal content, but with the performance of the factual

content. The performance - how it is done - that is the content of art' (Cited in Goldberg: Ibid.). The Bauhaus educational method at the college was 'aiming at the interchange between the arts and sciences and using the theatre as a laboratory and place of action and experimentation' (Ibid.: 122). The anarchic spirit of experimentation was indeed celebrated at the college, and in 1952 Cage and Cunningham staged the Untitled Event, a performance which demonstrated a Zen inspired philosophy towards art and life developed by Cage: 'In Zen Buddhism nothing is neither good or bad. Or ugly or beautiful... Art should not be different (from) life but an action within life. Like all of life, with its accidents and changes and variety and disorder and only momentary beauties' (Ibid.: 126).

The description of the event reveals an approach to performance as living art embodying endless variations and forms in interaction. As such, the event is a landmark in performance history, beginning a new stage of modern art's concern with synthesis and performance at the second half of the twentieth century. According to Goldberg's account:

Spectators took their seats in the square arena forming four triangles created by diagonal aisles, each holding the white cup which had been placed on their chair. White paintings by... Rauschenberg, hung overhead. From a step-ladder, Cage in black suit and tie, read a text on 'the relation of music to Zen Buddhism' and excerpts from Meister Eckhart. Then he performed a 'composition with a radio', following the prearranged 'time brackets'. At the same, Rauschenberg played old records on a hand-

wound gramophone and David Tudor played a 'prepared piano'. Later Tudor turned to two buckets, pouring water from one to the other while, planted in the audience, Charles Olsen and Mary Caroline Richards read poetry. Cunningham and others danced through the aisles chased by an excited dog. Rauschenberg flashed 'abstract' slides... and film clips projected onto the ceiling showed first the school cook, and then, as they gradually moved from the ceiling down the wall, the setting sun (Ibid.: 126-127).

By the 1960s performance events became an exciting arena for sophisticated interdisciplinary activity in the USA. The realm of performance and film collided when the Filmmaker's Cinematheque in New York became a venue for performances such as Robert Whiteman's Prune Flat (1965), which combined live figures and film images. Goldberg's account of the performance demonstrates Whiteman's investigation of performance principles, live actions and filmed actions, and their interaction and integration:

Whiteman decided to project images of people onto themselves, adding ultra-violet lighting which 'kept the people flat, but also made them come away from the screen a little bit', causing figures to look 'strange and fantastic'. While certain images were projected directly onto the figures, others created a filmic background, often with the film sequence transposed. For example, two girls are shown on the film walking across the screen, while the same girls walk simultaneously across the stage; an electrical company's flickering warning light, which by chance formed part of the film

footage, was duplicated on stage. Other transformations of film images into live ones were created through the use of mirrors as performers matched themselves against screen images. Subsequently time and space became the central features of the work, with the preliminary film made in the 'past', and the distortions and repetition of past action in present time on the stage (Ibid.: 137).

The interaction of visual imagery, such as slides, photographs, paintings, and films with live action, within the context of live art, mixed media, performance-art and dance, was a subject of intense exploration throughout the 1960s and the 1970s, particularly within the downtown art scene in New York. Yves Klein's Leap into the Void (1960) (See image: 15), showing his leap from the second story of a building, marked the phenomenon whereby a photograph can be staged and presented as a performance or a 'performative' text. Thus, the photograph is not merely a documentation of performance actions but an essential element within the context of Klein's performances. Moreover, Klein intended 'to freeze the action into an iconic image' (Goldberg, 1998: 33). This interaction of live action with photographic media such as still photography or film also 'emblematically illustrates an important point in Mikhail Bakhtin's philosophy, the difference between what is now and what is after-now' (Ibid.). This notion is also explored within the framework of dance on screen whereby performance actions in real time as 'in the now' are shown 'after the now' within a new format which is strictly visual but not 'live'.

Within the context of interdisciplinary activity and the exploration of live and filmed performance in interaction, Dance (1979) demonstrates formal fusion and interaction within a theatrical setting. Lucinda Childs, who choreographed Dance, began her career as a choreographer in 1963 as an original member of the Judson Dance Theatre in New York. In 1976 she collaborated with Robert Wilson and Philip Glass on Einstein on the Beach, and since 1979 she has concentrated on creating large-scale collaborative productions (Kreemer, 1987: 95). The music score for Dance, which was staged at the Opera House at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, was composed by Glass and 'the choreography was developed in strict relation to the musical score' (Childs in Kreemer, 1987: 99). Film imagery was incorporated as an integral part of the dance performance using a stage-wide screen which was hung between audience and dancers. The manner in which the components of cinema, produced by the minimalist sculptor Sol LeWitt, and live dance interacted is described by Childs:

LeWitt chose to introduce film as a visual element that functioned as an integral part of the dancing. He filmed parts of three of the five dance sections in 35-millimeter black and white film. In performance the film projection was perfectly synchronised with the dancers on stage so that when the dancers on film appeared, they were always at the same point in the dance. At times the film image seemed to chase the dancers, sweeping across the stage along with them. Through shifts in camera angle and changes of scale (the dancers seen sometimes in close-up, sometimes in long shot), the spectator's point of view was subjected to an ingenious

series of manipulations. Sometimes LeWitt projected the film directly above the dancers on the same scale, creating a perfect double set of dancers; with split-screen images he displaced them further to the left and right; and he even enclosed image within image (Ibid.: 100).

The form of Dance presented a hybrid theatrical experience based on the formal synchronisation of dance, music and film elements. Although the three artists involved all created within a minimalist framework typical of the 1970s, Dance already embodied the 1980s shift towards interdisciplinary activity, large-scale multimedia productions and a fascination with the media and popular culture (Banes, 1994: 307-308).

In Britain, interdisciplinary practices within the framework of New Dance emerged from The Place in London and Dartington College of Art in Devon. Mackrell's account, in Out of Line: The Story of British New Dance (1992), traces the origins of the New Dance phenomenon and its interdisciplinary nature:

It was from The Place that most of the original energy for British modern dance, and later New Dance, was to spring. Today, the school is a relatively formal institution, with strict standards of entry and an inherited commitment to Graham-derived technique in its teaching. But in the 1960s it was open to any kind of influence. Many of its earliest students, for example, had little dance training, and came from completely different disciplines - Richard Alston and Siobhan Davies were originally art students, while Sally Potter was a film-maker - and their experience of other art forms

contributed to some of their more revolutionary ideas about choreography. Other students, like Jacky Lansley and Fergus Early, were trained ballet dancers who were searching for alternative approaches to dance (Ibid.:7).

Moving Being played an important part within the context and history of New Dance. Although it was not a dance company in the strictest sense, it introduced a strong interest in movement coupled with a vision of a multi-media theatre (Ibid.:15). The company was founded by Geoff Moore, an art student, stage-manager and self-taught choreographer, who in 1968 gathered a group of dancers, actors, designers, film-makers, lighting people and costume-makers for the purpose of creating an experience which was described in the programme for The Real Life Attempt (1973):

(The work's ideas are) to do with painting and the power of the visual image, theatre, and the 'presence' of live performance, film, music, newspaper reports, dancing and 'natural' movement, science, popular culture, poetry, psychology, information of all sorts about people and venues (Ibid.: 15-16).

Moving Being was initially sponsored by the ICA in London and was based for three years at The Place. The company's interdisciplinary mode of creativity 'hit exactly the right note for the experimental mood of the late 1960s, and appealed to a wide audience by cutting across so many different disciplines (Ibid.: 16).

Sally Potter's exploration of film language, dance and performance

within a feminist context resulted in highly visual live performances inspired by the aesthetics of cinema e.g., lighting, editing, juxtaposition of images, movement, location and narrative. In 1976 Potter collaborated with Rose English on Berlin, a performance which took place in four different locations in London, over four weeks. Berlin, Part Two: The Spectacle (on Ice) is described by Goldberg:

Focusing on place, narrative, and the juxtaposition of imagery, this part took place in an ice-skating rink. It was almost cinematic in the way one scene faded into the next - woman in black carrying a stool, a cradle bursting into flame, skating men, and a naked boy (1998: 136). (See image: 16)

Cinematic elements were also incorporated in the performance work of Miranda Tufnell and Dennis Greenwood. Although Tufnell and Greenwood were both trained dancers, critics argued that their work is not 'dance' due to the emphasise on images created via lighting, sound and props and a minimal use of movement (Mackrell, 1992: 75). The black and white world which was created in the performance Silver (1984) had a filmic quality of a black and white - poetic/surreal - film montage. The event is described in Tufnell and Crickmay's Body Space Image: Notes Towards Improvisation and Performance:

Silver began with a large ball containing a Sony Walkman... This provided a moving sound source; we invented a world for it and the sounds that came out of it - a series of slides (made from scratched tinfoil, plaster, string), white sheets, a screen, table and chairs, a bridal veil and an iceberg of transparent plastic, a fish bowl of

water and a candle completed the set - a black and white world. We slowly found our way into this world of slides, sounds, etc., creating a series of loosely connected images and events (1990: 185).

Furthermore, Tufnell and Crickmay's approach to narrative within the framework of performance and choreographed texts correlates to the use of narrative within the context of avant-garde and contemporary film and video making:

The last hundred years of experiment with narrative and non-narrative forms, the existence of film and TV in modern history, and the influence of poetic and image-based modes of thought on performance, have opened the way to extreme freedom in the treatment of narrative. The logical and linear structure of narrative can exist as mere suggestion in forms akin to dream in which drastic shifts of time, scale, context, style of narrative, can be accommodated, linked as often by poetic association as by literal course of events. Narrative can be subjected to all kinds of fragmentation and distortion, where the whole may be condensed into a single moment or series of moments, stretched out to immense scale or broken up and reassembled like a collage (Ibid.: 98).

The above guidelines concerning the making of performance narratives can be applied to film/video making and to the construction of screen narratives. However, as opposed to live performance's terrestrial boundaries of time, space, location, gravity and the limits of the

physical body, film/video can shift the performance experience into the realm of dreams and poetry beyond physical limitations, thus creating screen narratives, such as dance on screen as art, which can exist only on tape or disk and be performed only on the surface of a screen.

The creative potential of film/video language, coupled with the technological advancement applied to motion picture media, particularly during the last two decades, has motivated film/video makers and dance choreographers to produce choreographic works for the screen. Thus, during the eighties and nineties, a clear trend of action can be identified as a phenomenon involving outstanding choreographers creating work especially for the screen. In Britain, amongst the choreographers and dance companies who extended their activity beyond live dance and explored their choreographic ideas on screen are: Lee Anderson of The Cholmondeleys and The Featherstonehaughs, Yolande Snaith, DV8, Siobhan Davies, Ian Spink, Laurie Booth, Gabi Agis, Second Stride, Michael Clark and others. New Dance's involvement with television, according to Mackrell, allowed choreographers, as from the mid-eighties, to explore the freedom of location given by the camera (1992: 139), thus, transporting dance into alternative performance environments, natural or urban spaces:

They played with the ways in which different camera angles could affect the quality of the movement: a floor-to-ceiling shot that made an ordinary balance held on the edge of a small rostrum look like a suicidal lean over a precipice; a close-up could dramatically enlarge a small gesture or highlight a particular part of the body.

They found how a moving camera could insert itself within a pas de deux, could gallop alongside a travelling step to make it seem even faster. They discovered how editing could create new rhythms, and give a different pace to their original phrases of dance (Ibid.).

Mackrell's conclusion with regards to the interaction of dance and television points to the fact that television has the power to promote new dance works and bring dance to a bigger audience than any live performance. She also identifies the transition of dance to the arena of television as 'just one demonstration of how much energy and potential lay in those early experiments that rightly called themselves New Dance' (Ibid.: 140).

2.6. AVANT-GARDE FILM AND FILM AS ART

The exploration of dance on screen as hybrid art form involves the analysis of screen texts which derive from the tradition of the avant-garde and experimental film and video and which approach the medium of film/video as art. As mentioned in section 2.3. the French Surrealists employed film as a medium through which they could give expression to their ideas concerning the irrational contents of the unconscious mind. The film Entr'acte (1924), is a major example of a cinematic ballet in which ordinary movements and events transform into choreographed sequences of surreal and comic activity. Thus, the passage of a funeral procession in the streets of Paris becomes a comic ballet, through the use of slow motion and accelerated motion camera effects, which show the event as a scene taken out of a dream, in which a crowd is gliding smoothly in the air and rushing rapidly through the

city following a camel-drawn hearse (See images: 17-18). Using abnormal camera-angles is another device used by René Clair to create surreal imagery, such as by filming a ballet dancer from below through a sheet of glass at a vertical angle so that she looks like a flower (Stephenson and Phelps, 1989: 40). However, Clair also makes the dancer look comic as the viewer sees her dancing from unusual angles, and as the same filming technique is applied to a dancing Picabia (the script writer) who appears as a bearded female dancer (See images: 19-20). The screening of the film within the framework of a theatrical ballet created, from aesthetic and historical perspectives, a fusion whereby film and ballet are the two forms in interaction, both comprised of the manipulation of movement in space and time and dedicated to the portrayal of modern life.

At the end of the twentieth century, and at the beginning of a new era, dance on screen is still a form used for the manipulation of movement in space and time. However, the pioneers of avant-garde film were the first to explore the creative possibilities of the film language, and its ability to manoeuvre the elements of movement, space and time, as demonstrated by the films of poets such as Jean Cocteau and Maya Deren. Although, Deren's first film Meshes of the Afternoon was made in 1943, thirteen years after Cocteau's first film, Le Sang d'un Poète (1930), both filmmakers give an expression to their personal-mythic rituals (Sitney, 1974: 36) and are concerned with 'a vision of the fusion of arts (poetry and film for Cocteau, dance and film for Deren)' (Ibid.). In fact, for Deren film-making was a substitute for poetry as she

confessed:

The reason that I had not been a very good poet was because actually my mind worked in images which I had been trying to translate or describe in words; therefore, when I undertook cinema, I was relieved of the false step of translating image into words, and could work directly so that it was not like discovering a new medium so much as finally coming home into a world whose vocabulary, syntax, grammar, was my mother tongue; which I understood, and thought in, but, like a mute, had never spoken (1965: 29).

Although Deren's ideas concerning film poetry and film dance were shaped during the 1940s - 1950s, I have found her insight into the nature of visual poetry and dance on screen inspiring. within the context of my creative practice. Primarily, Deren had a vision to be realised on screen using poetic imagery and choreographed movement for the making of 'cinematographic choreography' (Ibid.:3):

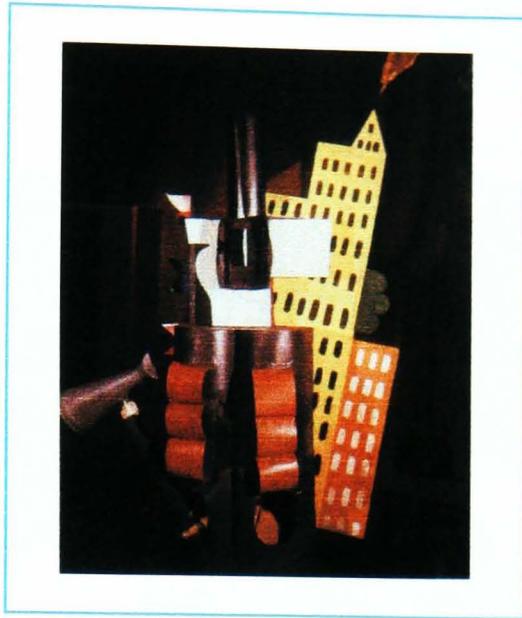
The central character of these films moved in a universe which was not governed by the material, geographical laws of here and there as distant places, mutually accessible only by considerable travel. Rather, he moved in a world of imagination in which, as in our day or night-dreams, a person is first one (sic) place and then another without travelling between. It was a choreography in space... More and more I began to think of working with the formalized, stylized movement of dance, of taking the dancer out of the theatre and of giving him the world as a stage. This would mean not only that the

fixed front view and the rigid walls of the theatre oblong would be removed, or even that the scene of activity would be changed more often than in a theatre, but it meant also that a whole new set of relationships between the dancer and space could be developed. Dance, which is to natural movement what poetry is to conversational prose, should, like poetry, transcend pedestrian boundaries (Ibid.: 3).

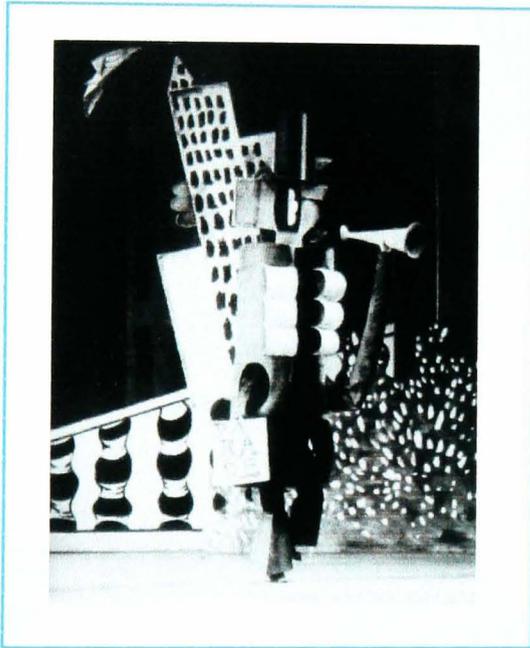
The poetic language of contemporary texts of dance for the screen analysed in this thesis, such as Golden City, Dust and Boy, derives from the tradition of the avant-garde and experimental film and video. These texts are only a few examples out of a variety of contemporary dance films and videos which are choreographed specifically for the screen and are made as visual poems. They embody a resemblance, and a stylistic and formal connection, to what Sitney terms the 'trance film' (1974: 30), deriving from French Surrealism and American avant-garde film, and best demonstrated by Le Sang d'un Poète and Ritual in Transfigured Time (Ibid.: 36). As Sitney demonstrates the 'trance film' is usually led by a single hero or heroine as all other human figures become background elements, or the manifestation of a single persona. The images are not so much symbolic as archetypal, inspired by the vocabulary of ancient mythology, or 'mythopoetic', reflecting the nature of the imaginary landscape through which the protagonist travels, and his or her's inner world, often portrayed via enigmatic images, in which the personal mythic-ritual takes place (Ibid.: 30-36). The analysis of the above contemporary texts in the following chapters reveals how

choreography created for the screen, dance or stylised movements, 'mythpoetic' imagery and personal rituals are all employed within the context of dance on screen as an art form. It also demonstrates how notions taken from early avant-garde film-making are reworked to reflect the fabric of late twentieth century life and culture, using new technologies and current images of the world.

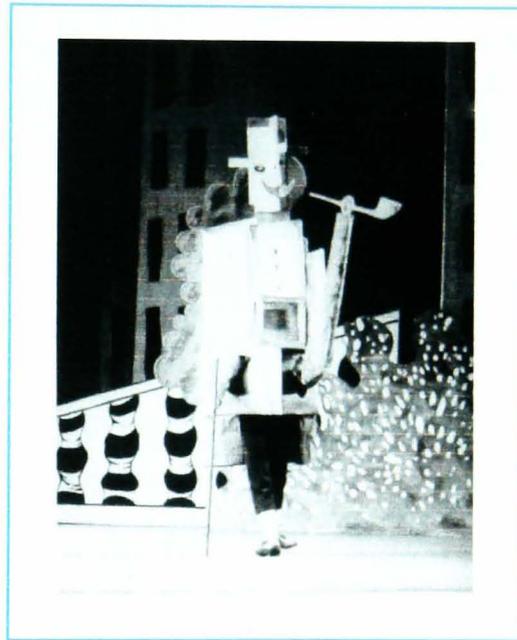
Within the context of cinema as art, I refer to theoretical ideas proposed by the Russian film director Andrei Tarkovsky in his widely acclaimed book Sculpturing in Time, published in 1986. Tarkovsky's approach to cinema as poetry and his demonstrations of visual poetry inspired by Eisenstein's observations of Japanese's Haikku poetry (Tarkovsky, 1989: 66), provide an insight into the nature of poetic experience via screen images. Tarkovsky's theoretical ideas are used to demonstrate how poetic film or video structures are created, and how space, time and action are employed to produce poetic depictions. In this way, dance on screen is established as a hybrid art form within the context of avant-garde film by drawing examples from the work of Deren and Cocteau, and within the context of film as art by referring to Tarkovsky's views on the art of cinema.



1. Parade, see page 29



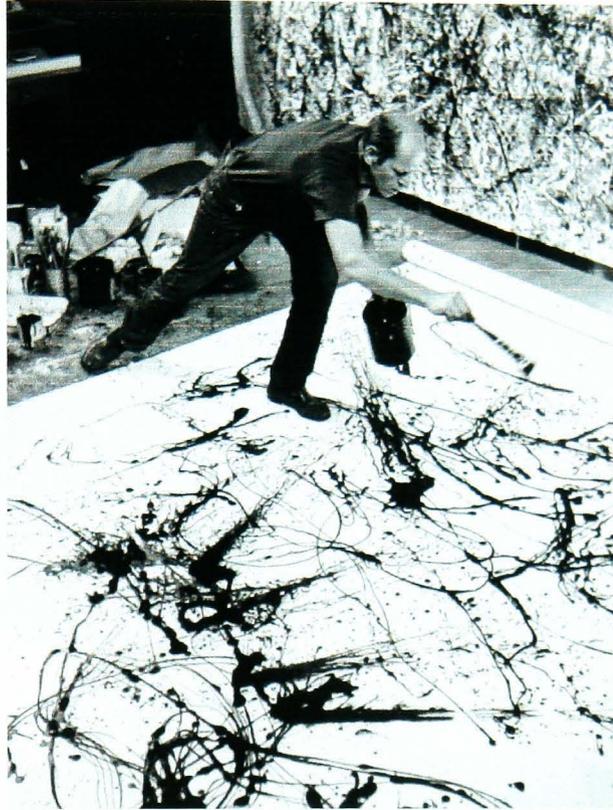
2. Parade, see page 29



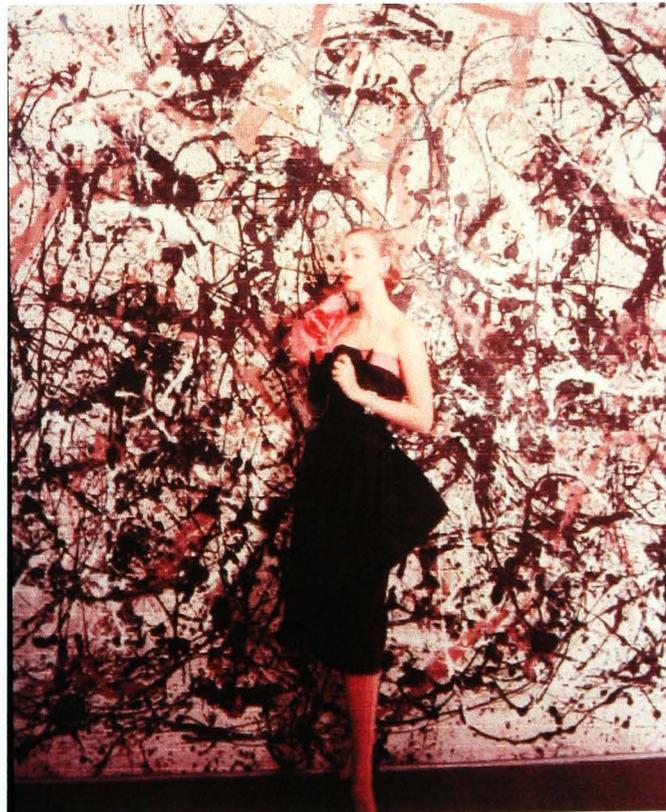
3. Parade, see page 29



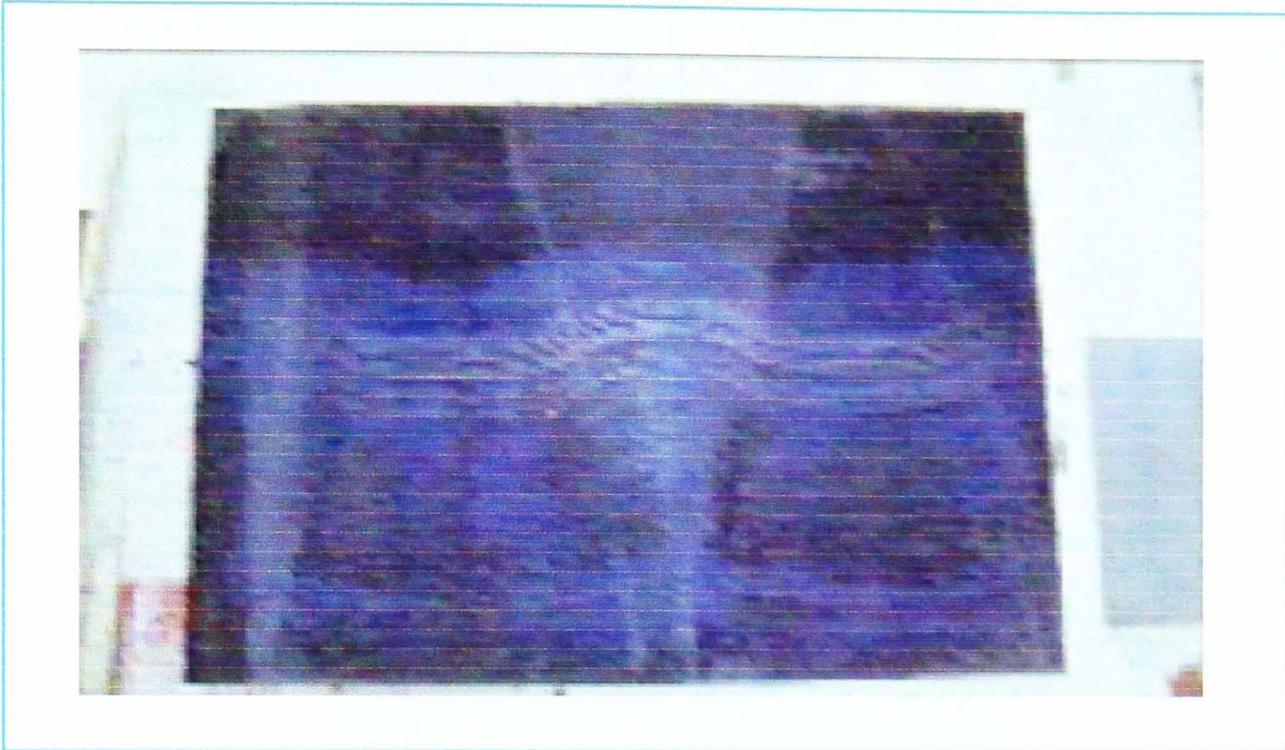
4. Parade, see page 29



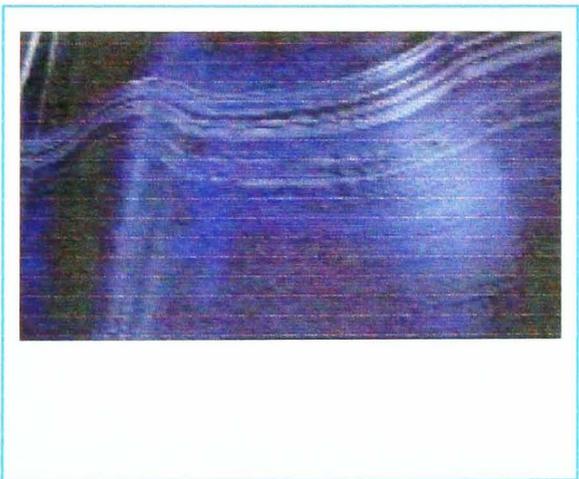
5. Pollock, see page 37



6. Pollock, see page 37



7.Martin, see page 38



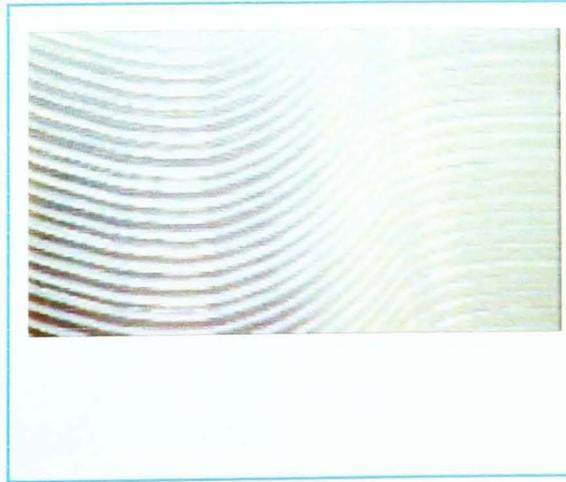
8.Martin, see page 38



9.Martin, see page 38



10.Martin, see page 38



11.Martin, see page 38



12. Gaia, see page 43



13. Gaia, see page 43



14. Gaia, see page 43



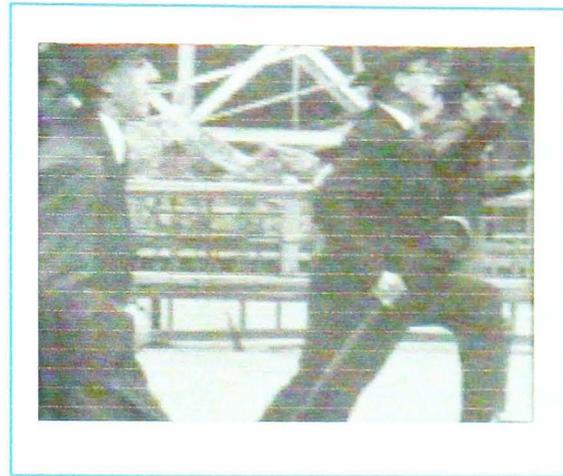
15. Leap into the Void, see page 47



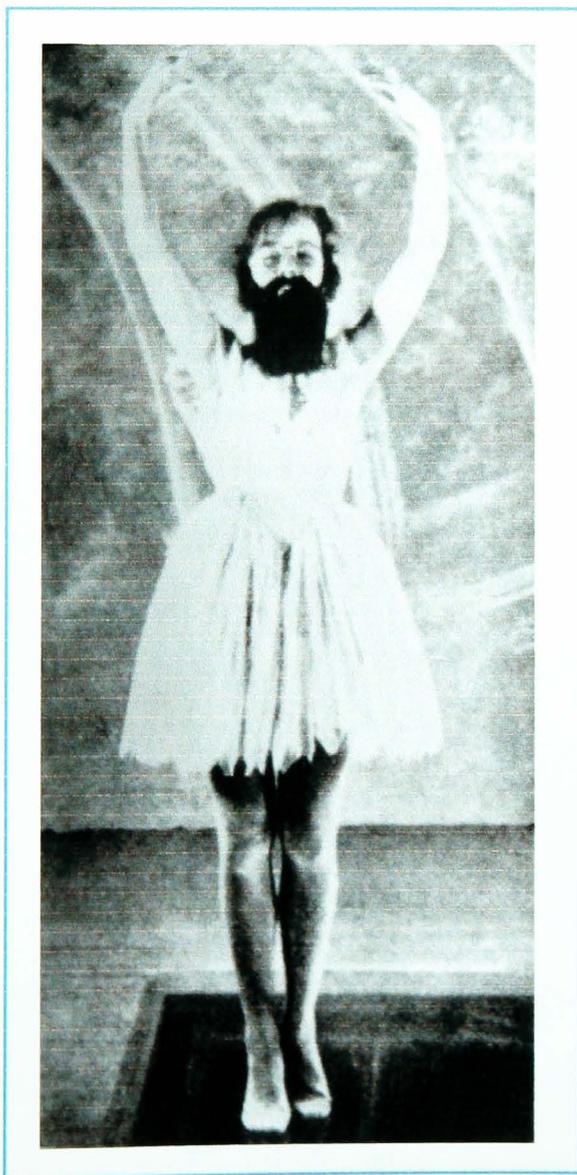
16. Berlin, see page 51



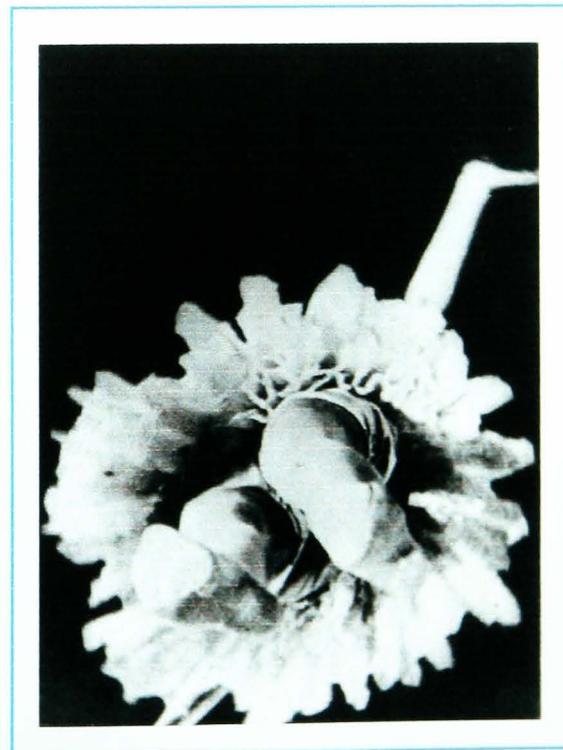
17. Entr'acte, see page 55



18. Entr'acte, see page 55



19. Entr'acte, see page 55



20. Entr'acte, see page 55

CHAPTER 3: CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO DANCE ON SCREEN

3.1. FROM LIVE PERFORMANCE TO SCREEN

Dance on screen is a vague term which could be applied to a variety of forms representing dance through the means of film and/or the electronic media. The first suggestion that springs to mind derives from the basic fact that dance as a live form ceases to exist in the process of its recreation as a screen form. Shown on a television screen, transferred to video or film formats, or onto a computer disc, dance is no longer perceived in its original live framework. From classical ballet, modern, post-modern and new dance, the essential element which is at the core of all dance forms, and which is rooted in the life of dance as a live and physical activity and performance, is no longer applicable in its newly preserved presentation as a screen form. The transformation of media in itself eliminates the fundamental physicality of the dance performance. Although this transformation may not propose a dilemma to those accustomed to the mechanics of audio-visual technology, it has been a subject of debate, and discourse engaged in by film/video makers, choreographers and dance scholars and critics who perceive the transition as problematic.

In the article 'Ballet and Contemporary Dance on British Television' (1993), Robert Penman illustrates a tradition of classical ballet screened on British television from the pioneering days of the BBC service during 1932-1935, and in the years following the war (1945-1954),

whereby ballet enjoyed a generous coverage on television. However, theatre managers feared the competition from television and tried to ban companies using their theatres from appearing on television. The televised programmes survived as soon as a telerecording system was in place, allowing programmes to be recorded during broadcasting. A guide to this material is available in a catalogue compiled by Penman (1986), and published by the BBC with the assistance of the producer Bob Lockyer and the Gulbenkian Foundation. Penman's account demonstrates that by the early 1960s ballet in performance occupied a secure position on independent television, a position reinforced by the extensive work of the producer and director Margaret Dale during 1954-1976. A former leading dancer with Sadler's Wells, Dale produced over sixty dance programmes and arranged for leading ballet companies to dance on television (1993: 111-112). Nevertheless, Penman also refers to problems which occur during programmes of ballet or contemporary dance and which highlight some of the difficulties of viewing dance on screen:

The contrast with performance could not be greater. The movement in both ballet and contemporary dance is highly stylised, and the setting and costume equally contrived. Also, the performers are frequently playing parts to which it is difficult for the general public to relate. The television audience is suddenly invited into very unfamiliar territory. Moreover watching a performance on television at home lacks any of the supporting ritual that going to the theatre provides. The size of the television screen means that dancers seen in a long shot may at times be reduced to the size of

matchstick men. The lack of immediate physical proximity to dancers on stage only adds to the difficulties. The emotional and psychological distance, therefore, that the viewer has to travel in order to appreciate the dance work fully on television is considerable (1993: 114-115).

In addition to the difficulties in appreciating dance performances on screen suggested by Penman, there is the general feeling of a substitute rather than the experience of dance in a different medium. The small screen could easily be replaced by a larger screen on which the film or video of the performance is projected in a darkened theatre. The size of the dancers might increase but the effect would be 'filmic' rather than physical. The screen would create an illusion reflecting the recorded dance whilst maintaining physical and emotional distance from the viewer. It is, therefore, apparent that as soon as live dance is treated through film or video, it is shifted into a different territory, a dimension in which the physical form of dance becomes strictly visual. Once this transition occurs it is no longer possible to view dance on screen with the same criteria as those applied to the viewing of live dance performance, or with the same expectations.

In the introduction to the book Parallel Lines: Media Representations of Dance, the editors Stephanie Jordan and Dave Allen present the key issues that emerged from the collection of articles compiled by them in order 'to set an agenda for further consideration of the role of dance on public television' (1993: ix). With regards to the transition of dance

from a live form to a television form Jordan and Allen refer to Sarah Rubidge's report according to which 'she frequently hears members of a dance audience arguing for the superiority of the live work over the television version and the implication is clearly that dance on television fails to represent the live experience' (1993: ix). However, the dance audience to which Rubidge refers may be expecting to find the live dance experience duplicated on screen disregarding the formal transition which has been taking place, a transition which utterly changes the manner in which dance is represented, viewed and experienced. Starting with the simple act of filming dance, the dance action is no longer alive in a physical sense, or seen from the viewer's point of view. It is now the camera's eye which determines the visual information and which does not duplicate the human eye and its visual perception: 'camera vision is unlike ordinary human vision in that the camera reproduces the whole of a scene without discrimination and the cinema can imitate the selective capacity of the human vision only in a very inferior and clumsy fashion' (Stephenson & Phelps, 1989: 63).

Regardless of technological advances, the human eye is controlled by the mind, whereas the camera vision is a result of a variety of factors such as lenses, angles, movements and lighting which are manipulated by the operator behind the viewfinder. The mechanical process of filming and the data recorded in the case of live dance re-frame the action not only in a visual sense but also within the different framework of an audio-visual screen form. Michael Kustow who, as Channel 4's Commissioning Arts Editor, was responsible for the broad range of

dance shown during its first decade, expressed a similar opinion on the nature of dance on film when he told Chris de Marigny: 'There is no such thing as just filming a performance. Every choice you make with a camera is a choice' (de Marigny & Newman, 1993: 86). Furthermore, the choices that one is making whilst filming a performance are in fact reshaping or even recreating the live event on film or video. This process of choosing the visual information to be recorded or filmed results in the disintegration of the original performance. According to Jordan and Allen: 'This act of choosing leads, inevitably, to the fact that all dance seen on television has been constructed through the selection, recording and reordering of the primary activity of dancing' (1993: ix-xi). Jordan and Allen, therefore, suggest that the initial activity of dancing has been formally manipulated through film or video technology to the point that it loses its identity as a physical and live event in a specific time and space. The visual form of the dance, its position in space and its progression through time are now determined by the camera and the process of editing which reorders the initial material.

