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A Framework for Analysis

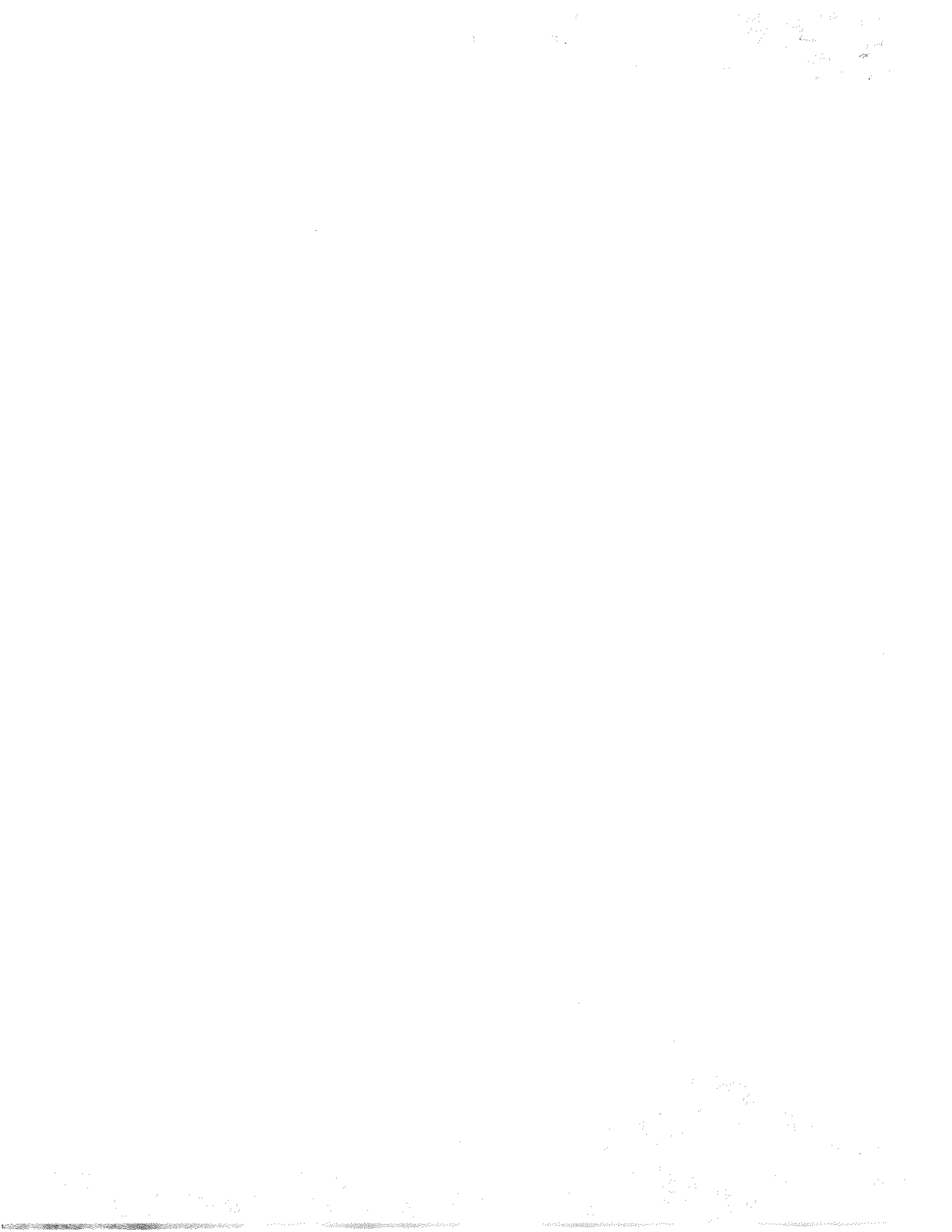
Introduction

It is useful at this point, before discussing Morris's individual dances, to consider how we might talk meaningfully about relationships between music and dance. How can we conceptualise meetings between music and dance in a way that preserves their full richness and diversity?

For many years, relationships between music and dance have been discussed in deliciously polite and vague terms, not untouched by anthropomorphism—with reference sometimes to happy marriages (going back at least as far as Guillaume Du Manoir in 1664¹), sometimes to total unity as an ideal, sometimes to civilised debate. Just occasionally, as mentioned in the last chapter, someone dares to propose total independence. But what does all this really mean? How do we process cross-modal information in the form of two artistic media? Quite apart from the underlying value systems implied, what do unity, civilised debate and total independence mean in practice?

Here are some thoughts on watching and listening that engage with the complexity of Morris's dances² and inform the analyses that follow. Some readers, on the other hand, may prefer to work the other way round, addressing the analyses of dances first and using this chapter for reference. Or they may wish to use the chapter for later in-depth exploration of an underpinning, specifically choreomusical, analytical framework. Several routes through the book are possible, and several ways of using this chapter.

These are exciting times: intermedia theory is developing fast. Encouraged too by the diversity within Morris's work, the approach here is to draw from a multi-stranded theoretical base, like an analytical toolbox, ready for selective use of its contents, and always as appropriate to a particular dance speaking to us in a particular way. The theory will be regularly supported by examples from Morris's work. While stressing the relevance of method to his specific context, I suggest that the various ways of thinking about choreomusical relations outlined here might also be useful to a broader dance repertory, extending well beyond the work of a single choreographer.



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A fundamental concept is that there is always some kind of relationship when music and dance are put together. This seems obvious in the case of Morris's work, where relationships are carefully set up and manipulated, but it is equally true of the work of Merce Cunningham and John Cage, who famously created dance and music totally independently, in other words, made no attempt to 'manage' relationships between the two media (other than being familiar with each other's general style and philosophy).

At the same time, as Allen Fogelsanger has observed, we still tend naturally to conceive of music and dance as either going, or not going, together.³ We are also naturally inclined to find, or work at finding, coherence or pattern, although there may be times when this is so rarely possible that we lose interest in pursuing this line (as in the work of Cunningham and Cage, when we grow to accept what comes our way from one moment to the next). To expand from the previous chapter, we even sense a number of apparent formal equivalences that have settled as conventions over the centuries and that have led us to imagine that music can be 'visualised' (or not). Dance equivalents, for instance, have at various times made sense for all the following musical categories: rhythm and form; dynamics; texture (for instance, comparing the organisation of dancers with thick or thin instrumental layout or polyphonic/homophonic structures); pitch contour; staccato and legato articulation; timbre (using established associations between a dancer or particular gender and an instrument or instrumental group); energy pattern (large-scale patterns of tension and relaxation).⁴

Supporting the idea that relationships of opposition are also relationships, just as much as relationships of equivalence, the composer-theorist Barbara White adds the point that there is never, in any case, one without the other. There is always an element of simultaneous opposition as well as equivalence, at least due to the disciplinary incongruity—congruence and incongruence, similarity and difference, and various kinds of similarity and difference,⁵ so much so that words like similarity and difference often seem hopelessly inadequate. Furthermore, just as White proposes, we have to go to precise examples within precise contexts in order to spell out these dilemmas and pleasures in any meaningful way, to go beyond the question of *whether* music and dance meet each other or not, to ask *where* or *how* they meet.⁶

We need also to take into account that we as audience construct shape and meaning just as music and dance construct shape and meaning together. Our backgrounds and prior experience are crucial in determining how we listen and watch. Are we more musician or dancer? Our personal awareness is never quite the same as anyone else's. We are also likely to find ourselves

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favouring different stimuli at different moments, our attention shifting fluidly between the two media, and perhaps the same stimuli perceived differently from one day to another.

Both shape and meaning are referenced here. Structural and semantic concerns are inextricably connected, although the emphasis shifts. The chapter moves from ideas about semantic content, to ideas about structure (borrowing from traditional music theory). Structure is not some dry, schematic phenomenon. It is important that, even if Morris says that audiences do not need to know about the structure and mechanics of his pieces, we can experience a tremendous aesthetic thrill when seeing something rigorously wrought as well as expressive and intellectually stimulating in other ways. (Besides, he enjoys talking about structure himself.) Finally, we turn to more body-based, sensual phenomena, the crucial issue of embodiment that is especially hard to rationalise in words.

Another basic concept used here is that music and dance operate in dynamic interaction. They are both seen as subject to change rather than static entities, operating within a mechanism of interdependence rather than maintaining the hard binary of parallelism versus counterpoint.⁷ We are dealing with a composite form, music and dance. Whilst we might still be able to trace the separate development of the two media, these two sensory planes now meet to affect each other and to create a new identity from their meeting.

