The year 2015 witnessed a high-profile installment of Boris Charmatz’s Musée de la danse at Tate Modern in London; Tino Sehgal was accorded a yearlong retrospective at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, as well as a shorter and smaller one at the Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin; while WIELS, Brussels, showcased Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker’s Work/Travail/Arbeid: All of these high-profile projects are the work of choreographers, or artists trained as choreographers. Their confluence raised a number of questions. If performance is now ubiquitous and “generalized”, is there an increasing prominence of the specific discipline of dance within general performance? Why, in this fleeting temporal art, the emphasis on historiography, on collection and curating? Why the focus on dance as physical activity and/or a form of labor in an exhibition space, where dancers and spectators are joined in co-presence? Whose work are we looking at, or what work are we performing, and what do these choreographed exhibitions tell us about value today?

1. The Dancing Museum

The quintessential medium of contemporary art is time. So as not to let this statement appear neo-modernist and essentialist, one of course immediately needs to add that this intermedium is in fact profoundly intermedial. Time is articulated and modulated through a variety of technological media—though most of these in turn tend to converge in digital technology, which makes it difficult to store and retrieve. Of all the temporal arts, dance appears the most resistant to storage. While it is true that real-time computer graphic dancers have increasingly been integrated into choreographies, the software is not choreography itself. Dance notation has always been notoriously tricky, and the condition has been exacerbated throughout modernity, as traditional movements and positions—and the entire economy of dance movement they upheld—were rejected.

From the 1970s on, Charles Atlas and Babette Mangolte have successfully used video to create something that is more than mere registration: “video dance”, in Atlas’s terms it involves “generating a complex rhythm, emphasized by the coordination of dancers that interpret the loops, an original work is an elegant reconfiguration of dance that is already (partly) choreographed for and with video. Video dance is made to be seen and re-seen in different contexts, the ephemeral time of dance becomes the stored time of video, which can be re-synchronized (or resynched) with various moments of lived time. Like performance in general, dance thus lives a multifaceted life, spanning various media and forms of re-actualization. It is indeed viral.

The practice of dancer-turned-artist Tino Sehgal curtails this move-ment across media, at least as far as images are concerned. Sehgal gravitates to the art context and its culture-industrial juggernauts Tate or MoMA and their provincial clones, such as the Stedelijk, because here he can profit from art-specific forms of art production based on exclusivity and uniqueness, going to the point of using verbal contr-acts to sell his work and handing photo and film documentation or remediation of his pieces (though not of his own portrait).

That imposing this policy effectively is pretty hopeless in the age of social media results in a glaring discrepancy between ideology and the reality on the gallery floor. The Martin-Gropius-Bau made a significant effort to ban photos, whereas during my visits the Stedelijk appeared to have given up, as most guards and “interpreters” did not seem to care about the copious camera use. This only emphasizes Sehgal’s perfect compatibility with the temporalized and eventful museum, in which something (anything) must happen almost all the time. Sehgal’s anti-reproduction and anti-object stance was always highly selective. In the past, and now again at the Stedelijk, he has presented his own performances in conjunction with historical works, that seem to lead up in a linear historical sequence, to his own practice. At the Stedelijk, this auto-historicization took the form of This Is Good (2011) being performed in a room that also contained Marcel Duchamp’s Bottle-on-Fir. Sehgal and works by Jeff Koons and Félix González-Torres. If these artists all work with multiplication and editions in some way, Sehgal suggests that he does them one better by doing away with object- and technology-based commodities in favor of a dematerialized commonalty. And Sehgal’s danced goods are sometimes highly referentialist, amounting to live reenactments of historical artworks.

As dematerialized commodities that need to be actualized in per-formances, Sehgal’s works are as perfectly in sync with the needs of the contemporary museum as Boris Charmatz’s Musée de la danse. Charmatz rejects the traditional exclusion of ephemeral dance from the museum as a space of cultural consecration and canonization, while embracing the contemporary museum’s “eventization” and its openness to “precarious movements”. Hence, while Charmatz is the director of an institution in Rennes named the Musée de la danse / Centre chorégraphique national de Rennes et de Bretagne, this is the basis from which he develops the Musée de la danse as something more mobile and intermittent—a series of proposals in different lo-cations. Its incarnation at Tate Modern, on two consecutive days in May from noon to 10 p.m., comprised large-scale dance performances in the Turbine Hall as well as 20 Dancers for the 20th Century (2012), which involved dancers performing (mostly) in various rooms of the collection presentation, and Expo Zéro (2009), the part of Musée de la danse that is least suited for the manifestation—or Tate-ification—of culture. Expo Zéro consists of otherwise-empty rooms in which a number of invited artists, dancers, writers, curators, and others are invited to group discussions on the floor or one-on-one storytelling. On Sat-urday in particular, the crowd was so thick that performers had to carefully negotiate their way through the “cake room” carefully by not giving way, and something like Sung Hwan Kim’s storytelling for one single visitor at a time became truly a drop in the ocean.