The representation of dance on film, video or television is bound to create a conflict amongst those who approach the activity of dancing as a physical and live art form. The conflict emerges from the fundamental differences between the medium of dance and the medium of film and video. The experience of a live performance corresponds to our experiences in the real world whereby we control what we see. In Cinema as Art Stephenson and Phelps suggest that 'in the real world,

vision is controlled by attention, but in the cinema it is the other way around: attention is controlled by vision. In everyday life we see what we attend to; in the cinema we attend to what we see...' (1989: 75). Thus, in a live performance we attend to what draws our attention, whilst in dance on screen we see what the director has chosen to show us. In addition, there is the notion of real space and time whereby in a live performance the audience is an integral part of the same space and time in which the performance takes place. Although the space which the audience occupies and the performance space or stage are separated, the actual performance as an event occurs within the same continuous existence. The performance, therefore, takes place in the same physical environment shared by the audience, and its impact attacks their senses in a direct physical manner.

The same performance transmitted on screen becomes an external experience rather than a direct and physical one. This emerges from the position of the spectator with relation to the screen. The screen establishes a clear distinction between the spectator and the objects on the screen. 'The most important difference is that the screen is external to the spectator, who is not involved with it as he is with his normal surroundings' (Ibid.: 35). In fact, the screen may create a sense of alienation, distancing the spectator from the performance in contradiction to the live event which forms a part of the spectator's environment. In a live performance, the audience's experience is both external and internal as the event both affects their external environment and stimulates them intellectually and emotionally via a

direct physical contact. Film and video operate differently from a live event, engaging the viewer through the language of images and sounds, using the screen as an instrument of communication. Dance thereby takes on a new life on screen as it is shaped by the film or video apparatus.

On the basis of the above observations, it is clear that dance on screen and dance as a live performance are two entirely different disciplines resulting in different viewing procedures and experiences. Although both dance and film or video are concerned with movement in space and time, the manner in which they employ these notions are fundamentally different and contradictory. When dance and film or video merge into a single framework and presentation the typical distinctions between the two forms become less clear and thus problematic. However, the formal integration of dance and film/video is used in a variety of ways, and in different degrees of fusion. To clarify the areas of practice concerned in the collaboration of dance and media and to set-up a framework for the analysis of dance on screen as an art form, the following section offers a system of categorisation. It divides the vast landscape of dance films and videos into categories of specialisation. It also isolates the areas which are specifically relevant for the discussion of dance on screen as a hybrid art form.

3.2. A SYSTEM OF CATEGORISATION

The categorisation system for dance films and videos offered in this section is based on a model employed by IMZ/ Dance Screen: an

international festival and competition for dance films and videos. Since 1990 IMZ - The International Music Centre in Vienna, the founder and co-organiser of Dance Screen - has been responsible for seven international competitive festivals which took place in Frankfurt, Lyon and Cologne. Since its foundation, Dance Screen has become a major international meeting point for the key creative and business powers of broadcasting, dance and dance programmes made for the screen in the non-broadcast area. Dance Screen competition categories, which have maintained their format since 1990, provide a framework for the classification of dance films and videos, a system which, assists in defining the nature of any film or video production according to its approach to the subject of dance and its treatment.

One of the forms of dance on screen which has enjoyed popularity and a degree of success on British television from the late 1950s is the dance documentary. Penman's survey of ballet and contemporary dance on British television demonstrates that 'documentaries became an increasingly important element in television's coverage of ballet' (1993: 113). He identifies the success of the dance documentary as the result of its relatively accessible form:

Documentaries about dance and dancers are often successful because they take the viewer backstage to meet the artists on human terms. Interviews are conducted in familiar, everyday surroundings, and the story unfolds like a conversation. Also the television box is an ideal frame for the head and shoulders of someone sitting and talking. Dance is often seen in a relaxed

atmosphere of a rehearsal when dancers are struggling with the steps. The viewer can, therefore, readily identify with the subject and easily assimilate the information (1993:114).

The dance documentary as a category and a practice representing dance on screen has retained its particular qualities up to the present time. It is a form used to inform the viewer about the contents and forms of dance practices and about the lives and activities of dancers, choreographers, or any other participants in a variety of dance activities. It is a particularly useful tool in dance education, and is used to raise the awareness of dance as a practice, and the perception of this, by the general public. It is a category which does not introduce the problems which the transition of dance as a live art form onto a screen form has posed. As dance documentaries are about dance rather than dance presentations on screen they can avoid the danger of being misrepresentations of dance performances. However, films such as Heartland (Canada, 1997), directed by Laura Taler and choreographed by Bill Coleman and Urban Clan (Australia, 1997), winner of the IMZ/ Dance Screen 99 award for 'Best Documentary', directed by Michelle Mahrer and choreographed by Stephen Page, are current examples of innovative documentaries which incorporate factual data with segments of dance reworked and choreographed especially for the screen.

The second category of dance on screen is the specialised area of stage or studio recording of a live performance. Although it is a form aimed at preserving live dance and its authentic qualities, and transmitting these via the television screen, its structure has become a sophisticated craft

employing carefully devised methods of filming and editing. The role of the film or video director is to improve the viewing experience of the live dance on screen, thus avoiding the perception of dance on television as a mediocre experience that substitutes the live performance with an inferior screen version. In well-crafted recordings such as A Midsummer Night's Dream (UK, 1999), directed by Ross MacGibbon and choreographed by George Balanchine, and Bella Figura (Holland, 1997), directed by Hans Hulscher and choreographed by Jiri Kylian, the directors always worked to serve the choreography. Thus in the case of Midsummer Night's Dream, according to Dirk Gryspeirt on the behalf of Dance Screen 99 jury: 'The framing of each image and the timing of each shot is exceptional', in the sense that it is in total alliance with the nature of the choreography, (Music in the Media, IMZ Bulletin, 1999: 2). The Stage/Studio Recording as a category does not relate directly to this thesis's enquiry into the nature of dance on screen as a hybrid art form, a form which distances itself from live dance and choreographic stage work. (For further insight into this category see Bob Lockyers's article: "Stage Dance on Television" in Jordan and Allen, 1993: 127-146).

3.3. THE CAMERA RE-WORK

The next category takes the collaboration between dance and the film and video medium a stage further. This category, termed the Camera Re-work, is defined by the IMZ/ Dance Screen 99 'Competition Rules' as: 'a film/video based on existing stage production that has been re-conceived for the camera in the process of creating

televisual/choreographic work in its own right' ('Competition Rules', Dance Screen 99: 4). In the context of television in Britain, television adaptations of stage works were introduced only in the mid-1980s with the appointment of Michael Kustow as Commissioning Editor for the Arts. He began to present a regular series of dance programmes on Channel 4 which he called Dance On 4 (Rubidge, 1993: 187). Before Kustow's programmes, dance on television took the conventional form of dance documentaries and televised stage performances. In the article 'Recent Dance Made for Television', Sarah Rubidge addresses the problems confronted by directors and choreographers in the process of reworking stage dance for television. Rubidge addresses the central question: 'is the purpose of a television adaptation to re-create as closely as possible the stage version of a work for a small screen, or to create a new version of the original for television?' (1993: 207).

The dissatisfaction that many choreographers and dance audiences experience when watching a stage adaptation on screen is, according to Rubidge, created by perhaps having the wrong expectations of a screen presentation. She then asks whether the dance audience is looking for the wrong energy on television, whilst comparing it to the dynamics of physical movement in space:

On television we are seeing a virtual image - one which is not really present but is the result of myriad electronic impulses combined to produce a visual image resembling something available to perception in real life. The formal structures of a television rendering of a dance piece needs to be very different

from those of a stage performance, both in detail and in larger compositional structures, if a viewer's attention is to be sustained (1993: 207).

Rubidge strongly suggests that a camera adaptation of a live dance performance should be very different in form and experience from the original dance on stage. In her view the dancer on stage as a physical being becomes a virtual entity on the television screen: a reflection of the real thing captured by the camera. Her observation highlights a key factor in the transition from dance on stage to dance on screen, whereby the dancer as a physical entity transforms into a mere reflection, a recorded visual image that replaces the physical form.

The article 'Collaborations White Man Sleeps and Wyoming: A Discussion' reveals about the dilemma experienced by choreographers reworking stage performances for television. Siobhan Davis, David Buckland and Peter Mumford discuss the making of White Man Sleeps and Wyoming as part of 'Dance Lines' productions for Dance on 4 . The two videos were billed together in a one-hour programme transmitted on May 28th, 1989. The works had two identities, as both stage dances and camera re-works. The following quotation from the discussion reveals the loss that choreographers, dance scholars and audiences often feel when dance is being reworked for the screen:

'PM: I think that what you lose most of all is that event-chemistry in the theatre. That's what's irreplaceable, and that's why one always wants to keep working in the theatre.

SJ: For me, what is lost is the physical empathy with the

performers that you get with a live event. I think that's why some of my favourite moments disappeared.

SD: Yes, you are there seeing it and feeling it in the theatre.

PM: You're also there with other people.

DB: And to take a thousand people with you is really extraordinary.

PM: And you don't try to replace that. You don't want to replace that' (Jordan, 1993: 177).

Mumford's conclusion to the discussion reinforces the need to draw a line between a stage production and a screen production, separating the two contradictory representations of dance:

I also firmly believe that dance on TV shouldn't simply be second best to theatre experience... I don't even want to make comparisons between TV and theatre versions of the same work. What's interesting about making work that's **only** for the screen is that it avoids the comparison between theatre and screen version, and it forces the dance material to stand up on the screen. You look at it on its own, in isolation, in that medium (Ibid.: 182).

3.4. SCREEN CHOREOGRAPHY

The term Screen Choreography, as defined by the IMZ/ Dance Screen-99 'Competition Rules', is used for dance films and videos which are productions 'that feature choreography that has been created specifically for, or in close collaboration with, the camera' ('Competition Rules', Dance Screen 99: 4). This category includes works which do not have life on stage and are not motivated by the notion of a live performance in a real time and space. It is an area of intense creativity with a strong

sense of experimentation. Questions are now being asked by screen choreographers and critics as to whether Screen Choreography is an art form in its own right. If indeed it is a new art form, the questions it raises include issues such as: 'Does the 'choreography' pertain to the camera or the body? Does the quality of the dancing matter?' (Sulcas, 1999: 88).

Another question that can be asked is whether the dance has to be attributed to the human body alone, or whether it can be performed by non-dance entities or virtual dancers, as in the case of Sonata do mar, a short film from the Netherlands directed by Janica Draisma. The film is based on the 'Life Forms' computer programme for choreography developed by Merce Cunningham. The choreography was created for three virtual figures, built up from rings, who dance regardless of gravity, place or time. The Screen Choreography winners of Dance Screen 99, Dust (UK, 1998), choreographed by Miriam King and directed by Anthony Atanasio and Men (UK, 1997), choreographed by Victoria Marks and directed by Margaret Williams, also raise questions as to what constitutes dance or choreography within the context of Screen Choreography. Choreography is applied to the environment, which is natural in the case of Men (the Canadian Rockies) and imaginatively manipulated (dunes) in the case of Dust. Both works explore the qualities of movement rather than dance as a technique.

According to Sulcas: 'The Screen Choreography category makes it clear that dance on film can exist as an art form quite different from dance on

stage' (Ibid.). This provokes the question as to whether Screen Choreography should be labelled as 'dance' or 'event'. Even more important is the question of whether Screen Choreography is an art form in its own right. These questions are central to this thesis and an integral part of the exploration into the nature of dance on screen as a hybrid art form.

3.5. THE COLLABORATION OF MERCE CUNNINGHAM AND CHARLES ATLAS

Merce Cunningham was one of the first choreographers to employ film and video as creative devices with which he extended the scope of his choreographic work. His exploration of dance and movement via the camera, editing and special effects coincided with his relentless search for new ways to dance. Claudia Rosiny describes him as the 'father figure of post-modern dance... a pioneer of choreography staged directly for the camera... who, as early as the '70s, was experimenting with various effects of time and space on the television monitor' (1999: 32). Dance on screen as Cunningham and the video and film maker Charles Atlas discovered in their joint and adventurous projects throughout 1974 to 1983 has offered new options for choreography. Dance on screen enabled Cunningham to take movement into a new territory, thus presenting him with a variety of possibilities for the manipulation of movement in time and space. This resulted in the transformation of his choreographic ideas from their live and physical form into an audio-visual form with new aesthetic concerns. While Atlas held a permanent employment with the Cunningham Foundation, he was able to work with

Cunningham on an ongoing basis, exploring the possibilities of combining elements of film/video and dance. In an interview with Ulrike Boecking, Atlas recalls Cunningham's personal commitment to realise dance/media productions. He describes their approach as process-orientated and experimental (Boecking, 1999: 42).

Works such as Blue Studio: Five Segments (1975) and Locale (1979) approach video and film choreography in two entirely different ways. Whereas Blue Studio: Five Segments, is about movement within the frame and incorporates elements of video technology, Locale (Cunningham's first dance on film as opposed to video) is concerned with the impact of the film camera in movement along with, around and amongst dancers. The movements of the camera were choreographed in detail and were as important as the movements of the dancers. As a result, the camera was an active participant in the dance and responsible for the choreographic structure of the film. Methods of camera choreography employed in Locale are described by Atlas and provide an insight as to how the co-ordination of dancers and camera worked:

The opening shot of Locale is a continuous single SteadiCam shot (16mm)... First we worked out the path the camera would take in space and what direction it would be pointing... With this we set the approximate speed at which the camera would travel. This set the (travelling) space and approximate timing for the dance sequence. Cunningham created the movement for the dancers and set it in space. Then we began dance rehearsals with the camera and made necessary adjustments to both dance and camera plans. The

shootings consisted in attempting to "get it right", i.e. multiple takes (quoted in Boecking, 1999: 43).

The motion of the camera in Locale proved to be unsettling to many viewers, and especially to dance audiences who have different expectations as to how dance should be viewed and perceived. The movements of the camera in Locale apparently caused some viewers to experience something close to motion sickness. It also created an effect which caused some viewers to complain about 'being robbed of their autonomy' (Vaughan, 1998: 153). The critic Marcia B. Siegel, for instance, wrote in Soho News (April 2, 1980) that 'I'm... impelled to give up my own centre and submit to an external motion that I can neither predict nor control' (quoted in Vaughan, 1998: 153).

In Locale the sound track by Takehisa Kosugi is composed of electronic music and ambient sound effects and was added once the film was completed. The interaction between the image track (the dance) and the audio track is determined by their autonomous status. In the article 'Space, Time and Dance' (1952) Cunningham wrote about the role of music in his work, emphasising the need to separate the dance and the music from their conventional association and allowing them to evolve independently in space and time, thus, 'making the connection between the dance and the music one of individual autonomy... The result is the dance is free to act as it chooses as is the music' (1998: 39).

The use of a silent audio track in Blue Studio: Five Segments is also challenging and exciting. The absence of sound triggers other audio

possibilities beyond the video text. The silent video differs from the silent films of Maya Deren, for example, where silence is used to emphasise the autonomy of the film image and the uniqueness of the purely visual poetic film. The video Blue Studio: Five Segments, by avoiding sound, suggests that silence is a form of sound, and furthermore points to the possibility of the sound existing outside the video text. Whilst studying the video, it occurred to me that the sound track exists in the environment where the viewing experience takes place. As total silence is a rare phenomenon, and as we exist in a world full of sound, each of our activities is accompanied by an audio trail. What determines the audio experience in the event of watching Blue Studio: Five Segments are the actual sounds heard in the environment in which the tape is viewed. Therefore, each time the video is watched, its soundscape changes according to circumstances and chance. And with regards to the dance, the implication is that it is free to evolve in space and time regardless of, or in conjunction with, any audio accompaniment. This approach applied to dance on screen was the result of the collaborative work produced by Cunningham and John Cage, and their exploration of sound, noise and music and their interaction with dance. The silence of Blue Studio: Five Segments echoes Cage famous piece 4' 33" for three movements, described by RoseLee Goldberg in Performance Art:

The work's first interpreter, David Tudor, sat at the piano for four minutes and thirty-three seconds, silently moving his arms three times; within that time the spectators were to understand that everything they heard was 'music'. 'My favourite piece', Cage had

written, 'is the one we hear all the time if we are quiet' (1988: 126).

Blue Studio: Five Segments is choreographically designed by Cunningham, Atlas and Nam June Paik using computerised video effects such as: the chroma key effect allowing a figure to be seen against a changing background, split screens, live action and animation. The last section of the video includes five Merce Cunninghams, 'the section had to be shot five times, during which he tried to remember what he had been doing and where in the space he had been doing it, so that he would not occupy the same space more than once' (Vaughan, 1997: 196). A major part of the choreographic treatment took place in post-production. The computerised editing, according to Kenneth King in the article 'Space, Dance and Galactic Matrix', enabled Cunningham to realise ideas such as: 'how a dance might appear if the background, or scenery, were always changing' and 'create five separate interactive dancing selves, and dance on a road with a continuously moving landscape' (King, 1998: 191-192). (See images: 21-26).

The collaboration of Cunningham and Atlas reflects Cunningham's interest in the synthesis of the arts. Their dance/media productions should be viewed from the broad perspective of twentieth century art. This collaboration between dancer/choreographer (Cunningham) and video and film maker (Atlas) implies the contemporary notions of collaboration between artists from different disciplines, the interaction of different media and of artists as collaborators with their materials. In 'On Collaboration' (1974) Calvin Tomkins discusses Cunningham's

collaborations with artists such as Jasper Johns, Frank Stella, Andy Warhol, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, John Cage, and Robert Rauschenberg who made sets and costumes for twenty-four Cunningham dances. The common ground that unites the collaborators on Cunningham's productions was their approach to the materials with which they worked. Tomkins found a common ground between Cunningham and Rauschenberg according to which:

Cunningham's feeling that dance movement could be presented for its own sake - not to express ideas or emotions or to tell stories - has its clear parallel in Rauschenberg's wish to work as a sort of "collaborator" with his materials... to liberate colour from any non-chromatic reference (Tomkins, 1998: 46).

Viewing the Cunningham and Atlas productions from this perspective, it is apparent that the interaction between dance and the apparatus of film or video is strictly formal. For example, in Blue Studio: Five Segments the choreography is created jointly by the dancer (Cunningham) and the video medium as it shapes and moulds his movements in space and time. The video medium becomes a 'paint box' adding in and wiping out colours and forms whilst constructing and deconstructing the dancer's movements within a constantly changing environment.

In their collaboration Cunningham and Atlas created film and video texts which call for a new appreciation of dance as a screen form. Their work stimulates viewers' participation, but in a different manner from the participation of an audience in a live stage dance. The viewers are

confronted with non-linear texts of dance, whereby space is inconsistent, time is broken through the fragmentation of different events, and dance movement is as inconsistent as the time and space in which it takes place. The notion of gravity is no more a factor which influences the choreography or the dance movements, as the dancer can appear anywhere in the frame, or in space and time. The physical qualities of a live performance are replaced by different notions of physicality implied by camera movements that, as in the case of Locale, create amongst viewers a sense of disorientation, loss of control, and physical sensations of dizziness and motion sickness.

The Cunningham and Atlas screen dances are 'performative' texts that incorporate both the performance on screen, and the performance of the viewer as active participant in their realisation. As these texts do not convey predetermined meanings or ideas they allow the viewer the freedom to interact with the dance events on the screen. In his approach to performance on stage or on screen Cunningham shared Marcel Duchamp's view 'that the artist should be seen as a "mediumistic being" who performed only one part of the creative process, and that it was up to the spectator to decipher and interpret the work's inner qualifications, relate them to his own experience, and thus complete the creative cycle (Ibid.).

3.6. THE 'PERFORMATIVE' PROCESS

Live performance, which is at the core of dance, ceases to exist within the text of dance depicted on screen. However, the concept of

performance in the context of contemporary life, art and culture does not limit itself to live and physical actions alone. Performance as a process is currently perceived as encompassing a variety of activities in a state of perpetual animation. Performance can be actual or virtual and its life can extend beyond the limits of space and time. One of the advantages of dance depicted on screen is its non-transitory state, as opposed to its transitory state as a live performance. But being non-transitory does not imply being a passive documentation of 'dead' actions. On the contrary, there are other 'performative' qualities within the text which bring it to life as an active performance form.

In the recently published book Performance: Live Art Since The 60s, RoseLee Goldberg proposes that, in the 1990s, performance is a central topic, not only with reference to art history, but also in relation to contemporary culture, philosophy, photography, architecture, anthropology and media studies. Performance activities, such as personal ritual, dance, theatre, cabaret, etc., provide insights into contemporary viewpoints on issues such as the body, gender and multiculturalism (1998: 9). Performance is now extended into the varied layers of contemporary life and may indeed become the fabric of life itself in the new millennium. This assumption is reflected in Goldberg's account of performance:

According to the current tenets of critical theory, the viewer of art, the reader of a text, the audience of a film or a theatre production are all performers, since our live, immediate response to an art work are essential to the completion of the work. Even the lecturer

or the critic "performs" a text, as I do too in these pages, allowing each reader to insert her or his own social, economic, psychological, and educational experience between the lines. In this way, we are all activists, never more passive recipients of the material of culture: we are kinetic collaborators in the construction of ideas. The term "performative" has come to describe this state of perpetual animation. It appears regularly in academic texts to underline the significance of engagement by artist and viewer (1998: 9-10).

The term 'performative', according to Goldberg, is also used to describe the content of highly charged art works such as the action painting of Jackson Pollack, or the performed photography of Cindy Sherman. Art texts do not have to be 'alive' or maintain a live performance aspect in order to be 'performative' and to contain strong performance elements. The same approach can be applied to dance created for the screen. Establishing the elements of performance within the context of a screen form calls for dance or any form of live performance to be transformed into a performance language on screen. Goldberg's survey of live art establishes the scene of contemporary art, dance, theatre, film, video and media as rooted in performance. Dance made as a screen event is a product of contemporary art and culture, a practice that has been evolving from the contemporary approach to performance, and the application of 'performative' elements within the framework of active art forms.

3.7. A PROCESS OF SELECTION

The above sections demonstrate dance on screen as a rich but complex area and practice. I have, therefore, adopted a system of categorisation which allows the division of dance films and videos into particular areas of specialisation. The categorisation system does not include the entire scope of dance on screen, as certain aspects of the practice form areas of expertise which do not directly involve or affect the central topics raised by this thesis concerning dance on screen as an art form.

These areas are by no means less important, on the contrary, they can actually form the subjects of other research projects. For example, the employment of dance on screen in the Hollywood musicals of the thirties, forties and fifties, and in contemporary musicals, are subjects of what could give rise to separate research. Although, the musical genre is narrative-based according to the Hollywood formula of the narrative film, it integrates a variety of dance styles in interaction. Within the context of dance in musicals the work of Fred Astair and Ginger Rogers (Bilman: 1997), Busby Berkeley (Martin: 1993), Jerome Robbins in West Side Story, and Balanchine and Katherine Dunham in Cabin in the Sky (Banes, 1994: 61) are only a few major examples out of many others of a variety of dance styles on the cinema screen. Another specialised area of dance on screen is the music video, to which Ann E. Kaplan dedicated an entire book: Rocking Around the Clock (1987). However, Kaplan's investigation does not include in-depth analysis of the dance aspects of the music video, and how choreography in dance terms, and in film/video terms (camera and editing) is employed in music videos.

Due to the fact that the musical and the music video both form separate areas of specialisation and deserve separate study, they are not included in the categories of dance on screen as part of the enquiry in this thesis.

3.8. CHOREOGRAPHY FOR THE CAMERA

In 1945 Maya Deren's article on her film Choreography for the Camera was published in Dance Magazine. In this article Deren expressed a vision concerning the art forms of film and dance:

It is my earnest hope that film-dance will be rapidly developed and that, in the interest of such a development, a new era of collaboration between dancers and film-makers will open up - - one in which both would pool their creative energies and talents towards an integrated art expression (1965: 4).

Deren, who was termed the 'Mother of the Underground film' by Sheldon Renan, and shared the title 'activist of the avant-garde' with Germaine Dulac according to Regina Cornwell (Rabi, 1984: 196), was the first experimental film maker to propose clearly a combined expression of film-dance. Her observation of film-dance as a form in its own right was exemplified in Choreography for the Camera which she proposed as a 'sample film-dance, that is, a dance so related to the camera and cutting that it cannot be 'performed' as a unit anywhere but in this particular film' (1965: 4).

Groundbreaking festivals and symposia took place in the United States and Canada during the 1970s including Dance On Camera, a film festival specialising in dance (Rosiney, 1999: 32). This festival, the

oldest dance film annual event in the world, was established in 1971 and has been organised since 1972 by the Dance Film Association founded by Susan Braun in 1956. The first European international event emerged with the Grand Prix Video Dance in 1988, which coincided with the growing interest in contemporary dance, and in 'the new form connected with film', in France during the 1980s (Rosiney, 1999: 32).

The television series Dance for the Camera was created and produced by Rodney Wilson of the Film, Video and Broadcasting Department of the Arts Council of Great Britain, and the BBC2 director and producer, Bob Lockyer. The series was founded in 1994 and produced four series of Dance for the Camera. The fifth series which went into production in 1999 is co-produced by Rodney Wilson (Arts Council of England), Bob Lockyer (BBC/ACE), and the Dutch company MPS, thus realising dance for camera productions in both the UK and Holland. Dance for the Camera was produced on the basis of experiments made by the production company 'Dance-Lines' mentioned in section 3.3. The interesting form that emerged out of the works created for Dance for the Camera, and which is central to this thesis is what Leask describes as the 'new genre' of

Screen Choreography (also referred to as dance video creation and camera choreography). This was dance made especially for the camera. Choreographers and directors worked together to create new dance which replaced the often boring two-dimensional recording of existing choreography. It was a creative collaboration between movement, camera and the editing process, which

explored both dance and TV. Rather than focusing on traditional vocabularies and steps, it was more concerned with unconventional filming and striking images (1999: 34).

When Rodney Wilson was commissioning dance films with Michael Kustow (Arts Commissioning Editor at Channel 4), he discovered the areas of dance and film that attracted his attention. The main aspect which he found interesting was 'looking at dance through a camera lens on location' as opposed to looking at dance on stage (Wilson, 1999: 57). Secondly, he was fascinated by the 'affinities between dance and cinema' finding that 'at the heart of this connection between the two forms was movement' (Ibid.). Wilson recalls Lloyd Newson's comment when editing a film as he realised that with film he could 'choreograph the movement of an eyelid in the way he choreographed a body on stage' (Ibid.). This comment became for Wilson an 'emblematic statement', in the sense that it exemplified a vision as to what was possible in the context of Dance for the Camera (Ibid.: 57-58). Behind the concept of Dance for the Camera was also Maya Deren's short film Choreography for the Camera which, according to Wilson, became an inspiration for a television series composed of short films and videos (Ibid.: 58). Eventually what emerged from conversations between Wilson and Lockyer and negotiations between the Arts Council and the BBC was according to Wilson:

the idea of collaborations, a synthesis of film and choreography, with specially created music/sound design as an organic part of the project, designed for the screen (Ibid.: 58).

In addition, there is the important point of diversity attached to Dance for the Camera's programmes which allows the synthesis of film/video and choreography to remain an elastic form. This attitude is described by Wilson:

The main point about the format of Dance for the Camera is that it allows diversity. The one thing we did not define about the series was a style or type of dance, or a particular filmmaking approach. Considerations of sexual identity, age, gender, disability, social dance, professional and non-professional performers, cross-over, the post-modern mix, are all possible within a format which is easily described. Dance shades into movement, new combinations and challenges emerge (Ibid.).

Creatively stimulating dance films and videos were also created outside the limits of Dance for the Camera, and Wilson in fact adds that dance films and videos with a similar vision as to dance on screen were made outside the programming structure of Dance for the Camera (Ibid.: 57). However, the underlying creative and theoretical principles exemplified by the Dance for the Camera series are crucial for the understanding and perception of dance on screen as an art form.

3.9. DANCE ON SCREEN AS HYBRID ART: THE ARTIST'S VIEW

The factors which determined my theoretical research and practice were concerned with the quest for an art form that combines elements of both film/video and dance, but which does not rely on previous texts outside the form. The possibility of dance on screen existing as an art form has

been expressed in discussion panels which I have attended during the Dance Screen 99 festival for dance in the media in Cologne. Rodney Wilson summarised his opinion on the matter in a declaration published in the Dance Screen 99 Catalogue:

It is often asked whether dance for the screen is a new art form. We cannot agree on what to call it, dance film; videodance; dance programme; or possibly digital dance, but the answer is obviously yes. If by any mischance it is not, in my view it does not matter, because it does everything art does anyway, and what more can you ask for? The future of dance film seems extremely bright, despite the shortage of money and difficulties in reaching audiences. The wheel has turned and now it is hard to imagine anyone saying they are not making dance specifically for the screen. It seems self-evident, it is the only way to go (1999: 58).

However, the questions of whether dance on screen is an art form and where to locate it within the vast field of dance films and videos are constantly being asked. As indicated in section 3.4. the critic Roslyn Sulcas identifies dance on screen as an emerging art form within the category of Screen Choreography i.e. dance films and videos, which are productions that feature choreography that has been created specifically for, or in close collaboration with, the camera. Claudia Rosiny, on the other hand, suggests that 'the most interesting and balanced fusion of dance and video can be found' within the category of Camera Re-works (Dance Screen 99 Catalogue: 54). As my aim is to claim the autonomy of dance on screen as an art form, I focus the research on the category of

Screen Choreography, thus making a clear distinction between works created for the screen and works created for the stage.

To demonstrate my ideas about the fusion of video and dance I was engaged in the making of the video Gaia - Mysterious Rhythms as an integral part of the research process. It proved to be an invaluable experience which enabled me to assess the core elements of the research topics from creative/practical points of view as an artist employing the physical performance of a dancer on location in conjunction with video technology. The practical work provided an insight into problems shared by choreographers and video makers attempting to develop dance for the camera and enabled me to discover the potential of choreography for the screen as an art form capable of depictions beyond the scope of live dance and performance. It became clear to me that the audio-visual language of the form can transmit active elements of movement, space and time in a direct and almost tactile way to the viewer via the screen. I realised that it is a form which uses the frame as an environment, with the choreographer looking through the viewfinder to locate the body in space. The movement is of the body, but also of the camera, and any other phenomena embodying movement.

Through the interaction of practice and theory, and through a process of analysis and reflection, I pursue the identification, and the structuring of a model claiming the autonomy of dance on screen as a hybrid art form. The analysis of Boy, Golden City, and Dust in the following chapter explores the formal structure of screen choreography and the

relationship between form and content as it is expressed in three different texts. The analysis provides insight into this hybrid form, which like other forms, such as painting, sculpture or even dance, has its own particular qualities, boundaries and limits.



21-26. Blue Studio, see page 77

CHAPTER 4: CHOREOGRAPHY FOR THE CAMERA AND THE SCREEN: ANALYSIS OF SELECTED WORKS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The works which I have chosen to analyse out of the vast arena of dance films and videos, although award winning and critically acclaimed within the context of dance on screen exemplify and demonstrate the creative potential of choreography for the camera and the screen, as opposed to choreography as applied within the context of live and theatrical dance. This research demonstrates how the notion of choreography for the screen differs from the perception of choreography in dance terms. The texts which are analysed in detail are not dance-based in the purest sense: firstly, they were created specifically for the screen and did not emerge from a previously choreographed dance piece, and secondly, they explore the aesthetic qualities of movement unfolding through space and time outside the context of any particular dance style or discipline, and can be evaluated as choreographic screen forms. The analysis of their structures proves that the texts cannot be viewed as dance-texts outside the context of 'dance on screen' in which they form a hybrid aesthetic language based on performance activity and choreographic principles as they are applied by screen media.

David Hinton's 'Notes on Dance and Film' (1999) emphasises the autonomy of dance on screen as hybrid art form which can be independent of the art of dancing. Hinton defines dance as 'action which has been structured in a rhythmic and expressive way' (Ibid.: 50). A

definition which, according to him, can also serve film: 'Making a dance and making a film are the same kind of enterprise: giving structure to action' (Ibid.). Furthermore, Hinton suggests that if we view film as a formal language, it is 'surely a choreographic language' (Ibid.). He then explains:

To create a shot is to create an image of action. To edit shots together is to give shape to a sequence of actions. The expressiveness of this shape depends on the effectiveness of its rhythms. The final structure of a film is a structure of many different rhythms - the rhythms of camera angles, camera movements, shot sizes, and edits, as well as the rhythm of the action itself. Any completely "pure" film - one which entirely escaped the influence of literature, theatre, painting, etc. and used only the language of cinema - would, like dance, consist simply of action arranged in a rhythmically satisfying way. Of course, most everyday movies do not consist simply of action. They are full of talking and acting... But film at its most "cinematic" (at its purest and most powerful) when it communicates entirely through action. For me, this is the attraction of trying to make dance films (Ibid.).

However, Hinton also explains 'why most actual dance films are so unsatisfying' (Ibid.) despite the similarities between film and dance:

The central problem is obvious: dance doesn't need film. Dance exists as an independent language in its own right - a theatre language with its own rhythms and its own structures. To film a dance is to impose one structure on top of another. The danger is

that the structure and rhythms of the film will simply confuse the structure and rhythms of the dance, and the rest will be a mess: a clumsy compromise between theatrical language and film language (Ibid.).

Finally, Hinton's vision as to the future of dance on screen as an autonomous choreographic language is of great value to those attempting to explore or refine the form. It also supports the central argument of this thesis that dance on screen is a hybrid art form with independent aesthetic identity:

I do think that the most interesting experiments in dance films are those that try to escape entirely from theatrical ideas and theatrical values - because I think this is where the future lies. Eventually, there will be a non-theatrical, cinematic style of dancing which will be accepted just as casually as we now accept a non-theatrical, cinematic style of acting. There will be a choreographic language designed for the film frame rather than the theatre space, and thought out according to the rhythms of editing. When this happens, making the dance and making the film will become one and the same thing: a single rhythm and a single structure (Ibid.).

The connection between the avant-garde and the experimental film practice and dance on screen as a contemporary form is raised throughout this thesis and is again relevant for the analysis of the chosen texts. This is due to the fact that in form and content the texts employ avant-garde strategies especially in the manner with which they

manipulate images, space and time in a non-linear framework. According to Hargraves, 'traditionally, dance film has been more related to experimental film where standard uses of time, space and narrative elements are more permeable than the Hollywood model. Experimental film share a similar aesthetic to that of the choreographer's creation, in that both are able to go beyond narrative to draw in viewers with visceral, emotional hooks' (2000: 2).

My choice of films to be analysed was also determined by a common motif which is analysed by Sitney (1974: 30-36) as a phenomenon recurring in the 'trance film'. This is usually led by a single protagonist travelling in a 'mythopoetic' landscape reflecting his/her inner world. The motif of the single protagonist runs through the analysed texts in this chapter, including Gaia. My choice was, therefore, determined by the motif of the single protagonist as it is explored in three different contemporary texts, created during the closing years of the twentieth century within the context of dance on screen, and as they reveal three fascinating inner worlds portrayed by a child, a young man and a female 'swimmer'.

The imaginary realm of a child is the subject of Boy (UK, 1996) directed by Peter Anderson and choreographed by Rosemary Lee. Anderson, a video artist, and a film and video director led the 'Dance on Screen Master Class' during the Dance on Screen festival at The Place in October, 1998. His credits include the highly successful BBC Dance for the Camera collaborations with choreographer Rosemary Lee: Boy

and Greenman (1997/1998), which also portrays a single protagonist. In 1998 Anderson and Lee created Infanta for BBC television, another short five minute dance film featuring a young girl as a leading protagonist. A solitary journey is portrayed in Golden City (Canada, 1977) as 'an other worldly character wanders out of his forest habitat only to find himself transformed into a denizen of an urban landscape' (Richard, 1999: 1). Directed by Moze Mossanen and choreographed and performed by Jose Navas, the film is one of a trilogy known as Dances for the Small Screen produced by Mark Hammond and Laura Taler, and which amongst other venues was screened at the Dance On Camera Festival's 'Salute to Canada' during January, 2000 in New York: 'This trilogy is typical of the wonderful variety of dance films being produced in Canada' (Ibid.). Golden City is an example for a text in which the inner world of a character is projected onto the realm of contemporary environment creating a dreamlike reality. Dust (UK, 1998) is described as 'a surreal short film that follows the 'mental' journey of a stranded, long distance swimmer battling with the elements, one of which appears to be time itself', Dance on Screen's programme, The Place (October, 1998). The text is also described in Dance Screen 99 Catalogue as tracing 'the solitary journey of a ... swimmer within a waterless world. Searching for the sea of her dreams, her struggle eventually brings rain, regeneration and hope' (1999: 155). Winner of the IMZ Dance Screen 99's award for 'Best Screen Choreography', the text is an excellent example of dance on screen as hybrid and autonomous art form, and which in terms of content and form is focused on the inner journey of a single protagonist in a surreal environment.

4.2. Boy (UK, 1996)

Director: Peter Anderson Choreographer: Rosemary Lee

Dance for the Camera 3 Duration: 5 minutes

Produced by MJM Productions, Arts Council of England and BBCTV

Boy depicts the inner world of a child as he creates an imaginary reality typical of children's games. His playful activity and the imaginative and spontaneous qualities of his movements are utilised to create a choreographic event on screen. In addition to the manner in which the text innovatively manipulates the boy's performance via camera, editing and sound, its subject matter, focused on the realm of a child, demonstrates the potential of the form, i.e. dance on screen, to take viewers into areas which are rarely explored in depth or revealed on screen, within the contexts of storytelling, drama or documentary, such as the poetic exploration of a child's physical activity and playful behaviour as he invents his imaginary world. The text, therefore, explores the physical and emotional qualities of the boy's experience and, via screen language, his vivid inner realm is made available to the viewer.

Boy, demonstrates how the natural and spontaneous body language of a child can become the subject matter of choreography when it is observed by a camera and manipulated by screen technology. Moreover, it emphasises the special and genuine qualities of a child's body language as he is fully engaged in a game, occupied by his inner world

moving freely, and unrestricted by the self-conscious mode of movement and behaviour typical of the adult moving body. Although the choreographer, Rosemary Lee, is responsible for the child's performance, she succeeded in preserving the authentic qualities of the child's body language creating the impression that the boy is not 'a performer' but simply 'a boy'. This is also suggested by the vocabulary of movement utilised by the boy which consists of simple jumping, leaping, kicking, swaying of arms and running, and simple but 'magical' gestures of hands with which he controls his 'imaginary friend' and the 'flying suit'.

Boy is a text choreographed for the screen and which could not be performed in any other live media. It creates a world of fantasy and magic relying only on the activity of one child. Time, space and movement are economically manipulated, and through a succession of nine brief shots in a time span of thirty seconds the viewer is introduced to the boy, the seaside environment through which he moves, and to his imaginary friend with whom he begins to interact. In addition, the soundscape introduces an air of mystery with specially designed electronic sounds denoting suspense, enhanced by a bizarre bird-call, and mixed with natural sounds which appear to originate from the boy's environment i.e. the sound of wind and sea. The soundscape also constructs the boy's realm as it projects via sound his inner perception of his world which is full of suspense and enigma, and prompts the atmosphere of his self-invented adventure.