A number of theorists from outside dance have contributed to the development of theories of dynamic interaction involving music, with an emphasis largely on semantic content. Film music theory has been especially useful. In 1947, recognising the inadequacy of the term parallelism, Hanns Eisler made suggestions for a more mobile and multivalent approach to description:

From the aesthetic point of view, this relation is not one of similarity, but, as a rule, one of question and answer, affirmation and negation, appearance and essence. This is dictated by the divergence of the media in question and the specific nature of each.⁸

Leading from this, in 1980, Claudia Gorbman proposed the concept of 'mutual implication', music and image working together in a *combinatoire* of 'expression'.⁹

Since then, in 1990/94, Michel Chion has introduced the useful concept of 'transsensorial perception' that cuts across the usual boundaries between the senses. He refers to these senses as 'channels' or 'highways' more than 'territories' or 'domains'. Thus the visual can convey the aural (even if the visual dimension is still central) and vice versa:

Silent cinema, in the absence of sync sound, sometimes expressed sounds better than could sound itself, frequently relying on a fluid and rapid montage style to do so. Concrete music [*musique concrète*], in its conscious refusal of the visual, carries with it visions that are more beautiful than images could ever be.¹⁰

Chion's ideas resonate with the Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari cultural model of 'deterritorialisation' and 'nomadisation', a model also used by dance philosopher Michel Bernard, who argues the case for dance and musicality as roving vehicles for possible sensorial conjunction.¹¹

The American modern dance pioneer Doris Humphrey was one of the first to acknowledge the important, active role of music in determining how dance movement is read. In her primer *The Art of Making Dances*, she explains that music can:

...distort the mood. Suppose the dancer has a sequence arranged which is quite serious, a small segment of one of life's major encounters. Accompany this by trivial music which patters along without any depth of feeling. The result is that the dancer does not become stronger by contrast; rather he seems empty, silly and pretentious. Such is the power of the sound to set the mood. This same sequence, accompanied by jaunty, slightly jazzy music, can make the dancer look cynical; he is pretending to be serious, but actually it is all bluff, and he believes in nothing. The variations on this kind of thing are endless.¹²

Humphrey advocated trying out the juxtaposition of the same dance material with different musical accompaniments, testing out the effect of the musical changes. Interestingly, Morris gave a similar assignment at the Dartington Masterclass (2013, see p. 59), when composers and choreographers separately created a hundred seconds of material and then examined the result of different combinations of movement and sound. Humphrey observed that in some circumstances the effect was more of separation or disjunction between music and dance, in other words, of two opposing voices, with music speaking from outside the dancer:

If soft sound supports strong movement and vice versa, a curious effect is produced. The music seems to be antagonist; the figure of the dancer fights to be strong without encouragement; and in his more vulnerable moods the music seems to seek to destroy and dominate him.¹³

Yet, whether or not we perceive music and dance as disjunct, our experience of each is inevitably changed by their meeting.

A related point is that nearly all Morris's dances have been made to existing musical scores, which has particular implications for our understanding

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of those dances, especially if we are familiar with the scores before seeing the choreography. Each of those scores has developed its own tradition of historical and cultural reference. Each too is subject to freedom from the composer's supposed intentions and renewed through the choreography set to it, informed by new dance and cultural contexts. Thus, our perceptions of the music might well be changed by its association with dance, and perhaps to lasting effect. For instance, we might literally hear notes that we have not noticed before, or a particular instrumental line might suddenly emerge more strongly. Movement seems to seek out related properties in the music and vice versa, and new meanings emerge from their point of contact. The consequence or underside to this is that other aspects of the music and dance are hidden from view or erased. Together, the two media can even create a new shape through time.

All these intermedia proposals clearly acknowledge our cognitive capacities as human beings. We now turn to recent intermedia research involving music that considers these cognitive capacities more systematically. This research draws especially from linguistic theory that has been influenced by cognitive science's discoveries about the nature of mind.

Crossing Domains

Nicholas Cook's *Analysing Musical Multimedia* (1998) is an important contribution to intermedia studies, putting forward a general theory of how potentially *all* different media—music, words, moving pictures, dance—can work together—in theatre, commercials, film and music video. In keeping with his emphasis on issues of denotation, Cook proposes metaphor as a viable model for cross-media interaction, with 'enabling similarity' at its root, the possibility of the 'transfer of attributes', which results in the creation of new meaning.¹⁴ He draws from the literary theory first proposed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in 1980, according to which, given 'enabling similarity', we can map across two conceptual domains and understand a target domain in terms of a source domain. For instance, we can understand love (target) in terms of war (source) within the metaphor 'Love is war' because the two concepts have attributes in common: they involve more than one party, and, in certain circumstances, love can absorb from war the concepts of conquest, strategy and siege. But the metaphor, Lakoff and Johnson would say, 'gives love a new meaning'.¹⁵

Aside from his application of linguistic theory in assessing a multimedia work as 'a distinctive combination of similarity and difference',¹⁶ Cook puts forward three basic and potentially overlapping models of multimedia interaction: conformance, where there is direct congruence and no element

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of incompatibility, a concept associated with theories of synaesthesia; contest, a more dynamic concept indicating essential contradiction and potential for irony, the media 'vying for the same terrain, each attempting to impose its own characteristics upon the other...each medium strives to deconstruct the other, and so create space for itself';¹⁷ complementation, a kind of mid-point between these two extremes. In what he terms a relationship of contest, Cook proposes the kind of relationship that results from opposition, connection through a primary disconnection, as in punning (which is often introduced between visuals and music in commercials), but the issue of connection/disconnection can arise in far less connotationally loaded contexts, where there is loud music to very gentle dance, strong movement to soft sound and so on.

Theory from cognitive science and linguistics has more recently been applied, and in more developed form, by Lawrence Zbikowski, in most detail within song contexts, crossing music with text.¹⁸ To summarise the theory in relation to dance and music, let us first consider a simple example (to which I will return later), the commonly understood metaphorical link between pitch and spatial patterning, in terms of 'up' and 'down'. The conceptual metaphor at the root of this link between pitch and spatial patterning is: PITCH RELATIONSHIPS ARE RELATIONSHIPS IN VERTICAL SPACE.¹⁹ This conceptual metaphor in turn relies on the pre-conceptual VERTICAL image schema that is grounded in our everyday bodily experience.²⁰ Our natural capacity to stand upright leads to embodied experiences when seeing upright objects--like trees and poles, or moving objects like rising escalators or water; or moving our own bodies, as in climbing up or going downhill; or, via kinaesthetic empathy, watching the rise and fall of dance movement on stage. Meanwhile, an underlying 'invariance' principle operates, which proposes that 'the best cross-domain mappings are those that preserve as much of the image-schemata structure of both target and source domains as possible'.²¹ Thus, Zbikowski argues, we are able to make the link between pitch and space because they are both continua that can be divided into discontinuous elements, with points along each continuum, degrees of 'up' or 'down'.²² There are:

correlations between musical pitches and points in vertically-oriented space, and between relationships between pitches and relationships between points in space (such that one pitch can be 'higher' than another).

And Zbikowski continues:

Once this framework has been established it is but a short step to a characterisation of the succession of pitches in terms of a motion between points in space.²³

But it is important that the notion of 'spatial patterning mapping on to pitch is not natural or universal within human understanding. To some extent, it is culturally-based, and is most likely prevalent in the west because it reflects Western music notation systems. It also reflects the apparent sources of vocal sounds in our bodies: the chest for low sounds, nearer the head for high sounds.²⁴ Yet what we consider 'high' or 'low' is, for instance in Java and Bali,²⁵ considered small or large (which reflects the fact that small things vibrate at a higher rate than large things). In the West, however, we do not find it hard to understand this small-large paradigm (as an alternative to the high-low one), because of our experience of the sounds that emanate from physical objects and animals of different sizes.²⁶ Thus, it makes sense that in Camille Saint-Saëns' *Le Carnaval des animaux* (a piece set by Morris in 2012) his elephant is characterised by the double bass and his aviary by the flute. Both these metaphorical paradigms have implications for Morris's *Dido and Aeneas* (1989), even to the degree that a mezzo soprano seems to be a more suitable accompaniment to Morris the dancer than a soprano, because of his size, not just because one of the characters he portrays is the low-minded Sorceress. But there is yet another paradigm to consider. Music imagery experiments demonstrate that rise in pitch can also be associated with distancing and acceleration, and pitch fall with approaching and, more surprisingly, turning left.²⁷

On stage, matters are more complicated still. Up-down/rise-fall do not relate directly to the small/large paradigm because of the law of perspective and our understanding of upstage and downstage. Our eye-line rises as the dancer moves away from downstage. At least until she reaches stage centre, she appears to increase in size and power, an effect further exaggerated if the stage is raked, in other words sloped upwards away from the audience. Yet we must always consider the bigger context of a dance-music event when applying these paradigms. Sometimes choreographers make use of them, sometimes they disrupt them, and at various times consciously or unconsciously.