In the first two rooms, an expansive and vocal Tim Etchells could at times be seen to coexist with Pichet Chidchan and his careful, focused walk around the perimeter of the second space. At one point, Etchells invited his fellow Expo Zéro participants Heman Chong and David Riff into the first space to co-curate the “first room of the Musée de la danse” at Tate Modern, at a time, with each new addition being prefaced by the entire list up to that point, as remembered by the performer. Suggested inclusions ranged from dance performances made by Etchells on his birthday to Chris Burden’s shooting piece and an Andy Warhol of Charles Atlas, all of which amounted to live reenactments of historical artworks.

Not unlike Sehgal with his strategically essentialist stance on per-formance, Charmatz appears to delegitimize filmed dance or video dance, or any other manifestations of dance in the live event. As a consequence, the Musée de la danse exists as a virtual or mental institution, something that can never be fully actual, at least not all of the time.

The contemporary museum demands a dematerialized but omnipresent art, an art that is a continuous event or ongoing performance. Within this condition of generalized performance, dance maintains a prominent and particular position. Svend Lüticken analyzes the encounter between these two novel realities: a temporalized and “eventized” museum and a desublimated dance that requires greater time and physical effort, raising new questions not just about the mingling of audience and performer, but also about concepts like labor and value.
The overarching title of the two Musée de la danse days at Tate Modern was “If Tate Modern was Musée de la danse?”, suggesting a collapsing of the potential institution into the actually existing mega museum, or post-museum, or ex-museum. Some of the 20+ Dancers performances in the collection displays resulted in traffic jams and effectively relegated other artworks to backdrops; meanwhile, the large-scale performances in the Turbine Hall not only inscribed themselves in the logic of previous Turbine Hall projects, but pushed their logic even further. In 2010–11, Michael Clark presented dance rehearsals and performances in the Turbine Hall. As part of this project, “non-dancers” from the public were invited to partake in workshops and perform a piece written especially for them; this project turned the punk ethos of “anyone can do it” into a contemporary participatory mass event at the heart of the culture industry—with free labor provided by those who were happy to have this unique opportunity. For Charmatz’s Manger (Disparièr) (2015), dancers and audience members inhabited the same space, with the performance going on in a scattered manner, whereas Adrénaline: A Dancerfloor for Everyone transformed the space into a disco, complete with a giant glitter ball suspended from the ceiling.

Made in 1986, Charles Atlas’s television essay Hail the New Puritan shows certain contrasts and continuities between different forms of performance. In this staged documentary on Michael Clark and his dancers and collaborators, the opening segment shows an onerous scene in which dancers go through their motions while others pose and pretend; Leigh Bowery, queer performer par excellence and Clark’s costume designer, opens his mouth to reveal TV static, and the static then becomes that on a TV screen next to Michael Clark’s bed; we see Clark wake up in his studio/apartment, and a day of rehearsals and interviews begins. After segments of dances by Clark set to songs by the Fall, the staged day ends with a different type of dance: with Clark and others clubbing, and voguing. At night, the relentless cycle of movements, performed continuously for nine weeks during the opening hours of the exhibition: Wednesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Members of De Keersmaeker’s Rosas troupe performed in a performance. In this staged documentary on Michael Clark and his movements starts to be awkward that it becomes interesting”. In Cédric Andrieux, movement starts to be awkward that it becomes interesting”. In Cédric Andrieux, movement starts to be awkward that it becomes interesting”. In Cédric Andrieux, movement starts to be awkward that it becomes interesting”.