The first nine shots are devised so that the boy is introduced climbing on a dune and reaching the edge of a cliff overlooking the shore and sea through four shots. Each shot shows him moving via different camera angles which tightly frame his climbing body until he reaches the edge of a cliff which is revealed via a long shot. The following four shots form the interaction between the boy and his 'double' through a close-up shot of the boy's anticipated expression which is intercut with what he sees, which is the view of the shoreline and his 'double' running across the shore with camera following him via a panning movement. This is immediately intercut with a close-up shot of the boy's bewildered expression as he follows the 'double' with his gaze, which is intercut with a following pan shot of the 'double' running across the shore, from the boy's point of view. The 'double' suddenly stops running and turns toward the boy, looking up at him. This is intercut with a close-up shot of the boy now swiftly rising, which is intercut with a full shot of him standing at the edge of a cliff, showing him kicking into the air with fighting gestures and pointing at the 'double' on the shore (See images: 27-28 of boy and 'double').

This very short introduction already embodies the structure of the entire text in the sense that time, space and movement are condensed into concise units of choreographed actions through which movement, both of camera and child, is constantly evolving and manipulated via editing into a relatively fast rhythmical pace, as each shot's duration is approximately three to five seconds. This formal structure constitutes a text which is made of short fragments of interrelated actions and in

which continuity of movement in space and time is constantly interrupted and recreated. This type of choreographic treatment is unique to the screen and does not rely on the physical continuity of rhythmical movement through space and time as in a live performance. Hence, rhythm is determined by editing and not by actual physical movements.

Another choreographic device unique to the screen is the image of the 'double' created through the editing of different shots of the boy and which result in the illusion that the boy is interacting with a different character or an identical twin. The boy and his 'double' never appear in the same space together nor are they framed by the camera in a single shot. They interact via sight, movement or gesture but do not physically meet. This type of interaction produces a new choreographic arrangement which is unique to screen texts and replaces physical interaction between characters with an interaction which is unrestricted by physical limitations. Thus, a character can interact with an image of himself/herself, or even with a number of characters, in a manner which can not be performed on stage without breaking the illusion by having to rely on the physical presence of performers in real time and space. The space created within the limits of the frame as opposed to theatrical space has the advantage of taking performers into imaginative realms which contradict the laws of any theatrical presentation and its reliance on the continuity of performers in performance, according to which a single character can not be in more than one place at the same time and can not be physically divided into two identical characters.

The interaction between the boy and his 'double' continues through a series of intercuts of shots of the boy kicking, jumping and waving his arms at the 'double' below him on the shore, and of the 'double' reacting to the boy with a similar pattern of movements. This 'duet' ends when the 'double' is seen collapsing on the sand followed by a close-up shot of the boy now lying on the sand. At this point the boy is gazing at an empty expanse of shore onto which wind is blowing white clouds of drifting sand. Unexpectedly, the 'double' fades into frame and into the shore like a vague silhouette which forms into a solid figure running with arms stretched to the sides of his body, tilting from one side to the other like a flying bird or an aeroplane, and fading out of frame like a ghostly figure, leaving the shore empty again. The surreal quality of this image, enhanced by a soundscape of sea, blowing wind and drifting sands, intensifies the sense of two realities merging, i.e. the reality of the boy on the shore and the imaginative realm created via his interaction with his 'double'. It also highlights the event, in formal terms, as choreography created for the screen through the use of screen technology which allows a simple event involving a boy running on the shore to transform into a magical moment in which his moving figure fades in and out the frame like an illusive character, rather than a truly physical entity, and moves in an environment which, although real, i.e. seashore, has the visual quality and soundscape of a surreal expanse (See images: 29-30).

The interaction continues with a new 'duet' in which the boy is tapping the sand with his fingers and then framing his eyes with his hands as if

to capture and 'frame' the 'double' seen running in various locations on the shore. The movements of the tapping fingers and framing gestures are accompanied by sound effects which highlight their nature as concise magical actions made to captivate the 'double' who appears in frame as soon as he is 'framed' by the boy. Whilst the boy is shown in tight shots, the 'double' is shown in long shots, as he jumps from the top of dunes, runs freely on the shore and across dunes accompanied by the soundscape of the sea merging with the sound of his running footsteps on the wet shore or travelling sound effects (See images: 31-32). Finally, as the 'double' is being followed across the dunes, his identity merges with that of the boy now leaping into the air from the top of a dune. This event comprises three leaps which are intercut into a consecutive pattern of movement. Thus, the boy is shown leaping into the air (camera below him framing him falling from the height of the dune) and landing and rolling downward the sandy slope (camera on the sand catching him falling). On the third descent his leap in mid-air is extended via slow motion, which together with the soundscape that highlights his time in the air and the crashing impact of his landing, transforms the leaps into majestic moments of rise and fall full of excitement and childlike bravery (See image: 33).

Through the 'magical' movements of his hands the boy 'invokes' the 'flying suit' which appears to be hovering in the air above him. The interaction with the 'flying suit' consists of a struggle through which the boy attempts to get hold of the garment and overpower it. A soundscape of blowing wind and battered garment, mixed with the boy's fast breaths

as he jumps to get hold of the suit, accompanies the interaction. The event has the dynamics of a battle as the boy attacks the 'flying suit', whilst the camera emphasises his involvement via tight shots of his upper body reaching for the garment, battering the cloth, or in long shots as he jumps to hit or kick the suit which flies above him (See images: 34-35). The action comes to an end with the 'magical' movements of the boy's hands which dispel the 'flying suit' (See image: 36).

The movement of the boy's hands dissolves into a series of shots of him on the dunes assuming the walk of a birdlike creature which is followed by a bizarre sound of a calling bird. This is intercut with a series of shots involving the boy and his 'double', who gradually merge into one identity, rolling down the slope of a dune, jumping from a dune's top and frantically racing across the shore (See images: 37-38). Next, the 'flying suit' is found by the boy floating on the shallow water by the shoreline, and picked up by him he waves it around his body, and then runs away across the shoreline carrying the garment along with him. The formal treatment of this particular event, which is rather simple in terms of detail and movement, is another demonstration of how choreography for the screen can highlight the quality of ordinary movements and events and transform them into poetic choreographic depiction. Three shots deliver this event, starting with a full shot of the suit floating on water whilst into frame enters the boy's hand picking and dragging the garment out of the water. The action is enlivened by the soundscape which, in addition to the suspenseful motif which runs throughout the

film, integrates the sound of babbling water around the suit, and the sound of the garment pulled out of the water in a swift and strong movement. The next shot, which frames the boy's upper body as he waves the suit around him, is engulfed by the sounds of strong wind, the boy's breaths as he forcefully waves the cloth, and the garment being battered by the wind. The shot is intercut with a long shot of the boy who continues the movement and then starts running away from the camera along the shoreline disappearing into the distance with the echo of his running steps on the wet sand. The shots are coloured in brownish tones merging the boy and the suit within a pictorial landscape and a highly dynamic environment of sound and vision (See images: 39-41).

This treatment, which brings into view the finest details of the boy's experience, highlights what often escapes ordinary adult experience, and which is embodied in the sheer observation of reality as seen from the point of view of a child, a reality in which every component is alive and magical and every moment and movement are heightened with a sense of wonder and discovery.

4.3. Golden City (Canada, 1997)

Director: Moze Mossanen Choreographer/Performer: Jose Navas

Dances for the Small Screen Duration: 7 minutes

Produced by: Mark Hammond and Laura Taler

Executive Producer: Louise Garfield

The Analysis

Golden City is a fascinating journey led by a young man, as a single protagonist, in a world in which reality and inner states of mind are synthesised into a highly imaginative and sensitive poetic vision. The screen text forms a pure audio-visual and choreographic experience which can not be translated into a literary text such as a written script, or be reproduced as a live performance. Therefore, any descriptions of the text can not substitute for the actual viewing experience or deliver the emotional nuances and the overall choreographic design constructed through a total fusion of performance, environment, camera, editing and sound. Any verbal or written descriptions of the text negate its primarily poetic and visual identity as dance for the camera and the screen.

The text is divided into two parts which take place in two different locations, i.e. a forest and city streets. In the first part (2 minutes and 25 seconds in duration) the man is shown in an exotic forest ecstatically dancing in a silvery outfit of a net top, corset and a short skirt layered with chains. His dancing figure shimmers in silvery hues against the background of the dark green shades of the grounds. The camera is utilised in this part mainly to reveal the man to the viewer and follows him in fast tracking movements as he runs and revolves through a hidden path amongst the trees. The camera captures him in tight shots and following shots which frame his moving figure in the environment as the centre of attention in what can be described as a personal trance-like event. The notion of a trance is also connoted by the electronic soundtrack with a mix of trance-like drumming, the calls of forest

birds, and the metallic sound of chains rapidly shaken which corresponds with the metallic glow of the man's outfit and the chains of his skirt (See image: 42).

A transition occurs when the man pauses, moving his arms like the wings of a bird which coincided with travelling sound of a bird's wings. From a full shot the action dissolves into a shot of the camera framing his moving upper body in medium shot (See images: 43-44). Seen from the back he now turns to face the camera and the viewer. He steps forward with an intense gaze as if fascinated and hypnotised by what he sees. The frame is washed by red-golden light as he sends his hands (the action is intercut with a medium shot of him from his back) to separate the branches of trees, revealing a view of city skyscrapers located at the far side of a river bank. A shot of his astonished gaze is intercut with the view of the city washed by the red-golden light with clouds rushing across the sky and the river restlessly moving, a surreal depiction enhanced by the camera in accelerated motion (See images: 45-47). A new transition now takes place which transports the man from the forest to the city within a flicker of a second: a close-up of his astonished gaze as he views the city's allure is intercut with a shot of the skyscrapers' structures seen from his point of view and the view of the camera as he enters the frame, now walking in a city street dressed in a suit like a man of the city (See image: 48). The manner in which the man is transported from the forest to the city is a formal device typical of dance on screen and screen choreography whereby film/video language is used to transport the action from one location to the other without

breaking the continuity of events or movement, whilst location, setting, time or appearances change.

The actions in the city are all tinted in red-golden hues which produce a surreal effect and a heightened sense of reality whereby all mundane activities are elevated and assume extraordinary or poetic traits. The soundscape for the city and the second part of the text as a whole is composed of an electronic melodic theme with reflective and meditative qualities. This atmospheric soundtrack corresponds with the inner realm of the man as he glides through the city as if in a dream, his body moving or posing gracefully and in total freedom against the rapid pace of city life and the oppressing architectonic structures which uplift his body and soul as he soars free of gravity into the golden sky.

The man's passage through the city is composed of four movement motifs each forming a choreographic screen event. In the first motif the man walks and revolves in fluid stylised steps across a busy street followed by the camera. As he revolves, his movement dissolves with a shot of him revolving which adds a sense of lightness and transparency, without breaking the action, and the impression that he is gliding rather than simply walking in the street (See image: 49). In contrast to the casually walking people, the man appears as a unique phenomenon existing within an isolated sphere at the heart of the city. In the second motif the man's upper body is framed against the backdrop of skyscrapers and his evocative and stylised upper body movements are taken in slow motion. A choreographic motif evolves as his moving

figure is frozen through a freeze-frame, and via dissolve and superimposition and a new figure emerges out of the frozen one and continues the movement (See image: 50). In this manner the man's movements are frozen and 'resurrected' three times, and as a character he exists on screen briefly both as a still and frozen figure and a figure in motion. The formal interaction of the frozen figure with the moving figure which dissolves out of it creates a choreographic pattern which is unique to the screen. The sound of birds' wings accompanies this motif and echoes the sound of wings heard in the forest when the man was moving his upper body like the wings of a bird. Although he is in a cityscape, his movements are fluid and light and the skyscrapers around him intensify his desire to reach upwards towards the sky.

The notion of time as an elastic principle which can be manipulated, stopped, frozen or speeded up is explored further in the third movement motif. In this motif the man is shown posing in static gestures as he stands in the heart of busy urban streets. However, whilst he poses in calm, relaxed and static movements, the urban activity around him, composed of traffic, street lights and people, is moving rapidly in accelerated motion (via accelerated motion camera effects) (See image: 51). The meditative soundtrack which envelops the actions enhances the visual depiction, revealing two opposing movements in interaction: the gestures of the man as movement frozen into static poses and in contrast the fast speed of urban life. The result is that the man's gestures take on a meditative quality as he stands still and calm at the centre of a chaotic environment, depicting a state of motionless and peaceful

detachment from the world of high-speed motion and activity.

The fourth movement motif combines both content and form in a highly evocative choreographic and poetic event on screen. The man's ambition, inspired by the skyscrapers, to reach the sky is translated into a visual depiction showing him jumping into the air and rising upward in slow motion and fluid movement. Thus, through a series of intercut shots, he is shown being elevated in a straight line along the vertical structures of skyscrapers until he reaches the city skyline and jumps into the golden clouds. From the clouds his descent is choreographed through a series of intercut shots showing him landing in slow motion and in a straight fluid movement along the vertical architectonic structures of the city until he is back on the pavement of a street (See images: 52-55). This highly stylised choreographic event, created via blue screen effect, is another demonstration of dance in screen terms created through the combination of performance and technology unique to screen media.

The man's journey ends as he is transported back to his forest habitat to which he returns, dressed in a suit, to re-encounter the mystery of his dark interior into which he slowly steps, his gaze full of wonder and looking above him he hears the travelling sound of birds' wings (See images: 56-57). This journey can only be available as a screen text and combines what is unavailable during a stage performance, i.e. concentration on particular parts of the performer's body such as his facial expression as a focal point revealing a unique state of mind, or the

manipulation of his movements into choreographic compositions via camera and post-production effects, which result in images of body in movement which are unattainable within the context of live dance. The images created in this text are not only valid as new forms of body in motion on screen but as forms which reveal the content of an inner and poetic realm which can only come into life and be portrayed via the aesthetic means of dance on screen.

4.4. Dust (UK, 1998)

Director: Anthony Atanasio Choreographer/Performer: Miriam King

Duration: 8 minutes Producer: Anthony Atanasio

The Analysis

Dust is a text which can be viewed primarily in formal terms as its subject matter is embodied within the formal treatment and can be described in only few brief sentences which would inevitably fail to translate its visual and poetic traits. However, Dust according to Miriam King, is about a long distance swimmer in search for water, a description which should not be understood literally but as a metaphor encapsulating the wealth of connotations which the text generates. During 'Insight 2', a discussion held at The Place during the Dance on Screen festival in November, 1999, King also described the 'long distance swimmer' as a metaphor for the journey of a dark soul who is searching whilst struggling to find water or the essence of life. As the soul eventually finds the dark liquid representing life and regeneration,

and as rain begins to fall on the desert moonlike world in which the journey takes place, the text is also, according to King, about faith and hope. Furthermore, King made a connection between the character of the swimmer and images of mermaids which, according to her, are symbolically associated with bridges forming between dreamlike worlds and reality. The protagonist of Dust exists in a state in which her reality, i.e. her search for water in a desolate moonlike planet, and dreamlike states in which she swims in a dark pool of liquid, merge to form the resolution which brings about the liquid essence of life and the rain into her world.

However, Dust's special quality is in its construction as the eight minute text is constructed of extremely fragmented imagery and each shot remains on screen for approximately three to five seconds. In this structure the protagonist's body is also subject to formal fragmentation, and there is a focus on movement details, such as the movement of an eye lid, or the trace of the body as it moves through space and time, such as when the swimmer's hand-print on sand is catching fire. There is also an involvement with the qualities of textures and patterns in movement, such as when the earth surface cracks before the protagonist is discovered buried under layers of sand and dust, or when the dark liquid that she tries to preserve inside the palms of her hands streams in black patterns over her arms. The images are inter-linked via associations, as the viewer recreates the text whilst making the connections between images which gradually reveal the protagonist's landscape and journey. This fragmented screen text 'notable for its beautiful, hallucinatory

sepia-toned images' (Sulcas, 1999: 89) has a surreal appeal with a picturesque quality of abstract, action or process painting dealing with the intensity, texture and trace of movement in space and time rather than with the movement itself.

The formal features of Dust make it an interesting case within the context of dance on screen, and as the winner of best 'Screen Choreography' (IMZ/Dance Screen 99) the text prompts central questions as to the nature of dance on screen as an art form. Thus, when the critic Roslyn Sulcas asks whether 'dance' is an appropriate label for works such as Dust, which according to her can also be termed as 'performance' or 'event' (Ibid.) she emphasises the importance of actually analysing the text and identifying its specialised form.

Whilst viewing Dust and reflecting on its structure and content, I arrived at the conclusion that the text forms an important example of the specialised form of dance on screen as hybrid art. Hence, it assists in supporting the central argument of this thesis. In my view the text tackles the issues of the body in motion and the notion of choreography in terms which are applicable to the screen, revealing what can not be portrayed in a live performance, and bringing into view qualities, textures and patterns concerned with the movement of the body and its impact as it clashes with the environment through which it travels. Through Dust the viewer has an insight into the emotional depth of how the protagonist's movements feel, their inner dynamics, their weight and textures. The text is not concerned with the 'physical muscles' which are

responsible for the movements but with the highly charged emotions which drive them. An example is when a small movement, such as when the protagonist's fall on her knees on the sand, transforms into an 'earth cracking' impact, enhanced by the powerful soundscape connoting a mighty crash resembling the echo of a meteor hitting the earth or of the earth vibrating due to the impact of inconceivable force.

This exploration of the inner nature of movement, such as the above mentioned example of a simple fall which turns into a colossal event, demonstrates how dance on screen can bring the experience of movement to the viewer in a manner which can not be achieved in live dance, by fragmenting, isolating and framing movement details and mixing them with sound effects. This technique destroys the notion of 'dance' and instead delivers new experiences and visions of the body in motion which transport 'dance', or the movement of the human body, into a completely different arena controlled by screen technology. Furthermore, the visual surface of Dust is fragmented, and the images unfold on screen as flashes from a broken or disjointed environment. There is no attempt to join movements into a coherent pattern but, on the contrary, the attention is on incoherence and the breaking of the body as a form in order to emphasise the qualities and textures of movement details. For example, the character is first revealed by a close-up of a hand appearing underneath sand and blowing dust which is followed by a shot of clouds of dust. Next, a face appears from underneath the dust wearing swimmer's spectacles, which is followed by a shot of cracking earth. It is intercut with a close-up of a single

spectacle which is intercut with the image of cracking earth, followed by a close-up of a single spectacle revealing the movement of an eye lid opening. Imagery of blowing sand leads to a shot of a character lying facing the earth covered by layers of sand and blowing dust. As if buried by the sand the swimmer's body is now exposed again by the wind which blows the sand away. This image fades to black. The imagery described is engulfed by a highly dynamic electronic soundscape which connotes the volatile power of the elements: earth, air, water and fire, with which the swimmer interacts. The soundtrack is also closely linked to the images creating an intense montage of constantly evolving soundscape. The audio-visual qualities of the movements and textures of images, such as the earth being opened from within as it cracks, and clouds of sand blown violently by the wind, are an integral part of the choreographic composition, and form and reflect the protagonist's world.

The interaction of inner and external realities is best exemplified when black liquid pours out of the swimmer's closed eye onto the sand on which she lies creating a pool of liquid by her face. This imagery is intercut with a fast series of shots of the swimmer's body immersed in black liquid which coincides with the mechanical sound of a camera's shutter as each image comes into view. An audio-visual connection is thereby made between the swimmer's eye and an eye of a camera, and whilst her physical eye is shut her inner-eye captures the desired images of her in liquid which pours out of her eye to form a pool beside her. This perfect marriage of inner and external worlds is not only the result

of mere image manipulation, but one of the characteristics of dance on screen as hybrid art, which explores movement relating to the body in a context in which the limits of physicality, as expressed in stage performance involving the continuity of the physical body in motion within a clearly defined framework of time and space, are pushed beyond their conventional boundaries and into the sphere of fantasy and magic. This interaction also allows a performer to dream or be static and act at the same time that the dream-state penetrates into the realm of physical activity as a 'real' physical event.

The swimmer's search for water is pressurised by a lack of time symbolised by the clock which she discovers in the sand. The clock and its ticking sound enhance the urgency involved in her actions to find the liquid of life. The fragmented form of the text, divided throughout by short shots of concise action and sound, also reinforces the speed in which the events take place, and although swift in pace, they are highly charged units of intense actions. As time is divided into brief segments, space and movement are also fragmented, and although the swimmer exists in a single location there is a sense of disorientation as she seeks for water. The notion of disorientation and of incoherent space is also increased by the breaking of the text into short and separate units of actions. In this manner, Dust offers a choreographic experience in which movement and space and all actions are broken into fragments and edited into a mosaic of dynamic and restless audio-visual event.

4.5. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the above three texts demonstrates the creative potential of dance on screen as an hybrid and screen-based art form. Each text explores choreography in screen terms in a distinctive manner, and within the framework of an original event involving a single protagonist moving in an imaginative realm. Thus, the texts exemplify the potential of dance on screen to portray highly dynamic performances and inner-worlds which can only exist as screen forms, creating a fusion of performance and poetry within an audio-visual format.

Although each text is the depiction of a unique performance on screen, the texts do share the fundamental principles which constitute dance on screen as an autonomous art form. The creative principles at the core of dance on screen form a model which define its aesthetics (See Chapter 6). However, the central principles are the components of movement, space and time, perceived in screen terms, as they are the ingredients utilised and choreographed by the camera and all other post-production technological devices. The result is a performance, delivered on screen as a screen form and a screen-based language, which explores the depth and the wealth of the human body in motion and the experience of any phenomenon which can be set in motion. The principle of performance is at the heart of the form and can be found in the activity through which the text is created involving the initial activity of performance captured by the camera as a performer interacting with the action. The performance of editing of image and sound is also responsible for the new form of performance created for

the screen. And finally it is the viewer who performs the text as the recipient of the audio-visual information on screen whilst deciphering the dynamic content on the basis of a personal point of view, experience and knowledge.

The physical separation between viewer and screen highlights the creative potential of 'screen choreography' as screen based art form which relies on the language of cinema involving the interaction of viewer and screen. The dynamics between viewer and screen were analysed by Maya Deren as she identified the creative potential of screen images to generate visions and sensations which can not be produced within the physical constraints of theatrical performances. Hence, according to Deren:

In certain aspects, the very absence in motion pictures of the physical presence of the performer, which is so important to the theatre, can even contribute to our sense of reality. We can, for example, believe in the existence of a monster if we are not asked to believe that it is present in the room with us. ... But the film image - whose intangible reality consists of lights and shadows beamed through the air and caught on the surface of a silver screen - comes to us as the reflection of another world. At that distance we can accept the reality of the most monumental and extreme of images, and from that perspective we can perceive and comprehend them in full dimension (1999: 221).

In the case of the above analysed texts the screen is used as an arena for

performance activity. Thus, the screen is utilised to reflect an imaginative reality which does not exist outside the texts and which is not concerned with the authenticity of a live performance or with the documentation of natural phenomenon in real time and space.

Furthermore, the texts do not rely on the continuity of actions in a linear manner and on the actual performances on location, as the latter were reconstructed and re-choreographed by camera and by editing in post-production in order to produce choreographic events unique to the screen. Moreover, by using the screen as an arena for choreography the makers of each text allow the viewer to comprehend the happenings on the screen as a 'reflection of another world' (Ibid.), which is fantastic, and in which the tangibility of the physical body and environment cease to exist as space and time are non-linear and elastic. However, it is the formal structure of each text which embodies and delivers the unique states of body, mind and emotion depicted, and which is responsible for the viewer's intellectual and emotional reactions to the events on screen.

The formal structure of Boy constructs a narrative which encapsulates an exciting momentum in the life of a child. The narrative captures the mystery involved in children's games and the wealth of dynamic movement and emotion that can be found within an ordinary activity of a playing child. The detailed analysis of the text shows that it is made of short shots which create a relatively fast moving and energetic atmosphere around the boy's activity, and bring into life his imaginary friend, his 'double', and the 'flying suit', thus blurring the boundaries

between reality and imagination and depicting the special nature of children's games and rituals whereby the "real" and the "magical" coexist. By structuring the narrative within the framework of one location and by isolating the boy as the only figure in time and space the makers of the text allow the viewer to focus on an event which has no references to any other actions or meanings outside the boy's playful realm. The expression of this child's world is greatly enhanced by the overall impact of the soundscape which exists with relation to the boy's physical and inner movements. The soundtrack allows the viewer to experience the child's sense of mystery, the 'invisible' creatures and forces that surround him, or being 'invoked' by him, such as a bizarre bird or the 'magical powers' embodied in his gestures. The close formal interaction between images, movements and sounds, convey the choreographic experience within a structure of a playful, energetic and light-hearted rhythm. This short film also demonstrates the potential of audio-visual and choreographic language to communicate as powerfully as Haikku, Zen inspired, poetry by capturing the invisible realm which resign within the visible and by observing rather ordinary and natural events with a sense of wonder and enigma.

The formal structure of Golden City allows the viewer to comprehend a state of personal isolation by encountering the protagonist, and as the viewer discovers the young man he/she may also develop a sense of empathy with his personal, introverted and highly inspired inner world. To achieve this heartfelt depiction the makers of the text positioned the activities of the protagonist against the flow of ordinary urban life.

The man does not interrupt the rhythms of the world around him but glides through it as an unseen traveller in space and time, although he is visible to the camera and the viewer. The four movement motifs, which are explored in the detailed analysis of the text, relating to the man's passage in the city, demonstrate how the formal treatment is responsible for the particular depiction of the isolated character. In the first movement motif, the man walks and revolves in a fluid manner and is followed by the camera which completes the choreography as it moves along with him and framing him from a distance. His movements appear to be in total contradiction to the mundane rhythms of the people in the streets as he lightly moves in stylised steps totally unnoticed and isolated as if existing within a separate sphere in the heart of the city. Another movement motif which emphasises his isolation is due to the formal treatment framing the man in static poses against traffic and city lights in accelerated motion, whilst he is unnoticed by the world around him, though seen by the camera and the viewer. This depiction reflects two contradictory moods as the man appears to be in deep and calm meditative state against the restless energy of the city. Therefore, by isolating the man from the environment through which he moves and placing him against and within it as a separate entity, the viewer is able to develop insight into the man's inner-world, and to comprehend the protagonist's interior realm.

Another formal device which is used in this text to enhance the man's isolation and reflect his inner world is the meditative and melodic soundtrack which engulfs the entire action in the city. The melody

replaces the "real" sound of the city, thus turning the city into a detached and idealised vision rather than a noisy and busy place. The sound corresponds with the gentle and poetic movements of the man and therefore seems to emanate from his interior realm. In the fourth movement motif, when the man soars into the air and the city skyline, an integration between form and content is achieved and delivers the expression of total physical liberation perhaps connoting the limitless possibilities available to a creative and inspired mind. Here, the man is not only isolated from the rest of the world but seems to be able to "rise above it" unrestricted and free.

As mentioned in the detailed analysis of Dust the subject matter of the text is embodied in its formal treatment and structure. The texture and visual quality of this text is characterised by its fragmented form created through the editing of very short shots which do not imply the continuity of action and movement in a linear space and time. The physical body of the protagonist is disembodied and the camera reveals to the viewer details of body in movement, rather than capturing the entire scope of the body as it moves. The trace of the body is also a subject depicted such as showing the protagonist's hand print on sand catching fire as if it was lit by an invisible flame. The protagonist's herself is revealed to the viewer first as a figure buried in sand and dust and the impression that her body is alive is communicated to the viewer through the movement of her eye lid opening. This small movement which occupies the entire frame connotes the idea of life and awakening. The text is ,therefore, constructed through mainly short shots of body

and movement details and aspects of the physical environment which allow the expression of movements and meanings which can only be created in an audio-visual framework and which could not be expressed as live performance forms. For example, by tightly framing the protagonist falling on her knees so that the movement is isolated as a visual detail and by using sound effects to create an "earth cracking" momentum, this simple movement turns into a mighty fall. Although on screen the illusion of an earth cracking fall is convincing, the same event on stage could not be convincingly performed as the physical body of a performer would not be able to convey the force of a giant or the impact of a meteor.

In Dust the soundscape is crucial to the visual depiction and there is a close interaction between images, movements and sounds. The soundtrack brings to the viewer the audio information that is necessary for the understanding of the text as a whole, and make audible the invisible qualities of an unknown world. The interaction between sound and image also contribute to the atmosphere of the text which conveys a surreal and moonlike terrain, restless and volatile, and with a fast and dynamic rhythm motivated by the protagonist's urge to find water and survive.

Overall, the formal structure of the three texts demonstrates that the language of 'screen choreography' is primarily 'filmic', and relies on screen-based media in which the movements of the performers and the movements and rhythms created by camera, editing and sound

are fused into a single hybrid context and experience. The interaction of images and sounds and the marriage of form and content can result in the expression of rarely depicted states of body and mind.

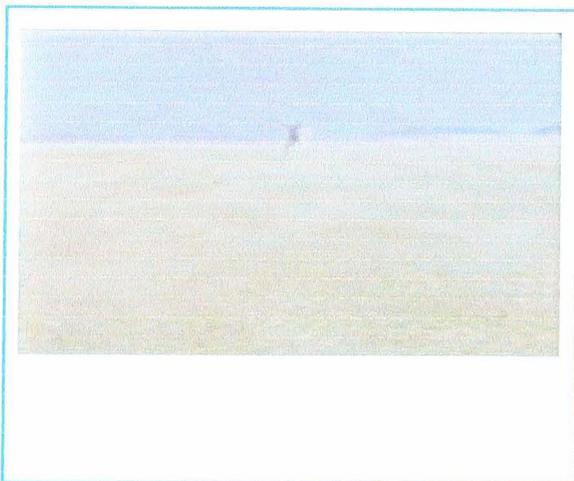
In the following chapter I explore screen choreography through the analysis of my own work as expressed in the video Gaia. Inspired by the poetic approach to film making by artists such as Jean Cocteau, Maya Deren and Andrei Tarkovsky, I embarked on a journey which was realised in an audio-visual form. The analysis of the pre-production process and the analysis of the relationship between formal treatment and content in the completed text assist in demonstrating some of the key elements at the core of the form such as: performance, choreography, camera, editing, sound and subject matter, and how images of the body in movement can transform into poetic depictions and metaphors capable of communicating mythical data and insights as to the relationship between mind, body, environment and spirit.



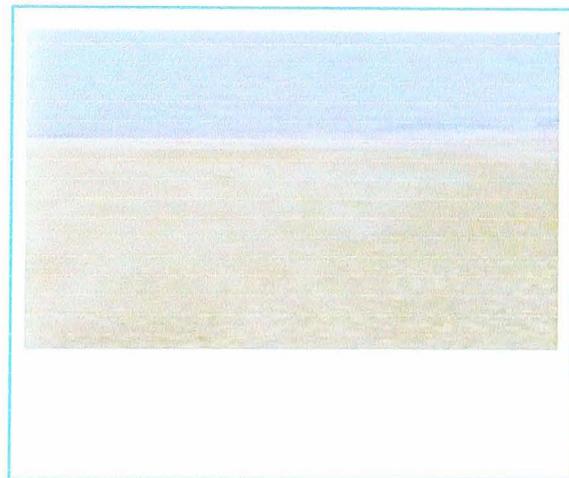
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28. Boy, see page 97



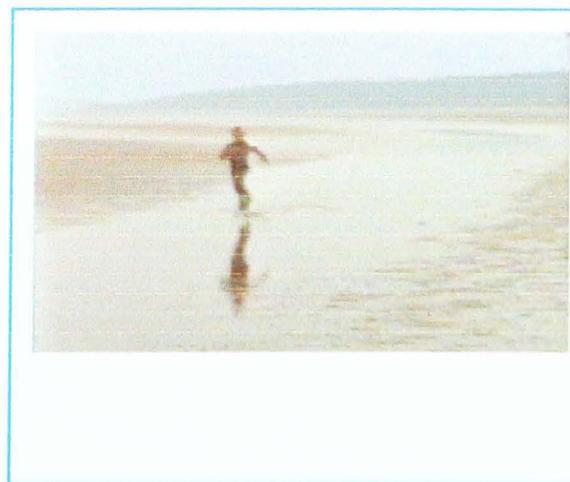
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30. Boy, see page 99



31. Boy, see page 100



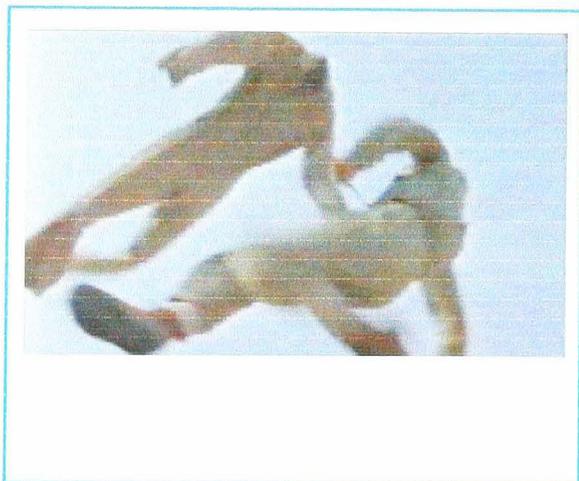
32. Boy, see page 100



33. Boy, see page 100



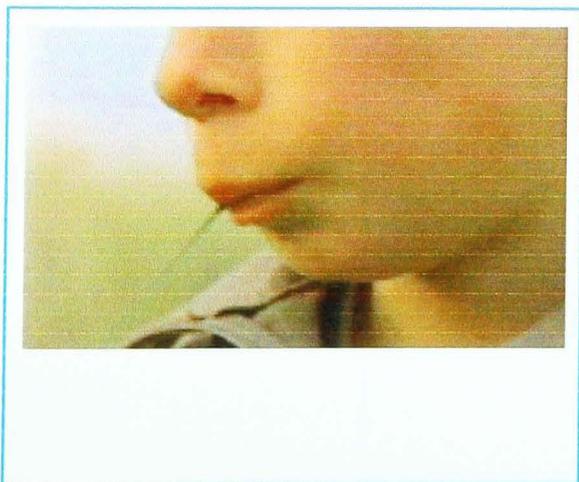
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35. Boy, see page 101



36. Boy, see page 101



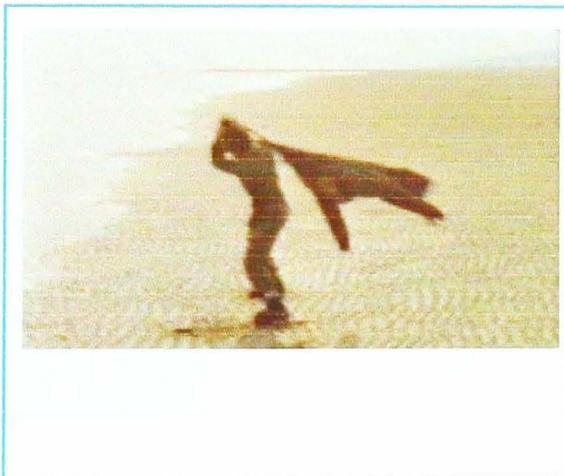
37. Boy, see page 101



38. Boy, see page 101



39. Boy, see page 102



40. Boy, see page 102



41. Boy, see page 102



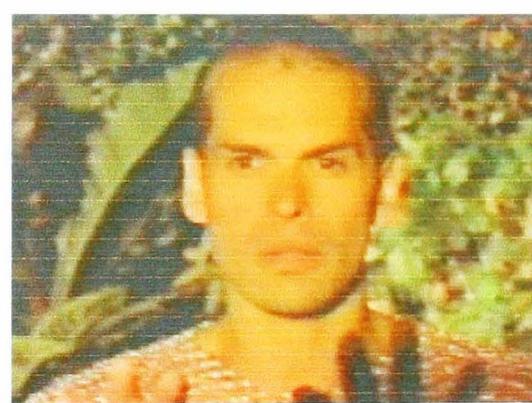
42. Golden City, see page 104



43. Golden City, see page 104



44. Golden City, see page 104



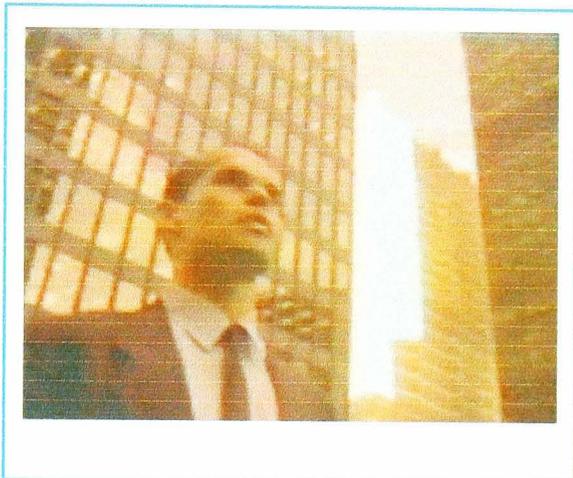
45. Golden City, see page 104



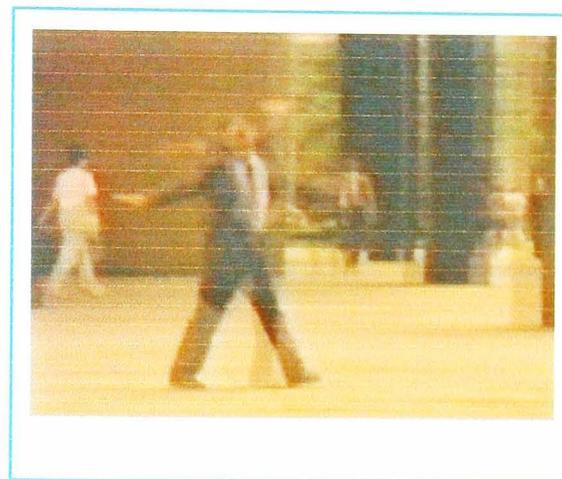
46. Golden City, see page 104



47. Golden City, see page 104



48. Golden City, see page 104



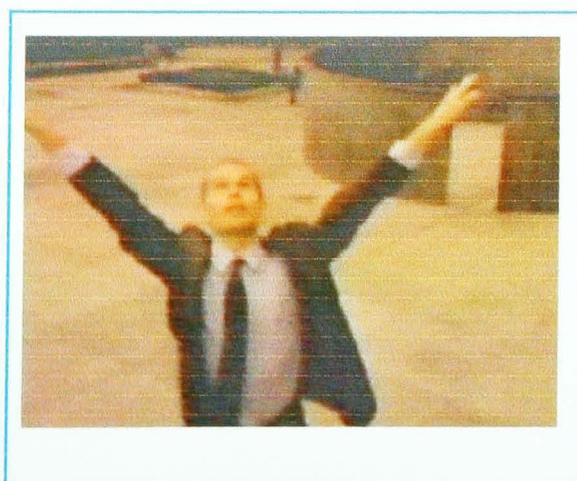
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50. Golden City, see page 106



51. Golden City, see page 106



52. Golden City, see page 107



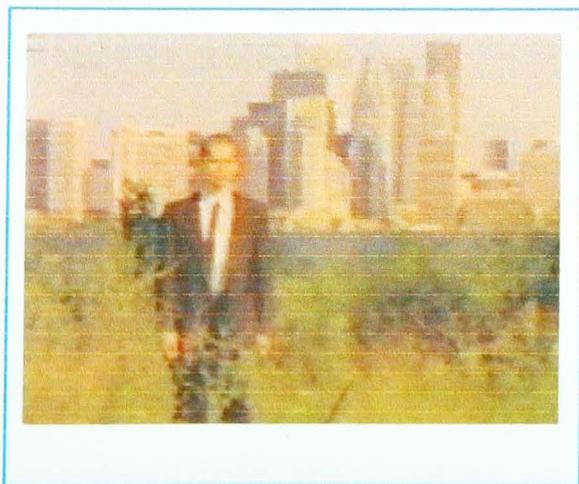
53. Golden City, see page 107



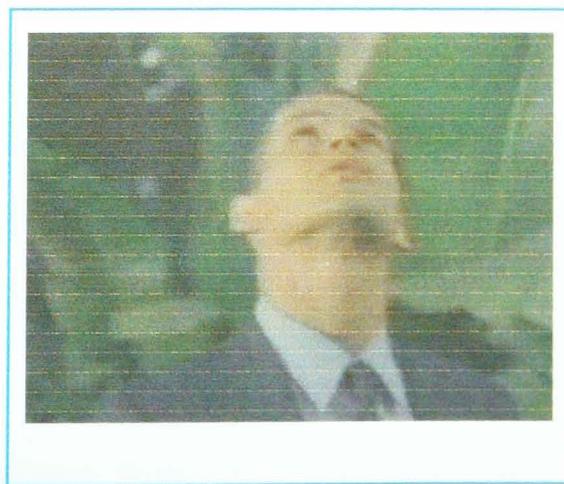
54. Golden City, see page 107



55. Golden City, see page 107



56. Golden City, see page 107



57. Golden City, see page 107

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS OF GAIA - MYSTERIOUS RHYTHMS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In order to produce a coherent analysis of the submitted video Gaia - Mysterious Rhythms I have structured the chapter into two sections:

The first section is divided into topics, each dedicated to a major creative principle employed within the context of the video, and thus, responsible for its final structure. The topics are all interrelated as together they reveal the overall structure of the video created through the assimilation of the creative principles discussed.