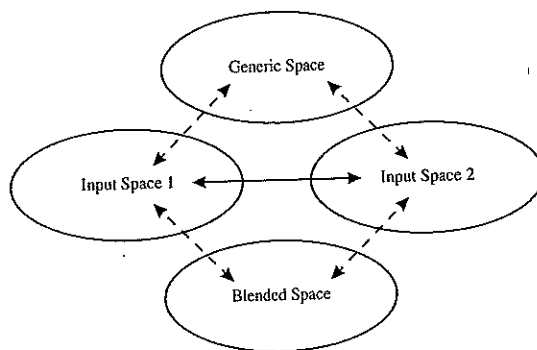
Since the mid-90s, the rhetorician Mark Turner and linguist Gilles Fauconnier (followed again by Zbikowski in music) have explored metaphor within a more complex framework, blending concepts from different domains (two or more) to create a further, new, domain, and forming a conceptual integration network (CIN).²⁸ This theory too can be usefully applied to dance and music. Blending, by its nature, means something more than the sum of parts. The CIN structure is also more interactive, less determined by movement in one direction, from source to target (as in moving a spatial source concept—like verticality—on to the target of music). There is again a kind of 'invariance principle' at work, now called 'generic

Of any choreographer today, the one who is most often cited as a musical visionary is the music theorist. This also raises questions about how we understand the interaction of seeing and hearing. Detailed studies of music, revealing a wide range of applications and strategies, show that musical scores can have a powerful impact on outlining a (visual) framework that introduces science.

Divided into two books, the first opens with a context of the choreographer as a musical journey and in choreomusical processes. After how to watch a Morris's output in three periods: 1988-91 (when in Brussels), and The choreographer heard regularly in book, and analysis are brilliantly illustrated with ground-breaking clips generously from Morris Dance Gr

space', which could work for any of the paradigms mentioned above. For instance, the generic space behind 'rising' and 'falling' in dance and music could comprise continua with the possibility of discontinuous elements and the verticality schema. Now, bringing dance and music together, this might result in a blended space in which we perceive either relatively congruent or relatively non-congruent relationships between what we see and hear, rising and falling occurring at the same or at different times. Such differences in relationship give rise to meaning and lead through elaboration into human concerns, like agreement and opposition, or compliance and resistance, beyond, that is, simple ideas about note patterns and movements in space seeming to relate or not to relate. Or the concepts of high and low alone (in instances where music and dance 'match') can connote such things as joy and despair, or life and death.

Below is a diagrammatic representation of the CIN principle in its simplest form:



The arrows in the diagram are double-headed because, as Zbikowski explains, 'under certain circumstances, structure may also be projected from the blended space back into the input spaces, and from the input spaces back into the generic space'.²⁹ For instance, the idea of vertical motion in music and dance symbolising forces that can complement or resist each other in a particular context could make us think differently about vertical motion in either music or dance in other contexts. This in turn might also affect how we think about vertical motion in general.

A prime example in this book to illustrate conceptual blending is Morris's setting of the famous Lament from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. There is an extended analysis of the whole work in Chapter 7. Here, I present summary examples to illustrate the theory in action and move quickly towards the blend, referring to the two input spaces of dance and music. The new CIN works from a shared 'generic space' that 'contains' the concept of Dido

preparing to die, her heart broken by Aeneas who has now departed. Part of my analytical approach was to work back to the input spaces, watching the dance in silence, to reinvigorate my ideas about what could be brought into the blend. Already, of course, there was a blend between music and text, and Purcell had introduced repetitions of his own into the text, for the purposes of stress, to suit his interpretation of the story.

A key feature of the music is the 5-bar ground bass that is heard eleven times and is like a second strand within the music in dialogue with, and moving relentlessly against, the vocal line.



Ex. 4.1 *Dido and Aeneas*, Purcell, Lament, bars 1-5, bass line.

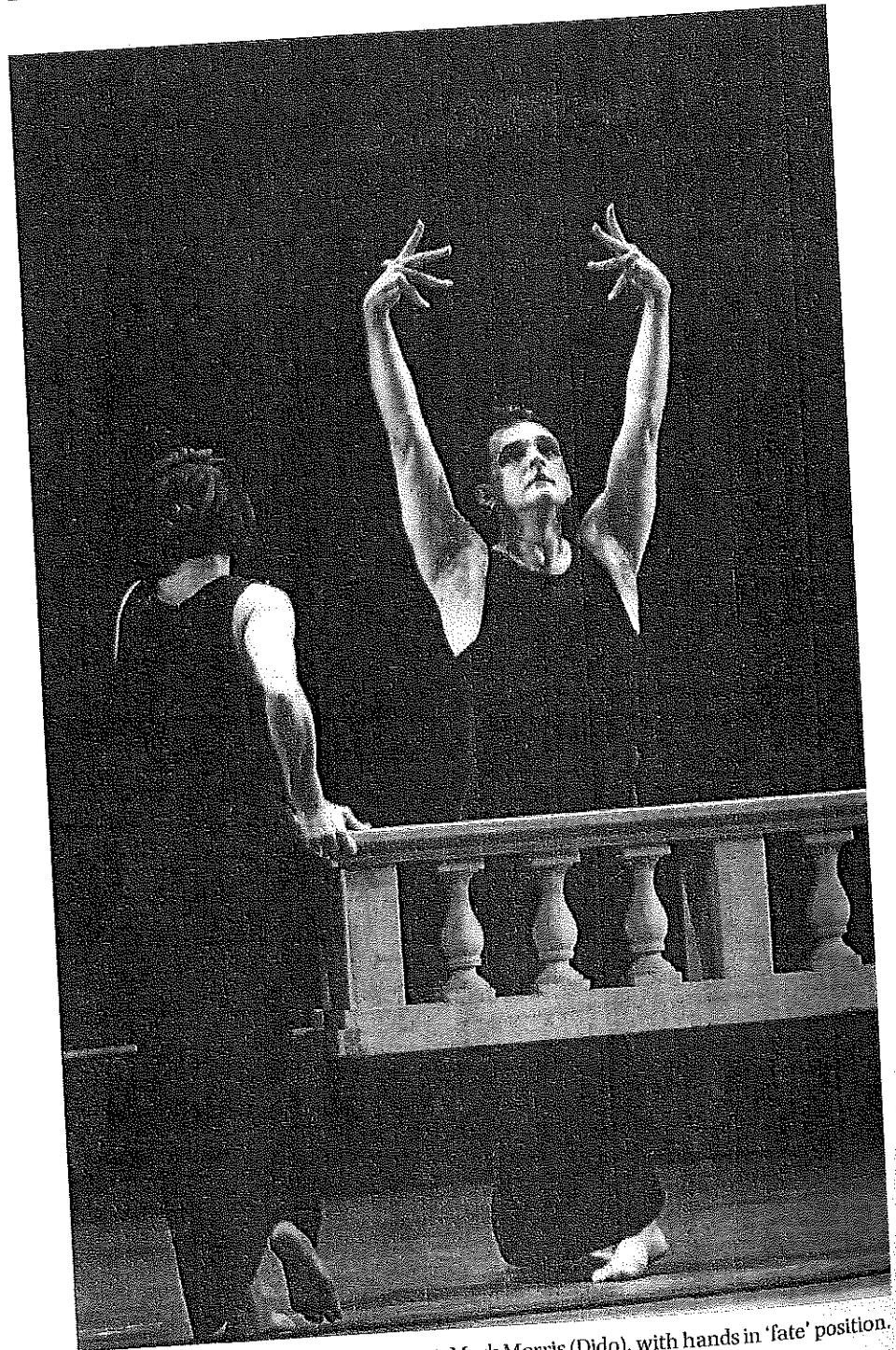
First, the choreography 'fleshes out' the music (and especially the vocal and bass lines) as a conduit for human subjectivity. Dido becomes a moving human being, and the ground bass line becomes a much enriched 'voice', carrying a variety of human traits. It is matched by the dancing chorus and, as such, represents the speech of courtiers, cupids and conscience. In the instrumental postlude to the Lament, the dancing Dido and the chorus illustrate the resolution between voice and accompaniment, completing the blend as it were.³⁰

By reflecting melodic contour and phrasing in selected places, the dance increases the particular emphasis suggested by Purcell. He elected to repeat Dido's pleas that her confidante Belinda should not be troubled and should remember her, stressing that remembrance of her, living in the memory, should resist the finality of her physical death. Morris's choreography further highlights these pleas. It illustrates too the metaphorical connection between pitch relationships and vertical space. A number of key movements embody the vertical dimension. In this context, however, the connection between dance and music speaks of the tension between living and dying (for which vertical space is yet another metaphor). The dance component greatly increases the tension, being visual and literally using the 'earth' to which Dido refers.

At the same time, there is a compelling, pervasive element of resistance within this blend. The dance movement not only draws attention to pitch change (or lack of it), it is also influenced by that change. First, there is a resistance to the downward pull of the accompaniment. But enlargement is another, second form of resistance. Both Parts 1 and 2 of Purcell's Lament are repeated, but, on both occasions, Morris chose to make bigger, rather

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Dido and Aeneas, Postlude to the Lament, Mark Morris (Dido), with hands in 'fate' position.
 © Petra Bober, 2000

than simply repeat, his choreographic statements. Most strikingly, in the Part 2 repeat, Morris hugely increases his upward reach at the melodic climax, the climax of the entire Lament, by both running all the way upstage and mounting a balustrade. Later, we will discuss even more intense examples of resistance, as oppositional resistance, in other examples of Morris's work (see, for example, *The Vacant Chair*, pp. 154-7).

