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**Embodied Attention in Contemporary Dance Practices
in the Perspective of Critical Dance Studies**

Ph.D thesis summary

In this thesis I focus on a critical intimate analysis of the practices of five dancers/choreographers: Lisa Nelson, Rosalind Crisp, Maria Zimpel, Anna Nowicka and Maria Stokłosa. Embodied attention in their practice is a central issue, developed in the course of successive stage works as well as pedagogical practice. In the years 2013-2019, I had the opportunity to see the works of the artists I've decided to focus on and to conduct numerous interviews with them, which, in the context of the assumed critically intimate methodology, was a necessary condition for a deeper analysis of their stage works and studio practices. Theoretical thinking derived from the above practices dictated the choice of methodology, as well as aspects that focalise key issues of embodiment and attention.

The thesis is divided into two parts: methodological and analytical. In the first one, drawing the theoretical horizon of the dance practices, I discuss: critical dance studies, the problem of attention in the context of the crisis of co-feeling and co-responsibility, and the issue of embodiment and the body in the philosophy of corporeal feminism and feminist new materialisms. The second deals with a critically intimate analysis of the practices of the five artists I am focusing on. The theoretical dictionary developed in the methodological part of the work and the dictionary of artistic practices in the analytical part of the work illuminate each other, complement each other. The practices of Lisa Nelson and Rosalind Crisp are treated here as particularly emblematic of the development of theory on the ground of choreographic practice. In their pedagogical and choreographic practices they directly influenced the other three protagonists of the thesis. In the structure of this thesis, they constitute a key bridge between the analysis of theories (concerning, in turn, critical dance studies, attention, and embodiment) and the practices themselves (Maria Zimpel, Anna Nowicka, Maria Stokłosa). These practices, proposing an experimental method of working with attention, transform it into embodied attention as a way of supra-individual emancipation of the subject - both the one performing and the one watching. It is attention that is the tool that allows (in both artistic and everyday practice) to redirect focus and open the senses to a variety of stimuli, and thus to constant flows between the senses, including states such as distraction, fantasy, etc. Corporeal feminism allowed me to explore embodiment as a processuality, while attention and attention framed in the span between economics and ecology allowed me to anchor the perceptual environment for making and receiving dance in key social and political concerns such as relationality, empathy, care.

The practices of Lisa Nelson, Rosalind Crisp, Maria Zimpel, Anna Nowicka and Maria Stokłosa emblematically demonstrate tensions between dancing, choreographing and improvising, which activate the potentiality of the field of contemporary dance to generate change and regeneration, both privately and socially. Each of these practices are revealing a different dimension of corporeality, treating the body as multisensory, dancing, intensified, kaleidoscopic, improvised. Each of the multidimensional practical concepts of corporeality works with a different kind of attention, which appears as a force capable of composing experience and environment (Nelson), of shuffling in infinitely many directions and on many levels of body, perception or imagination (Crisp), generate spatial and temporal patterns of its own appearance within the framework of stage and studio practice (Zimpel), haunt the body within the framework of imaginative practice expanded by the dimension of dreaming (Nowicka), improvise participatory relations within the framework of spectators emancipation (Stokłosa). With their practices, all these artists prove that both corporeality and attention are processual modalities of the subject, which is in constant transformation in response to and in relation with the environment that surrounds it. This processual responsiveness, anchored in the continuous flows between the interior and exterior of the body, is an improvisational composition (of perception, experience, relations) in real time.

The notion of "embodied attention", on the one hand, marks a turn towards the primordial modality of dance as a multi-sensory awareness and presence embedded in the body, and on the other hand, it allows for locating the perception and reception of dance in the body, clearly indicating the necessity of taking into account the materiality of the subject on an intimate and social level - in the age of virtual mediation and the disembodiment of relations. Dance and choreography are the field in which one can closely observe embodied attention in multisensual, responsible and receptive practice.