The second section of the chapter includes a scene-by-scene analysis of the video which is based on the data provided in the first section. This analysis can be fully comprehended once the the creative principles which determine the nature of the work have been explored in theory (as exemplified in the first section) and in practice (as exemplified in the second section).

Topic 1 is concerned with the poetic structure of the video which is a crucial creative principle at the heart of the work. It is only through an insight into the poetic form, that the reader is in a position to analyse and decipher the screen text of Gaia correctly.

Topic 2 deals with the central theme which runs through Gaia and the identity of the single female protagonist, her role and experience through space and time.

Topic 3 observes the use of location, natural environment and natural elements within the context of the screen text. As I demonstrate, the

environment in which the protagonist's experience and actions take place is perceived and depicted as a living and active entity rather than a background or mere setting for the performance activity on screen.

Topic 4 investigates the manner in which choreography is employed within the context of an interdisciplinary text involving the protagonist's movements in space and time, coupled with the choreographic treatment of her performance by camera and editing. Thus, the issue of camera work and editing becomes an integral part of the final choreographic experience on screen.

In the concluding part of section two of this chapter, I reflect on the relationship between viewer and text on screen with special reference to the viewing experience of Gaia, and how the text has assumed a life of its own during screenings, as it has been integrated into the working processes of movement and dance workshops.

5.2. POETIC FORM AND CONTENT (TOPIC 1)

Gaia was originated and created as a visual poem to be viewed on screen as a poetic and 'performative' text. It is, therefore, crucial to evaluate the text on this basis and understand the nature of its poetic form. This particular form which shapes Gaia as a screen text relies exclusively on the language of images. Although the imagery is accompanied by layers of sound, the latter is used only to enhance and empower the visual depiction. Gaia as a text was conceived as a succession of images or visions bound by a common emotion which eventually gave rise to the birth of the protagonist and her activity through space and time. As all

content evolved via images and is expressed by visual means, the protagonist - including her experience - had to be depicted as a visual phenomenon which can not be expressed or depicted in a literary form. In other words, a poem created through the use of written verbal language could not produce the same effect and experience as that delivered by Gaia as a visual poem on screen. Furthermore, as the protagonist is a mute visual phenomenon, rather than a character within the framework of verbal story, prose or poem, her experience can only be conveyed through her physical performance and the manner in which this is depicted through an interconnected set of actions and selected images which have been manipulated by camera work and editing devices and choices.

The primarily visual status of Gaia as a poetic screen text resulted in an alternative scripting method, avoiding or simply abandoning literary descriptions of contents and actions. The materials assigned to the script were mainly visual items such as story boards, photographs, video recordings of landscapes and choreographic experiments with dancers in rehearsal spaces. The shooting script included instructions as to camera angles and positions in each scene, which were in relation to the protagonist's performance, but these were basically practical and technical guidelines for myself as the video director and cameraman. It was initially impossible to give a precise description, literary or visual, as to how the imagery would be finally realised on screen or describe its poetic value. For example, a scene depicting the protagonist as a reflection dancing on the surface of the sparkling waves was

originally depicted in a drawing (See image: 58). Observing the shallow and calm sea waves by the shore and the movement of sunlight upon their surface gave rise to this image, as I contemplated the natural phenomenon with a sense of wonder, and as I noticed the effect of my own reflection upon this moving plane. I recorded the idea with a home video camera as a reference assigned to the script. The protagonist's movements to be reflected on the waves were created separately in a studio. The conclusive visual and poetic value of the image of the dancing reflection could be shaped and delivered only during post-production. The process involved in the making of this image initially relied on natural conditions and lighting during the shoot, and eventually depended on editing through which the dancing reflection finally appears as she divides herself into three reflections moving in unison upon the water, merging with the moving light and ultimately being reduced to a single reflection again. The dancing reflection as an image was then 'coloured' by a soundscape which added rhythm and emotional quality to the depiction. However, any literary description of this audio-visual event would fail to demonstrate in accurate terms its pictorial and poetic traits (See Appendix A, Scene 5).

It is, therefore, important to emphasise at this point that any literary descriptions provided in order to support the analysis of Gaia as a screen text can not be substituted for the original visual material. To my opinion, providing written explanations or descriptions of the audio-visual events depicted in the video negate the nature of the work and its experience and perception as a purely visual poetic text. Nevertheless,

descriptions of scenes, as demonstrated in Appendix A and as they are utilised in the scene-by-scene analysis of the video, should be evaluated as a practical device which I employ in order to provide insight into the nature of the video, its form and content. These descriptions were written once the video was completed and as such they provide additional references for the analysis of Gaia. However, literary descriptions did not determine the manner in which the video was made, as the text's point of origin was visual, i.e. the text was born out of images and not words, and is concerned with the depiction of visual and poetic phenomena.

As a poetic text Gaia emerged from the desire to express what a particular experience looks and feels like, its physical and inner-emotional qualities, its exterior and interior features, its sounds, colours and textures. The protagonist and the environment which engulfs her are explored via a form described by Maya Deren as the poetic 'vertical structure' (Rabi, 1984: 218). In a symposium on the topic "Poetry and the Film", held in Cinema 16 in 1953, Deren expressed her thoughts concerning the poetic film structure. Her theoretical ideas concerning film poetry, and which can be applied to any form of visual poetry on screen, are fundamentally important for the understanding of the nature of the poetic form, and can assist in deciphering the poetic construction of Gaia and other contemporary poetic screen texts analysed in this thesis. According to Deren:

The distinction of poetry is its construction... and the poetic construct arises from the fact, if you will, that it is a "vertical"

investigation of a situation, in that it probes the ramifications of the moment, and is concerned with its qualities and its depth, so that you have poetry concerned, in a sense, not with what is occurring but with what it feels like or what it means. A poem, to my mind, creates visible or auditory forms for something that is invisible, which is the feeling, or the emotion, or the metaphysical content (Vogel, 1963: 174).

In addition, Deren explains the relationship between images within the context of the 'vertical structure':

The images in dreams, in montage, and in poetry- is... they are related because they are held together by either an emotion or a meaning that they have in common, rather than by the logical action. In other words, it isn't that one action leads to another action (this is what I would call a "horizontal" development), but they are brought together to a centre, gathered up, and collected by the fact they all refer to a common emotion, although the incidents themselves may be quite disparate. Whereas, in what is called a "horizontal" development, the logic is a logic of actions. In a "vertical" development, it is a logic of a central emotion or idea that attracts to itself even disparate images which contain that central core, which they have in common. This, to me, is the structure of poetry (Ibid.: 178).

As an artist, I have always explored the poetic structure regardless of the medium employed e.g. painting, performance-art, video, photography, or written poetry. My first public performance, Lights in

the Darkness, presented at the Museum of Modern Art in Haifa, Israel, 1982, was the depiction of a poetic experience. Inspired by the poetry of Charles Baudelaire, the protagonist of the piece assumed both the character of a poet and the muse which excites his senses with demonic beauty and mysterious visions. The performance was an attempt to invoke the interior qualities of the poet's experience, his obsessive feelings, movements, search for the muse, and the muse's enigmatic presence. The piece was created in a dark interior in which the elements of live performance, props, visual projections, lights, and a voice over reciting Baudelaire's impressions of the poet and his muse were integrated into a poetic and 'performative' structure (See images: 59-60).

The aesthetic principles of the Symbolist school of French poetry following Baudelaire has had, in fact, a profound influence on the art of cinema (Stephenson and Phelps, 1989: 209). The visual and sound resources of cinema are also capable of suggesting other senses:

The cinema can suggest impressions of touch and taste without being any actual sensory experience. Although our physical perceptions are independent of each other, the feelings they arouse in us are an interrelated whole. Baudelaire says in his poem

Correspondences:

Just as the sounds of far-off echoes blend
Into a shadowy, soul-felt symphony
Vibrant as night and colourful as day
So colours, scents and sounds all interact (Ibid.).

Based on the above observations, the poetic structure as applied to visual poetry on screen, as opposed to the poetic experience of a live performance, is not only capable of delivering the poetic experience via sound and vision, but can be employed for the depiction of physical experiences and sensations in a manner that is unique to cinema or any other screen-based media. Therefore, the physical experience of the protagonist of Gaia is communicated to the viewer via audio-visual aesthetic means which can not be compared to the choreographic means used to communicate physical experiences and sensations within the context of a live performance.

The relationship between the languages of film and poetry was also explored by the Russian film director Andrei Tarkovsky. In fact, Tarkovsky, who avoided making comparisons between cinema and other art forms, actually found poetry, and in particular ancient haikku Japanese poetry, closer to the truth of cinema (1989: 66-67). Tarkovsky identified the basic element of cinema as observation, for him 'the cinema image is essentially the observation of a phenomenon passing through time' (Ibid.: 67). Tarkovsky's approach to poetry in cinema differs from Eisenstein's understanding of the poetic cinematic montage, which he compared to ancient Japanese poetry providing some examples of poetic verses such as:

Coldly shining moon;	Silent in the field
Near the ancient monastery	A butterfly was flying
A wolf is howling.	Then it fell asleep.

(Ibid.: 66)

According to Tarkovsky Eisenstein found in the three line verse of haikku, as exemplified above, 'the model for how the combination of three separate elements create something different in kind from any of them' (Ibid.:66), i.e. the assimilation of three different descriptions produces the poetic metaphor.

According to David Finch, in the article 'A Third Something: Montage, Film and Poetry', 'the metaphoric combination can produce something beyond the description by comparison: a 'third something' which can not be named or pictured; an image which can only be produced by one particular combination of representations' (1989: 22). Finch's account of Eisenstein's approach to film and poetry in terms of a common montage principle demonstrates that 'the film montage image is not essentially different from the poetic image: both are mental images, despite the difference between picture and word. The operation of montage is partly metaphoric: film montage and language metaphor use some of the same mental processes' (Ibid.). Hence, according to Finch:

Eisenstein characterises the montage image as a mental event, not a static picture or an object - 'the desired image is not fixed or ready-made, but arises, is born'. This image is produced by the receiver in response to concrete representations - pictures, sounds, words - selected and combined by the artist. These representations are partial and incomplete aspects of the idea imaged: the impression of wholeness in the image produced comes from the fact of the viewer having produced it him/herself, as an idea: 'the strength of the montage method resides in this, that it includes in the creative

process the emotions and mind of the spectator' (Ibid.).

However, Tarkovsky takes a different view regarding the power of the poetic image as he fears that Eisenstein's montage method may cause cinema to move away from itself giving 'birth to symbols, allegories and other such figures... that have nothing to do with the imagery natural to cinema' (Tarkovsky, 1989: 66). In the poetic style of the Japanese haikku Tarkovsky discovers the pure observation of life and 'its aptness and precision will make anyone, however crude his receptivity, feel the power of poetry and recognise... the living image which the author has caught' (Ibid.). Thus, it is not the 'third something' which is at the core of the haikku verses but the simple and accurate manner in which life is observed. The following haikku by Basho are cited by Tarkovsky to demonstrate his insight into the nature of poetic depiction:

The old pond was still	Why this lethargy?
A frog jumped in the water	They could hardly wake me up.
And a splash was heard.	Spring rain pattering.

(Ibid.: 106-107)

Tarkovsky finds the verses beautiful 'because the moment, plucked and fixed, is one, and falls into infinity ... And the more precise the observation, the nearer it comes to being unique, and so to being an image' (Ibid.: 107). However, Tarkovsky is aware that not all recorded facts result in the creation of a poetic cinematic image as the purely poetic image in cinema 'is based on the ability to present as an observation one's own perception of an object' (Ibid.).

Within the analysis of Gaia I consider both Tarkovsky and Eisenstein's

approaches to film and poetry and find them complementary, as each approach highlights the potential of film or video to be employed for the purpose of poetic expression. I share with Tarkovsky the fascination with the purely poetic image based on precise observation of a particular phenomenon as it is perceived from the artist's point of view. My own fascination with natural phenomena, explored in Topic 3, has led me to depict the natural environment of a seashore in accurate terms. Nevertheless, the images captured depicting the environment were not perceived by myself, as an artist, as mere recordings, but as 'living' elements and images of a particular world, held together by a common emotion, and which would be structured to convey the central theme of Gaia. Therefore, when taking images of the sea, for example, my main concern was to reveal the features of the sea as a natural phenomenon full of beauty and wonder, and not as a metaphor or a symbol of other ideas beyond the actual depiction. However, I am also aware that the sea as an image, and as a phenomenon or as a Jungian archetype (Jung, 1986: 15) can generate a variety of emotions and ideas in the mind of the viewer, and that it is the viewer's perception that eventually produces the meanings assigned to the sea as an image. However, by manipulating the images of the environment including the protagonist, thus, creating new combinations of images and forms, I could maintain some control over the meanings produced, and more importantly deliver my own personal perception of the phenomenon portrayed. Ultimately, when I pointed the camera at the sea, I was taken by the sheer power of the sea as a natural phenomenon and it was the sea that was captured on tape and not a metaphor or a symbol.

However, Eisenstein's montage method can still be applied in the deciphering process of Gaia as a poetic text. To demonstrate this argument, I now return to the image of the dancing reflection, mentioned in this topic, and which is depicted in Scene 5. Once the idea of the dancing reflection was conceived in my mind, my goal was to realise it in practical and formal terms. The actual phenomenon based on the fusion of natural conditions and the movements of the protagonist as a reflection was in itself a creative challenge and an inspiring event. The choreographic and formal arrangement of the reflection already embodied poetic observation as the figure is portrayed moving upon and with the waves, merging within an environment of sand, water and light, engulfed by soundscape, and expanding into three moving reflections just to return into a single figure, and dissolve into a surface of liquid and patterns of bright light. I perceive the actual formal depiction of the dancing reflection as a poetic event which is held together by a common emotion expressed through colour, texture, the rhythm of the reflection's movements as it is merging with the rhythms of the moving plane on which she appears, in the transparency of both reflection and the elements of water and light, and in the manner in which she suddenly appears, expands and disappears, fragile and transitory just like the temporal nature and the short life of bright light dancing on waves. An event which could never be repeated again in exactly the same way is thus plucked out, and shaped into an image outside the context of 'real time' and 'real space', as time and space are elements taken from nature to be redesigned into a poetic depiction existing outside the limits of 'real time and space', thus, becoming

'eternal' or in a perpetual state of 'eternal present' (See: Topic 2.).

Employing the montage method of Eisenstein in order to read Scene 5, one should address the elements depicted as metaphors, although they were not originally conceived as metaphors. In this manner, it is possible to imply, using the language of metaphors, that the protagonist is transparent as water and weightless as light, that she moves like the waves and that she dances with waves and patterns of light. It could also be implied that the protagonist reflects her environment, and that she merges and becomes one with natural elements, and that she exists as both a concrete and an abstract being. Her division into three female figures, in a symbolic manner, can be perceived as representing the triple nature of Pagan goddesses (Fincher, 1991: 97), especially as she merges with the sea and the element of water which is associated with goddesses and mother-symbols (Jung, 1986: 15). The division of a female protagonist into three identical selves also takes place in Maya Deren's Meshes of the Afternoon including a reference to the sea in the striding sequence with the first step in the sand with a suggestion of the sea behind the woman. It is therefore apparent that by applying the language of metaphors, a variety of meanings can be produced and can be associated with Scene 5. The language of metaphors can be utilised as the images which construct the scene were created via a montage technique, thus, composing the scene out of disconnected shots, using layers of imagery in superimposition to integrate separate images into a single framework (See: Analysis of Scenes, Scene 5.).

What attracts me to the poetic form and structure, as it is exemplified in Gaia, is the potential of visual poetry to convey ideas, meanings, impressions or feelings within the context of image-making. It is the option to work with images and sounds rather than with words or with a literary text of any kind, and the chance to reveal or discover, even for a brief moment, the invisible movement or emotion which resides at the heart of a visible phenomenon. Tarkovsky's ambitious statement regarding poetry can be used to demonstrate this possibly unattainable desire: 'We cannot comprehend the totality of the universe, but the poetic image is able to express that totality' (Tarkovsky, 1989: 106).

5.3. THEMATIC CONTENT (TOPIC 2)

The central theme which runs through Gaia originally evolved from a series of images which formed in my mind as separate scenes within the framework of a non-literary script i.e. the scenes constituted audio-visual events involving performance activity employed to generate poetic observations rather than concrete actions within the context of storytelling. In a sense, Gaia is an attempt to create a depiction which can not be told in a literary way, and which can not be performed on stage. Nevertheless, the separate scenes, which can also be described as audio-visual events, are inter-linked by a common thread that emerges from the central theme, exploring what can be termed 'a rite of passage and transformation'.

The protagonist, a woman undertaking the passage through time and space, undergoes a process of transformation as she both controls and is

controlled by the 'living elements' of the natural environment in which she thrives. She exists within a self-contained universe, a world in which natural elements such as earth, sea, sky and sun are 'key players'. She reflects her environment, and nature is being reflected through her, often via montage and visual metaphors as she appears to be transparent, thus, reflecting her world or the world being reflected through her. She also tends to dissolve into the elements from which she is born, such as when she dissolves into the sea or fades in from the sea and into being. She exists both as a concrete figure and a reflection, showing a constant state of duality, and she divides herself into other 'selves', thus, denoting a state of inner conflict or struggle, or her ability to expand or recreate herself beyond physical limits.

The passage and the transformation begin at dawn when the moon is still above the sea and the tide is out and are completed at dusk when the sun dissolves into the sea. Each scene is visually effected and 'painted' by the lighting conditions throughout the day following the movement of the sun across the sky. Each scene is also a stage forward in a transformation process and composed of a specific activity which can be perceived as a personal rite undergone and celebrated by the protagonist. However, the major driving force leading to the performance of a rite involving a passage through which a process of transformation occurs, is born from the longing to overcome terrestrial, physical and in particular man-made limitations of any kind, to bond with the natural environment and discover one's identity via natural elements, to create one's work or fulfil one's destiny along with the

rhythms of nature which often contradict the nature of human rational thought (a notion developed by the Zurich Dada and in particular by Arp) (Moszynska, 1990: 66). (See: Topic 3, concerning the role of the natural environment). Therefore, by positioning the protagonist in the midst of a larger process of change, which is evident in all aspects of nature, and within the context of a day transfiguring from morning to night, her personal rite is performed within a universal context of transformation.

The protagonist's rite is aimed to achieve a state of delicate equilibrium in which she is neither in control (an ambition which can not be attained) or being totally controlled by the environment and natural forces. Her interaction with the environment begins with a curious exploration of the surroundings which leads to a confrontation with its overpowering totality. An inner struggle results in a state of surrender, in which the protagonist almost loses her terrestrial identity and dissolves into the elements of nature itself, which brings about a passage of self-realisation as to her transitory terrestrial condition. By surrendering to 'rhythms' beyond her control, she is then empowered by the environment which previously threatened to consume her, and finds the key with which she dances on a terrestrial plane both restricted by and free of the laws of gravity, thus, achieving a state of resolution. The transformation process is completed via a metaphor as the key allows her to perceive her condition beyond terrestrial limitations, opening her eye to see, and merge with, 'the eye of the sun', and with the physical and yet unexplainable mystery of nature and creation.

The protagonist's 'rite of transformation' takes place within the duration of a day, and what makes this day unique is her activity. However, she exists only for this purpose and only within this particular framework of time, as she does not have an identity outside her role in the rite, and does not exist in other dimensions of time and space. She can, therefore, be perceived as existing in an enclosed world, and in a state of 'eternal present' i.e. an approach to the concept of time as an undivided and continuous phenomenon which exists beyond terrestrial limitations and Western culture's rational perception of time via the ticking clock. This approach is associated with the concept of 'mythopoetic thought' which has been used to describe the concept of time as perceived by early man and by American Indian tribes such as the Hopi, who lived in 'eternal present' and did not even have a word for time, just as their verses had no tenses (Wilson, 1996: 299, 325). A similar approach to the notion of time within the context of cinematic ritual and myth is demonstrated by Cocteau in Le Sang dun Poete in which according to Sitney:

Cocteau explicitly places the events of his film either outside time or within an instant of a time. The first image of a crumbling tower, interrupted mid-air, recurs at the very end of the film so that the tower can continue its collapse to the ground. By bracketing his film this way, Cocteau wants the viewer to understand that his mythic ritual occurs in "transfigured time" (1974: 35-36).

Additional creative principles employed throughout Gaia as a poetic text created within the tradition of poetic film-making and within the context of personal rite and myth-making, which is preoccupied with

visual vocabulary inspired by ancient mythology and archetypal imagery, are the focus on the initiation of a single female protagonist, the fusion of arts i.e. dance, poetry and video, the performance of concise stylised movement, and the manipulation of time, space and movement. In formal terms and in its approach to the notion of ritual, Gaia recalls Maya Deren's Ritual in Transfigured Time, described by Sitney as 'an attempt to present a complete ritual in terms of camera techniques... slow motion, freeze frame, repetition of shots, and variations on continuity of identity and movement' (Ibid.: 33).

The activity of the protagonist in each scene is highly stylised and precise in terms of the movements performed, thus, denoting a ritualistic behaviour. She is not shown in a state of hesitation and her gaze and body language denote determination to be engaged in the process of transformation. She is designed as an image and a figure made to fulfil only this particular rite and as such she is empty of any other meanings and attributes. Her stylised appearance in terms of hair, make-up and dress all contribute to her role as a persona in what can be termed a passage in transfigured time and space. However, in formal terms, the protagonist's physical identity and appearance was shaped with relation to the location in which she performs (See: Topic 3).

5.4. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (TOPIC 3)

The central theme of Gaia is concerned with the interaction of the protagonist with the natural environment and natural elements. To suggest this link between protagonist and the environment as a 'living

entity' I titled the video Gaia, thus, referring to ancient mythology and to contemporary views of the natural environment of planet earth as a living organism, e.g. James Lovelock's The Ages of Gaia: A Biography of Our Living Planet (Second Edition: 1995).

From a mythological perspective Gaia is associated with the beginning of the universe and the origins of life, she is the female creator appearing in the myths of the pre-patriarchal era, hence, according to Stein:

The oldest pre-Hellenic goddess is Gaia, though by no means the oldest of goddess creation stories. Like the Babylonian Tiamat, the sea, Gaia the earth arose from her self, from chaos. Whirling in darkness, she became a galaxy of fiery light and created the sun and the moon, the mirror of heaven. Merging with heaven, herself in the mirror, she gave birth to the seas and after cooling became the planet. Gaia's body is the mother, the female, fertile earth. Her deep breasts are mountains and her watery dark openings are oceans, her skin the soil from which all plants and nourishment grow. Her interior is birth, death and the underworld of rebirth, the place where crystals and volcanoes form, where life begins and ends (1993: 32).

Although, Gaia as a text does not refer directly to any particular myth of creation and it does not observe nature in scientific terms, it embodies the perception of the environment as a physical and living organism, and as an entity with the power to both create and destroy itself. In

addition, by referring to the female mythical aspect of nature, a link was created between the identity of the female protagonist and the environment as a manifestation of a female entity, creator, or goddess. This has located the personal rite of the protagonist within a wider mythical context in which natural elements can be seen as symbolising female attributes. The connection to the mythical Gaia, the ancient goddess of earth, also assisted in amplifying the affinity between the protagonist and the environment, that is to say the protagonist's relationship with natural elements becomes a process through which she learns about her own female identity, and discovers her own nature as it is reflected via the female mythical features of her world.

The intimate interaction between protagonist and environment is also supported by the notion of the protagonist emerging from the environment: the protagonist is perceived as an integral part of the physical world which surrounds her. This physical connection between environment and protagonist is denoted in formal terms through the protagonist's physical appearance and in the manner in which she was designed as a figure and image on screen. The dominant colour attributed to her is red e.g. she is wearing a red dress, her hair shines in red shades and her lips are painted in a dark red hue. From a practical point of view, red was one of the best colours to use for her screen image due to lighting conditions on location, and the fact that as a figure she could have been dissolved into her background if other colours were used such as shades of green, blue, brown, white, etc. To be effective on screen, so that her physicality would not be overpowered by the physical

colours of the environment, red was chosen as the colour which could create a tonal friction between her figure and the vast expanse of blue sea, sky and white sand. However, my choice of colours was also determined by story boards with drawings of female characters, each representing a slightly different temperament conveyed by a dominant colour. Thus, my perception of the character's nature was expressed via colour which, for me as an artist, represented her dominant characteristics. The choice to use red (See drawing of female character in red created during the development stage of the screen text, image: 61) resulted in a character associated with this colour, and with associations, symbols, or notions all linked to the colour. For example, the Hebrew word for earth (Adama) embodies in its root related words all issuing from it, thus, the word 'earth' in the Hebrew language also contains the words: red, blood, mother and Adam, which is the name given to the first man. The colour red is, thereby, perceived as associated with physical life as it is the colour of blood and the colour of earth and is interrelated with the notion of motherhood and manhood. Red is also a highly dynamic colour expressing the physicality and intensity of life on earth and their expression in physical terms.

On the basis of these observations, the choice to colour the protagonist in red tones was also made with the intention to emphasise her physical connection to the mythical Gaia as earth and mother, and highlights her dynamic nature. It also frames the protagonist's personal rite within a wider symbolic context thus reinforcing her intimate relationship with the physical environment through which she journeys.

The props used by the protagonist are also perceived as linked to the natural environment, such as her use of shells, the product of the sea, within the context of dance and ritualised activity (See images: 62-63). The protagonist's interaction with shells denotes her attempt to form a closer link with the natural environment, and the mythical and female aspects of shells as natural elements. The motif of the shell and its spiral form is described by Stein:

Seashells... are female symbols, symbols of wombs and birth, fertility and the emergence from the sea. ... Aphrodite, a powerful fertility aspect of the great goddess in pre-patriarchal Greece, is described as sea-born, and often standing on a flat shell. Teteu Innan, an Aztec goddess, wears a seashell shirt, and the Navaho White Shell Woman is a saviour of her people. Shells, pearls and fishes are associated with the Chinese Kwan Yin, and the conch that sounds of the sea is in India the sound that made the universe. Many shells are rounded and hollowed womb or moon symbols and some are spirals - the shape of DNA and the labyrinth mystery symbol of the unfolding universe, the birth canal and the creative goddess (1993: 27-28).

Another prop used by the protagonist is the ankh, the ancient Egyptian symbol representing the 'key of life' associated with the goddess Isis and female goddesses in general, which the protagonist finds emerging from the sea. Once she picks it up, she also discovers a seashell washed by the waves. She uses the two objects in conjunction to perform a serious of stylised movements which denote a ritualistic activity (See Appendix

A, images: 10.2-10.6.). According to Stein, female images such as those of women holding the ankh, or associated with the sea, shells, spiral forms and the moon are 'powerful reminders of the force of female creation' (Ibid.: 31). The ankh as a prop is used as a symbol, and it is perceived within the context of the screen text of Gaia as a metaphor representing the mythical and female dimension of the natural environment as a living entity (See image: 64).

In formal terms, the components of the environment, in the form of images taken on location, eventually shaped the screen text. Even images created in post-production were initially based on footage of the environment as natural elements and imagery of nature were used as raw materials for the construction of the text. Moreover, the environment became not only a stage for the protagonist, but also an opportunity to take advantage of its topography, by filming the protagonist and the landscape from cliffs overlooking the action, and from great distance, and from a variety of camera angles uninterrupted by studio walls or the need to adjust the settings to convey a sense of continuity of action in time and space.

My initial interaction with this coastal environment was done via still photography, in order to get to know its photogenic qualities and potential, I approached it through the eye of a still camera. This approach assisted me in seeing the location as an inspiring landscape shaped by a variety of bays and rock formations, painted by natural light, and which can be framed in endless variations, each time creating

a new perspective of a world which is constantly changing. The use of a still camera also assisted me in choosing the locations for the actual filming of the video, and the desirable camera positions and angles. Additionally, looking through the lens of a still camera helped me in structuring what the viewer would finally see on screen, and what would be the boundaries of the world depicted. I could easily lose a sense of structure within an expanse of landscape in which anything can happen, and when nature could become a subject for endless photographic or film/video events. These photographic sessions which I undertook also gradually reinforced the central theme of Gaia, as I became physically and photographically involved in a passage through a landscape which, in my mind, opened a window into a world shaped jointly by nature and my poetic and imaginative impressions.

It was through still photography that the picturesque quality of the landscape became apparent, as I realised how imagery which usually escapes the human eye and sight can be captured, thus revealing the endlessly transforming forms of nature. I also became aware of the potential of camera to take the total impression of a transitory moment with all its details, as opposed to the human eye's selective vision. The other advantage the camera introduced was the ability to focus on formal and tonal details and textures of any phenomenon captured, filling the entire frame or screen with a visual and kinetic experience unavailable via ordinary human vision. In this manner, my photographic expeditions in the landscape, which became the location for Gaia, shaped the visual material and style of the screen text (See images: 65-

68).

The final locations for each scene were chosen jointly by myself and the cameraman, Roni Kalderon, on the basis of the photographic stills and by travelling to the location and exploring its potential. We were both interested in capturing the natural features of the location, its geology and topography, and taking advantage of the environment as a performance space for both protagonist and camera. The shooting script, therefore, also included shots of the environment, and the geological and topographical features of the landscape, which were intended to be used as raw materials and imagery during post-production. These shots were later integrated into the protagonist's performance during the editing process. Regardless of the use of symbols and poetic metaphors within the screen text of Gaia, and the references made to myth and ritual, both personal and universal, the text captures the life of the environment in its natural form. My own world which was shaped into a screen text, therefore, relies on images of nature which I perceive as accurate observations of the phenomenon of life in motion and the transitory nature of our physical existence. I share Tarkovsky's views regarding the role of natural imagery in cinema, and in my opinion this is relevant to any screen form, where the inspiration of nature itself is brought to the screen as an aesthetic experience which is linked to our human existence within the natural world, hence, according to Tarkovsky:

I am... puzzled when I am told that people cannot simply enjoy watching nature, when it is lovingly reproduced on the screen, but

have to look for some hidden meaning. ... In commercial cinema nature often does not exist at all; all one has is the most advantageous lighting and exteriors for the purpose of quick shooting - everybody follows the plot and no one is bothered by the artificiality of a setting that is more or less right, nor by the disregard for detail and atmosphere. When the screen brings the real world to the audience, the world as it actually is, so that it can be seen in depth and from all sides, evoking its very smell, allowing audiences to feel on their skin its moisture or its dryness - it seems that the cinema-goer has so lost the capacity simply to surrender to an immediate, emotional aesthetic impression, that he instantly has to check himself, and ask: "Why? What for? What's the point?" (1989: 212-213).

As an artist, I find in nature and in the natural environment fascinating ingredients with which to construct my work. I find the use of 'living' materials and settings such as rock formations, bays, caves, cliffs, flowing water, etc., as opposed to specially designed studio sets, an opportunity to form an exciting dialogue with natural elements. Although, Gaia has been manipulated by video and computer technology, it is, nevertheless, created through the synthesis of screen technology and imagery taken directly from the natural environment, mirroring its variety of forms. By looking into nature's variety of forms, or by 'borrowing' natural forms in order to create a new set of forms based on the original ones, artists, such as Arp and Klee sought to express 'the image of creation itself', and the process of evolution and

growth (Rhodes, 1994: 153). For a Dadaist such as Arp 'matter and spirit were one, and humankind was an integral part of an organic universe in a continuous process of flux and re-creation, driven by the laws of chance' (Ibid.: 150). Moreover, 'Arp and his Zurich contemporaries believed that a true work of art does not exist above nature, but that it takes its place within the natural order, as a concrete manifestation of the primal and organic process of becoming' (Ibid.), a view also shared by Tarkovsky

My personal observation of the natural environment as a 'living entity', within the context of Gaia, can be affiliated to modern art as exemplified by the Dadaist approach to nature and similar views concerning the 'living' world of nature as expressed by artists working at the Bauhaus. This is explained by Rhodes:

Artistic creation of this kind is often reliant on a type of feeling that sees matter not as lifeless and inert, but as animate, possessing its own unique spirit. It is right to compare this with the idea of the 'animistic sensibility', which early anthropology viewed as an integral component in the world-views of the savage, the child and the neurotic. ... The animistic sensibility is related to attempts to return to a more primitive way of seeing, or what has sometimes been called 'primary vision', as opposed to ordinary adult perception that orders the world in utilitarian terms as a set of causes and means. Primary vision is a form of 'pure' perception that frees artists from theoretical and practical concerns, allowing them to experience the immediate expressiveness of things - everything

is a presence and nothing is an it. We find examples of the operation of this type of 'perceptual primitivism' throughout the practices of artists working at the Bauhaus in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, such as Johannes Itten, Kandinsky and Klee. Another Bauhaus artist, Baumeister, later provided an emphatic statement of primary vision's importance in his book The Unknown in Art (1960): 'Prior to our bodily and utilitarian sight there exists an original state of vision. One might call it "concrete vision". It transcends the intellectual and understands all appearances as purely visual phenomena... the artist possess the ability to see things in a "dematerialized" way, and the world assumes a strange depth and vastness' (Ibid.: 153-160).

Ultimately, Gaia is my own attempt to reveal the 'living' and constantly transforming characteristics of the natural environment which is shaped by nature's unpredictable laws of chance, capturing the ever-changing motion of elements such as sunlight, sea waves, and the slow decline of terrestrial formations sculptured by natural forces through time eternal. The natural forms captured are choreographed into an audio-visual experience on screen.

4.5. CHOREOGRAPHY FOR CAMERA AND SCREEN (TOPIC 4)

In Gaia the location is not only the 'stage' on which the protagonist performs, but it also constitutes her 'world', an enclosed universe from which she emerges and where she exists. The coastal expanse is the space in which the protagonist and the camera move, and their

movements in this space are intertwined. The movement of the camera in space, coupled with the movement of the protagonist, create an interaction between two separate movers, one physical (the protagonist) and the other which is invisible (the camera). In addition, there is the movement which the natural environment generates and which become an integral part of the choreographic event. This is the movement created by natural elements such as wind, sea, waves, tides, sunlight, etc. An interaction is created and results in a choreographic event performed by three movers: protagonist, camera, and natural elements. The various manners in which the three 'movers' interact is exemplified in the detailed analysis of each scene. However, it is relevant to introduce the analysis by stating that I consider the movements of dancer, camera and nature itself as the 'key players' in this choreographic event for the screen. Once the footage was shot, the process of editing became crucial in shaping the choreographic experience of movement in time and space. Nevertheless, it is the time, space and movement captured on video tape which eventually shaped the final screen experience, as editing was used for the manipulation and redesign of already existing material. I admit that digital video editing technology allowed me to create imagery which could have not be filmed on location, and can not be performed on any stage, but this imagery evolved from the original footage.

In terms of camera work, I shot the actions in a manner which allowed me to edit the material later, especially the protagonist's performance, whilst preserving the continuity of movement through space and time. In

addition to shooting each scene from a variety of camera angles, I also created a master shot for each sequence of a continuous set of movements performed by the protagonist in order to secure the continuity of her performance. Each scene was composed as a unique unity of actions, forming a particular stage and event within the context of the protagonist's 'rite of passage'. During the editing process, it became apparent that my task was to shape the rhythm of each scene by joining and manipulating segments of already existing units of movement, time and space, i.e. separate shots of material related to a scene. This, emerges from my perception that the rhythm of each scene, created by the manner in which the shots are manipulated and joined, delivers its particular emotional, physical and intellectual experience and flavour as it unfolds on screen. Through the process in which a scene is composed out of separate shots, the original performance of the protagonist on location was literally destroyed as a live event and the entire event had to be reconstructed as a screen event. However, each shot contained the living ingredients of the original activity performed and, by joining different shots into a new structure, the protagonist's activity and experience emerged as a screen form.

The rhythm of each scene is created not only by the rhythmical qualities of the protagonist's performance, but by the overall rhythm created by the interaction of the separate shots as they are joined into a single structure, thus forming the scene as a unique event. Nevertheless, even within the framework of a scene, the rhythm embodied in each shot is an expression of a unique moment in time which delivers the experience of

time or a particular movement through space and time. This moment is condensed into a structure created by a number of unique moments which together deliver the rhythmical quality of the entire scene. The interaction of the different scenes creates the overall structure and rhythm of Gaia as a text, in which the scenes dissolve into one another, and are combined via emotion generated by the central theme, rather than by the logic of cause and effect. I perceive the overall structure and rhythm of Gaia as a poem, each scene constituting a verse in which time, space and movement are choreographed for the screen. Choreography for the screen is created by the combination and distribution of the elements of movement, space and time throughout the structure of the screen text.