Multiple Voices

The *Dido* example illustrates the concept of 'voice' operating within Morris's work—'voice' as speaking to us from within the music, in the form of both the vocal line and the ground bass, mapping on to Dido and her community. Another example in which separate musical voices have been taken over by dance is *Gloria* (Vivaldi, 1981, see pp. 138-45), where Morris regularly duplicates the SATB organisation in his casting plan. But distinct media are also frequently conceived of as independent voices, potentially saying different things when assembled alongside each other. Nijinska, for instance, conceived of her *Les Noces* choreography as a 'voice' distinct from Stravinsky's music.³¹ Another example: in social dance situations, musicians and dancers play both with and against each other in dialogue, the voices of performers operating again through their respective media.

Let us now examine the voice concept in more detail, as a basis for further understanding of Morris's work. It has been debated widely within music theory, especially in the work of Edward T. Cone (*The Composer's Voice*³²), Carolyn Abbate (*Unsung Voices*³³) and Lawrence Kramer.³⁴ It is perhaps significant that, just as Morris has used a high proportion of vocal music, Cone, Abbate and Kramer have all incorporated many vocal music examples in their writings. All these scholars reject the Romantic notion of art as manifestation of the creator's single personality or soul and think of voice instead as a flexible concept.

Cone refers to the persona (or more precisely *a persona*, one of potentially more than one) of the composer evident from within a single work.³⁵ His stance remains fundamentally composer-centred. But his position is one that post-structuralism has long since questioned. Critiquing Cone's monological approach, Abbate (drawing from Mikhail Bakhtin) refers instead to 'potentially multiple musical voices that inhabit a work'. She also focuses on these as 'certain isolated and rare gestures...that may be perceived as modes of subjects' enunciations', and that 'distance us from the sensual matter of what we are hearing, that speak across it'.³⁶ In accordance with the post-structuralist idea of 'voice' as fundamentally illusory in a wishful sense, Kramer characterises the concept as the 'feeling of a continuous plane of intentionality'.³⁷ Yet he says that voice must be understood 'not as

cause but as effect',³⁸ and that we should be careful to recognise it for what it really is: 'a rhetorical strategy meant to humanise the impersonal agency that we hear in music'.³⁹

Leaving aside the problematic, composer-centred aspects of Cone's theory, his work has proved useful in opening up the 'voice' discussion and particularly in highlighting a variety of other possible personae that can be found in music, like the literal voice in song as opposed to the piano accompaniment, the various singing characters as opposed to the orchestra in opera, the solo instrumentalist in a concerto, or the various instrumental lines in a fugue or other kind of polyphonic work. In each case, the total musical construct (formed by the interaction between the components mentioned) is considered by Cone to be the complete musical persona or the composer's persona. But, as we will see later, the term 'voice' could be applied to the 'topics' in instrumental music as well, specific musical styles bringing particular connotations into a score, as in the scores used in *Mozart Dances* (see pp. 438-9).

It is a useful coincidence that one of Cone's main musical examples is Schubert's familiar *Erlkönig*, a song that Morris set as one of three Schubert songs in *Bedtime* (1992, see pp. 341-7). The story is based on Goethe's poem about a man and his son riding home at night in a storm. A spirit, the Erlking, tempts the boy to come away with him. The father does not see him and ignores the frightened boy, but when he arrives home, he finds the boy dead in his arms.

Cone first looks at Goethe's ballad, a series of stanzas, and suggests that, within it, the number of 'voices' can be read in at least four different ways: from just one, the narrator who quotes the three characters, to five, an interlocutor, a responder and the three characters who speak for themselves.⁴⁰ But Schubert's song presents a quite different scenario. Cone concludes that the reading of four voices from the text, the narrator and three characters, is the one that works best in this other context, but with the accompaniment equivalent to another narrative voice.⁴¹ He also argues the particular relationship here between the composer's voice and the singing voice. The vocal line has special power as it absorbs text and gives us perhaps the strongest impression we ever have of a human being, a 'dramatic character' or 'protagonist', actually speaking to us.⁴² The composer's voice, however, according to Cone, may still be the dominant presence, influencing this vocal persona (who is logically unaware of this) as well as the 'mute' piano accompaniment. In *Erlkönig*, the accompaniment refers to the environment of the character, depicting stormy night music, but also symbolically suggesting the outer world impinging strongly upon the character and his reaction to this impingement.⁴³

Cone proposes that the composer makes the poem his own, by appropriating the music: 'by turning it into music. What we hear in a song, then, is not the poet's persona but the composer's.'⁴⁴ But Kramer makes the useful point that Cone does not include the voice of the poet within song, arguing that in most songs, 'the poetry and music will pull the voice in different directions, and the more so to the extent that the listener takes the text seriously'.⁴⁵ So conflict and resistance are involved. The music may absorb the poetry smoothly, but not necessarily so, and indeed, as he intimates, previous experience plays its part, just as knowing a piece of music before watching a dance set to it inevitably affects our experience (see pp. 94-5).

As for Morris's treatment of *Erlkönig*, we should first bear in mind the obvious, that the work now involves his 'voice' too. Yet I do not go so far as Cone probably would, to say that Morris's 'voice' is now the central, dominant authority, even if, as the last creative voice to enter the fray, he has changed matters radically. Later analysis will demonstrate how Morris's characters as dance 'voices' interact with what Goethe and Schubert came up with before him. Sometimes, the dance voices map directly on to the four voices of the song, but at other times Morris blurs the boundaries between his characters and extends them into other phenomena such as the wind, the fog and the horse. So, pulling into other, new directions, he disrupts what may previously have seemed like coherent voices.

The voices within instrumental music are another important source for Morris, not only singing voices. A compelling example occurs in the central movement of *All Fours* (2003, to Bartók's Fourth String Quartet): a dialogue between the first violin and cello, first in inverted canon, later (from the end of bar 59, see Ex. 4.2), straight canon, 'visualised' by a couple who seem like 'parents', sharing the stage with their two 'children'. The violin and cello speak as one with each of them respectively (the cello as the man, then the violin as the woman). I have already suggested that Morris sees a large proportion of music as drama, as do some of the composers he sets, not simply for its abstract values. A clear illustration is this kind of treatment of instrumental voices as subjectivities, or, as Kramer would see these, as examples of 'humanised impersonal agency', either because Morris feels that this is what they already are, or because he makes them so with his choreography. Compared with dance, music is relatively open in its capacity for meaning, yet, even without a programme attached, it is never entirely abstract (see Chs. 12, 13). Morris makes that meaning more specific: he grounds it.

Considering application of the 'voice' concept to dance, Cone raises the interesting question as to whether the musical accompaniment is to be understood as heard by, or as part of the consciousness of, the dancer:

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Ex. 4.2 *All Fours*, Bartók, Fourth String Quartet, third movement.

The character [Cone refers to dance with story] portrayed by the dancer is conscious of his *actions*, realistically interpreted, but he is only subconsciously aware of his *dancing*, which is both a formalisation and an expressive amplification of his natural gestures. In the same way he is subconsciously aware of his accompaniment.⁴⁶

Yet dancers can sometimes show conscious recognition of their music, even in plotless choreography. On many occasions during Morris's choreography, a dancer draws our attention to the music. Morris does this in several solos for himself, for instance in his 1994 *Rondo to Mozart*, adopting a knowing, self-conscious performance manner as he 'shows' the musical detail in his body. It is one of his performance 'styles'. But there is another especially good example near the beginning of the 'Double' section of *Mozart Dances* (2006, to the Sonata in D for Two Pianos, K. 448) when the soloist (originally Joe Bowie) stands still, turning upstage, then towards the audience, and making isolated gestures to two isolated high notes (each of them E, decorated by a preceding grace note, bars 35 and 37). He attaches himself precisely to Piano I: these decorated Es are the only thing happening in the Piano I score at this point. It is as if he suddenly addresses us directly: 'Let me bring out for you this tiny moment in the music *and* I'm fully aware that I'm mickey-mousing!' In another sense, he embodies, or 'becomes', the

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voice of the piano. The opening hand gesture is small and rather like the pianist's actual motion when producing the original musical gesture.



(Allegro con spirito)

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Ex. 4.3 Mozart *Dances*. Sonata in D for Two Pianos, first movement.

Processing Sound and Motion: The Phenomenon of Capture

Formal relationships operating in a less discursive and personal manner—for instance, in the domains of structure through time, rhythm or pitch—can still lead to meaning. There is, for instance, the phenomenon of movement exaggerating musical events (which, heard alone, may be barely perceptible) and thus influencing our perceptions of the music. In psychology, this phenomenon is known as 'visual capture', although it has been described aptly by psychologist Lawrence E. Marks as one medium 'sopping up' attributes from another.⁴⁷ In other words, visual stimuli are strong enough to influence people to perceive simultaneously presented auditory stimuli as related. The phenomenon can work in the opposite direction too, as 'auditory capture', sound stimuli affecting our perception of visual information. 'Capture' relates to Chion's notion of *added value* in film. This is:

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given image so as to create the definite impression, in the immediate or remembered experience one has of it, that this information or expression 'naturally' comes from what is seen, and is already contained in the image itself.⁴⁸

A scientific experiment by Kathleya Afanador (and colleagues) provides a dance example of 'auditory capture'.⁴⁹ The experiment suggested that different musical tempos may change our perceptions of the speed of dance movement so that it looks faster or slower than it really is.