The April installment of Selig’s Stedelijk retrospective included Koo (2002), in which a couple kisses for a duration of four hours, moving from horizontal to upright positions and embodying art-historical kisses from Böcklin to Koons along the way. One of Selig’s stronger pieces, Koo lies on a temporal junction between the performers, who are completely focused on each other, and the audience. The performers are clearly going through the motions in a carefully choreographed way; this is both intensified and temporarily extended labor. But while the performance is a durational tour de force, it ultimately partially reverses the temporalization of the museum. Even while engaging in intense and protracted exchange, the performers seem to exist in a temporality that is closer to that of the lovers in the referenced artworks. In their sovereign disregard from what happens around them, they appear to transcend mundane time and the life of work.

Perhaps the most elegant and incisive meditation on the time and labor that goes into a dance performance is Jérôme Bel’s choreography Cédric Andrieux (2007), which shows and discusses the preparation and self-abnegation that underlie the moments normally seen on stage. Cédric Andrieux danced for Merce Cunningham for years; in this work, when he dances extracts from pieces by Cunningham and others, there is no music, and his breath is clearly audible, stressing the intense labor required in particular for performing Cunningham’s choreography—which, as Andrieux emphasizes, regularly pushes dancers to and beyond the limits of their possibilities. Practice with Cunningham was a “slow and laborious process”, and the nearly impossible things he demanded resulted in feelings of humiliation. We see Andrieux unable to keep his torso in a strictly horizontal position, and when up on one leg, he makes little jumps as if to lose his balance. Cunningham had the dancers do the same practice exercises every morning. Noting that it was a Cage-ian “zen thing” for Cunningham, a way of emphasizing that every moment is unique and that there is in fact no such thing as repetition, Andrieux adds that “for me, mostly it’s totally depressing”. The performance is not, however, some kind of debunking exercise. Andrieux notes that Cunningham never remarked on mistakes, but stressed instead that “it’s when movement starts to be awkward that it becomes interesting”. In Cédric Andrieux, the dancers mentions his relief upon leaving Cunningham and shedding the dreaded unart. He wore more comfortable clothes and experienced less physical pain dancing for Trisha Brown or Bel. With the latter, he remarks, “we are people before we are dancers.” Repeating Cunningham’s repetitions, Andrieux examines himself as a quasi-subject and quasi-object, as a body in perpetual training which at one point decided that it preferred not to be. In Picker Klunchun and Myself (2006), Bel stages a comedic dialogue between himself and the Thai dancer, highlighting the extreme amount of deskilling and decoding in contemporary Western dance; Bel and Klunchun maximize the contrast between the latter’s emboldened archaic of movement and poses and the former’s sense of historicism. Whom Klunchun explains how Thai dance is intrinsically connected to court culture, Bel deplains that “in France we cut off our king’s head”. But the show must go on, to invoke the title of one of Bel’s most popular (or, indeed, popular!) pieces. Performance becomes a hellish karaoke. Deskilled labor reveals its purely temporal nature: filling, stretching, having, selling, making time.

1. However, Bel shows remarkable loyalty to the theater and to theatrical time, refusing to reformat his pieces for exhibition contexts. One highly successful recent reformatting was Anna Teresa De Keersmaeker’s Work/Travail/Arbeid at WIELS, which was based on her theatrical choreography Fervent Temporae, which in turn is based on a musical composition of the same name by Gérard Grisey. It was a twelve-hour cycle of movements, performed continuously for nine weeks during the opening hours of the exhibition: Wednesday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Members of De Keersmaeker’s Bosco troupe performed in circular and spiraling patterns across the large gallery space—which actually consisted of two spaces connected by a narrow corridor—going from “daily life” movements to dance and back again, and from frozen or slow motion to accelerated leaps. Instruments, including a grand piano, were moved along as well. The movements often be-
In line with their 2013 Intramural Retrospective of the Fontes Bianca, last year Alexandra Pirici and Manuel Pelmuş developed Public Collection of Modern Art for the Vanam Alabhum Exhibition’s “subtext”, and it was a successful event. For the first time since the rise of young performers enacted artworks from the twentieth and twentieth centurines. These included Manel’s ‘La Jornada en el bar’ and a panel of dancers who performed in a series of role-playing, 2013. Pirici was also included with both Videojuegos de una Revolución (1992), her collaboration with Adrii Ujicci and Workers Leaving the Factories (1995). The latter includes a scene where the critical philosopher, Charles B. J. de Saussure, accidentally hits a robot outside the factory gate. Pirici and Pelmuş have often taken a position in the arts and in the economy of contemporary art. What is interesting about this is that the spectators become co-performers in the museum-as-factory and that the spectatorial role is more than just a passive one. In Pelmuş’s reenactment had the per- formers moving from the central room of the old museum building toward other spaces. It was as if they did not leave the museum-as-factory but continued the program. At first, you can’t really leave the dance factory anywhere. Pirici and Pelmuş acknowledge and live -to live outside that notion of mere physical exertion, which seems to be De Keersmaeker’s un- derstanding of the term. In Pelmuş’s view of the temporality of labor, it becomes a nightmare. Proposals for quantifying the value that users produce value for Apple not just by buying the products but also by advertising them by using them—by performing them.13 This is not to deny, of course, that neo-Ford- ist formats in which a spoken “label” ends the performance and that is not to mention the artists’/choreographers’ fees, or the prices of those works that have become “collectable” in part through the labor of the dancers and other performers who actualize them time and again. As we have speculatively stated, what money could be replaced by living objects of desire, (1992, Videograms of a Revolution) speculated that money could be replaced by living objects of desire, (1992, Videograms of a Revolution) speculated that money could be replaced by living objects of desire, (1992, Videograms of a Revolution). Workers Leaving the Factory. In this scenario, this function as a speculative fiction that obfuscates as much as it illuminates.