I have found Tarkovsky's approach to editing and rhythm in cinema inspiring and informative within the analysis context of my own practice. His vision concerning the crucial principle of rhythm in cinema can assist in demonstrating my own attempt to create a rhythm unique to the central theme of Gaia. Hence, according to Tarkovsky:

It is above all through sense of time, through rhythm, that the director reveals his individuality. Rhythms colour a work with stylistic marks. It is not thought up, not composed on an arbitrary, theoretical basis, but comes into being spontaneously in a film, in response to the director's innate awareness of life, 'his search for time'. ... But there is still an apparent dichotomy: for the director's sense of time always amounts to a kind of coercion of the audience, as does his imposition of his inner world. The person watching

either falls into your rhythm (your world), and becomes your ally, or else he does not, in which case no contact is made. And so some people become your 'own', and others remain strangers; and I think this is not only perfectly natural, but, alas, inevitable (1989: 120).

In addition, Tarkovsky addresses editing as a meticulous process at the heart of film-making through which the originality of the director is revealed and his/her unique perception of the phenomenon chosen for depiction on screen. The director is 'sculpting in time' as the film is structured and given a rhythmic design through the editing of different segments of action in time in a variety of rhythms which the director shapes into a newly formed entity with a new rhythmic structure. Tarkovsky explains this creative process:

Assembly, editing, disturbs the passage of time, interrupts it and simultaneously gives it something new. The distortion of time can be a means of giving it rhythmical expression. Sculpting in time! But the deliberate joining of shots of uneven time-pressure must not be introduced casually; it has to come from inner necessity, from an organic process going on in the material as a whole. ... Joining segments of unequal time-value necessarily breaks the rhythm. However, if this break is promoted by forces at work within the assembled frames, then it may be an essential factor in the carving out of the right rhythmic design. To take the various time-pressures, which could be designated metaphorically as brook, spate, river, waterfall, ocean - joining them together engenders that unique rhythmic design which is the author's sense of time, called

into being as a newly formed entity. In so far as sense of time is germane to the director's innate perception of life, and editing is dictated by the rhythmic pressures in the segments of film, his handwriting is to be seen in his editing. It expresses his attitude to the conception of the film, and is the ultimate embodiment of his philosophy of life. ... On the other hand, if you take a few Hollywood films, you feel they were all edited by the same person; in terms of editing they are quite indistinguishable. ... Of course you have to know the rules of editing, just as you have to know all other rules of your profession; but artistic creation begins at the point where these rules are bent or broken (Ibid.: 121).

Creating rhythms artificially is a stylistic device which I employ throughout the video text of Gaia. Slowing down time, freezing time, incorporating a number of slow motion modes, and integrating movements in different variations of slow motion modes with movements in real time, are all artificial methods via which artificial rhythms are created in Gaia. (For an example as to how movement, time and space are manipulated and result in specially designed artificial rhythms, see the analysis of individual scenes and in particular Scenes 6 & 11.) In Scene 11, the particular rhythm produced by manipulating the protagonist's leaps through the use of a variety of slow motion modes in interaction with her leaping in real time creates an 'artificial' dance sequence in which she is both free of and restricted by the laws of gravity. However, it is not only time and movement that are artificially manoeuvred, but space itself is made into a transparent plane in motion

so that the surface on which the protagonist's leaps both engulfs her and travels in an opposite direction to her. As such, it is not only her movements which are designed to create a choreographic experience on screen but all other objects in the frame, as in the moment in which she is shown leaping above the sun positioned on the sand beneath her.

This particular example, demonstrates my approach to choreography on screen, as neither of the above mentioned stylistic devices is possible on stage, and it also illustrates my approach to rhythm created through the assimilation and interaction of images in real and artificial time and space. This approach also clearly indicates my personal view, as an artist, concerning the notions of time, space and movement in space and time, and which can be expressed only through a screen medium. This is due to the fact that I perceive time as an elastic concept which can be stretched by being slowed down or speeded up, which can be frozen to a point where time stops, and can be manipulated in a manner in which the notions of past, present and future can be constantly in interaction and not necessarily separate units of time. This approach consequently influences the perception of space. Thus, space can be bent, stretched, condensed, or be concrete, fantastic or abstract. Within this framework, movement is subjected to the treatment of space and time and can assume formal configurations beyond the scope of live dance and choreography created for real time terrestrial conditions.

My approach to choreography in Gaia is film/video based, thus, for me the frame is the environment in which the protagonist moves. As a video

choreographer I looked through the viewfinder in order to locate the protagonist's body and movements in space. The movement of the camera was added to the movement of the protagonist and to all other natural elements manifesting the motion of life. However, one of the major elements which shaped the manner in which the video was shot and edited was the factor of frame and framing. The manner in which a live performance is viewed is radically different from the manner images are perceived on screen as images framed by the camera as opposed to live images framed by ordinary human vision. This difference is explained by Stephenson and Phelps:

Reality exists all round us; above, below, in front, behind. In real life we do, in a way, frame what we see by directing our attention, but as soon as we concentrate our attention on, say, the left limit of what we can see, our eyes and our head move involuntarily and the limit moves with them... the frame of the cinema has artistic uses. First, it allows film-makers to choose, to isolate, to limit the subject, to show only what is mentally and emotionally significant. ...Secondly, the frame forms a basis for the composition of shots by giving them an architecture, an equilibrium, a meaning. The rectangle of the screen constitutes a frame of reference from which to organize and orientate the contents of the picture... it provides an arena of plastic composition as well as a centre of dramatic action. ... Thirdly, any picture isolated by strongly marked boundaries has the property of attracting attention (1989: 85-86).

My approach to framing the images of Gaia was enhanced and informed

by previous experience in framing performance activity within the context of video-art and performed photography. My experimental work in video-art was an extension of my work as a performance artist, thus, translating my performance ideas into a video format. I created this type of work during my art school days (The State College of Art Teachers, Ramat Hasharon, Israel), taking the material developed during the performance course into the small television studio which was available for those interested in pursuing television and film studies. Due to the fact that these studies were not theory-based, I discovered the creative potential of camera and framing through practical experiments, and from the start I identified the potential of camera and framing to focus on objects and details which the eye would not be able to isolate in the event of a live performance, and the possibility of creating movements within the frame via camera movement and special effects such as dissolves, and superimposition (See images from the video Flight: 69-72). The other interesting discovery was to realise that the video Flight, which issued from a performance piece titled Flight (See images of performed slides: 73-75 and performance: 76-78), was formally different from its live origins and concerned with different aesthetic means such as: camera, framing, special effects and editing. On this basis, Gaia which I created especially for the screen is concerned with the means of video technology such as the framing of images issuing from performance activity via camera, and creating the dynamics of any action within the limits of the frame.

The work that I have been creating within the context of performed

photography also informed the manner in which I treated and framed the images of Gaia. Despite the fact that photography is a static art form, I perceive the photographic frame as an arena for performance activity to be captured in space and time like a frozen video or film frame. I also view performed photography as a process through which images are created: 'it is not reality that photographs make immediately accessible, but images' (Sontag, 1979: 165). In performed photography, the activity captured is positioned within a particular composition involving the arrangement of movement in a space framed by the camera. I explored this particular type of photography in a variety of manners working in studio settings and environments: urban and natural. With the Berlin-based photographer Bert Lowenherz, who specialises in performed photography, I collaborated on a number of projects which were studio based and in which I created the performance activity (See image from the series The Wheel: 79). This type of work has contributed to my understanding of camera framing within the context of performed activity. Urban environments were often incorporated into my image-making work as arenas for performed activity and for the creation of imagery conveyed through the interaction of environment, performer and performance. Other factors such as colour, light and shade also affected the experience of movement in the frame as the eye travels across the frame discovering the movement inherited in the image.

Making images via performed photography has been, for me, an extension of my performance work, hence, live art becomes the focus of photographic activity and text. Initially, performed photography was

used by myself to extend the visual language of my performance work and the stills were projected as slides in the framework of a live performance as a multimedia event. However, recently I created a new series of performed photography which became an extension of the video text of Gaia (See images of performed photography in urban environments in which I acted as concept creator and performer: 80-81. My recent work was made in 1999 with the photographer Sally Faraj, and was based on the central theme of Gaia: 82-87.) These images demonstrate my creative approach to performance and to the framing of performed activity. Although, these are stills they are an integral part of my work and represent my approach to image-making and to the making of 'performative' and hybrid (interdisciplinary) texts. This type of photographic work has influenced the making of Gaia especially with regards to the treatment of camera-framing, location, lighting, performer in movement and performance activity.

Ultimately choreography for the screen involves framing imagery via the camera, isolating various image details and fragmenting space and the moving body. This type of choreography differs from the concept of choreography which looks at the overall movement of the entire body within a continuous framework of space and time. In fact, the notion of space in film or video forms a world of its own which can not be compared to the manner in which space is treated in dance, theatre, sculpture or painting. This factor has to be considered in the case of interdisciplinary practice involving dance, performance and video language. Film or video space 'lacks such characteristics of physical

space as tangibility, density, weight, expanse, depth, and continuous existence' (Stephenson and Phelps, 1989: 95). Choreographing for the screen involves other possibilities which real space can not offer: the camera can move in any direction at any speed, it can divide objects, chose to emphasize particular sections of reality, it can analyse space by fragmenting it and then re-form it into a new whole, it can abolish distances, make objects large or small, distort perspective and control forms and appearances by lighting, setting or camera angles (Ibid.: 95-96). The analysis of the scenes provided in this chapter demonstrates how choreography is created by the use of the camera, and through the overall treatment of camera and editing, which also demonstrates the contrast between choreography for physical space and choreography within the context of video space.

The choreographic work involved in creating the stylised movement and the short dance sequences for the protagonist of Gaia was initially done in a London-based studio, where her performance was developed throughout sessions with a number of professional dancers and dance students. The material gathered during rehearsals was recorded on video tapes. My initial visual ideas, issuing from the emotion generated by the central theme concerning the protagonist's 'rite of passage' gave rise to sequences of movement which were developed by myself, together with the dancers' assistance and contribution. Gradually, the identity of the protagonist evolved with a manner of movement unique to her and her role. Due to the fact that the video was shot in Israel, I finally gave the role to a principal dancer of Koldemama Dance Company, Rama Goren,

who studied and eventually assumed the protagonist's role. As I was planning to capture on screen concise stylised movements and movement details, I had to cast a trained mover, who is used to working in a very hot climate, and who would be able to convey via movement physical fragility, lightness, sensitivity, flexibility, sensuality and strength, and with a screen presence which would denote a sense of curiosity and enigma. Before the actual shoot, rehearsals were made on location, and then it became apparent, to all parties involved in this production, that the environment gave the protagonist's performance its special qualities and flavour. The performance was created for the environment and used the environment as part of its aesthetics e.g., moving in water, on sand, between rocks, etc. However, the camera intervened and physical space and performance transformed into screen imagery.

The soundtrack for Gaia was created only after the image-track was completed and fully edited, thus allowing myself, composers and sound editor to precisely match sound to picture. Although, sound and music were used during rehearsals to create atmospheric sound environments and rhythm tracks for the dancers, the final music and sound score had to interact with screen images and become a sound-environment which interacts with, and engulfs, the imagery on screen. My intention from the very start of the production was to create a soundtrack which would not be a mere rhythmical accompaniment for the action on screen or an illustration of it, but which would add another audio dimension, thus, 'colouring' the imagery with emotion, mood, atmosphere, rhythm,

texture and depth. As this video text does not incorporate any verbal or written information, sound and music replaced the sphere of words, communicating a range of emotion and meaning via the audio-track. The collision of image and sound issuing from different sources can result in a poetic montage and the creation of a wider scope of meanings. In Scene 2, for example, the protagonist's interaction with a shell is accompanied by a flute solo which issues from a source unavailable in the image-track itself, i.e. the flute solo is not issuing directly from the image. In addition, the flute solo does not illustrate the protagonist's movements, and its rhythm is independent of her movement, so both rhythms, the rhythm of the flute's melody and the rhythm of the protagonist's performance, coexist as two independent dimensions of sound and image which correlate and reinforce one another, creating a synthesis via correspondence but also out of the contrast as two separate events coexisting in space and time.

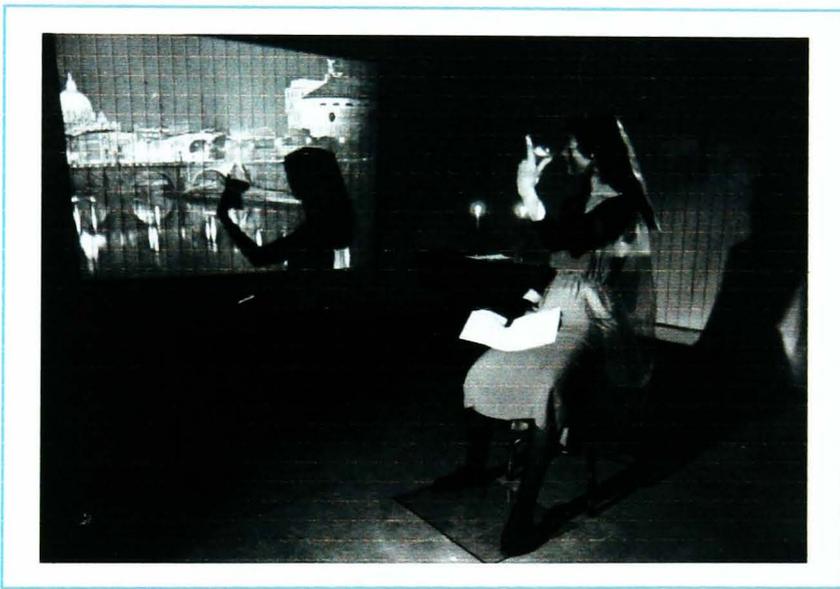
The principle of collision and correspondence of image-track and soundtrack runs throughout the text of Gaia, so that tension between the two layers of sound and image is constantly available. This interaction reinforces the 'performative' qualities of the text, as the viewer is interacting simultaneously with two different audio and visual dimensions. However, the sound track was not arbitrarily constructed but, was designed by carefully matching layers of sound to picture. The soundtrack for scenes 1, 4, & 9 was composed by John G. Smith and involved the exact matching of sound to camera movement and editing. The flutist and composer Tim Wheater, a self-described 'sound healer',

contributed a number of tracks from his sonic journey Fish Nite Moon, an ethnic fusion incorporating instruments such as keyboards, percussion, Native American flute and didgeridu. The tracks were rearranged and edited to match the imagery. Two additional tracks of flute and keyboards music were contributed by Shaun Aston and were also rearranged and edited to match the imagery. Wheater was attracted by the poetic quality of the imagery and Aston found that the imagery was in affinity with the visual aspect of the music that he composed. Sound effects and editing of sound to picture were made in a television sound-studio in which the work was accomplished by a sound editor who worked under my instructions.

The soundtrack was the final component which brought the text into life as a completed piece. It enhanced the image-track with rhythm and created an overall sense of formal unity by engulfing the entire structure of the text with a particular type of soundscape integrating electronic and instrumental sounds. The soundtrack also enhances the choreographic experience as it highlights and creates movement and rhythm in interaction with, and independently of, the image-track.



58. Reflection, see page 125



59. Lights in the Darkness, see page 128



60. Lights in the Darkness, see page 128



61. Red Woman, see page 142



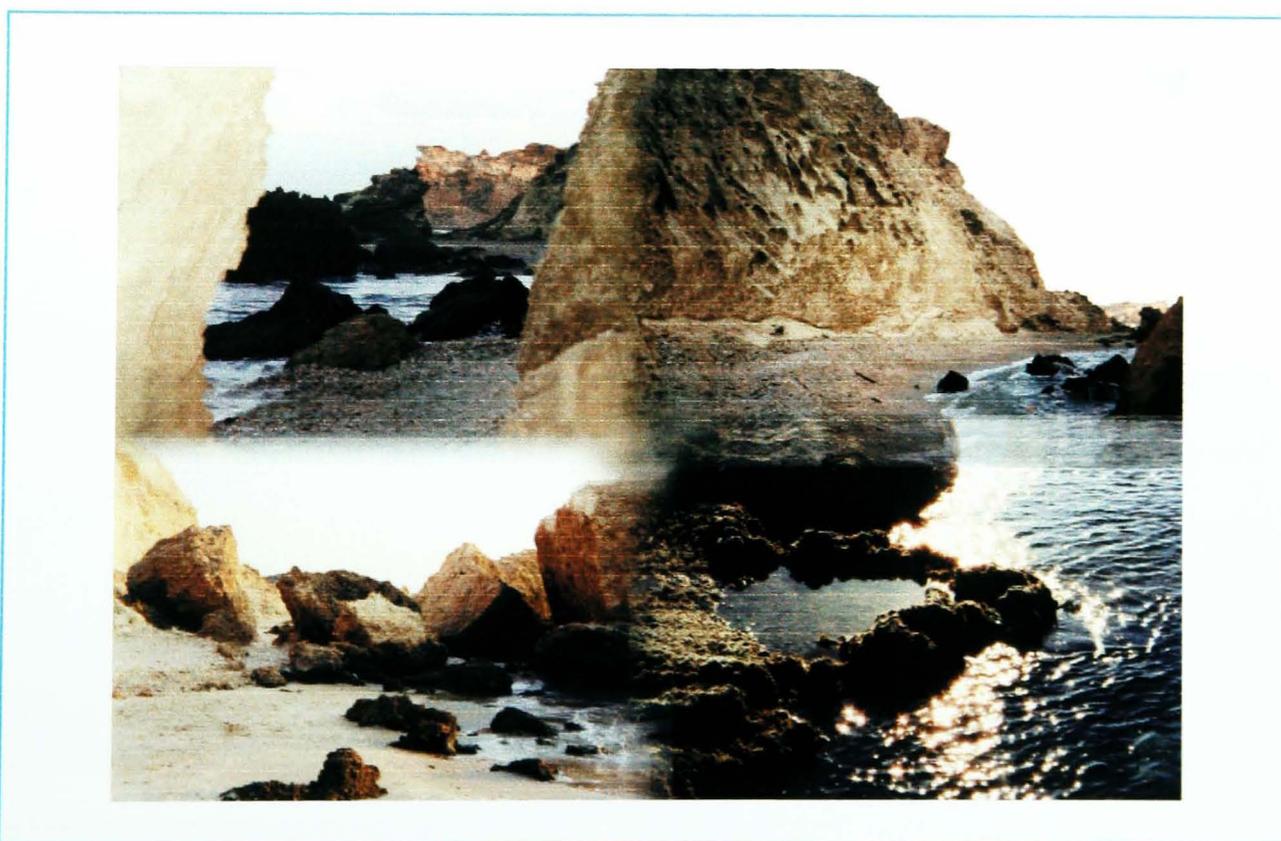
62. Gaia, see page 143



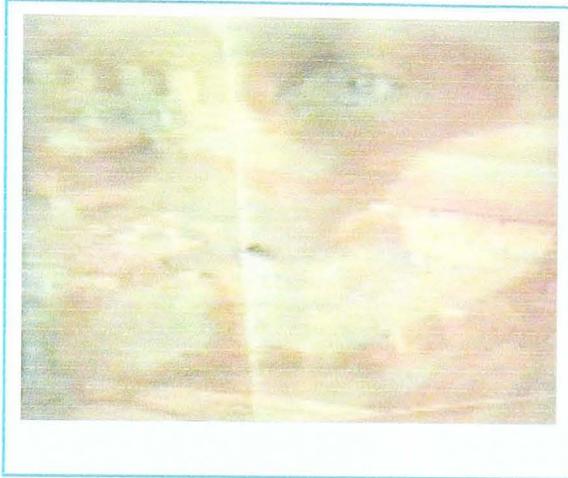
63. Gaia, see page 143



64. Gaia, see page 144



65-68. Gaia, see page 145-146



69. Flight, see page 157



70. Flight, see page 157



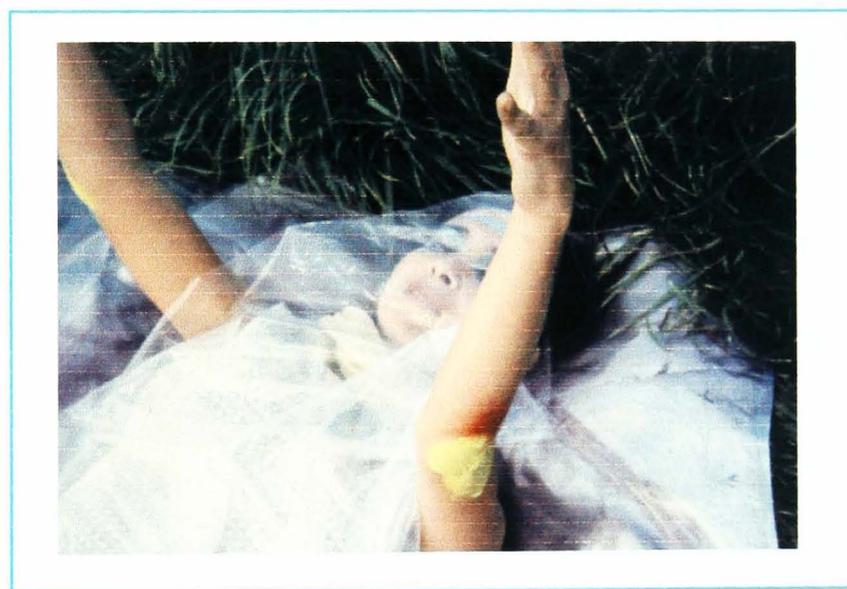
71. Flight, see page 157



72. Flight, see page 157



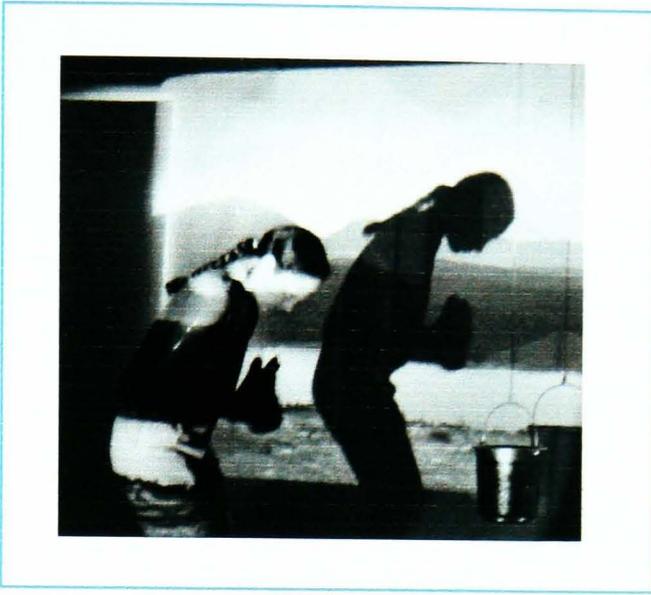
73. Flight, see page 157



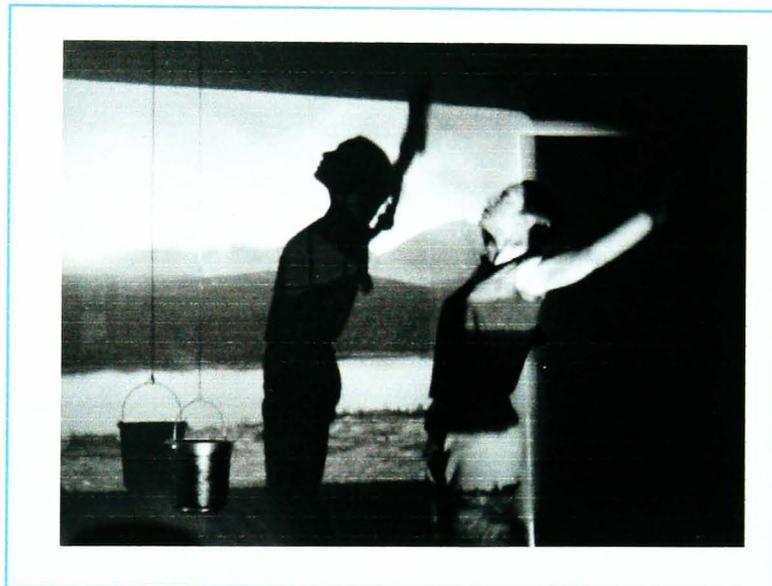
74. Flight, see page 157



75. Flight, see page 157



76. Flight, see page 157



77. Flight, see page 157



78. Flight, see page 157



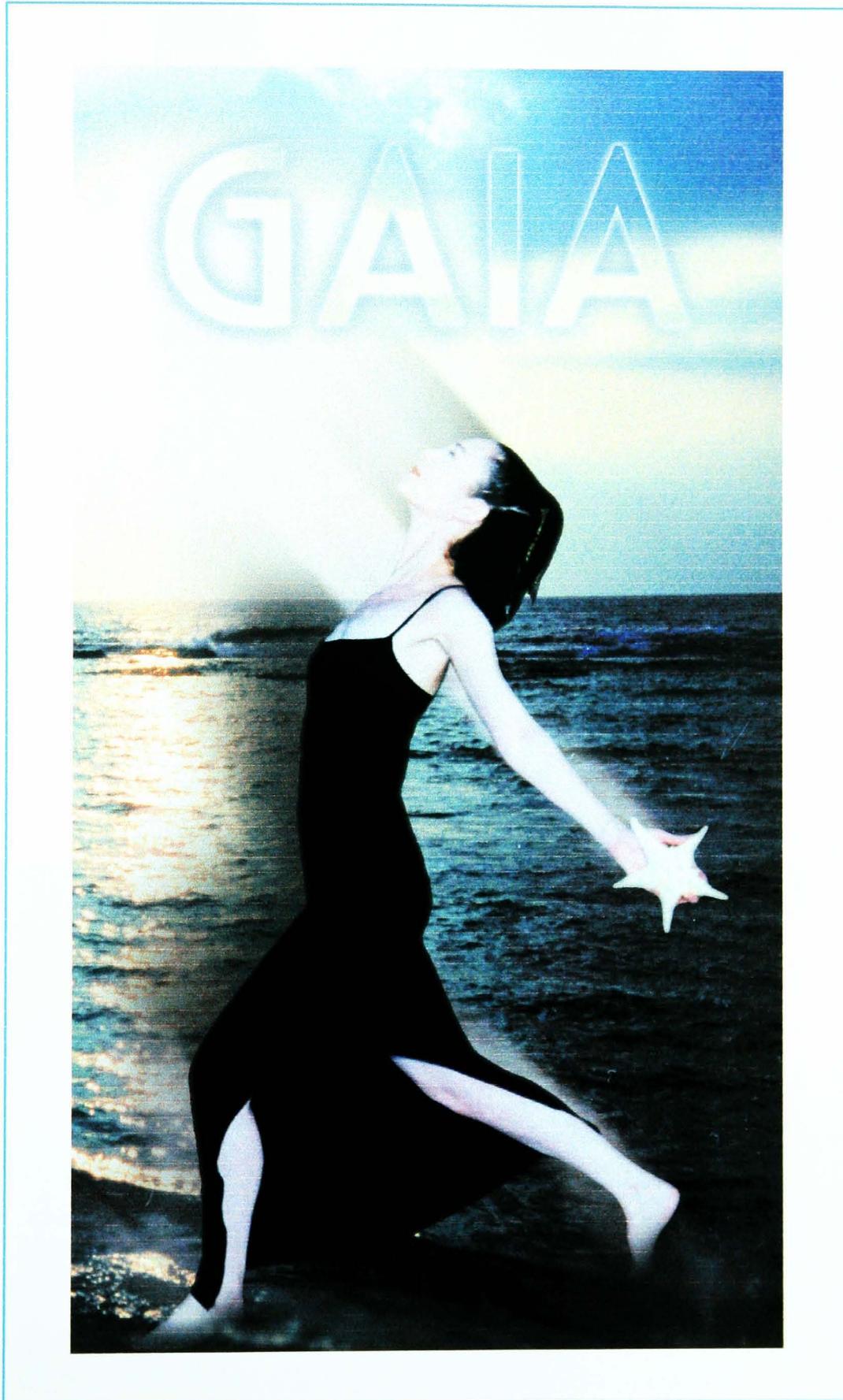
79. The Wheel, see page 158



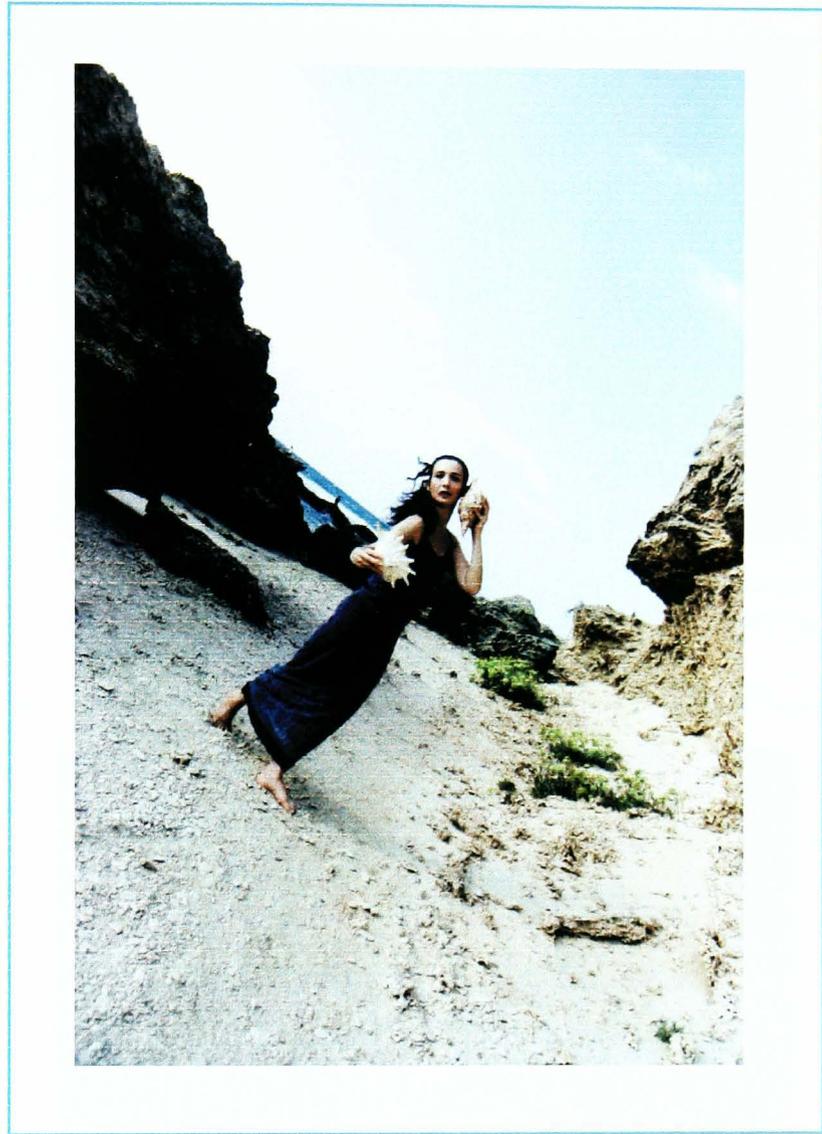
80. The Resurrection, see page 159



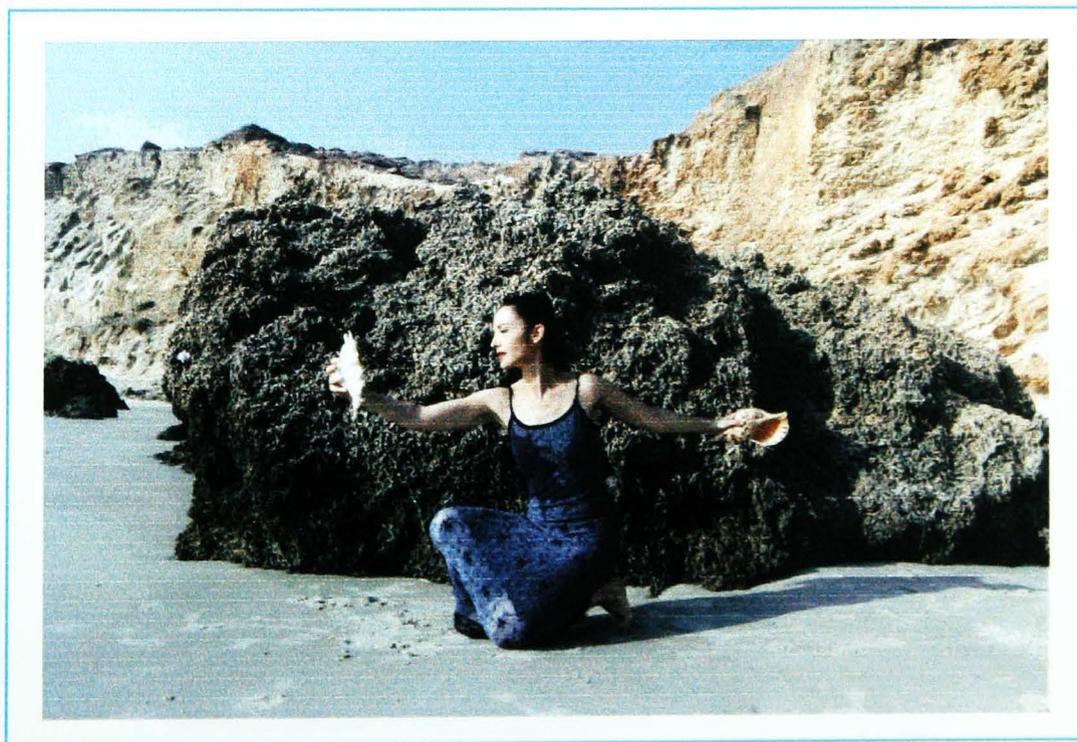
81. Love and Light, see page 159



82. Gaia, see page 159



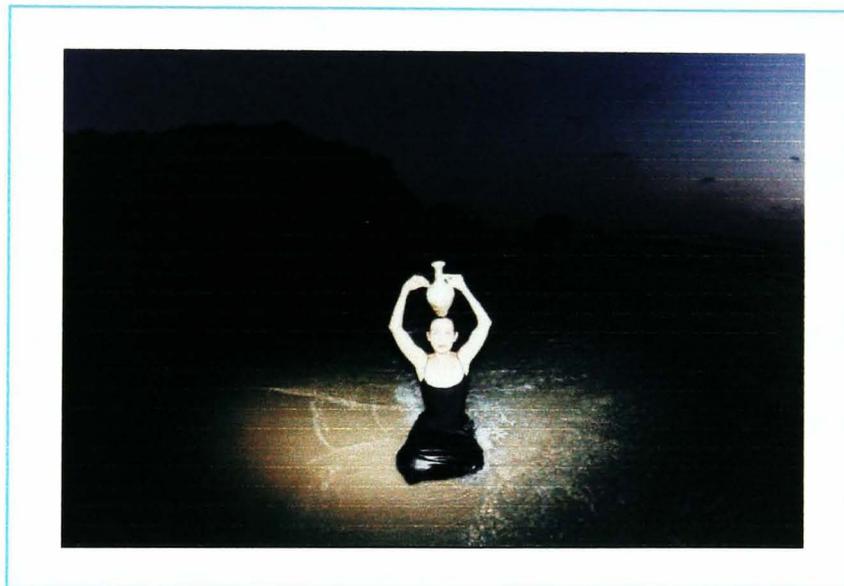
83. Gaia, see page 159



84. Gaia, see page 159



85. Gaia, see page 159



86. Gaia, see page 159



87. Gaia, see page 159

5.6. ANALYSIS OF SCENES

5.6.1 INTRODUCTION TO ANALYSIS: 'A JOURNEY TOWARD THE WITHIN'

This analysis of scenes reveals how each individual scene is formally constructed and how Gaia as a text delivers an audio-visual choreographic and 'performative' event on screen. The analysis demonstrates how the components of movement, space and time are treated and distributed throughout the text and within the framework of individual scenes. However, the formal treatment should be perceived as the aesthetic means used to convey the protagonist's journey and her inner realms as she interacts with the environment and with various aspects of herself often appearing as reflections, or 'mirror images' when her image splits into two or three identical selves. This journey is perceived by myself, as the maker of the text, as a 'rite of passage' through which the protagonist journeys toward an interior realm to meet aspects of herself and discover her identity whilst exploring her relationship with the natural world that surrounds her. Therefore, the analysis tackles both aspects of form and content, starting with the formal analysis of the images, due to the fact that the text was initially conceived in a visual form supported by an emotion rather than by a story. The protagonist's 'rite of passage' is, thereby, not a story about a passage but a visual poem which can not be translated into words, and functions as a visual phenomenon which generates visual depictions and metaphors through which the nature of the protagonist's passage is expressed.

Whilst I was researching the work of Maya Deren, I discovered in her writings a description, which was engraved in my memory as a powerful statement, concerning the potential of film language, and the application of physical movement choreographed for the screen, to convey layers of intense emotion and meaning via visual depiction and metaphors. This statement, which was written by Deren with regard to her first film Meshes of the Afternoon, has motivated me to explore the potential of choreographed screen images to convey a personal journey unravelling the interior realms of the protagonist's self, as exemplified in Gaia. It is not the subject matter of Meshes, but the attempt to uncover profound states of minds and emotions via the formal treatment that attracted me to this evocative statement:

There is a very, very short sequence in that film--right after the three images of the girl sit around the table and draw the key until it comes up knife-- (sic) when the girl with the knife rises from the table to go towards the self which is sleeping in the chair. As the girl with the knife rises, there is a close-up of her foot as she begins striding. The first step is in sand (with suggestion of sea behind), the second stride (cut in) is in grass, third is on pavement, and the fourth is on a rug, and then the camera cuts up to her head with the hand with the knife descending towards the sleeping girl. What I meant when I planned that four stride sequence was that you have to come a long way from the very beginning of time to kill yourself, like the first life emerging from the primeval waters. Those four strides, in my intention, span all time (Deren, 1965: 30).

In Gaia the protagonist's image is often reflected in sea water and her performance is inter-linked to the sea in formal terms and metaphorically. The reflection as a notion has always interested me as an image denoting self exploration, self absorption, the presence of other selves beyond the single physical self, and as a narcissistic tendency manifesting self love. The image of the poet lying on sand and gazing at his portrait reflected in a pool of water in Cocteau's Orphee (1950) encapsulates, for me, this notion of a reflection as an introverted desire to know one's self and as an extroverted ambition to be seen via one's reflection (See images: 88-90).

The notions of reflection, duplication, water and sea are interconnected as images and metaphors throughout the screen text and are perceived as linked to the female identity of the protagonist: 'Symbolically woman is indeed water: mare, mer, mere, and Mary... moving ever downward to collect in pools and lakes which mirror the sky. The feminine nature is reflective. ... By looking into the images in the deep unconscious, we come to know ourselves. Duplication, duplicity... belong to the feminine side' (Nichols, 1980: 78-79).