A solo that Morris made for himself to the central movement of Bach's *Italian Concerto* (2007, see pp. 402-11) provides a good illustration of the reverse 'visual capture'. The solo is like a metaphor for a thought process and unlike what people usually associate with Morris, for he is relatively hands-off here with musical details such as pitch and rhythm, often ignoring them. On several occasions, however, shared accents turn into structural signposts, moments in the score pulled out of their melodic surroundings by dance movement, as if 'frozen' out of their context, and thus afforded additional impact. For instance, Morris shows us a distinctive lunge and swing out backwards with an arm. Each time, he draws upon a syncopated leaping interval in the melody line, and the leaps become larger and more urgent. Here is another instance when 'up' in music can (metaphorically, and through Chion's concept of 'transsensorial perception', see pp. 93-4) connote distance (away from place or goal), not simply height in the vertical dimension (see pp. 96-7).

There is a degree of mutual enhancement here between music and dance. The argument for visual capture is that the physical movements at these particular points are especially powerful (or, in science language, 'salient') within their context. They stand out from their context, as major accents, more so than the 'accompanying' musical syncopations, which are part of the regular style of the unfolding long, long melody. And this 'freeze phenomenon' (another concept from psychology)⁵⁰ undoubtedly disturbed the expectations that I had from already knowing the music by itself. I also experience a sudden 'lift' or 'tension' within my body when I encounter these moments: they structure my experience of the whole solo. But it is important that their effect draws from music and dance *together*. This is an example of the two media *together* creating a new shape through time (see p. 95). Such moments of common accent contribute to interpretation, suggesting sudden realisation or crystallisation emerging from the thought process or murmuring subconscious in this particular solo.

'Capture' can extend in time beyond mere accented moments. An example of this comes in Young Drosselmeier's solo (Tempo di Tarantella) in the Act 2 pas de deux of *The Hard Nut*: he welcomes the clarinet interjections within

the flute melody by changing from jumps to tiny steps in short-long rhythm just at these points.

(Tempo di Tarantella)

Flutes

Clarinet

Dance: L R L R R L R L

Ex. 4.4 *The Hard Nut*, Tchaikovsky [*The Nutcracker*], Young Drosselmeier's solo. L and R indicate 'left' and 'right' steps.

Watching more traditional settings of the same music, we may never be aware of these changes of orchestration.

With regard to the direction of 'capture' and the power of one medium over another, the current view on how we perceive rhythm and the phenomenon of pulse or beat is intriguing. Morris claimed recently: 'people don't see rhythm, not nearly as well as they hear it'.⁵¹ He probably meant hearing *and* feeling kinaesthetically. So when we watch dance and think we feel dance rhythm, we might really be feeling musical rhythm? Various experiments, but which do not use the body as the visual source, have demonstrated entrainment to heard beat as the norm when aural and visual beats move out of synchronisation.⁵² But is this always the case? What about stepping, or stepping in particular ways? Do we know enough about the power of the body? Morris's own work suggests that movement can profoundly alter our sense of musical rhythm and tempo (see p. 64).

To date, there is little scientific research on dance and music that addresses formal concerns such as these. Looking to the future of choreomusical analytical theory, however, the discipline of cognitive science (including neuroscience) could well help us understand how we process hearing and seeing within a dance context. It is interesting, for instance, that, within the field of philosophy (including aesthetics), the boundary between the conceptual and empirical has become more porous in recent years: current philosophy is now informed by cognitive science.⁵³ In the choreomusical field, a raft of scientific experiments readily suggests itself, such as testing our perception of aural and visual beat and their respective strengths, or our kinaesthetic response to conditions of choreomusical congruence and incongruence. Morris's work, as much as anyone's, calls for further work of this kind: it is clear that he himself thinks deeply about audience

perception. Having said that, working towards an integrated approach would seem crucial, in other words, empirical work taking into account cultural issues, our aesthetic judgements, as well as the varying dance and musical experience of those who participate in this kind of experiment.

Structures through Time

In terms of temporal structures, many existing concepts from music theory can be applied within choreomusical analysis. The concept of *unit hierarchy* refers to the combining of smaller units of notes or moves (the microform) to form larger units, and the continuity between these units up to the level of the macroform, which is the whole piece. In music, an established nomenclature exists for units that are either part of specific forms (for instance, exposition, variation, episode, fugue subject) or common to all tonal forms (phrase, period, theme or motif). These named musical units are very important for locating dance material within analytical discussion. For in dance, there is no such fixed nomenclature, except the titles for individual dance numbers (e.g. variation), and motif, the term for an arrangement of movements (spatial and temporal) that is characteristic of, and particular to, a work. The term 'phrase' has been frequently used for dance, but in a variety of ways, and rarely defined. I use it here to convey the idea of a short dance unit, but will clarify what this means within a particular context.

In many styles of dance, including, to some extent, Morris's, symmetrical units of structure together form a larger unit. These derive from the symmetrical structures of much eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music, especially music written for dance, but also from the structure of the body. Often, a musical unit is repeated or answered by a unit of related length; the dance unit is repeated on the same or opposite side of the body.

The concepts of *mobility* and *closure* refer to the processes of continuity and breaks in continuity that define units and articulate music and dance at various levels. They are widely used in music and literature and are well-suited to dance too. Broadly speaking, these processes are deeply intertwined, but mobility can be said to derive from developmental devices, and closure from separation in time (sustainment or rest), completion of a progression (like the end of a pathway, or a musical cadence), or a major change that marks off as finished what has just been seen or heard. Simple, immediate repetition without rest or break has dual mobility/closure characteristics, indicating continuity through relationship to what has just been seen or heard, while closing off the previous material. There are also different degrees of mobility and closure.

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and closure. A choreographer or dancer can choose to draw attention to the long line of a section of music or to dissect the music in order to show its internal units. Matching musical closure in dance appears to emphasise the effect of closure, to reinforce the sense of completion (just as matching accents reinforce emphasis).

Return is a particular form of closure. Signalling a concluding or terminal event, return articulates larger structural units and provides a major effect of closure, a sense of coming-home stability. We see this in any number of musical forms, such as sonata (the section called recapitulation after the exposition and development of material), ternary (ABA) and rondo (ABACA etc.), and the effect of closure is especially strong if the recapitulation is an exact repeat of what happened before, and in the home key. Similarly in dance, return can be made more or less exact as repetition or variation, and as a result more or less emphatic. Whether or not the choreographer decides to match a musical return is important. Dealing with sonata form structure, for instance (see Chs. 12, 13), Morris can choose to create a more or less powerful sense of return by repeating the familiar movements and formations of the exposition with the music, from the beginning of the recapitulation and onwards (the most powerful), or by introducing change: variations on the original movement, additional layers of material, fresh casting, or new spatial arrangements. Masking the straight emphatic return can give the impression of openness and continuing progression, rather than resolution or finality, instability rather than stability. It is a matter of degree, and the structural choice can have a decisive effect upon our experience of closure and resolution.

As well as the organisation of material into units, *tonality* plays a central role in determining structure across a vast history of western music, from the Renaissance, through the nineteenth century and, to some degree, into the present. It is a force therefore within the majority of Morris's musical choices. (There is no simple equivalent in dance.) This book is not the place for discussing the huge variety and complexity of codes for chordal progressions based on the western major and minor scale. Most important here is to stress the fundamental drama within tonality, the move from and back to a point of stability, that supports, or drives, thematically-based musical structures. A tonal piece of music starts in a home key, the tonic key, which is rooted in the first note of the scale that forms the foundation of a score. Thus, to take an example from the Morris repertory, F is the tonic of Mozart's Concerto No. 11 in F major, which opens *Mozart Dances*, and the score begins in the key of E. Then there is a move to one or more other keys, each clinched by a cadence, a marker point, or punctuating gesture, of closure. Most often, these keys include the dominant, the key

based on the fifth note of the tonic scale, traditionally associated with the culmination of a sonata form exposition. Thus, C is the dominant key of the F major Concerto and after its arrival within the exposition, the music moves into other keys and then back again, at the point of recapitulation, to the home (tonic) key and to stability.