Dance and dance-related practices in an exhibition context show without selling much. Budgets and performers’ fees are rarely mentioned, not to mention the artists’ work on works that have become “collectable” in part through the labor of the dancers and other performers who actualize them time and again. An initiative recently discussed in the context of contemporary art, this potential has become labour power. What money could be replaced by living objects of desire, (1992, Videograms of a Revolution) speculated that money could be replaced by living objects of desire, (1992, Videograms of a Revolution). Workers Leaving the Factory. In this scenario, this function as a speculative fiction that obfuscates as much as it illuminates.

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Il museo contemporaneo richiede un'arte smaterializzata ma omnipresente, un'arte che rispeca la realtà e alla fine del suo ciclo non lasci un'interrotta. All'interno di questa condizione e di questi limiti, diversificati e molti, si mantiene una poetica esistenziale e promettente, che si è creata, a partire da queste due rinnovate realtà: un museo temporaneo, che rappresenta la danza desumelizzata, che richiede tempi veri e diversi, e che si manifesta come un'artista interdisciplinare, che si rivolge alle persone attraverso una combinazione di determinati risultati che si sono anche evoluti e sono riferiti a: concetti, che si lavorano e si lavorano con.

Il 225 ha visto l'appuntamento con il ricer- cato e significativo Museo della danza di Bruno Boîte a Torino, una delle più importanti realtà di scienze umanistiche del mondo, con l'opera di Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker al WIELS di Bruxelles. Tutti i progetti di questo periodo realizzati dallo studio di Danza, attraverso la presentazione di Work/Travail/Arbeid di Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, esiste una presenza speciale, per dare un contesto, che si riferisce alla condizione...
ciò, tutti e due gli eventi si sottopongono alla tematica dello spettacolo, anch’esse traggono il risultato di una dialettica di lunga durata (performance di lunga durata o programmi di performance). Si tratta di esercizio, di capacità di attesa o di accentrarci su ciò che si sta svolgendo nella ricerca di una sua definizione o un contesto che ne dia un piano più ambizioso. A differenza dell’opinione della base, che in genere si sottopone ai doveri che la situazione professionale e lo stato economico imposti, il lavoro è spesso oggetto di messinscena. Il lavoro del danzatore e del performer è spesso stigmatizzato, e solitamente viene considerato un lavoro sfruttato, ma è anche considerato un lavoro di alta qualità, che richiede professionalità e passione.

Secondo la teoria marxiana, il lavoro può essere al contempo schiavitù taylorista e liberazione. L’attacco marxista all’appropriazione registrazionale della crescita del valore può mostrare azioni concrete, ma ciò che caratterizza la teoria marxiana è la sua capacità di spiegare le dinamiche sociali e economiche attraverso l’analisi dei processi lavorativi.

Il lavoro è spesso oggetto di messinscena, e la messinscena può essere un modo per esprimere una critica alla società. La critica alla società può essere espressa attraverso la critica al lavoro, la critica al sistema economico, o la critica alla cultura. La messinscena può essere usata per esprimere una critica alla società in diversi modi, ad esempio attraverso la critica alla cultura, alla società, o alla politica.

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