The process of deciphering the images of Gaia for their metaphorical meanings or emotional and intellectual content is, for me, a journey through which I rediscover my own text. Throughout the creative process the images, 'came into being' and were not created for the purpose of intellectually presenting metaphorical ideas. The visual metaphors created, though, originated from the material itself, and not

from any intellectual notions outside the material, available in the form of images and sounds. Bartal and Ne'eman's resource book The Metaphoric Body: Guide to Expressive Therapy through Images and Archetypes (1993) has provided additional insight into the manner in which metaphoric imagery and experiences are produced through the interaction of body, objects and natural elements and assisted the analysis process of the completed video text. Bartal and Ne'eman's approach to movement and the 'the exploration of the body through archetypal imagery' (Ibid.: 1) is based on practice and research made across three continents: in Israel, England and America, and on the work of Moshe Feldenkrais. Vered Ketter, who is currently developing dance and movement workshops integrating Gaia as an integral part of therapeutic-holistic movement experience also researched Feldenkrais's work. Although Gaia at the outset was planned as a purely creative demonstration of dance on screen, the text apparently attracted a specialised sector involved in dance therapy and in the therapeutic aspects of the arts. The reason for this particular interest in the text can be found in its treatment of physical movement, as it is integrated with the natural environment, and as the text generates archetypal and metaphoric imagery concerned with the process of transformation through the protagonist's 'rite of passage'. According to Bartal and Ne'eman:

Jung viewed the desire to create and transform as 'the basic instinct of civilization'. Goethe more joyfully expresses it: 'Transformation and again transformation, the eternal entertainment of the eternal spirit'. ... The exploration of the body through archetypal symbols

transforms and facilitates changes in people's lives. As Jung stated: 'Fantasy is the archetypal activity of the psyche... it is never merely mentally subjective, but is always being enacted and embodied' (Ibid.).

The Greek Delphic Oracle, also referred to as the 'navel of Gaia', the female creator, (Stein, 1993: 32), is known for its particular call: 'know thyself'. 'The Call of Awakening' in Hebrew, 'lec lecha', literally translates as 'go to there' - and in a metaphoric sense, implies 'go to thyself' (Bartal and Ne'eman, 1993: 1). The call which generates the protagonist's journey in Gaia directs her 'toward the within', to know herself through a passage leading inward to knowing herself through interaction with aspects of herself and nature.

Initially what attracted my attention to the The Metaphoric Body was the demonstration, provided by the authors, of a visual metaphor via a photograph of a woman hanging on a wheel. The image brought into my mind my own series of photographs titled The Wheel. Comparing the two photographs showing a woman and a wheel, as exemplified by my own work and the photograph provided by Bartal and Ne'eman, one can view the operation of two metaphoric images related to the wheel, both involving a woman interacting with a wheel via physical movement. (See images: 91-92) According to the authors, in image 91, 'the woman identifies herself with the wheel. This identification is a metaphor, and the relationship between the woman and the wheel is a metaphor for her feelings' (Ibid.: Introductory page). In image 92 the relationship

between the woman and the wheel represents a different set of dynamics associated with the identification with the wheel, although in both cases the women entrust or surrender their bodies to the wheel. This example of metaphoric imagery created via the interaction of the physical body with objects or elements existing in the environment is relevant to the manner in which I decipher the metaphors created in Gaia through the interaction of the protagonist's body with objects and elements of her environment.

5.6.2. GAIA: THE ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL SCENES

(For visual references see Appendix A)

5.6.2.a INTRODUCTORY SCENE: INVOCATION

Duration: 28 seconds

Formal Analysis

This short introduction, in formal terms, is composed of a dynamic set of images integrating five separate shots into a visual montage. The journey begins with a shot of planet earth in motion as it is seen from space. This original footage taken from Space Shuttle Discovery (Courtesy of Stuart Carter, Pioneer Productions) was superimposed with a shot of sea waves, thus creating a visual montage of the planet in motion onto the background of the sea (See image: 0.1.). This is followed by two shots in superimposition creating a different visual montage, fusing a shot of sea waves and a shot of the moon against blue sky, thus the planet is engulfed by waves and moon and fades out (See image: 0.2.). Next the waves fade out, but the moon remains as a dim

reflection positioned within a new visual depiction of a seascape taken by the camera from an extremely high angle point of view (the camera was positioned on a cliff overlooking the seascape) with a zoom leading towards a figure lying on a rock surrounded by the receding tide. The moon, positioned just above the figure, fades out, and the scenery brightens as camera keeps zooming towards her (See image 0.3.).

This formal treatment of images creates a continuous visual montage in which each frame is filled with movement contributed by the combination of camera movement, images in superimposition, fades, dissolves and the natural motion of the sea as it is seen on screen. The images are edited as they dissolve and fade into one another, thus denoting the notion of an integrated fluid movement. This rhythm of a fluid movement, which integrates all elements in the frame, and the flow of imagery throughout the scene, is also enhanced by the soundscape which is linked to the imagery as it engulfs it continuously with the sound of the sea. Furthermore, the imagery is intensified by an evocative flute call, especially co-ordinated to this introduction by the composer Tim Wheater, which follows the imagery up until the very end of the scene where it dissolves into the next musical composition and the next set of images of Scene 1.

Analysis of Content

Although the manner in which the images are edited constitutes a fluid movement and rhythm, the actual imagery manipulated and restricted by the limits of the frame is extremely powerful, using volatile natural

elements i.e. planet earth, the sea and moon. Furthermore, the calling flute, though following the fluid movement of imagery, denotes a sense of expectation with its awakening call. A sense of mystery is also aroused as the camera reveals an isolated figure lying on a rock amidst the seascape sheltered by a dim reflection of the moon. As the camera zooms in towards the figure, the entire movement of the scene is shifting towards her as the focus of attention.

There is also the option of reading the imagery in a metaphoric manner, referring to the relationship between the images in this montage as reflecting the interaction of, and the fragile balance between, the earth and the moon and its impact on the sea and tides. As the figure is revealed lying underneath the moon surrounded by the tide, a connection is made between her and the natural environment. As mentioned in this chapter, the sea, from a mythical perspective, is a female domain ascribed to the ancient earth deity Gaia, who gave birth to all nature. Thus a link can be made between the figure and the mythical realm of the female creator. The passive state of the lying figure underneath the moon denotes a state of sleep, indicating the influence of inner-states, dreams and the terrain of the unconscious mind. The fact that the female figure appears within a framework in which the sunlit earth, sea and moon are 'key players' already suggests that her destiny is interlinked with those powerful elements of nature.

5.6.2.b SCENE 1: AWAKENING

Duration: 3 minutes 82 seconds

Formal Analysis

Scene 1 is made up of three interrelated sections which can be compared to the structure of a poem created through the interaction of three verses. The first verse depicts a process through which the protagonist is awakened and begins to interact with the environment. Throughout this verse, she never leaves the rock on which she was first discovered. Initially, the protagonist is discovered by the camera, as she lies motionless on a rock. The camera, positioned on a cliff overlooking the landscape, produces the movement on screen as it travels across a large expanse of seascape surveying it from a bird's eye view. The camera travels across the sea three times, each time revealing the figure on the rock from a different and nearer perspective. Each camera movement dissolves into the next one, creating a fluid sequence of images which merges the protagonist and the environment into a single framework, especially as images of the sea and the protagonist overlap by superimposition (See images: 1.1., 1.2.). Next, the camera frames the rock on which the protagonist lies and her reflection in the tide water underneath it (See image: 1.3.). As she begins to move, there is a cut to a shot centred on the protagonist on the rock and her movements as she awakens (See image: 1.4.).

The protagonist's performance on the rock was fragmented and choreographed via editing and although the movements she performs are limited to her upper body, opening her arms like a swimmer or producing small and rounded gestures around her eyes with her hands, the camera and editing, in fact, provide a range of additional movements

through which she is shifted in a manner possible only on screen (See images: 1.5., 1.6.). For example, her figure on the rock, and her full reflection in a vertical position underneath it suddenly appears in a landscape in which the sea has transformed into the surface of planet earth moving in the blackness of space. This image is edited with a shot of the camera moving upwards from reflection up to her full figure on the rock. When the camera movement is completed, framing her full body in frame, the landscape changes into the original seascape (See images: 1.7., 1.8., 1.9., 1.10.). This is followed by another formal transformation when the protagonist's movements are shown in a new visual framework as a reflection moving in the clear and sky-blue water of the tide (See image: 1.11.). From the reflection there is a sudden cut to a close-up of the protagonist's dynamic arm and hand movements around her chest, face and eyes, and when she poses in a stylised gesture, there is a cut to a full shot of her standing still as a reflection gently carried by the low tide.

In the next section, or verse two, the protagonist is now walking on the wet sand, having left her position on the rock. She continues the movement motif of the 'swimmer' with upper-body 'swimming' movements and hand and eye's gestures. However, she now revolves to explore her environment (See image: 1.12.) and tries to balance her weight on one leg as she inspects the surroundings (See images: 1.13., 1.14.). But she falls into a new movement, firmly grounded and still looking ahead with curiosity (See image: 1.15.). This short section of continuous movement was constructed via the editing of four separate

shots showing the protagonist's performance from four different points of view. The last shot of the protagonist's gesture, with her hands framing her eyes as she looks at the landscape, is superimposed with a shot of a new landscape into which she gradually dissolves (See image: 1.16.). The landscape also dissolves into the next verse.

In verse three, the protagonist's figure is engulfed by the sea (See image: 1.17.), the image created by the superimposition of a long shot of her amidst the waves and a shot of waves washing over the entire frame, her body leaning towards the water, her arms in a wavelike motion. This dissolves into another superimposition with the same movement motif of her figure with waves though, she is now in a full shot at the centre of the frame (See image: 1.18.). Engulfed by the waves, she moves forward, her arms in a wavelike motion leading the movement as she revolves and leans to collect water with the palms of her hands which she then raises upwards as she rises (See images: 1.19., 1.20.). A close-up of her profile and raised and opened palms is superimposed by a wave which breaks over the frame and disappears to reveal the opening of her tightly closed palms (See image: 1.21.). As the raised hands are opened, the image is superimposed and dissolves with a full shot of the protagonist rising from the sand and running backwards toward the sea and then running forwards toward the shore where she falls on the sand (See images: 1.22., 1.23.). As she falls a new superimposition creates a montage showing the protagonist still in the same location but with rocks behind her and with waves washing over her kneeling body on the shore (See image: 1.24.). She rises and begins

a series of stylised steps whilst washed by almost transparent waves which move across the frame. Suddenly the rocks and the waves disappear from frame, and she is again on the same shore completing the sequence of steps and posing in a gesture with raised arms and opened palms and eventually dissolving into water and fading into the sea (See image: 1.25.).

The soundscape, composed specifically for Scene 1 by John Smith, is made of electronic harp music mixed with the ethereal voices of a choir. This repetitive and melodic soundtrack integrates and unifies all the movements and the three verses into an homogenous structure and colours the imagery with a delicate and unified rhythm denoting lightness, playfulness and curiosity mixed with a sense of enigma. This musical treatment corresponds to the manner in which the protagonist moves through the constantly shifting landscape, as she dissolves in and out of light, transparent as a reflection, or as a concrete figure effortlessly transported and playfully moving through a mix of imaginary and ordinary spaces.

Analysis of Content

The formal treatment of this scene demonstrates a choreographic experience created specifically for the screen, allowing the protagonist to move through space and time both as a concrete figure and a reflection, (verses one & two) to be located in imaginative spaces in which the seascape turns into the surface of earth moving in space, (verse one) and to be moving in a space engulfed by waves, or on a

shore which is a constantly changing environment (verse three). There is also the constant shift in the camera's perspectives, moving from a bird's eye view of the action to full shots and medium shots which, in fact, transgress the perception of space and time, especially in verse one, and creates a larger scope for the protagonist's performance as her identity and movement motif remain intact whilst her position in space keeps changing (See images: 1.7., 1.8., 1.9., 1.10., 1.11.).

There is also the option of reading the images for their metaphoric value and, although my perception connotes particular ideas, the images as metaphors can assume a variety of meanings depending on the viewer's personal interpretation. This can be compared to the experience of reading a poem, and although the poem as a text prompts particular notions, the manner in which the poem is comprehended by individual readers is a matter of personal perception. However, my personal view is already embodied in the formal treatment and in the manner in which the images were manipulated. Overall, the protagonist is viewed in a context in which she both dissolves into and reflects the environment. Thus her identity is an integral part of, and reflects, the natural world. She exists in a universe in which time and space are elastic notions and in which the physical components of the environment can assume transparent and almost intangible qualities, as in verse three, where her environment is engulfed by a transparent layer of waves, or where solid elements such as rocks become transitory and insubstantial. Her own identity as a concrete female persona is juxtaposed with the presence of her reflection, as another personification of herself, especially as the

reflection is as important as her physical body. Her reflective nature is also expressed in verse three in which the wavelike motion of her arms and the movement of her body imitate and reflect the motion of waves lowering, rising, revolving and progressing from the depths of the sea to the shore and back.

Finally, the emphasis on the stylised and repeated movements of the protagonist's hands around her eyes in verses one and two can be seen as a metaphor denoting the notion of sight associated with 'the ability to see both literally and metaphorically, in the sense of "understanding". ... The eyes might be a message to pay attention to what it is that your unconscious "sees"' (Fincher, 1991: 123-125). According to Fincher, the 'eye' as a symbolic image suggests a concern with issues related to women and feminine identity, and could also be a symbol for the Self. The association of the eye to the feminine is found in Egyptian mythology in which the goddess Matt was the 'All-Seeing Eye and Mother of Truth' (Ibid.: 124-125). According to Walker, cited in Fincher, 'The universal mother word Maa was both the name of the goddess and the hieroglyphic eye' (Ibid.: 124). Hence, the protagonist directs the attention of the viewer to read the text with the unconscious mind rather via intellectual reasoning, denoting that the reality depicted and her journey are rooted in a fantastic realm integrating external/objective and extremely internal/subjective points of view. The movement motif which constantly emphasises the eyes can also connote that it is the protagonist's self which undertakes the journey seeking self knowledge (To find out about the psychological aspects of 'the self' see:

Jung's Man and his Symbols, 1978).

5.6.2.c SCENE 2: WOMAN AND SHELL

Duration: 2 minutes 2 seconds

Formal Analysis

The last scene ended with the protagonist dissolving into the sea which is followed, in scene 2, by a visual montage created out of three shots of sea imagery leading to a depiction of a shell floating on waves (See images: 2.1., 2.2.). The shell, carried by the waves, is shown revolving upon the sparkling plane of water and light until it is engulfed by waves of light which cover the entire frame via the superimposition of the shot of shell and a shot of sunlight reflected on waves (See image: 2.3.). The protagonist enters the frame to collect the shell and in stylised steps she walks out of the sea moving one arm over the shell, which she holds close to her chest, in rounded movements (See image: 2.4.).

The interaction of the protagonist with the shell is designed to convey that a connection is made between her and the object which is intimate, in the sense that she treats it with a sense of discovery, affection and adoration. Her movements with the shell are choreographed and edited to create rounded and spiral shapes, imitating the spiral quality of the object, which unfolds in and out. The interaction was created through the combination of separate shots showing the continuous interaction via different perspectives (See images: 2.5., 2.6., 2.7.). The protagonist's contact with the shell is emphasised as she tentatively listens to its sound, bringing it closer to her body, and especially to her ear, and then

reacts with a smile to its communication which washes over her with a transparent wave which mirrors the blue sky and the red of her dress in patterns of water and light (See images: 2.8., 2.9., 2.10.). The communication with the shell continues with movements folding in and out toward the shell, outward and back (See images: 2.11., 2.12.) and ends with the protagonist listening to the shell with growing awareness, suggested by the repeated gesture of bringing the shell to her ear, which is also emphasised by close-ups of the action (See image: 2.13.). The listening gestures are coupled with gestures of offerings as the protagonist directs the shell away from her and towards her surroundings, thus denoting that the shell is a gift given by the sea and which she offers back to the natural elements. When the shell is brought forward, it becomes enormous almost covering the entire frame (See image: 2.14.). Throughout this scene, the protagonist's interaction with the shell is tightly framed, with the camera focusing only on the protagonist's body with relation to the shell. Thus the camera frames the protagonist in a manner which brings her closer to the viewer, revealing aspects of her physicality and the intimate relationship which she forms with the shell.

The soundscape created for this scene begins with the sound of waves which dissolves into a flute solo, by Tim Wheeler, which accompanies the entire interaction of protagonist with shell and unifies all aspects of her activity into a continuous movement. The flute solo dissolves into a hollow sound effect of waves and blowing wind, connoting the echo of the sea which emanates from the shell. The protagonist, who is

tentatively listening to the shell, is captivated by its cylindrical and echoing sound vibration.

Analysis of Content

Any metaphorical reading of the scene emerges from its formal treatment which conveys the relationship between the protagonist and the shell. The metaphoric value of the shell as a feminine symbol is examined in Topic 5.4.. The intimate interaction between the protagonist and the shell can be perceived as part of a personal rite through which the woman explores her feminine identity as it is in affinity with natural elements and mythical representations of female traits. The emphasis on hearing by aligning ear and shell can also be referred to the relationship between the spiral shape of the shell, the spiral tube of the human ear and the sensation of the body. According to Sieben : 'As Alfred A. Tomatis, the expert in hearing and the structure of the ear, has observed, it is within the labyrinth of the ear that a person's "sense of the body" is located. Whoever dances necessarily understands a spiral, regardless of whether he or she can plot out the geometry on a grid' (1999: 64). The natural dynamic of human movement is often studied with relation to 'spiral dynamics' (See article by Sieben, I. 'Whatever moves also rotates: Spiral Dynamics', 1999). Overall, in terms of sound and picture the scene unites the shell and the woman's body whilst exploring the notion of a spiral as means to unravel aspects of the woman's self and nature.

5.6.2.d SCENE 3: CONFRONTATION

Duration: 1 minute 27 seconds.

Formal Analysis

The delicate balance established, in the previous scenes, between protagonist and environment is now disrupted, and her interaction with the natural elements which surround her becomes confrontational. This is conveyed through a montage of images which creates a disturbing dialogue in which the protagonist is overpowered by the physical mass and intensity of the landscape.

The scene begins as the shot, from the previous scene, of the protagonist and the shell dissolves into a landscape of sea and tall rock formations revealed by the panning motion of the camera (See image: 3.1.). The expanse of landscape brings to mind the isolation of the protagonist as the only human figure in that world also denoted by a sense of mystery conveyed by the soundscape. Now her figure is constantly dissolving into the harsh textures of the massive rock formations which surround her. The formal treatment creates the visual impression that the protagonist's body is, in fact, disappearing into the landscape. Her physicality becomes intangible as she is confronted by the physical mass of the landscape. In addition, the landscape which surrounds her is constantly in motion, as a result of camera movements, and its presence becomes animated and threatening (See images: 3.2., 3.3., 3.4.). Finally, the protagonist transforms into a rock, and although she is now a static form, the actual rock from which she is made is in motion and moving inwardly until it dissolves back into a massive rock formation which

covers the entire frame (See images: 3.5., 3.6., 3.7.).

The movement motif of the protagonist's performance is taken from Scene 1: verses one and two, though now her exploration of the environment is seen in an alienating context. As she performs her stylised hand and eye's movements what she sees is now mingled with fear. This is also enhanced by the soundscape which colours the imagery with an atmosphere of suspense. The sonic journey, by Tim Wheeler, is used as the audio dimension of the protagonist's journey, and the landscape vibrates with low earthy echoes of the aboriginal didgeridu distributing a sense of wilderness together with a trembling sound of flute and bizarre bird calls.

Analysis of content

The relationship between the protagonist and the landscape coupled with the soundscape creates a metaphor denoting the woman's isolation, alienation and her fearful state. The tremendous fear that she experiences gradually accumulates and culminates, in a metaphoric manner, as she turns into rock and thus, she becomes static and lifeless. This scene, therefore, creates a turn in the protagonist's passage as she is taken into an arena where the forces of the natural environment become confrontational and potentially destructive. Her physical identity is threatened when confronted by the massive physicality of natural elements which, although they appear as 'lifeless' rock formations, they are seen in motion, thus metaphorically connoting the hidden and often volatile motion underneath the apparently static surface of the

earth.

5.6.2.e SCENE 4: BREAKING FREE

Duration: 1 minute 53 seconds

Formal Analysis

In this scene the protagonist's confrontation with the environment extends itself into inner conflict and confrontation with aspects of herself. This entire scene can be viewed as a metaphor for inner conflict and struggle with limiting inner and physical factors which culminates in a state of resolution.

However, in formal terms, the previous scene merges with this new scene as a rope emerges out of the rocky surface into which the protagonist's motionless form was dissolved. The protagonist is now discovered tied to a large rock with the rope which encircles her waist so that her movements in space are restricted. The inner conflict is suggested at the very start, as her figure is divided into two identical figures, each stepping and pulling the rope in a different direction and eventually merging, though with their backs to one another (4.1., 4.2., 4.3., 4.4.). Initially, the protagonist's body language is victorious, but it quickly changes into a series of convulsive movements as she contracts her solar plexus with inward movement whilst curving her body. This is followed by a releasing movement in which she opens up and throws her upper body and arms forward and falls back again as she pulls her body into a curving shape with her head facing the solar plexus. To intensify the convulsive nature of these repeated movements, to reveal

the tension building in the woman's body, and the emotional intensity involved in this motion of contraction and release, the action is first shown in shots which tightly frame the moving body and in a slow motion mode. There is even an emphasis on the manner in which her hair is thrown across the frame, creating the impact of a wave of whirling red flames. The action is continuous in real time, capturing the rapid and repeated motion from different camera angles up to the point where the protagonist poses and runs to lean on the rock behind her. From there she throws her body with a revolving movement and collapses on the sand (See images: 4.5., 4.6., 4.7., 4.8., 4.9., 4.10). The scene ends with a shot travelling over the protagonist's body, on the sand, following the rope which extends behind her (See image: 4.11.). This is intercut with a close-up of the rope being pulled by an unseen entity, thus, releasing the protagonist from the rock to which she was connected (See image: 4.12.).

The soundscape which interacts with the picture-track of this scene was composed specifically for it, once the images were edited, by John Smith. It creates an atmosphere of discord with its rapid electronic sound and rhythm. It contrasts the setting of the natural environment with its fast and contemporary 'urban' atmosphere, creating rhythmical tension with its non-melodic and high-speed tempo which corresponds, though, with the emotional intensity embodied in the protagonist's performance and her erratic and restless state of body and mind.

Analysis of content

This scene can be perceived as a metaphoric portrayal of the protagonist's state of mind which was provoked by the overpowering influence of the natural environment seen previously. The fact that her movements are restricted connotes the notion of physical limitations, whilst the rope which ties her to the rock represents a state of imprisonment within the environment which is able to overpower and even destroy her. Her physical identity is threatened and she drives herself into a frantic state of body and mind through volatile movements. Finally she collapses and loses consciousness. By losing consciousness she breaks free from her physical self and imprisoned state. The initial portrayal of her two identical selves pulling in different directions can also be seen as a metaphor for her identity, divided into a physical self and an intangible self, showing the inner conflict which those two opposing identities produce as they collide.

4.6.2.f SCENE 5: THREE REFLECTIONS

Duration: 1 minute 47 seconds

Formal Analysis

A shot of sand dissolves into a panning shot of sky, which dissolves into a shot of a clear current washing over sand, which dissolves into a close view of the intertwined motion of sparkling waves of water and light. The watery surface then changes into a slow motion depiction of sea vegetation swaying along with the current and the patterns of reflected light (See images: 5.1., 5.2., 5.3.). Into this imagery dissolves the protagonist's reflection and a new set of images appear on screen in

which the reflection is now the centre of attention and her intangible body is dancing on the gently moving surface of water and patterns of light. Via editing involving superimposition and a mix of slow motion and real time modes including freeze frame effect, the reflection is seen divided into two and then three identical reflections which dance simultaneously on this watery surface, emerging from each other and then returning to become two reflections which eventually merge into the original one (See images: 5.4., 5.5., 5.6.). The reflection is then overlapped with a layer of transparent patterns of moving waves and light into which she dissolves, and this moving and vibrant plane which occupies the screen dissolves into the image of the glowing sky on frame.

The soundscape designed for this scene was composed by Shaun Aston with flute and keyboard music and is reflective and contemplative. The rhythm is slow but fluid, and the melodic theme colours the image-track with emotional depth and creates an environment of atmospheric sound expressing a state of equilibrium

Analysis of Content

From a formal perspective, my main interest in this scene was to use materials and images taken directly from the natural environment in order to create a choreographic screen event. Although the images are manipulated via editing, they still embody the form and the motion of natural elements, such as sky and clouds, rocks and vegetation under water, or patterns of waves and sunlight, which on screen form a visual

environment celebrating the 'dance of nature'. In addition, choreographing the movements of an intangible entity such as a reflection into a dance involving three identical entities created a new choreographic factor, which also includes the surface on which the reflections move which is also transparent and in motion. Video language and the screen have proved to be the only instruments through which such dance can be performed and viewed.

Employing the elements of nature in order to create a choreographic screen environment is also a comment on the transitory state of what constitutes the experience of time and space. This notion evolves from the visual material on screen, which, in this case, is created through chance, as sunlight and water produced patterns and reflections for a short time, allowing transitory and brief phenomenon to be captured on tape, bringing to the screen a momentum which can not be reproduced in exactly the same manner ever again.

A variety of metaphoric meanings can be ascribed to this scene as it deals with the interaction of an intangible female body with the intangible essence of light and other reflective surfaces, such as sky, earth and sea, denoted by the imagery in which sky is reflected on sand and sea, and light merges with water and sand. It can also be seen as the expression of the protagonist's intangible self, which left her physical body as she lost her consciousness in the previous scene, aiming to break free from her limiting physical existence. Finally, the division of the female reflection into three entities can be metaphorically referred

to the 'three faces of the goddess' (Bartal and Ne'eman, 1993: 156) (See images: 93-94). This motif can also be found in Deren's Meshes.

5.6.2.g SCENE 6: PASSAGE

Duration: 2 minutes 39 seconds

Formal Analysis

From a shot of the sky camera movement leads downward into a seascape which dissolves into a shot of the protagonist emerging into the landscape and stepping through a passage between the rocks (See image: 6.1.). The protagonist's journey through the passage is formally treated, time is slowed down via a variety of slow motion modes and her movements through that space, including the motion of the sea and wind, transform into a contemplative depiction. Twice during this sequence of images showing her travelling through the passage, time is briefly frozen, together with her figure, which is then animated back to life as she dissolves again into a moving image (See images: 6.2., 6.3.). As the passage is completed, she is moving in a real time mode again, performing a series of movements covering her eyes with her hands, (camera framing and following her in a medium shot) and then, in fluid steps and with wavy arms, she travels lightly across an open space (camera framing and following her, zooming to full shot) and poses with her profile to the camera which frames and follows her gesture of offering as she reaches toward the sun. The scene ends with a close-up of her hand merging with the star-like reflection of the sun which fades into white light (See images: 6.4., 6.5., 6.6., 6.7., 6.8.).

The soundscape of the previous scene is continued throughout this scene and fades into the sound of the sea as her hand merges with star and sunlight.

Analysis of Content

In this scene the protagonist reassumes her physical identity and her passage can be seen as a metaphoric portrayal of the inner passage which she undertakes. The contemplative form of the passage and the use of artificial time as opposed to real time denotes an inner-state of deep contemplation, which could not be achieved if, for example, the protagonist had been portrayed passing through that space, in a casual manner, with an ordinary steps in real time. The impact of the frozen frame can also be seen as a metaphor for the passage of time and the transitory state of her physical self. Slowing down time also allows one to reflect on the landscape and the natural environment which, with relation to the woman's passage within it and her brief physical existence, can be seen as a metaphor for the passage of time on a universal scale. The frozen frame can also be perceived as a metaphor for death, and the inevitable death of any physical entity which can take place unexpectedly and in any moment in space and time. Furthermore, this particular formal treatment can only be accomplished as a screen form, and although those metaphors concerning movement, space and time can be expressed differently in a live performance, in this context they are unique to the screen.

The passage ends, metaphorically, with the protagonist realising the

duality of inner and physical states of mind and body suggested by her hand and eye movement which denotes the duality of inner and physical sight. Her turning toward the sun can also be seen as a metaphor for realising the duality of physical light and inner illumination as commented by Jung, cited by Fincher: 'The sun which brings the light out of the unfathomable darkness... is that of intuition, the function which, as though by sudden illumination, apprehends the origins and tendencies of things' (1991: 55).

5.6.2.h SCENE 7: SPACE AND TIME

Duration: 28 seconds

Formal Analysis

A close-up shot of waves reaching the shore is followed by the depiction of the protagonist's hand emerging into the frame as a transparent image (See image: 7.1.). The hand disappears, and in the landscape of sand and waves appears a pitcher and, as the image is shown in superimposition, the pitcher is, in fact, positioned underneath the landscape, thus it is washed over by a layer of transparent waves (See image: 7.2.). The pitcher then appears as a partially transparent object which reflects its highly dynamic sea environments and although the pitcher is fixed in space, the environments in which it is located change (visual effect created via superimposition), (See images: 7.3., 7.4., 7.5.). The scene ends with the pitcher's environment dissolving into a shot of black sea waves which engulf the frame (See image: 7.6.). The soundscape remains unchanged, continuing the melodic theme of the previous scene.

Analysis of Content

In this scene the protagonist is absent but metaphorically she could be present as a passive observer. Since she has both physical and intangible selves it could be her vision that the viewer sees on screen, or her experience of space and time whilst losing her physical identity. As she emerges from the dark sea in the next scene, as an almost transparent figure, metaphorically, this imagery can connote that her physical self was temporarily lost. Then it rises again, from the sea, taking on a physical form. Metaphorically, the pitcher is associated with feminine issues, as the feminine principle is often shown or associated with vessels, clay and water (Stein, 1993: 51). The pitcher reflects the changing environment but it is also firmly located in space despite the changing landscape. As a metaphor it can be also seen as replacing the protagonist's physical body, allowing other associations to filter through the vacuum of space and time.

5.6.2.i SCENE 8: WOMAN AND PITCHER

Duration: 1 minute 39 seconds

Formal Analysis

This scene is created through a montage of imagery depicting the protagonist emerging out of the dark sea and dissolving back into it as she travels across the frame whilst carrying a pitcher. Moving from the right edge of the frame to its left and back, her physical body reflects the dark sea environment and assumes the form of a silhouette. A delicate balance is created between shots showing her physical identity intact and shots in which her body transforms into a silhouette

reflecting the environment and engulfed by the dark and sparkling surface of waves. The application of slow motion modes creates an environment through which she travels in a fluid motion within a transparent space of dark and slowly moving wavy patterns (See images: 8.1. - 8.5.). The scene ends with a shot of the kneeling protagonist dissolving into a cave splashed by waves which dissolves into a flowing current reflecting light and red patterns issuing from the protagonist's dress (See images: 8.6. - 8.8.). The soundscape is continuous, as in the previous scene, though the melodic flute theme is replaced by a choir of ethereal female voices.

Analysis of Content

The dynamics between the protagonist's physical self and her intangible reflective self are metaphorically explored within an environment which also transforms from a concrete setting into a reflective plane in which all the components assume transparent and intangible qualities. The protagonist carrying the pitcher can metaphorically denote her identification with a feminine principle and her role as the carrier of water, the source of all life from which she constantly emerges and into which she dissolves. Through this process, the protagonist's physical self and intangible self form a harmonious dialogue, coexisting in an environment constituted out of physical and intangible components. The formal treatment of this scene allows those visual metaphors and environments to be created via aesthetic means unique to the screen. It also portrays the protagonist's moving body as an entity which is constantly transforming in form and moving through a space

which changes ceaselessly.

The motif of the protagonist's physical body dissolving into a reflection or dissolving into the natural environment, and in particular into the element of water, which runs throughout the the text of the video and is especially evident in this scene, metaphorically connotes the process of self-transformation as experienced by the protagonist, which can also be perceived as a metaphor for personal transformation in general. According to Bartal and Ne'eman any process of transformation which is aligned with the process of life, as it is manifested in nature, involves the notions of losing, releasing and repeating a cycle (1993: 89). The authors cite Gerda Geddes's statement which, in fact, metaphorically corresponds with the manner in which the protagonist is visually treated: 'According to the Taoist belief, one can only become a sage by losing and losing, by letting go instead of holding on, by emptying oneself of emotions and preconceived ideas, and having the courage to "go down into the water" (Ibid.). Dissolving into water, or into the natural environment can reflects 'one's very essence... reaching deeply into human consciousness' '(Ibid.), creating a connection with nature and existence, and reflecting the relationship between humanity and environment and the relationships between human beings.

The movement motif performed by the protagonist in this scene is inspired by the graphic symbol of the swastika (See image: 95), 'the oldest symbol known to humanity, first found in Palaeolithic caves', and which was always associated with the release of creative whirling

energy' (Ibid.: 135). Outside its abusive status in the twentieth century, the swastika is a redeeming and balancing symbol also referred to in the context of the feminine principle which has been repressed and needs to be redeemed (Ibid.). In terms of movement, the swastika is 'a conventionalized human form of two arms and legs or the union of the male and female principles; the dynamic and static... the two complementary phases of movement, centrifugal and centripetal, in breathing and out breathing, going out form and returning to the centre, beginning and end... it is suggested as a version of the labyrinth, of water in movement...' (Cooper cited in Ibid.: 209).

5.6.2.j SCENE 9: WOMAN AND STAR

Duration: 2 minutes 19 seconds

Formal Analysis

The focal point of this scene is in the interaction of protagonist with a star-shaped structure symbolising the notion of the human body as it is in tune with nature (Ibid.: 91). The five angles of the star's structure stands for the five elements each representing an aspect of nature, a concept based on Chinese philosophy dating back more than 4000 years (Ibid.: 89). The formal treatment of protagonist within the structure of the star, therefore, portrays a central event in her passage of transformation.

First the star is discovered as the camera, based on a cliff overlooking the bay in which it is located, zooms in toward it from an extremely high angle point of view (See image: 9.1.). A close-up of the star on the

sand shows it dissolving and disappearing into a transparent layer of sparkling sky-blue water which engulfs the frame (See image: 9.2.). From the shimmering water emerges the protagonist now lying inside the star and immediately disappearing again into the blue sea which overflows the frame (See image: 9.3.). Next, the protagonist emerges again from the blue surface, but this time she is positioned differently on the star, which occupies the entire frame and is placed over the entire landscape of the bay. In this surreal image a miniature figure of the protagonist lies over her giant body stretched across, within and over the landscape (See image: 9.4.). As the protagonist unfolds her crossed arms to the sides of her body, the star begins to turn and the image transforms into another formal configuration in which she is now a miniature figure again lying inside the gigantic star which lies over and within the entire bay (See images: 9.5., 9.6.). In this manner, the protagonist in the star appears facing different directions and placed in different points in space without having to move physically. The manner in which the star appears and disappears and its formal arrangement in the landscape result in a set of surreal images which demonstrates the manipulation of movement, form, space and time in a manner unique to screen media (The visual effects were created during post-production and involved digital video effects including the repositioning of images in frame, superimposition, slow motion and dissolve).

The next set of images, which forms the second section of this scene, focuses on the protagonist rising from a lying position into a standing

position at the centre of the star. Lying on the sand, her upper body is framed showing the opening of her tightly folded arms in a slow motion mode denoting a sense of tension released (See image: 9.7., 9.8.). Via a slow and gradual dissolve, the lying woman is now kneeling at the centre of the star and performing a set of stylised movements connoting ritualised activity involving prayer (See images: 9.9., 9.10.). The shots were taken from the cliff overlooking the action and her activity is shown as being watched from a place above her. The woman is now rising into a standing position and begins a new set of movements which are highly dynamic and are shown from a variety of camera angles, and performed in real and slow motion modes. First, the woman creates the graphic symbol of the star with her arms as her body follows the gesture and then she rotates inside the star whilst her body turns toward the earth or rises toward the sky. Her performance demonstrates her control over her physical body (See images: 9.11., 9.12., 9.13.). Next, she is seen inside the star, her arms raised above her head in a victorious gesture, whilst she is transported across the bay and disappears into the landscape.

The soundscape designed for this scene is taken from the sonic journey composed by Tim Wheater which in Scene 3 created an atmosphere of wilderness and isolation. In this scene the slow and earthy sounds of flute and didgeridu engulf the first section of this scene with an atmosphere of introspection and suspense. As soon as the woman begins to rise though, the sound changes into a melodic and dynamic instrumental piece which highlights the dynamic tempo of the event on

screen during the second section.

Analysis of Content

A variety of metaphorical meanings can be ascribed to this scene as the

five-pointed star can generate numerous meanings. This type of star is

attributed to ancient goddesses (Fincher, 1991: 137) and in Egyptian hieroglyphics it has the meaning of "rising upward toward the point of

origin' (Ciriot, cited, Ibid.). It is also a graphic symbol appearing in

relation to feminine issues and identity, and which inspired myself and

other female artists, therapists and authors to explore its form and

content (See images: 96-98). The notion which guided the specific

portrayal of the protagonist and star in this text was, however, inspired

by a perception according to which the fifth element represents the

quintessential spirit inherent in nature and all life and the four other

elements i.e. earth, water, fire and earth represent the mundane and

physical life (Nichols, 1980: 166). Through a process of interaction and

integration with the symbol the protagonist's physical self finds its roots

and strength in the four elements of nature, whilst the fifth element can

be seen as a metaphor for her desire to explore her identity and origins

beyond the merely physical existence. According to Fincher, 'Stars are

also related to the soul. ... The soul star generates the person's

inspirations, creativity and enthusiasm' (1991: 37). According to

Paracelsus 'the true man is the star in us. The star desires to drive man

towards great wisdom' (Cited, Ibid.). Overall the formal treatment of

this scene conveys a fusion of physical performance mixed with visual

and kinetic configurations which results in an experience involving a star and a woman in which physical and terrestrial limitations are broken and overcome.

5.6.2.k SCENE 10: THE KEY

Duration: 1 minute 39 seconds.

Formal Analysis

The protagonist is now seen passing through another landscape which her figure reflects as she walks through rocks and sea waves (See image: 10.1.). She pauses and a close-up shot of the key in the symbolic form of the ankh is seen lying on a rock slightly hidden by sea vegetation and the flow of waves. Her hand enters the frame and picks it up (See image: 10.2.). Next a close-up shot of a shell washed by the waves showing her hand picking the object (See image: 10.3.). The next shot appears on frame via a dissolve in which she is framed in a long shot showing her walking out of the sea in measured stylised steps holding the shell and the key (See image: 10.4.). On the waterline, she turns sideways and performs another set of movements which are framed in medium and long shots. She turns back to centre, kneeling down, and placing the key inside the shell bringing it forward in a gesture of offering (See images: 10.5.-10.6.). Her kneeling image merges with rocks which appear behind her and she fades away. The background imagery of rocks and sea remains on screen revealing that her figure merged into rocks much smaller than she is (See image: 10.7.). The soundscape for this scene is a variation taken from the sound motif used in Scene 1, creating a light and ethereal atmosphere.