Talking Rhythm

An immediate point of contact between music and dance, rhythm is another fruitful basis for examining structural relationships. In both cases, it reaches us via a part of the brain connected with motor function. Here, I still find it useful to hold on to the notion of parallelism (or 'visualisation') and counterpoint between music and dance. The principle used is that music and dance are two simultaneous voices operating sometimes with, sometimes against, each other through matching or crossing accents or metres, with the term counterpoint reserved for those occasions when accentual or metrical patterns conflict. I steer away from hard binary opposition, however, acknowledging instead a continuum of possibility, weakening and strengthening effects of rapport and disjunction (according to the frequency and force of crossing accents). This notion of counterpoint is grounded in evidence from social dance traditions, of the play between musicians and dancers (as independent voices) that invites interpretations of tension, anxiety, chase and competition.⁵⁴

Even within situations that might be interpreted as prime examples of rhythmic parallelism or music visualisation, it is important to consider the distinctive manner in which music and dance operate. Fundamental differences between dance and music emerge when we consider speed as rate of rhythmic events (notes or moves). Physical limitations determine that, in a given period of time, the maximum number of events possible is smaller in dance than in music. In order to create an effect of parallelism, changes in musical speed can be reflected in a generalised rather than precise fashion. It is also possible to reflect broad contrasts in continuity, in other words, whether musical notes form a continuous series or are broken with rests.

Furthermore, speed changes are more likely to be obvious within a single dance movement than within a single musical note. A dance movement, by its very nature, has slowing and quickening built into it. Take a simple step, which is only relatively simple—it is nuanced in many different ways in Morris's style—and consider how much happens before and after the impulse of weight change that marks a point in time. In the same way, even when the phrase beginnings and endings in music and dance seem to correspond, there is often overlap, a blurred synchronisation, energies

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awakening and trailing to repose at different times. Dance constantly fluctuates in speed, and because of this, the effect of rubato in dance, the slowing, delaying and then catching up with the beat, can arise from within as well as across individual moves.

In terms of the shared principles of beat and metrical framework, music rhythm theory is the basis of the system of structural categories proposed here for dance: again, the field has developed a much more thorough detailing of concepts and of their interrelationship than exists for dance. Music theory also suggests that we engage with rhythmic structure as drama, responding to its capacity to build and defeat expectations, to the effects of syncopation as a feature of instability forced against stability, and again to patterns of mobility and closure that suggest tension and release. In other words, as suggested earlier, rhythm, like other formal principles, gives rise to meaning. Crucially, these rhythmic categories, together with their implications for meaning, can contribute directly to choreomusical analysis: patterns of interaction can be observed, demonstrating that musical and dance features can both reinforce and contradict each other.

A summary follows of the rhythmic categories that I use and which are explained in more detail in *Moving Music*.⁵⁵ The rhythmic categories (again respecting distinctions between media) can be divided into three strands. After this tabulation, some of the concepts are given more detailed explanation and related to examples from Morris's work:

1. Categories that refer to duration and frequency: note or move (the basic unit of duration in dance and music); beat (or pulse); rubato/breath rhythm (the kind of rhythm which avoids or plays against a motoric beat); speed, for instance, tempo (the rate of beats), the rate of consecutive notes or moves, harmonic rhythm (the rate of harmonic change), or the rate at which space is covered.
2. Categories of stress, or accent: the stress of single notes or moves, for instance, metrical accents (the accent of downbeat, the first beat of the bar, or strong relative to weak beat); rhythmic accents (when a movement or note stands out through lasting longer than those around it); dynamic accents (accents produced by physical energy in both dance and music).
3. Categories referring to the grouping of sounds or movements through time, the interaction of 1 and 2: metre, metrical hierarchy, hypermetre, polymetre (the use of different metres simultaneously); units (of grouped notes or moves that are not necessarily congruent with metrical structure), downbeat and upbeat (pick-up) units (terms that indicate beginning at the bar-line or before it, with an anacrusis).

Strand 1 includes the rate of consecutive notes or moves (as opposed to tempo, the rate of beats). Morris often plays with this concept, finding a dance beat different from, but mathematically related to, the one in the music (e.g. twice, or half, as fast), also using it as an opportunity to give

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the impression of slowing or speeding up when the musical tempo/speed remains more level (see p. 64). An example comes from *Dido and Aeneas*: the 3/4 chorus 'Thanks to these lonesome vales'. Morris's dancers start out in quick running steps to the quaver beat, faster than the crotchet pulse of the music, but later he adds lines of dancers in counterpoint to them, now walking to each crotchet (see p. 240, Ex. 7.4).⁵⁶ (The principle here relates to that of *metrical hierarchy*, which is discussed below.)

One of the most sophisticated examples, however, of this play between music and dance can be found in *The Argument* (1999, to Schumann's *Fünf Stücke im Volkston*), a dance for three couples. The duet that Morris made for himself and Tina Fehlandt is both the most tender and the most upsetting. The musical tempo is *langsam* (slow), but to the same, repeated 7-bar musical phrase, we see two extremes within the choreography. First, Morris introduces short dance beats, giving the illusion of a quicker tempo than the music, then later he utterly subverts this approach with jaw-dropping *molto adagio*. His space-devouring *allegro* phrase casts soft triplet steps at quaver rate over the musical 2/4 (Morris makes this both silky and relaxed, but also passionate, a miraculous combination). Later, there is a devastating incident when Fehlandt cautiously holds on to his arm and opens both of hers into a window through which she stares out at us. The pair do not look at each other; it is as if she no longer belongs to his world. Then she quietly slips in front of him, still looking away—minimal motion, slower than *langsam*, and all dance beats abandoned.

A witty demonstration of harmonic rhythm, on this occasion an emphatic acknowledgement of musical structure, emerges within Morris's setting of Chopin in *Sang-Froid* (2000). During the creative process, rehearsal pianist Ethan Iverson noted for him the only place 'where the harmony changes on every beat', in other words, quickening to crotchet rate sixteen bars before the recapitulation (bar 53 in the 'Winter Wind' Etude, Op. 25, No. 11). 'Well, I'd better make the most of it,' joked Morris: 'since it's a well-known fact that I'm the most musical of choreographers.'⁵⁷ So he did and, at that precise point, the dancers take eight deliberate strides, one for each harmony.

To illustrate stress (strand 2) in relation to metre, I turn to Dido's first aria 'Ah! Belinda' (the second part). When she sings 'I languish', the dancing Dido makes a series of strong, staccato gestures, on the upbeat (a preparation), then on the downbeats of bar 29 (straight arms before her, palms together), of bar 30 (the arms raised over the head, palms still together), and finally on the second beat of the same bar 30 (the arms separated).



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Ex. 4.5 *Dido and Aeneas*, Dido's aria, 'Ah! Belinda'.

Dido's dynamic stress here is not prompted by the music. Choreographing the last gesture to the second beat of the bar turns it into a rhythmic accent (the position lasts for two beats), while also creating syncopation, an accent crossing what you hear in the music by taking weight away from the main, downbeat accent. Additional syncopations follow to the next line of words, 'Yet would not have it guess'd', crossed wrists over the head with tilts of the body from one side to the other (left and right, twice), occurring on the downbeat (three times) and then on the weaker beats 3 and 2.

DIDO 40

Dance accents: L R L R

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Ex. 4.6 *Dido and Aeneas*, Dido's aria, 'Ah! Belinda'.

It is normal for us to make sense of music and dance in terms of patterns of linked or grouped beats, notes and moves (strand 3). When we consider the linking of beats, we are dealing with the concepts of *metre* and *metrical hierarchy*. If the fundamental metrical unit is the bar (measure), which groups beats in twos, threes, fours, and so forth, with a metrical accent at the beginning of each group, similar grouping and accenting is seen to occur at sub-bar and broader levels, the hierarchy extending from the length of the smallest note or movement values. We find shifting lengths of beat as well, for instance, as crotchet, quaver or semiquaver, the time signature written accordingly as a number over 4, 8 or 16. But let us take as an example a bar of 6/8, which is a grouping of two beats (dotted crotchets). Each bar contains two sub-bar groupings of three quavers. Then, several bars (four in the example) might group together into *hypermeasures*, each one lasting one hyperbeat.

6/8

Sub-bar counts: 1 2 3 1 2 3 | 2 | 3 | 4

Metre beats: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Hypermetre beats: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4

Ex. 4.7 An example of a hypermeasure, comprising 4 bars in 6/8 metre.

Metrical accents feel stronger the broader the level in the hierarchy; in other words, they are strongest at the hypermetrical level. *Hypermetre* does not always exist in music and dance, but when it does, it is usually regular and perceived either as a result of regular notes or moves every two or more bars, or successive units grouping notes or moves, each unit of equal length (two bars or more), most strongly when dance and musical material repeats, exactly, or with an element of variation. Hypermeasures can sometimes indicate musical phrases ending with cadences. In the 8-bar example from *Mozart Dances* (the 'Double' section that was referred to earlier, see p. 105, Ex. 4.3), we sense hypermeasures of 2 or 4 bars in length, defined here by repetition and varied repetition. There is a clear similarity across the first three 2-bar units, and precise repetition (like re-starting from the beginning) in bars 5-6. In classical western music prior to the twentieth century, groupings of 2- and 4-bar hypermeasures are by far the most common. They are especially strong in music written for dance (in the nineteenth-century ballet classics and in the dances in *Dido*), also in a great deal of recent popular music (for instance, in the American gospel and country music of Morris's *Songs That Tell a Story* (1982) and *Going Away Party* (1990)).