Analysis of content

In this scene the protagonist discovers the 'ankh', a symbol attributed to Egyptian goddesses, an emblem of femininity, which also stands for life or living (Cirlot, 1971: 70). The atmosphere of the scene, denoted by the formal treatment and the soundscape, is light and playful. There is a sense that the environment becomes an imaginary setting as she walks through the landscape as a transparent figure and disappears into rocks and sea. There is an emphasis on the manner in which the protagonist handles the shell and the key as offerings treated with reverence. A symbol, such as the ankh, introduced into the text, can assume 'a mediatory or reflective role, between two states of reality - the tangible, identified as day-to-day existence or temporal and historical life, and the intangible, defined by the eternal realm of myths and archetypes' (Bartal and Ne'eman, 1993: 10). The role of symbols expressed through visual arts, dance, music, literature and play is also demonstrated by an example given by Cooper and cited by Bartal and Ne'eman: 'In Taoist art there was nothing that was not symbolic and every symbol was a window onto a realm that is greater than the symbol itself and greater than the man who perceives it' (Ibid.).

5.6.2. 1: SCENE 11: GRAVITY FREE

Duration: 1 minute 50 seconds

Formal Analysis

In this scene the protagonist performs a dance composed of a series of leaps as she travels across the sand. The scene is divided into two sections or verses, whereby, in the first verse the protagonist's body is

shown from a variety of camera angles, and in the second verse there is a focus on the leaping legs.

From a seascape the protagonist dissolves into a different location on the coast, framed in a medium shot which shows her upper body moving with the key. The camera emphasises those particular opening movements in which the key is handled via stylised movement and moved in a circular motion and pointed sideways and forward (See image: 11.1.). Next, she turns sideways and, with camera following the action, she is framed in a following full shot showing her body leaping toward the left side of the frame and then to the right in slow motion. As she leaps to the right, her image dissolves with another shot of her full body leaping to the left, creating a choreographic design in which her two identical figures collide and cross one another in mid air as the new figure takes over and continues the movement (See image: 11.2.). The camera follows her as she glides in slow motion across the space and the frame from right to left and back. As she turns forward, the action is intercut with a long shot of her leaping forward in slow motion (See image: 11.3.). Extending the time she remains in mid air and she lands on the sand and the action continues in real time, showing her revolving with the camera moving into a tighter shot of her movement. At this point, a new choreographic design is created in which the movement of her revolving figure is integrated with another figure of her revolving in a different direction. In this manner, the two figures of the protagonist originate from the same point in space but moving and pulling into different directions create two opposing circular motions (See images:

11.4., 11.5.). The figures dissolve back into a single protagonist who pauses with her back to the camera, and is framed in medium shot. The attention is on her raised arms in a gesture often associated with ancient figures of female deities (See image: 11.6.).

The second verse starts with a shot of the protagonist's lower body following her leaps on the white sand. However, as she is leaping in a circular motion, there is another movement in frame which overlaps her. This movement is created as a panning shot over the texture of rocks was superimposed over the shot of the protagonist, but was reduced into a thin and transparent layer of a textured surface in motion. This results in a visual and choreographic design which locates the protagonist's movements in a space which is terrestrial but transparent and transitory. In addition, she is moving along with the moving surface or leaping in an opposite direction, thus moving against the movement of the plane through which she moves (See image: 11.7.). Moreover, the sequence of leaps unfolds in various time modes, shifting from real time to a variety of slow motion modes and back. This treatment creates another choreographic arrangement in which the time she spends in mid-air and the speed in which she lands on sand, takes off, or runs, constantly changing and artificial. The final leaping movement involves her leaping through and over the ball of the sun which appears on the white sandy surface as she moves in real time and then in slow motion above it. As she lands on the sand, the sun disappears from frame. This image was technically created by removing the ball of the sun from a different shot and matching it with the leaping movement shot (See image: 11.8).

The scene ends with a medium shot of the protagonist revolving and facing the camera as she places the key over her eye. The soundscape for this scene, by Shaun Aston, is dynamic and rhythmical. The first verse is accompanied by flute and drum music and the second verse is accompanied by rhythmical drumming.

Analysis of Content

A state of resolution is achieved in this scene and the protagonist is moving freely through the environment unrestricted by gravity but always landing back on a terrestrial plane. In a manner of metaphor, although she can not resist gravity, she has found the key with which she can enter the intangible realms of myth and magic.

This final dance of completion is an event created specifically for the camera and the screen, and demonstrates the potential of video language to create a variety of choreographic designs which can prompt new depictions and intellectual or metaphorical ideas which can not be technically achieved within the context of live dance or any other 'live' text.

5.6.2.m SCENE 12: THE EYE OF THE SUN

Duration: 1 minute 20 seconds

Formal Analysis

A close-up shot of the protagonist bringing the hollow circle at the top of the key to her eye reveals that her eye seen through the circle is merging with the sun as it appears within the circle and covers it.

Sunlight floods the frame which dissolves into a close-up shot of her holding the 'eye of the sun', i.e. she holds an object made in the shape of an eye designed to look like the ancient Egyptian hieroglyph representing the 'solar eye' ascribed to solar deities. The actual ball of the sun is sitting inside the eye. Holding the eye design against her eye she dissolves and disappears into a colourful sea lit by the setting sun (See images: 12.1.,12.2.). The 'eye of the sun' is now at the centre of the frame with the actual sun reflected through it (See image: 12.3.). The 'eye of the sun' is washed by a golden sea which engulfs the setting sun. A sea of fiery waves gradually dissolving into the dark earth (See images: 12.4.- 12.6.).

The soundscape, by Shaun Aston, is a repetition of a theme used in Scene 8 which colours the imagery with an ethereal atmosphere that corresponds with the harmonious flow of imagery on screen.

Analysis of content

Metaphorically, the sun and the 'eye of the sun' can connote the gaining of wisdom and understanding in the way of illumination or enlightenment. The light of the sun has become a symbol for the ability to 'see' or understand (Fincher, 1991: 53). Hence, the protagonist's rite of transformation is completed as she gains insight into the physical and intangible-mythical realms of her existence.

In formal terms, natural elements are manipulated to create compositions as when the actual ball of the sun is placed over the

protagonist's eye as she gazes through the key, or in a montage in which the 'eye of the sun' which reflects the actual sun appears together with the ball of the sun engulfed by sea waves, thus creating a duality of two suns in one frame: the 'eye of the sun' as a symbol for the mythical-intangible sun, and the real sun as an image of the physical sun (See image: 12.4.).

5.6.3. CONCLUSIONS: VIEWER AND TEXT

Gaia as a text was created specifically for the screen and as such it is, primarily, an audio-visual experience which relies entirely on the language of a screen based medium, i.e. images captured by camera, editing, specially designed imagery produced during post-production, and sound. Furthermore, it is a text based on the language of images as opposed to communication via words and literary descriptions of any kind. However, the special quality of this text is the manner in which a live performance concerned with the movement of a protagonist's body through space and time is redesigned into a screen form which utilises the original footage of the live performance to create a new choreographic experience, whilst exploring the impact of movement in space and time in screen terms. The screen thus becomes the environment for this audio-visual choreography, and the viewer's relationship with the text is formed via the screen as opposed to a relationship formed between viewer and performer in a live event. The screen also becomes an arena for a new type of choreographic activity, exploring the aesthetics of movement in space and time within the limits of the frame. In the case of Gaia, the text does not recreate the natural

environment on screen or the protagonist's performance, but produces a new experience of it. In this manner, the screen is used to reflect a reality which does not exist outside the text and which is not concerned with duplication of a previous live performance or documentation of natural phenomena.

Arriving at video from a fine-art and performance-art background, I perceive the screen as a canvas on which moving imagery unfolds. The screen/canvas becomes not only a flat surface on which images appear in front of the viewer, but an actual environment which surrounds her/him and with which the viewer interacts. The manner in which the text is viewed, therefore, also shapes its perception. Gaia, for example, incorporates a large amount of visual details which, in fact, escape the eye on small screen formats. On the other hand, viewing the material on a wide-screen format allows one to appreciate the overall choreography on screen, which, at times, involves small movements, such as the flow of colourful currents or the movement of light and waves, etc. As the text is image-based, the visual details are as important as the strokes of the paint brush in a painting. It is, therefore, through the visual experience of visual and kinetic details that the viewer can begin to appreciate the textures of the moving forms to the point that they become tactile, the aesthetic qualities of movements which often escape the human eye in ordinary and mundane circumstances, and the tonal variations of colours which affect the viewer's perception of forms in space. The interaction between the visual environment and the sound which surrounds the images is also a major element which affects the

viewer's aesthetic experience. The screen becomes an integral part of the viewer's physical environment and of his/her sensory experience.

As the maker of this text, my main concern was given to its formal realisation as a hybrid and screen-based choreographic art form. The content of the piece was, secondary in importance, as the form generates the meanings ascribed to the text. Moreover, the content, concerning the protagonist's 'rite of passage', could, as an intellectual idea, be portrayed through a number of media. In this text, though, it is the formal treatment that shapes and delivers the experience of this passage as a purely screen based phenomenon. My personal interest in image-making and in movements of bodies, forms and textures through space and time originates from an aesthetic appreciation of abstract forms which do not necessarily carry any particular feelings or emotions. Nevertheless, reflecting on visual phenomenon could become a poetic experience which embodies emotion and a mode of observation which colours the imagery with personal tones. The text analysed is, therefore, firstly, a purely audio-visual phenomenon, and the reading of other intellectual, metaphorical or emotional meanings with relation to it depends on the viewer's perception and understanding of the experience.

Gaia has been made available for viewing through a number of venues such as Dance Screen 99 in Cologne, in which it was featured under the category of 'Screen Choreography' and within the festival's catalogue and CD Rom with an extract from the video. In addition, the video was available for viewing during the Dance On Camera Festival 2000 in

New York and is featured in the festival's catalogue. The video was also entered into the videodance festival "II Coreografo Elettronico, 2000" in Naples. It is available at the IMZ-International Music Centre's archive in Vienna, and at the Napolidanza videodance archive. The video has been also in circulation through a number of holistic and women's organisations in the UK and Israel.

Constructive response to the video came mainly from female viewers who found the text useful within the context of therapy, and especially within the framework of dance and movement therapy. This type of reaction was obviously unexpected as I did not create the text for therapeutic purposes. However, I did discover that the video as a text generates imagery, and in particularly visual metaphors, which can be utilised by dance and movement specialists to demonstrate visually what is later explored through physical movement. I, therefore, gave the permission to Vered Ketter to develop a programme in which the video as a text is integrated into the context of dance therapy. Ketter's programme is developed on the basis of her MA thesis: From Inside Out: The Relation Between Post-Modern Dance and Western Holistic Movement Theories (1991), Surrey University and alongside theories developed by Bartal and Ne'eman (1993), and inspired by the theories of the physicist and neurophysiologist, Moshe Feldenkrais, concerned with 'the expansion of one's body awareness - in particular, of one's sensitivity to areas 'overlooked' by consciousness by exercising the power of imagination' (Sieben, 1999: 65). The exploration of the body and the expansion of body's awareness incorporates work with

'archetypal symbols which can transform and facilitates changes in people's lives' (Bartal and Ne'eman, 1993: 1).

Gaia offers a text with which a movement specialist, such as Ketter, can create an environment for participants to interact with, in a manner in which they are no longer passive viewers but active participants and performers expressing their sensory experience physically and emotionally. The non-verbal and visual language of the text and its focus on body language provide a demonstration of a mode of communication which is essential in the framework of a learning process or therapy which is rooted in body-felt experiences integrating body, mind and emotion, or body and soul, rather than focusing on the mind alone. Hence according to Bartal and Ne'eman:

The non-verbal is the immediate way of communicating and discovering the many layers of individuals, some confident and constructive, others shaky and destructive. Without words, reality and fantasy more readily intertwine, unfolding many layers of individual and cultural traits. We find the non-verbal to be a practical method that cuts across many barriers, stimulating the senses and leading to invigorating exchanges of physical communication, forming a body of language that is beyond speech. ... In all cultures, humanity's earliest attempts to communicate occurred on the preverbal level. Gestures and body expression are the vehicle in any attempt to share experience. Non-verbal expression through movement, dance, visual arts, and music enables one to think in images, to respond spontaneously and

creatively in the here and now. Hence the dance of body/ mind/ spirit becomes the metaphor for transformation - its most potent guide - on the journey of inner and outer growth (1993: 3-4).

The primarily visual landscape of Gaia depicting a process of personal transformation, and the performance of a rite via body language coupled with metaphoric and archetypal imagery, is, therefore, applicable within the framework of dance and movement therapy which relies on similar creative principles.



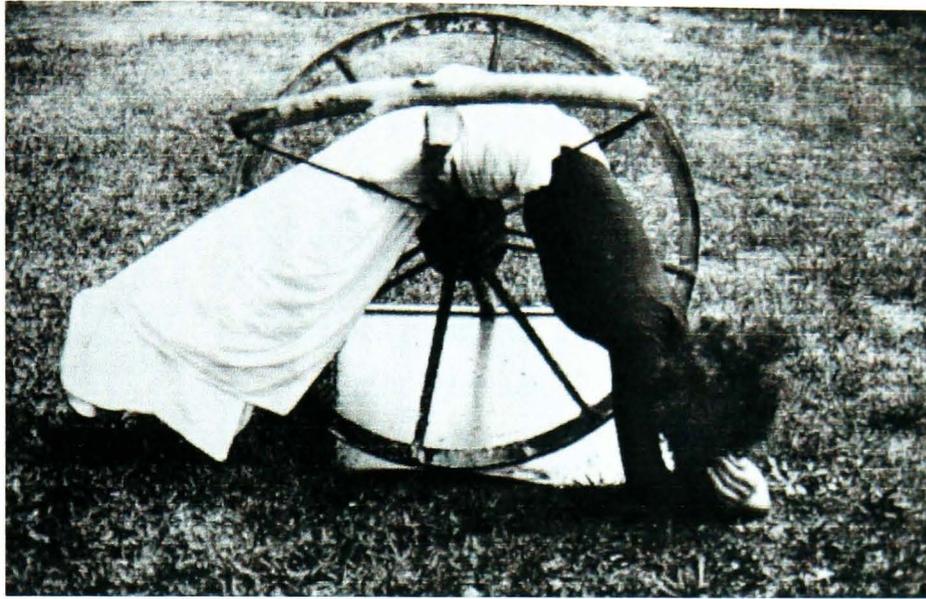
88. Orphée, see page 166



89. Orphée, see page 166



90. Mirror, see page 166



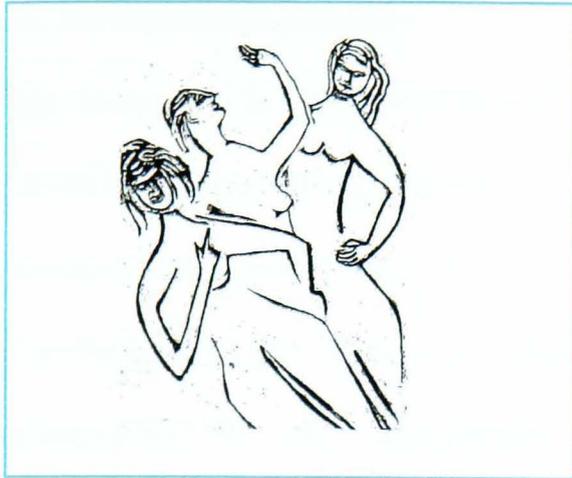
91. Woman and Wheel, see page 168



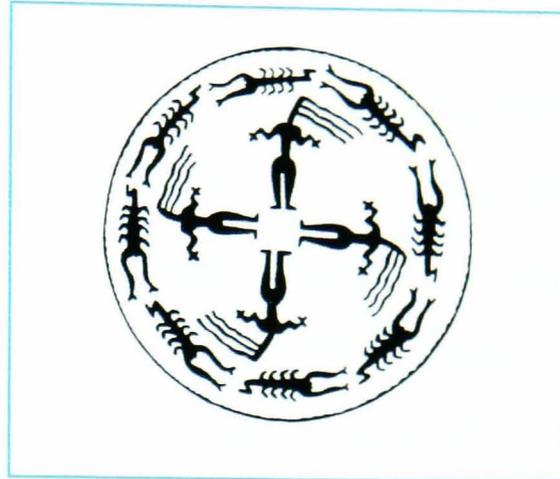
92. The Wheel, see page 168



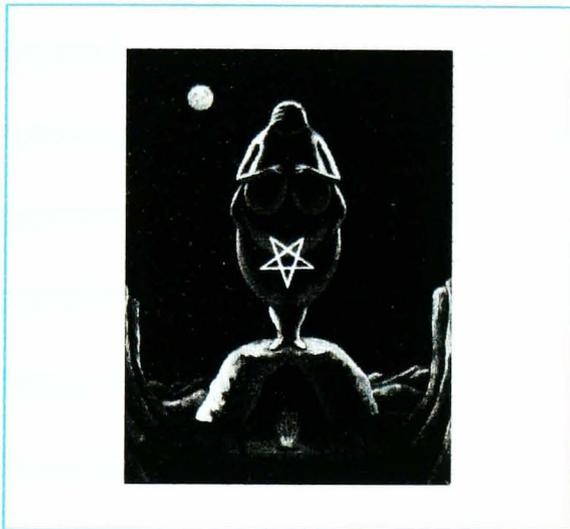
93. Three Faces of the Goddess, see page 188



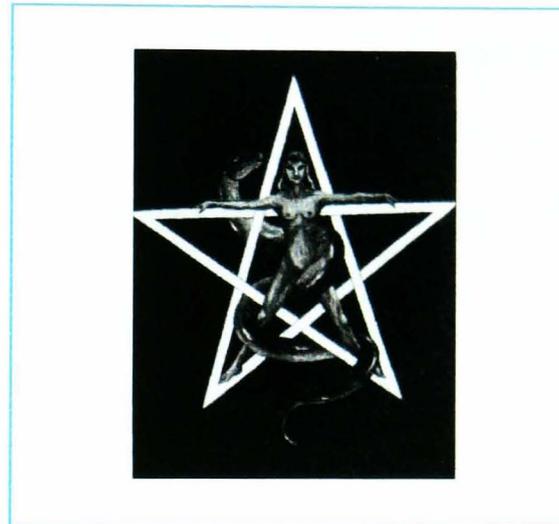
94. Triple Goddess, see page 188



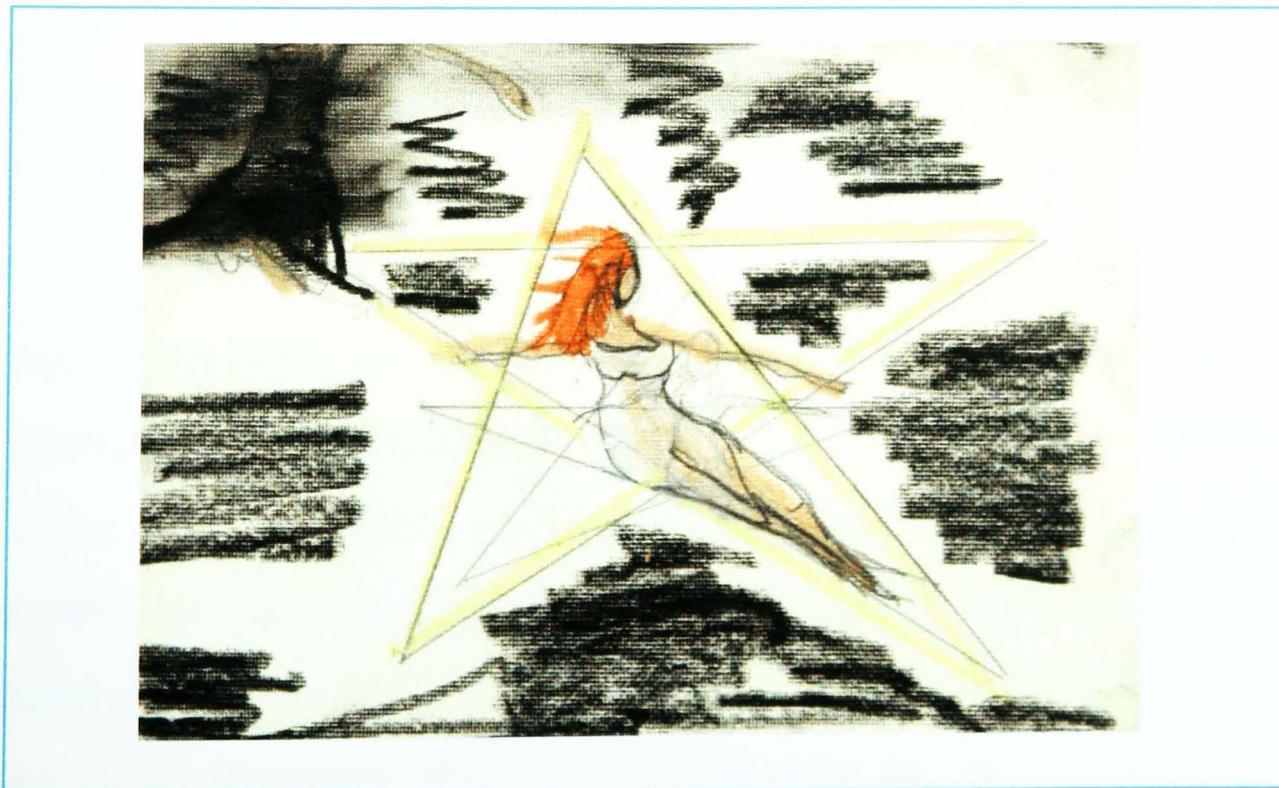
95. The Swastika, see page 193



96. The Pentagon, see page 197



97. The Pentagon, see page 197



98. The Pentagon, see page 197

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This research is concerned with a synthesised form of expression which assimilates the components of dance and film/video into a single and hybrid framework. This particular treatment negates the notion of dance as a theatrical art form as it depicts the moving body within a structure constructed by the apparatus of screen based media. Currently, the total fusion of live performance and film/video is best exemplified in the practice of screen choreography. The term Screen Choreography already implies the notion of choreography as a screen based art form as opposed to choreography in terms of theatrical dance. However, this practice, although of highest importance to the central argument of this thesis concerning dance on screen as hybrid art form, does not include the entire potential of dance on film. The practice of Camera Re-work is extremely challenging to choreographers and film makers as they attempt to balance dance choreography and film/video technology within a single framework, whilst reworking a stage production into a televisual/choreographic work in its own right. I also suggest that the practice of Camera Re-work should be a subject of a separate research project involving the collaboration of experts from the fields of theatrical dance and film/video. However, within the framework of Screen Choreography any live performance would be totally manipulated and fragmented into an entirely new choreographic experience which would negate and even destroy the original stage or live piece. Moreover, this form is dedicated for choreographic texts

created specifically for the camera and the screen, and which abandon entirely the notion of live performance or theatrical dance.

6.2. WHAT MAKES A GOOD DANCE FILM?

'Kicking and Screening - What Makes a Good Dance Film?' was the title of a panel discussion held at The Place during the Dance on Screen festival on 14 November, 1999. The discussion was hosted by the producer and broadcaster Christopher Cook and the panel included three of the UK's most prolific and respected dance film directors, Margaret Williams, Ross MacGibbon and Alison Murray, and the producer Rodney Wilson, one of the founding fathers of the Dance for the Camera series. The views expressed in this panel discussion, which I attended, in fact, assist in reinforcing the central argument of this thesis concerning dance on screen as hybrid art form: a form which is primarily screen-based and utilises choreography in screen terms.

According to Rodney Wilson, choreography for the screen is different discipline to that of choreography for the stage. Wilson declared that he has no interest in stage choreography at all, and coming from a background of painting and fine-art, he is far more interested in ideas created for the screen. For Wilson a good dance film is a screen experience in which choreography constitutes the heart of the film. Moreover, the screen, according to Wilson, is the director's domain. It is the film director who determines what the viewer eventually sees on screen. This opinion concerning the authority of the director over the filmed material was reinforced by the rest of the panel, and emphasised

by MacGibbon's conviction that the director has to be the one retaining full authorship over the footage in the cutting-room, and Murray's statement according to which the director and editor can not, in fact, work or collaborate with the choreographer in the cutting-room,

The above statements clearly suggest that a 'good dance film' has to be dominated by the director and not by the choreographer of the action filmed. Murray, who 'has been central to the innovation of video dance, and has had several commissions from Channel 4 and BBC TV' (Leask, 1999: 35) directs and choreographs her own films. Her view of choreography is entirely screen-based and has no relevance to live dance. Dance in screen terms is, according to her, primarily created by the camera and the editing. Thus, choreography which works well on stage is not necessarily appropriate for the screen. Overall, Murray 'feels that the processes of choreography and film-making work so well together that they can't be separated, and she considers all film-making in terms of choreography, rhythm, space, time, bodies, movement, whether she is dealing with dance or not' (Ibid.).

Margaret Williams, who produced the Channel 4's experimental series Tights Camera Action with Ann Beresford, approaches the issue of what makes a good dance film mainly on the basis of experimentation with film language i.e. choreographing with camera and editing, and as far away as possible from the notion of dance on stage. Her most recent film Men (1997) received the Dance Screen 99 award for Best Screen Choreography, an award shared with Dust. Williams and Murray both

share the view, which they expressed in the above mentioned panel discussion, that choreographers producing work for the stage are not necessarily qualified to make good work for the screen. Men, demonstrates Williams's approach as a director to choreography not in terms of a big dance production but in terms of the film evolving through subtle movements (Music in the Media, IMZ Bulletin, 1999: 4).

Wilson, Murray and Williams approach dance on screen from the perspective of experimental film making which is concerned with the potential of the film language to produce choreographic forms and experiences on screen. This approach, also termed as Screen Choreography, has emerged from, and has been developed within, the context of the television series Dance for the Camera (1994), (Leask, 1999: 34), a series which continues to grow and which is currently commissioning short dance films, as joint ventures between choreographers and directors, for a new series (Juice, February, 2000: 8).

The medium of film and video introduces new options for choreographers which can not be produced or expressed on stage. For this reason, some choreographers are using film and video to create work specifically for the screen whilst abandoning the desire to preserve the authenticity of their live dance creations. The extremely popular French choreographer, dancer, film maker and multimedia artist Philippe Decouflé (1999: 52) is 'an all round producer of the sort of culture in which everything is determined by appearance and looking.

What particularly fascinates Decouflé are simply images, be it on stage or in film' (Hahn, 1999: 36). Amongst Decouflé's many achievements are his film and video creations which he choreographed and directed such as: Le petit bal (1994), which received the award for Best Screen Choreography from Dance Screen in 1994, and Abracadabra (1998). Decouflé's approach to dance on screen is highly innovative as he considers the limits of dance on screen and dance on stage and takes advantage of the fact that the two forms are totally different and as such they complement each other. Hence, according to Decoufle the difference between stage and screen choreography is vast:

The relationship to time and space is completely different. Even the way the dancer moves is different. The cinema shot can be perfected, you just shoot the scene until you are happy with it. But in the process you lose the dancer's fragility on stage, the beauty of the ephemeral... A lot that you can portray on stage isn't so interesting in film. In my next film I'll be developing ideas that aren't possible on the stage but are typical of cinematography (Ibid.: 36).

In his film work Decouflé explores the relationship between dance and image creating fantasy and virtual worlds. He perceives the interaction between dance and film within the contexts of video dance and theatrical dance (live dance with projected film images) as separate, though, complimentary components which can be brought together to produce visionary and 'futuristic' multimedia experiences. However, with film Decouflé aspires to develop 'things that wouldn't be possible on stage' (Ibid.: 35), invoking dreams and creating poetry with images

(Ibid.).

Approaching dance on screen from the perspective of Screen Choreography, the creative power is with the film director and not with the choreographer, unless, the choreographer is ready to leave his/her choreographic vision as expressed on stage for a different vision which is filmic and in which choreography is treated within the framework of the moving-image, i.e. camera movement, camera angles, special effects and editing. Thus, on the basis of the above views, a 'good dance film' is a film in which the choreography is created and perceived as a screen form, and not as a stage form, and in which camera movement and editing produce the rhythm and the experience of movement in space and time. Although, the performance captured by the camera is important, it is not evaluated in terms of a live performance but in terms of how effective it is on screen. This can be compared to any other film genres whereby the viewer perceives and evaluates the performances on screen as screen images and does not refer to them in terms of previously filmed live performances.

However, within other modes of practice relating to dance on film, such as: Stage/Studio Recording and Camera Re-work, the tendency of both directors and choreographers is to create an harmonious fusion of form, a formal fusion in which the qualities of a dance performance are enhanced by film in a manner unavailable on stage. (For further insight into the dynamics of televised ballet, Camera Re-work and video-dance see interviews with choreographer/ director Mats Ek and former ballet

dancer and television director Dirk Gripeirt in Dance Screen 99 Catalogue, pp. 46-47, 53). Nevertheless, the formal synthesis of dance and film forms is available in various degrees, and whilst some directors and choreographers tend to preserve the components of the original dance performance, others prefer to break the original dance and give it a completely new structure and life on screen. Thus, in the case of Stage/Studio Recording the director has to comply with the choreographer's needs, however, in the case of Camera Re-work the director is in a position to move away from the original stage performance into the territory of film and video. This notion can be exemplified by Contrecoup (1997), a Swiss television production directed by Pascal Magnin and choreographed by Guilherme Botelho, which received the award for Best Camera Re-work from Dance Screen 99. In this film, which deals with male violence in relationships, 'the action takes place on the streets, adding dramatic urgency and immediacy. But this is a film which breaks the rules because it is a mixture of sequences filmed on stage and on location. It is a big risk, but it works. There is a powerful emotional continuity complimented by the pacing of the editing that synthesises the two elements' (Music in the Media, IMZ Bulletin, 1999: 3).

Although some Camera Re-works merge with the category of Screen Choreography, such as the short-listed film Witnessed (Ibid.: 4), due to the fact that the original performances were translated to film and were reconstructed as film images, the fact that they are the result of a previous live performance locate them within the framework of

theatrical dance. However, Screen Choreography is independent of the criteria of theatrical dance as the choreography is created for the screen as opposed to choreography created for the stage or for any form of live performance. Furthermore, it is a form which treats the moving body as performance material manipulated for the creation of choreographic screen events. In the next topic I examine the form of Screen Choreography in order to provide a platform for the making of well-constructed choreographic texts for the screen. I also tackle the issue of content and the importance of a convincing subject matter or theme with the power to capture the viewer's attention.

6.3. A HYBRID ART FORM

In Chapter Three, Topic 3.5., Merce Cunningham's approach to dance on screen is discussed with its relation to other art forms such as music (Cage) and painting (Rauschenberg), and as it reflects his interest in the synthesis of the arts. The manner in which art forms or ideas emerging from different disciplines were synthesised by Cunningham into stage and film works is also revealed in the publication Dancers on a Plane: Cage, Cunningham, Johns (1990). This publication is also useful for those interested in the fusion of art forms and in the integration of ideas issuing from a variety of creative practices. However, Cunningham's unique vision of 'dances choreographed for the camera' (Vaughan, 1990: 87) highlights the manner in which dance is portrayed on screen whilst preserving the underlying structure of his dances, i.e. the dance choreography and the actual dance performance. This unique perspective can be exemplified by Beach Birds for Camera, a 35mm film

shot partially in black and white at Cunningham's dance studio using natural daylight and partially in colour in a film studio environment. In this film, the manner in which the camera explores the environment in which the dancers move allows the viewer to see and discover the dance from angles and perspectives unavailable on stage. According to Chris de Marigny, the film 'is a triumph of cinematic movement where the director, cameraman and choreographer work to a single, pure, great vision' (de Marigny, 1993: 41).

Cunningham's vision of dance on screen is of highest value to choreographers and directors who are interested in a balanced depiction of theatrical dance on film. In this type of depiction a compromise is achieved between the two forms, i.e. dance and film, and although dance is translated into a screen form, its original structure and essence is preserved and even highlighted by the camera which explores the nature of the dance movement from a variety of perspectives. However, this thesis is concerned with a hybrid form of expression which synthesises the performance of the moving body and screen technology into an art form which is screen based and treat choreography in screen terms. The hybrid nature of this form is derived from the contexts of modern art, live art, performance-art and avant-garde film. Videodance is a form which, according to Claudia Rosiny, should be historically and aesthetically classified as part of a larger movement toward interdisciplinary practices and the mixing of artistic forms of expression which thrived throughout the twentieth century (1999: 32-33). Moreover, Rosiny suggests that the 'crosscurrents between dance- and filmmakers

have gone so deep that the professions themselves seem exchangeable' (Ibid.: 33).

Rosiny demonstrates the interaction between choreography and film by looking at the work of Jan Fabre, whose approach to performance inspired my own perception of film and dance as a young performance artist during the 1980s, and Wim Vandekeybus, who received the dance screen award for his choreography for Roseland (Dance Screen 91). Hence, according to Rosiny:

As a choreographer, Jan Fabre - originally a visual artist - often works with movement images that evoke cinematic slow motion. Wim Vandekeybus - who uses film clips in practically all of his stage works, and, in contrast to Fabre, employs a style of movement marked by the effect of speed - is not a professional trained dancer, either; After a brief course of film studies, he fell into dance by taking part in the first stage works of Fabre (Ibid.).

This notion of mixing stage choreography and film language is currently developed by Philippe Decoufle who creates work both for the screen and the stage. His futuristic vision of theatrical dance is of hybrid nature as he aspires to integrate live dance with film projections allowing audiences to alternate between stage and screen. This notion of projections and live action extends into a new area as expressed by Decoufle: 'I'd like to integrate other images into stage work or to choreograph with virtual dancers. In my life time, dancers and holograms will almost certainly be interacting on the stage' (Hahn,

1999: 36). According to Bozzini, cited in Rosiny, this type of dance, as exemplified by the above examples, 'seeks a language that will integrate the visual arts and music, but also new techniques, that is, film and video. From its status as a tool, video quickly rose to a means of artistic production' (Rosiny, 1999: 33). Furthermore, the interaction between film and dance, as this thesis demonstrates, has led to the development of the hybrid art form of Screen Choreography which treats choreographic ideas and forms in screen terms only, exploring the creative potential of movement in space and time as an audio-visual phenomenon. In the following topic I chart a model which exemplifies the structure of Screen Choreography as an art form. This model is based on conclusions drawn from the analysis of Gaia in Chapter Five, and the analysis of selected texts provided in Chapter Four. It is also reinforced by David Hinton's views on film dance (Hinton, 1999: 50) which provide insight into the art of making dances for the screen.

6.4. SCREEN CHOREOGRAPHY AS HYBRID ART FORM: A MODEL

Screen Choreography:

The fundamental principle at the heart of Screen Choreography issues from the fact that texts created within this framework are choreographic works created exclusively for the screen. It is, therefore, a form inappropriate for choreographers determined by the desire to record or preserve their original work for the stage. Screen Choreography as a form demands an approach to choreography which negates the nature of theatrical dance. As opposed to choreography created for the stage, Screen Choreography is produced by filmic devices and screen- based

technology, and not through the physical performance of dancers moving in 'real' space and time. Choreographers and dancers who rely on the physicality of the moving body and the concrete nature of space and time as experienced on stage or in any other performance or rehearsal space, can find Screen Choreography an alienating zone of practice which limits their choreographic ambitions and the visual and physical characteristics of their authentic dancing. The views of filmmakers and choreographers expressed in this chapter, and throughout this thesis, serve to reinforce this particular nature of choreography created for the screen. In addition, the analysis of selected texts provides insight into the art of choreography designed as a screen form and experience. Overall, Screen Choreography is a form which is not rooted in live dance but shares the later preoccupation with the creative potential of the moving body and the exploration of space and time via movement.

The Frame:

Within the context of Screen Choreography the frame is the arena for action as opposed to a theatrical space or any other space designed to accommodate a live performance. As a result the choreographer has to approach the choreographic material as images framed by camera, and the manner in which the moving images are framed determines the viewer's visual perception of the choreography. As there is no live performance to start with, the choreographer and filmmaker can produce the choreography directly for the screen, looking at movements as images to be captured by the camera as a framing device. The frame is at

the heart of the screening experience, and the limits of the screen become the limits of the frame on which the choreographic event is depicted. In this manner, the apparatus of film and video determines the mode through which the choreography is depicted and perceived. A mode of conduct which is primarily screen-based and relies on the art of story boarding and framing moving images. The frame, as an arena for action, is the domain of film and video makers and artists. However, it is also the arena of visual artists who are used to the notion of framing imagery as in photography, photomontage, painting, or any other work in which images are arranged into aesthetic compositions within the limits of frames. The manner in which any image is framed, in fact, determines the viewer's perception of any figure, object or movement in space and time. Maya Deren exploited the creative potential of the frame and framing to produce a choreographic screen event in The Very Eye of the Night (1959) (Deren in 'Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality', 1999: 225). The importance of framing within the context of my own work is discussed in the analysis of Gaia and the analysis of selected texts clearly demonstrates that framing is a choreographic device which is crucial to dances designed for the screen.

The Manipulation of Space and Time:

It is essential for choreographers producing choreographic texts for the screen to study the art of film and video making. The laws of space and time as perceived within the context of theatrical dance are irrelevant within the context of Screen Choreography. Moreover, the creative potential of Screen Choreography as an art form can be found in the

manner in which space and time are manipulated. However, the experience of space and time can only be achieved via movement as space is explored as one is moving through it, and time is experienced through a sense of rhythm. The experience of movement in the case of Screen Choreography is determined by camera movement, angles and framing coupled with the rhythms produced via editing and special effects. The movement of a performer, regardless of skill or virtuosity, is of no value unless it is manipulated by camera and editing, or as the camera is moving with the performer as an unseen 'dancing' partner, creating a new experience of movement by interacting with the performer. The various manners in which space, time and movement are manipulated within the context of Screen Choreography are demonstrated in Chapters Four and Five. David Hinton's views on dance and film (1999: 50) reinforce the argument, which supports this model, according to which choreographic screen language is designed for the film frame rather than the theatre space and thought out according to the rhythms of camera angles, camera movements, shot sizes, editing and the rhythms of the actions themselves.

Sound:

The soundtracks which accompany choreographic screen events, such as the texts analysed in this thesis, are designed to reinforce the image track by emphasising particular actions or by engulfing them with atmosphere. The soundtrack is usually edited during post-production, such as in the case of Gaia, as the soundscape is made to comply with the rhythms of the actions as determined by the final edited text.

Furthermore, the soundscape can introduce additional movements and rhythms unavailable in the image track thus creating an interaction between sounds and images which is unique to the screen. The sound design in the case of Screen Choreography is therefore employed as a filmic device within the context of film/video language concerned with screen images as opposed to live actions and performances.

Performance:

Screen Choreography can be perceived as a 'performative' form based on the depiction of performance activity. However, the 'performative' text depicted is designed and choreographed as a screen-based event or as a screen-based performance. In fact, the term 'performative' has been used to describe visual art works which contain highly charged performance elements although they exist outside the context of 'live' performance in the form of painting, photography or video/film. According to Peggy Phelan in Unmarked: The Politics of Performance, the photographic work of Cindy Sherman, for example, is fundamentally 'performative' due to its manipulation of the body's image (1993: 37). Moreover, Sherman prefers to call her work performance-art and 'as Avedon remarks of Rembrandt's self-portraits, Sherman's work must be seen in the "full tradition of performance" (Ibid.: 60). According to Amelia Jones in Body Art/ Performing the Subject, 'performativity' implies a concern with the body/self of the artist 'performed or enacted with relation to others' (1998: 86). 'Performative' body art work also implies the viewer as an active participant in the performance rather than a passive observer (Ibid.: 85). However, 'performative' body art

does not rely on 'live' performance and can be exemplified by 'performative' images such as the pictures of Yayoi Kusama (Ibid.: 5-9). Finally, for a text to be perceived as 'performative' the interaction of the viewer with 'performative' imagery or with the 'performative' body/self of the artist in a 'live' or documented contexts has to be 'performative' in itself i.e. the viewer becomes an active participant in a process as he/she performs the text whilst perceiving, reconstructing and deciphering the data.

Within the context of Screen Choreography the performance of the body in motion is a central subject. However, the nature of the performance depicted is an issue to be decided by the makers of the texts. Any performance activity, e.g. dance movements performed by professional dancers, folk dancing, rituals, performance-art, mundane activities, including virtual dancers (See the video: Sonata do mar, 1998), or the interaction of virtual dancers/performers and real dancers/performers, can become a subject for Screen Choreography. Nevertheless, the quality of the performance is evaluated according to its portrayal as a 'performative' screen-based form which has been manipulated by screen technology and the aesthetic means of film and video. Furthermore, the dynamics of the form demand the viewer's participation, thus engaging him/her to perform as the recipient of the text, whilst recreating the choreography as it unfolds on screen as audio-visual data composed of rhythmically arranged actions/movements in space and time.

Content

The content of any art form is open to a variety of diverse subjects and ideas. However, the nature of the form can determine the type of content implemented in the actual texts. In the case of Screen Choreography, the fact that the form is structured for the purpose of exploring movement in space and time via images rather than the exploration of literary texts, for example, implies that the content should retain audio-visual identity and be communicated exclusively through sound and vision. The texts analysed in this thesis demonstrate that artists producing works within the category of Screen Choreography tend to portray the poetic qualities of movements in space and time and enhance them with highly imaginative performances which can be only available as screen forms. In addition, by abandoning the need to tell stories in a conventional linear and verbal form, or present convincing theatrical performances, screen choreographers enter an arena which prompts the depiction of performances and phenomena which can only be expressed via Screen Choreography.

This model establishes the main principles which form the structure of Screen Choreography as hybrid art form i.e. a form which relies on the synthesis of the languages of live performance and screen media. Nevertheless, this model is as fragile as the art form of Screen Choreography which exists as a limited and small zone of practice at the boundaries between dance and film/video. Moreover, within a context of rapid change and development, especially within the arena of screen and computer technology in the 21st century, this form is likely to

change and evolve alongside the technological means and the new formats available for screen texts, i.e. digital video, computer technology and the internet (The Net, 2000). Thus, this model can be approached as a starting point for those who wish to be initiated into this interdisciplinary mode of creative practice, or as a point of departure leading to further innovations in the field of Screen Choreography. This model, therefore, illustrates a number of conventions associated with the concept of Screen Choreography as an art form. But, this model is also a subject to change, as any innovative action in the arts is aimed to enrich and expand our perception causing any art form, and the manner in which it is perceived, to be drastically revised (Redfern, 1983: 33).

6.4. FINAL STATEMENTS: THE ARTIST'S VIEW

One of the inevitable questions rightly to emerge, with regards to the central argument of this thesis, which claims the autonomy of Screen Choreography as an art form, is **Why Dance?** Screen Choreography, as this thesis suggests, has very little in common with dance as art and with other dance films and videos in which the form and the essence of theatrical dance is preserved or highlighted. One of the immediate answers to this question derives from the fact that Screen Choreography as a concept and as a practice has been developed alongside other developments in the arena of dance on screen, as exemplified by this thesis and reinforced by the major example of the television series Dance for the Camera, which was built on the early experiments of the production company 'Dancelines', and which commissions short, ten

minute, dance films 'that redefine dance for television' allowing choreographers to be actively involved in film-making (Leask, 1999: 34). Thus, as a practice, the art form of Screen Choreography is historically and aesthetically linked with the art of theatrical dance. This link is also established through international Dance Film festivals and festivals featuring Dance Film programmes (For a comprehensive list of Dance Film festivals and archives see: Dance Screen 99 Catalogue pp. 188-192).

However, the category of Screen Choreography is unique as it synthesises choreographic ideas involving the moving body and film/video language into a hybrid form which extends our perception of movement in time and space and our experience of texts produced for the screen. As a language and a form Screen Choreography emerges from the arena of experimental film-making and from the fields of contemporary dance, performance and live art. Thus, by integrating elements of film and 'live' performance a new form emerges which has a life on screen only. This form, can hardly be considered as 'new' at this day and age, but it is my opinion that the form as a concept encapsulates tremendous creative potential with regards to the exploration and experience of movement in space and time and as it relates to the human mind and body. According to the Jury of Dance Screen 99 'it is the extended possibilities of choreographed movement rather than trained dancers that we see in this category (the category of Screen Choreography). Since the beginning of dance screen there has been a distinct increase in the quality of choreographies for the camera, and the

development continues' (Music in the Media, IMZ Bulletin, 1999: 4). Although, Screen Choreography is not about dance, or even related to dance as 'live' art form, it is a form which can inform choreographers and dancers as to the creative potential of choreography outside the limits of their practice and can inspire their stage choreographies or motivate them to create choreographies for the screen. Although, the panel of 'Kicking and Screening' (Topic 6.2.) emphasised the authority of the film director in the making of dances for the camera and the screen, Rodney Wilson has raised the possibility that in the near future young choreographers will be making work for the screen as well. Nevertheless, Screen Choreography is primarily a screen-based form which exploits screen language and technology and requires the expertise of visual artists and film/video makers.

Screen Choreography is a practice which attracts the attention of very limited and specialised audiences which are often associated to the practice of dance on screen as choreographers, dancers, directors, musicians, producers, critics, administrators, students, scholars or professionals affiliated to the arena of the performing arts. It is also a practice which attracts viewers interested in the experimental wing of contemporary art and in particular live art and multimedia installations. It is not a form which produces texts which are likely to be shown on television networks apart from the exceptional and rare screenings of texts produced in Britain by the BBC series Dance for the Camera. However, compared with other countries, it is in Britain, France and Holland that a television audience for video dance exists, a fact also

indicated by new productions and broadcast schedules planned by the Dutch television channel NPS and the BBC (Ploebst, 1999: 30). However, most screen choreographies are unlikely to be exposed to television audiences and would reach a limited number of viewers, and as such they are unlikely to make any income. According to Margaret Williams and Alison Murray in 'Kicking and Screening' there are hardly any opportunities for dance film artists to make films and acquiring funding can take a number of years.

However, television is still a young medium in comparison with other modes of communication such as cinema, journalism, literature or the theatre. In addition, it is my view that screen choreographers, like other screen-based artists, would probably exploit the new technologies of the 21st century to a degree which is yet unknown, and which can become the subject of a specialised research project focused on digitalised video, computer technology and the screening and downloading of film and video texts via the internet. In addition, the costs of video productions are gradually being reduced by the introduction of high quality and digital home video and computer technology which would, in the near future, possibly allow experimentation with screen-based media to take place regardless of external funding bodies or institutions. These new options, which are becoming available to screen-based media artists, are not within the limits of this research. Nevertheless, they are likely to have an affect also on the practice of Screen Choreography.

Presently, the internet has become a platform for choreographers, dancers, film-makers and computer artists who promote, show or sell their work via specialised websites. The internet also enables and encourages interaction between individual artists, companies and between artists and potential audiences world-wide. The internet, basically, allows almost anyone the access to the vast arena of dance on screen and into the creative worlds and works of those who also present their ideas and creative texts within this relatively new and growing resource of information, knowledge and communication. Moreover, the internet has also become a platform for new creative activity and for the expression of screen texts which exist as internet art forms employing the formal language of computer technology. Although, this arena is not within the limits of this research it could eventually reshape the ways with which we view and understand the notions of the body, space and time and as a result influence the manner with which screen texts relating to the movement of the body and the mind are constructed. This is an exciting frontier available for creative activity and which prompts endless questions relating to the identity and nature of the physical body and mind and challenges our perception of physical reality and space and time as we know it. I can, therefore, only briefly suggest few directions for future explorations by looking into the works of contemporary artists which provoke questions rather than concrete answers regarding the nature of physicality in 'real' time and space, cyberspace and other perhaps yet undefined modes of existence in space/time.

Darren Almond explores time and the physicality of "real time" by transferring a unit of space/time from one place and time into another place and time via satellite and film-screen. This is explored in his installations and, for example, in H.M.P Pentonville (1977) time and space are converged in live footage of a claustrophobic and noisy empty prison cell, satellite-beamed from Pentonville Prison to the ICA where it was shown and heard on film screen as large as the cell giving 'a disturbing taste of the experience of 'doing time' ' (Collings, 1999: 254). The option of shifting or transmitting units of space, time and body from one location and time to another, including the physical, mental and emotional qualities embodied within the transmitted dimensions, for the purpose of producing an interaction between separate units of space, time and body are currently explored by digital artists, choreographers and dancers. Choreographers such as Susan Kozel explores interaction between "live" and digitised dancing images and in her telepresence works, for example, performers improvising in one space are 'interacting, through movement, with real teletransmitted digitised video images of performers who improvise "with" them in an entirely different space. A "long distance", real-time duet or trio ensues' (Rubidge, 1999: 44-45). In the article: 'Virtual Reality: Choreographing in Cyberspace' (Kozel, 1994: 35-37), Kozel describes another demonstration of interaction between physical and virtual body, time and space as created by the the artist Paul Sermon in Telematic Dreaming. The piece took place in two galleries at once and each gallery had a bed and video equipment. Paul placed himself on the bed in one gallery and had his image projected onto the bed of the second gallery where members of

the public were able to join his projected image on the bed. Interactivity took place as Paul received the footage of the person on the bed in the second gallery via video cameras and monitors around his bed, and was able to 'respond to the movements of the person. The effect was astonishing: it was contact improvisation between image and a person, between ghost and matter' (Ibid.: 36). Kozel description of the interaction between a virtual image and persons all mutually present in identical space and time, although the virtual entity exist in two places at once, is particularly revealing:

The intimacy between the two divergent bodies was compelling... He danced with them. It became clear that the position of power was Paul's. Paradoxically, even though he appeared as a projected image he was still able to intimidate. It was clear that if he were to make a big, abrupt or threatening movement the person would flee from his projected image as if they could be harmed. Some of the engagement was more adventurous, with one girl tenderly stroking the image of his arm as he gently moved it across the soft white duvet which doubled as a projection screen. In his work Paul's body become virtual (ie. projected image), yet the rapport between image and person was very real... I yearned to see it turn into uninhibited contact improvisation, to see the dynamic develop into choreographic patterns... and which take them further through exploring the overlap of projection onto person. ... In standard contact work one thing which cannot happen is for one person to be mapped like a ghost onto the other. In this sense the technology draws upon physical experience and extends it without leaving the

corporeal context. This, for me, is a far more powerful example of virtual reality than one where the body is hooked up to a machine only to be left as the mind travels in digitalised space (Ibid.).

Kozel's insight into the options available for dance and technology through the merging of physical performance and digital performance, can also be applicable within the context of Screen Choreography. As this art form is concerned with choreographic depiction, the interaction of virtual and physical units of body, space and time can inform and inspire the making of new screen texts. These texts may explore the relationships between "real" and virtual characters and events and the intellectual, physical and emotional dynamics created through their interaction. For example, the interaction between a girl and a virtual image of a man, such as occurred in Telematic Dreaming, can inspire the making of a choreographic screen text exploring the dynamics created between a girl and a virtual man projecting himself into her realm from his virtual world. However, this is a complex, though, highly inspiring new field, as it prompts questions such as how can one depict virtual characters on screen and make the interaction between them and "real" persons convincing and compelling. Additionally, there can be the exploration of the interaction of the physical body and mind, through movement, with virtual environments created by video/film and computer technology, or with the experiences of environments recorded by camera or transmitted via video or satellite, which could also prompt new questions as to how one locate, react and define oneself with relation to environment, space and time, and how units of separate

physical environments, or separate experiences of space and time can coexist, interact and enrich one another.

Overall, I find it impossible to predict the future of Screen Choreography and as to how it will evolve, or be radically transformed into a new form, in the 21st century. The future of the form may lie with the ongoing and rapid changes in media technology and new directions explored by minds conditioned by computerised technology. It is my hope that audio-visual technology and image-making coupled with the exploration of the human body and mind will remain a subject to creative activity, such as Screen Choreography, with the power to enlarge the scope of our intellectual experiences, allowing viewers to gaze into often uncharted territories of human experiences. The technological nature of Screen Choreography is part of its hybridity as a performance form and event. Hybrid art forms imply diversity as reinforced by the editorial team of Hybrid: 'Not only is the hybrid multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural, but it has many, changing, sexual faces. By not admitting the plurality of this body, we tether down its possibilities' (Phillips, 1993: 1). According to Higginbottom (1984), the potential of the purely visual language of film, which inspired Maya Deren, was also explored by women film-makers since the 1960s who sought for a language, based on the communication power of images, which is personal and female in identity.

Further to my initial research plan to explore, in formal terms, choreography for the screen, I discovered at a later stage, that the

depiction of the body in motion, as exemplified in Gaia, can provoke ideas and metaphors with therapeutic value. This occurred to me in a number of occasions when the video was viewed by practising therapists involved in holistic methods of movement and dance therapy. Subsequently, a programme of holistic movement therapy is currently developed by Vered Ketter with Gaia as audio-visual demonstration of metaphors created through the interaction of the dancer's body with specially created props and the natural environment. Although, my knowledge in the practice of therapy via the arts is limited I could identify a link between my personal approach to image making and the treatment of the body, in particular the female body, to the process of personal myth making through which a personal transformation is explored and new knowledge of the 'self' is acquired. My interest in myth-making was apparent in my early performance work, but it was only during my MA film studies at Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design that I was introduced to feminist film-making, and to the female notion of personal myth making, as exemplified by the films of Maya Deren. As an audio-visual text Gaia was also created from a personal perspective whilst recalling the mythical notion of a 'rite of passage' leading to transformation. According to Higginbotton, Maya Deren was the first female film maker to venture into areas most frequently dealt with in myth and psychoanalytic theory by making her own inner experience the centre of her work. She initiated the process whereby female film makers explore 'the concepts of female personality, sexuality and specific experience expressed in many mythologies' (Ibid.). It is, therefore, encouraging to discover that Gaia

can be of interest and of practical use to those who approach personal myth making from the perspective of therapy via movement, image and sound.

However, I find that the screen choreographies analysed in Chapter Four are also revealing testimonies of valuable human experiences. Each text shows the journey of a single protagonist interacting with the environment through which he/she travels. The texts provide insight into the various manners in which an individual interacts with his/her surroundings physically and emotionally, and the impact that the environment has on the human body and mind. Regardless to the fact that screen choreographies are usually short screen events with very small audiences they are important contemporary works which hopefully will reach the public domain also through other disciplines such as dance and movement therapy as audio-visual choreographic texts expressing the rarely depicted dimensions of contemporary human experience. Within the context of dance on screen and screen based media Screen Choreography is a language with the potential to enrich and inform the practices of choreography and image making. This hybrid language choreographs the movement of the human body through space and time in manners unavailable in any other non-screen media. It is a form reflecting contemporary concerns relating to the interaction of the human body with the environment and technology as it integrates physical, i.e. the human body and the environment, and technological, i.e. screen and computer technology, elements into an inspiring and uplifting form of creative expression.

LIST OF SOURCES

Image 1, Parade in Church, 1996:43.

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PhD Submission

By Limor Roichman

Title: Dance on Screen

2001

APPENDIX A

GAIA - MYSTERIOUS RHYTHMS

★This appendix is designed to support the analysis of individual scenes as demonstrated in Chapter Five, Topic, 5.6.2., and is comprised of short descriptions of scenes and a list of images relating to each scene.

SCENE 0: INTRODUCTORY SCENE

INVOCATION

Duration: 28 seconds.

Description: Earth, sea, moon and invoking flute lead to a female figure lying on a rock surrounded by the receding tide.



image: 00



image: 0.1.



image: 0.2.



image: 0.3.

SCENE 1: AWAKENING

Duration: 3 minutes 82 seconds.

Description: The woman on the rock is gradually revealed. She awakes and starts exploring her surroundings. Engulfed by waves she comes out of the sea.

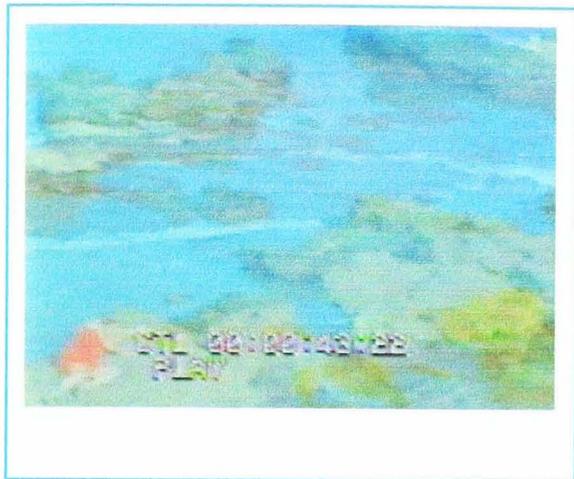


image: 1.1.



image: 1.2.

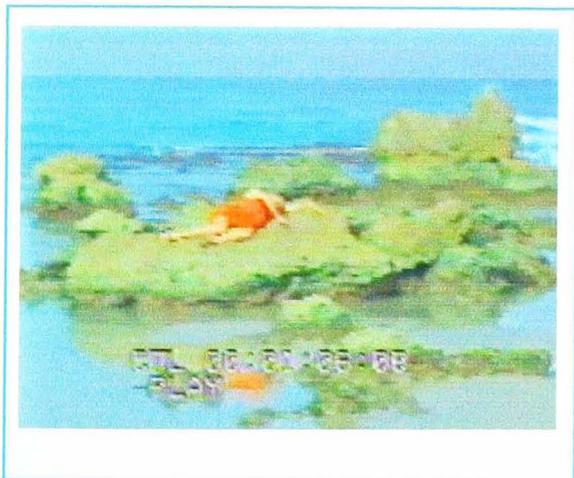


image: 1.3.

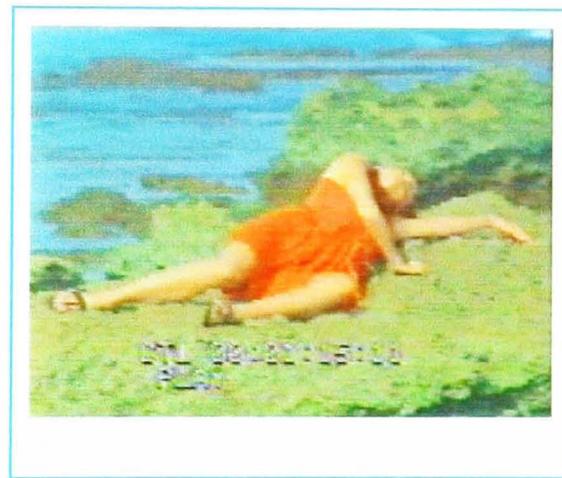


image: 1.4.



image: 1.5.



image: 1.6.



image: 1.7.



image: 1.8.



image: 1.9.



image: 1.10.



image: 1.11.



image: 1.12.



image: 1.13.



image: 1.14.

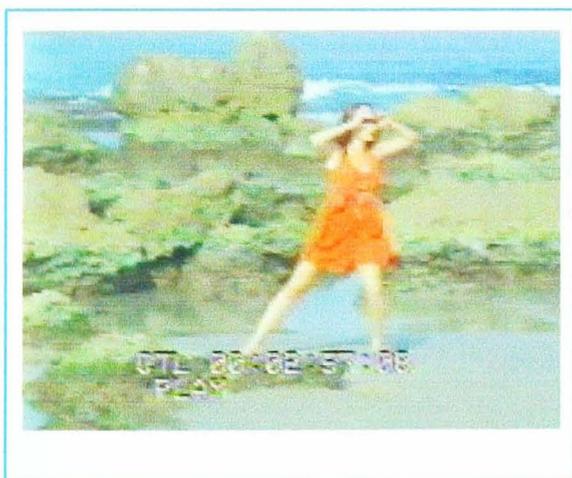


image: 1.15.



image: 1.16.



image: 1.17.



image: 1.18.



image: 1.19.



image: 1.20.



image: 1.21.



image: 1.22.



image: 1.23.

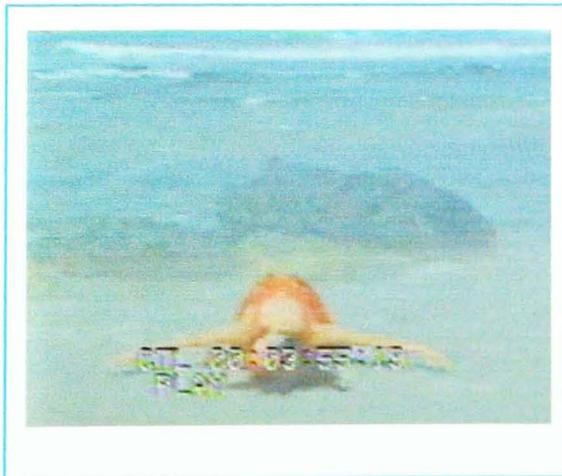


image: 1.24.



image: 1.25.

SCENE 2: WOMAN AND SHELL

Duration: 2 minutes 2 seconds.

Description: A shell floating on waves is found by the woman. In ritualistic movements she communicates with the shell.



image: 2.1.



image: 2.2.



image: 2.3.



image: 2.4.



image: 2.5.



image: 2.6.



image: 2.7.



image: 2.8.



image: 2.9.



image: 2.10.



image: 2.11.



image: 2.12.



image: 2.13.



image: 2.14.

SCENE 3: CONFRONTATION

Duration: 1 minute 27 seconds.

Description: The woman is confronted by the overwhelming power and presence of the environment. Out of fear she transforms into a rock.



image: 3.1.



image: 3.2.



image: 3.3.



image: 3.4.



image: 3.5.



image: 3.6.



image: 3.7.

SCENE 4: BREAKING FREE

Duration: 1 minute 53 seconds.

Description: The woman is imprisoned. Tied to a large rock by a rope she struggles to break free. Moving convulsively she collapses on the sand and loses her consciousness.



image: 4.1.

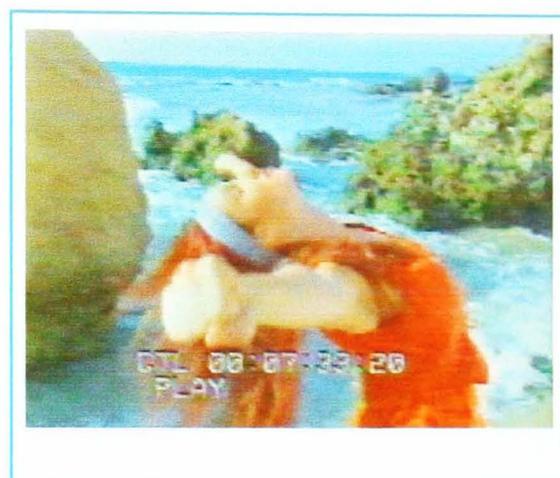


image: 4.2.



image: 4.3.



image: 4.4.



image: 4.5.



image: 4.6.



image: 4.7.



image: 4.8.



image: 4.9.

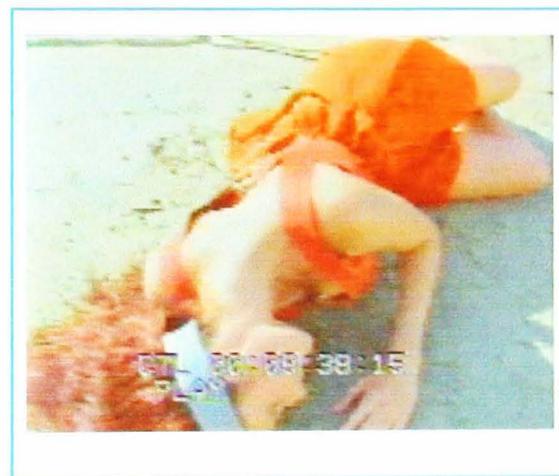


image: 4.10.



image: 4.11.

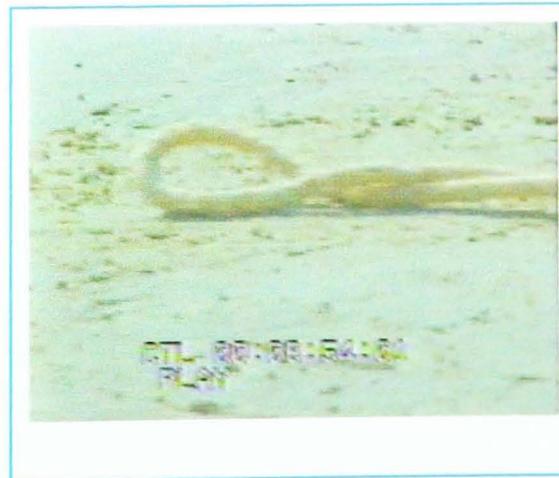


image: 4.12.

SCENE 5: THREE REFLECTIONS

Duration: 1 minute 47 seconds.

Description: The woman is now a reflection dancing upon a surface of waves and light. She expands into three reflections moving in unison briefly and dissolving back into one.

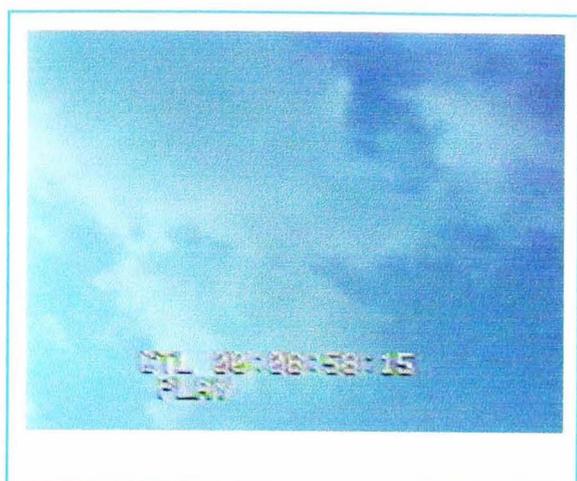


image: 5.1.

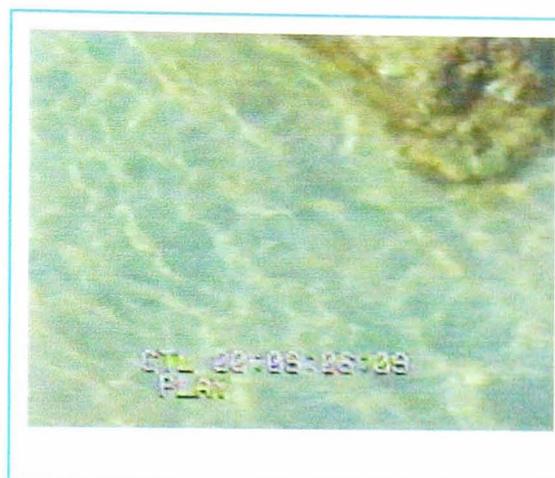


image: 5.2.

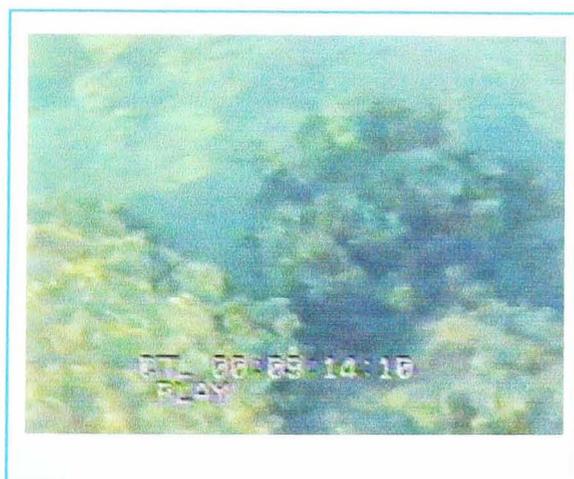


image: 5.3.



image: 5.4.



image: 5.5.



image: 5.6.

SCENE 6: PASSAGE

Duration: 2 minutes 39 seconds.

Description: The woman is striding through a passage between rocks. Time is slowed down. She is motionless and animated back into the flow of life. In an environment shaped by the passing ages her physical experience is fragile and brief. Reaching toward the sun her hand is engulfed by starlight.



image: 6.1.



image: 6.2.



image: 6.3.



image: 6.4.



image: 6.5.



image: 6.6.

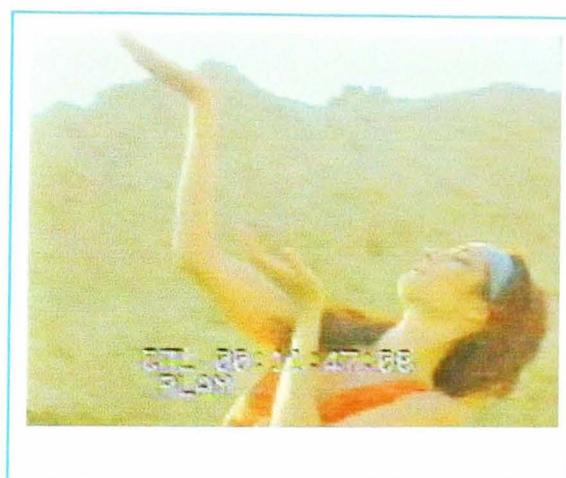


image: 6.7.



image: 6.8.

SCENE 7: SPACE AND TIME

Duration: 28 seconds.

Description: Space transforms and time rushes through space with the ceaseless motion of life. A pitcher made of clay remains intact reflecting the passing scenery.



image: 7.1.



image: 7.2.



image: 7.3.



image: 7.4.



image: 7.5.

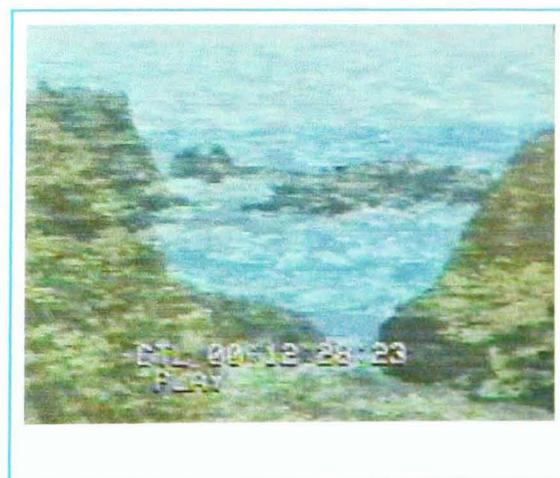


image: 7.6.

SCENE 8: WOMAN AND PITCHER

Duration: 1 minute 39 seconds.

Description: From the dark sea the woman emerges carrying the pitcher and into the shimmering sea she dissolves ebbing and flowing, building up and breaking down.



image: 8.1.



image: 8.2.



image: 8.3.



image: 8.4.



image: 8.5.



image: 8.6.



image: 8.7.



image: 8.8.

SCENE 9: WOMAN AND STAR

Duration: 2 minutes 19 seconds.

Description: The woman is rising from the centre of the star surrounded by the physical elements which support her growth: earth, water, air, and fire. Made of nature, the star is the soul calling her to soar toward the point of origin.

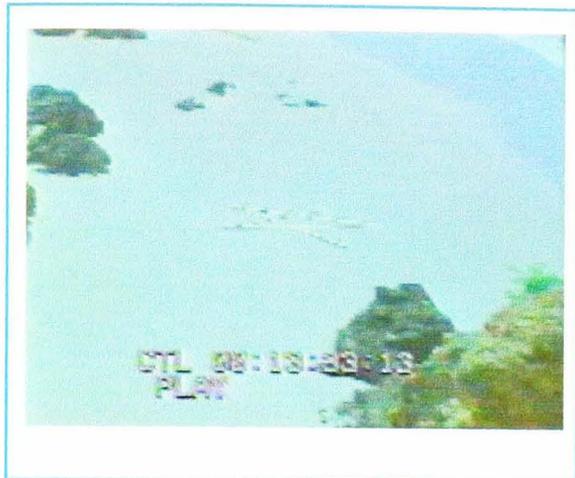


image: 9.1.

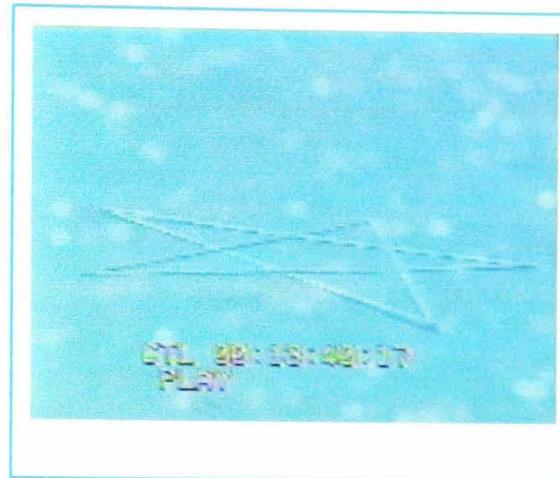


image: 9.2.



image: 9.3.



image: 9.4.



image: 9.5.

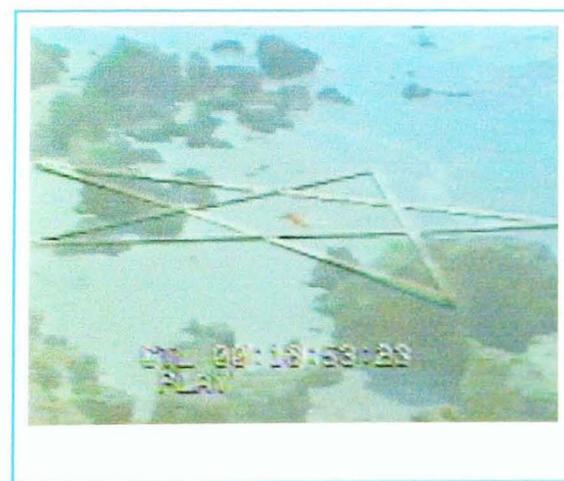


image: 9.6.



image: 9.7.



image: 9.8.



image: 9.9.



image: 9.10.



image: 9.11.



image: 9.12.



image: 9.13.

SCENE 10: THE KEY

Duration: 1 minute 39 seconds.

Description: The woman carries the offerings of the sea, the Ankh-Key and the shell, embodying the enigmatic essence of life.



image: 10.1.



image: 10.2.



image: 10.3.



image: 10.4.



image: 10.5.



image: 10.6.

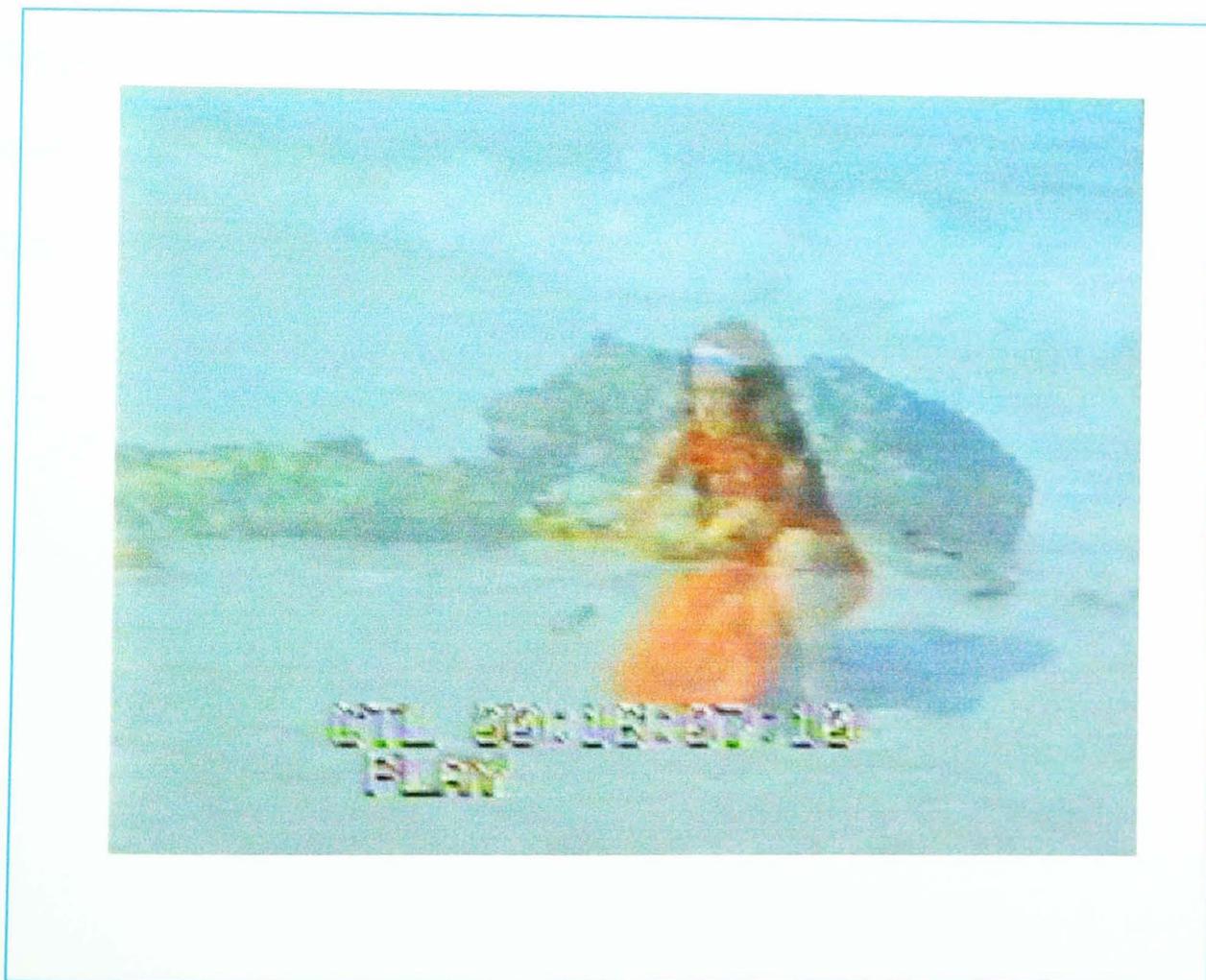


image: 10.7.

SCENE 11: GRAVITY FREE

Duration: 1 minute 50 seconds.

Description: Holding the key, the woman dances along with, and free of, the laws of gravity. Passing through shifting and transitory terrestrial planes she leaps over the sun.



image: 11.1.



image: 11.2.



image: 11.3.



image: 11.4.



image: 11.5.



image: 11.6.



image: 11.7.



image: 11.8.

SCENE 12: THE EYE OF THE SUN

Duration: 1 minute 20 seconds.

Description: The eye would not be able to see the sun, if in a manner, it were not itself a sun. Looking through the key the woman can gaze into the sun and through the eye of the sun into the light of spirit and intelligence.



image: 12.1.



image: 12.2.



image: 12.3.



image: 12.4.



image: 12.5.



image: 12.6.