As befits what is most useful to each medium, dancers and musicians often count differently, dancers at a slower rate than musicians. In dance, the counts used in rehearsal sometimes demonstrate the grouping of bars into a hypermetrical structure, but straight four-square constructions often need no counting at all, they are simply felt instinctively in the body. Nor are MMDG counts necessarily fixed, and they are often dropped once dancers are familiar with movement material. The dance counts that appear within the examples in this book are my own, drawn from analysis, although informed by a general knowledge of MMDG practice.

Morris engages frequently in *metrical counterpoint*. By far the most common examples in his work are 'hemiola' effects taken (as well as the term) from baroque music practice, 6 beats divided simultaneously into three 2s and two 3s across two voices or parts, or, in Morris's case, across dance and music. A good example is the opening, signature theme of the duet/chorus 'Fear no danger' from *Dido*, when after throwing their arms up and over their heads with a big jump on the spot, matching the vocal rhythm (bars 1-2, 6 musical beats divided into two bars of 3/4), the dancers

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do a knee bend and little jump on to the heels in second position, three times (bars 3-4, again 6 musical beats divided into two bars of 3/4, while the movement is now divided into three 2/4 bars).

Allegro

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Dance rhythm: $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$

1 2 1 2 1 2

Ex. 4.8 *Dido and Aeneas*, Duet/chorus, 'Fear no danger'.

But there are many examples of other kinds of metrical crossing, to different effects: a delightful gently bouncing travelling step in 3s for the couples against the straight 4s in the music in the last song of *Going Away Party* ('When you leave Amarillo') and, unusually, a 5-count gestural pattern that opens the Triumphant Dance in *Dido*, over the music in 3/4 (with hints of 2/4, see pp. 246-7).

Normally, metrical counterpoint happens in Morris's choreography when it does not appear in the score. The idea stems from the stamping and clapping games that he played with Penny Hutchinson in his childhood (see p. 22). As a teenager watching Pennsylvania Ballet in Vancouver, he was beside himself, too, joyful and laughing, when he spotted the famous three lines of counterpoint in the last movement of George Balanchine's 1941 *Concerto Barocco* (bars 41-47): the music in 3/4 (counted here in accordance with the quaver-rate dance pulse), 1 2 3 4 5 6, and two different groups of women: one group with repeating 4-count units—three jumps on pointe, followed by a leg extension to the side, and the other group breaking away into a 3-count version (with just two jumps on pointe) of the same motif. The result is, as Acocella describes, 'a fantastic machine'.⁵⁸ But Morris has a penchant for machines himself (see p. 149), and Balanchine's metrical crossings provided a useful model—no other choreographer has used this device so frequently. Morris, however, does not introduce more extended metrical units, like 5s and 7s, as often as his predecessor.

Sometimes, Morris mixes together several devices to create a delicious pattern of dialogue. Here is an example from *Festival Dance* (2011), the opening line dance step of Hummel's final Rondo movement barred as 2/4 in the music. There are several points of independent accentuation. In the music, there is a syncopation on the B in the melody (bar 2), but the dance does not follow suit. On the other hand, there is a special dance accent at the halfway point in bar 4 (beat 2)—a sharp curve forwards of the body—which

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is not prompted by anything in the music. Furthermore, the dancers now pause in this curved position, so that the fourth dance bar becomes 3/4, which is followed by two hopping step patterns in 3/8, before reconciliation with the musical metre 2/4 in bar 7.

Piano $\text{♩} = 88$
p marcato

Dance rhythm: $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$

D and U indicate 'down' and 'up' in movement level: R L R R R L R L
D U D U D

hop R RL hop L R-R L R-R L R L R
↑
accent down with body curve forwards

Ex. 4.9 *Festival Dance*, Hummel, Piano Trio No. 5 in E major, Rondo.

The 1997 *Rhymes with Silver* collaboration with Lou Harrison contains an exceptional amount of metrical counterpoint. My example is the 'Prince Kantemir' section (named after a Moldavian prince), part of which was taught me by John Heginbotham (see p.8). Here, Morris sometimes fits, sometimes crosses, the written musical metre and the metrical grouping within bars.⁵⁹ Harrison introduces a 4-bar percussion ostinato pattern with two bars of 5/8, each subdivided rhythmically to articulate counts 1-3-5 (bars 1-2), then 1-3-5-7 (bar 3 in 7/8) and 1-4-7 (bar 4 in 9/8). In dance phrase 1, Morris follows Harrison's rhythmic outline. But in dance phrase 2, to the repeat of the ostinato, he weights his own rhythms slightly differently, in bar 2, favouring count 4 (instead of 3) and re-structuring the sub-metre of 7/8 (bar 3) as 1-4-7. Then, by introducing dancers in lines of three following different rhythmic/metrical patterns, Morris builds a texture of several rhythmic layers across the stage. It is significant that this dance was influenced by the Balkan models that Morris experienced when growing up in the Koleda Folk Ensemble (see pp. 22-3). This is demonstrated not only by the asymmetrical rhythms and metrical counterpoint, but also by the movement style, with the occasional bounce on the supporting leg and the

Percussion:
4-bar ostinato

Dance:
Phrase 1

Dance:
Phrase 2

Dance:
Phrase 3

Dance:
Phrase 4

> = accents made by steps and arm movements

Ex. 4.10 *Rhymes with Silver*, Harrison, 'Prince Kantemir'.

arms swinging forward and back on certain steps, held together by the little fingers.

It is useful to consider further the implications of Morris's Balkan experience and to examine Balkan rhythmic asymmetries in more detail, for their effect as much as for their construction. Looking beyond Morris's work, take, for instance, the Macedonian Žensko Beranče step in the pattern 3+3+2+3+2, forming a bar of 13/16⁶⁰ and the Bulgarian Kopanitsa analysed as 2+2+3+2+2 adding up to 11/16.⁶¹ The semiquaver lowest common denominator refers to a very quick division which is best conceptualised in the flexible terms of sub-metrical grouping, into 'long' and 'short' units.

Much Balkan music and dance is not based on a mathematically regular unit long enough to register and hold on to in a series of what ethnomusicologists have called isochronous units.⁶² Rather, our dancing bodies grow to feel secure meeting the irregular pulses that group together the tiniest divisions like the semiquavers of the examples given. So this is music that you do not (and should not) count, but rather feel within the body. The effect is striking: 'Looking as though you quiver, but it's really internal', Morris once described how it felt.⁶³ His friend, the dancer Penny Hutchinson, at one a time a trainee Koleda member herself, confirms the distinctive feel of the style. 'It makes you shimmer,' she says. 'It's sexy.'⁶⁴ Both could well

have been referring to the excitement of the rapid bounce and lift of the body and the tiny shifts between 'long' and 'short' timing in Balkan style. It is significant too that the 'counting' that accompanies the learning of Balkan dances often relates to the number of steps in a sequence rather than to regular beat. This too reflects organicism, the experience of acceleration and deceleration, rather than of a mathematical beat framework for movement.

I suspect that this freedom at the most detailed rhythmic levels, which became second nature to Morris during his early training, could be a reason for his nuanced experiments with classical western musical rhythms. It could also explain his occasional impatience with the complexity of notated scores, 'all this insanity', he calls it, speaking specifically of *Nixon in China* (1987) when he would question John Adams: 'Did you have to put in a bar of 1/8 right here? Is that necessary? Come on! Isn't that the same as a comma?'⁶⁵ The point is that Morris heard and felt the 1/8 primarily as a short extension. Ultimately, it is big, deep physical response that means most to him. He conceives of all music as a communication between physical bodies, as precise communication, never merely as a computational, metrical and score-based operation. Regular metre in western music, for him, means the possibility of rubato, and likewise in the dance that goes with it.

A subtle example is Morris's setting of the second Dvořák Bagatelle in *The Office* (1994), a disturbing piece in which, one by one, members of a community are ordered to leave by a besuited woman (or man) carrying a clipboard. Dvořák's scoring is for two violins, cello and harmonium. The movement here, rather than the music, contains the rhythmic interest. It is a line dance, with a limping sideways step repeated to stage left, then continuing to stage right, forming one long phrase, with the right foot left on the return journey) stepping down and across in front of the body. Morris repeats the same step at different speeds. The passage as a whole accelerates and then slows again, with hints along the way (bars 3, 6 and 7) of 2 beats in the dance against 3 in the music.

The key issue here is that the acceleration and deceleration in the dance is magnified by rubato, beyond straight contact with the musical beats. (The notation in Ex. 4.11 cannot reveal this degree of nuance.) At the slow speed, there is a strange lingering, a resistance or holding back with the weight as the step down is taken, and a sense of catching up on the quick, high steps in the centre of the phrase. At the end, there is a lazy, relaxed swing of the right leg in preparation for a repeat of the journey. As Morris puts it, this gesture is the kind of move that 'folk dancers can do and highly trained professional dancers have a harder time with'.⁶⁶ Suddenly the plainest step pattern looks subtle, both perceptually and emotionally. I tried out the passage myself with the music in order to test this out. The unusual, easy quality of the

Tempo di Minuetto.

Violin I

pp

Dance rhythm: $\frac{3}{4}$

R L R L R

Going to left

5

dim.

L R L R L R

Going to right

Ex. 4.11 *The Office*, Dvořák

leg swing, allowing t without accentuatio quality seen in some dance styles, on the them off or to mark

Morris's approach the simplest step. Dancers are required what kind of speci hear it, and so you about a point, but r 'back' and the mor not about a click-tr when he compare the beat...they can Royal Ballet's tend Morris style involv being 'on' the beat wants his dancers front'—'anticipat specialist Richard more 'substantial

A fascinating e central section of

Tempo di Minuetto. Grazioso

Violin I

Dance rhythm: $\frac{3}{4}$

R L R L R L R L R L R L R

Going to left

5

dim. pp

L R L R L R L R L R L R L

Going to right

out to side across in front swing R leg

Ex. 4.11 *The Office*, Dvořák, Bagatelle, No. 2.

leg swing, allowing the gesture of a leg or arm to happen on the music, but without accentuation, turns out to be another aspect of Morris style. It is a quality seen in some of the slower Balkan dances. In most western theatre dance styles, on the other hand, gestures have an impulse attached, to start them off or to mark their point of arrival.

Morris's approach to beat deserves further discussion, for it affects even the simplest step. Dancer David Leventhal explains: 'In Mark's world, the dancers are required to shift their relationship to the beat depending on what kind of specific approach Mark wants. There's no universal way to hear it, and so you're always on your toes.'⁶⁷ Beat is a concept that is not about a point, but rather about a length, in time: for Morris, it has a 'front', a 'back' and the more familiar centre, which he simply calls being 'on' it. 'It's not about a click-track,' he says.⁶⁸ The critic Edwin Denby thought similarly when he compared the New York City Ballet style of dancing 'on top of the beat...they can take the exact lift of the upbeat to dance on' with the Royal Ballet's tendency to 'follow the beat, follow it with a tiny lag'.⁶⁹ But Morris style involves both strategies, as well as the one most frequently used, being 'on' the beat. 'Lazy rhythm' is an occasional instruction, when Morris wants his dancers to relax 'at the back of the beat', as is the opposite, 'at the front'—'anticipate...be ahead of it'. There is a link here with popular music specialist Richard Middleton's notion of 'groove' in music, using for beat the more 'substantial' image of a mound or hill, taking up 'a little real estate'.⁷⁰

A fascinating example of Morris's nuanced attitude to beat occurs in the central section of Morris's *Mozart Dances* (Double, to the Sonata in D for Two

Pianos, K. 448) when a circle of men just walk slowly, downstage, across and back upstage again. Of course, the musical beat was there to use in the first place, but now they soften the percussiveness of the piano by pushing off the back foot on the beat and changing weight smoothly just after it. 'The beat is suspended,' Morris explains. He also uses the image of 'lurching'.⁷¹ Here, it is as if the dancers lengthen our sense of beat most powerfully and, for men, unusually gently. The result is profoundly moving.

Embodiment

I return at this point to the subject of musical embodiment. Today, a range of writing refers overtly to the body or the 'carnal' in music, which is especially relevant to Morris's own experience of music (see pp. 18-20), and one reason why he likes to put the dancing body alongside it. Cook, for instance, proposes that we 'might speak of the feel of the sounds in the fingers or gut', something that is hard to explain in words—and neither science, nor hard theory, at least currently, can help us—yet that is powerfully concrete and deeply 'known' within our bodies.⁷² In her book *Boccherini's Body: An Essay in Carnal Musicology* (2006), Elizabeth Le Guin suggests that, as listeners, 'we join our eighteenth-century counterparts in "reading" apparently sonic events for imagistic or tactile associations'⁷³ and, writing from her experience as a professional cellist:

No music I have ever played seems to invite and dwell upon *the nuances of physical experience* [my italics] as does Boccherini's: one can count on tiny variations of position, weight, pressure, friction, and muscular distribution having profound structural and affectual consequences.⁷⁴

These ideas complement Roland Barthes' theories (in his well-known essay 'The Grain of the Voice' (1972)⁷⁵) that 'body' can be transmitted directly from the body of the musician performer, to become an embodied musical feature. He calls for the return to an aesthetics of musical pleasure, 'jouissance' (with all the erotic connotations of that word), after years of performance as execution. Thus, he admires the voluptuousness and physicality of the Russian church bass, of the baritone Charles Panzera (as opposed to pristine Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau). In terms of instrumental voice, he rejoices over the physicality of Wanda Landowska's playing, in contrast with the 'petty digital scramble, of so many harpsichordists...As for piano music,' he goes on, 'I know at once which part of the body is playing—if it is the arm, too often, alas, muscled like a dancer's calves, the clutch of the fingertips (despite the sweeping flourishes of the wrists), or if on the contrary it is the only erotic part of a pianist's body, the pad of the fingers whose "grain" is so rarely heard'.⁷⁶

I suggest that there is a palpable visceral nature, indulgence of the sensual, pliant bare foot (shoes). Coded, formal vocabulary work, often project a glistering audience as much as it is impenetrable are instantly more friendly—beings, have mass, flesh and no attempt to disguise any of it often say they would like to go

One particular dance then in music with special force singers and dancers/mimes in Morris (like *Dido*, or *Erkönig* of different characters). The visible, even more so when in *Orfeo*, see pp. 294-8). Here, of the dancer and the body of his unusually large repertoire more body: 'Singing is like a with nothing in between, has an intensely visceral effect doubling device, even though literally seen outside as well voice—has the potential to form connection. The bond, for instance is physically deepened as it v

There is fresh nuance here as sound seems to insinuate proxy into the spectator as more agency, the dancer listens sometimes be of mutual presence dancer inhabiting and being swell of sound, touching a nerve see and feel in our bodies from

It is important that I have while analysing it, literally dance', in most cases, a kind of music rather than full, stylised Morris's solo from his *Italic* learnt with the choreographer



I suggest that there is a parallel here with Morris's movement style, its visceral nature, indulgence of weight, and exposure of the 'pad' or 'grain' of the sensual, pliant bare foot (as opposed to hard, tight muscle, often in shoes). Coded, formal vocabularies, as in ballet and Merce Cunningham's work, often project a glistening surface muscularity that distances the audience as much as it is impressive and even spectacular. Morris's dancers are instantly more friendly—they stand like normal, un-stylised human beings, have mass, flesh and, we imagine, internal substance—and make no attempt to disguise any of these things. This is possibly why audiences so often say they would like to get up on stage and join them.

One particular dance theatre genre makes the point about the 'body' in music with special force, the kind that introduces the doubling of singers and dancers/mimes in the same roles, as in a number of pieces by Morris (like *Dido*, or *Erkönig* in *Bedtime*, when the singer becomes a series of different characters). The effect is especially strong when singers are visible, even more so when they are seen moving on stage (as in Gluck's *Orfeo*, see pp. 294-8). Here, there is the most direct link between the body of the dancer and the body of the musician. As Morris once said, justifying his unusually large repertoire of choreography to vocal music, and wanting more body: 'Singing is like dancing. It's the body, the body in the world, with nothing in between, no instrument between.'⁷⁷ Indeed, singing has an intensely visceral edge, emanating from *inside* the body. Now, the doubling device, even though there is a sense of visual separation—a voice literally seen outside as well as heard speaking through the dancer and her voice—has the potential to forge quite the opposite, a powerful empathetic connection. The bond, for instance, between the singing and dancing *Didos*, is physically deepened as it were, and presence enlarged (doubled).

There is fresh nuance here to that old cliché of 'music visualisation' as sound seems to insinuate itself into the dancer's private spaces and by proxy into the spectator as well. Or, in a reading that gives the performer more agency, the dancer listens acutely, and responds. But the effect can sometimes be of mutual possession rather than two-way dialogue, of a dancer inhabiting and being inhabited by a musical line, breathing with the swell of sound, touching a note, opening our ears so that we relate what we see and feel in our bodies from the dancer to what we hear.

It is important that I have embodied material from Morris's work myself while analysing it, literally experimenting through movement, 'doing dance', in most cases, a kind of 'sketch learning' of moves and phrases to music rather than full, stylistically accurate rendering of the choreography. Morris's solo from his *Italian Concerto* is the outstanding example of this, learnt with the choreographer's agreement from John Heginbotham.

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in 2011, and at the same time, the phrase from *Rhymes with Silver*. The experience led to further thoughts of my own about the structure and meaning of these dances. But I also 'sketched' out the whole of the Lament from *Dido* and numerous other phrases of material. I remain convinced that this kind of experience can inform choreomusical analysis,⁷⁸ seeing it as comparable to the practice of many music analysts (probably those who are the most interesting): they edge towards the piano as a natural part of their working process. (Indeed, it is pertinent that today, increasingly, music analysts view performance itself as an analytical act.⁷⁹) The result of such 'sketch learning' is hearing and seeing better, partly because the business of practical learning draws us into detail, highlighting distinctions within the choreography far more than distanced watching allows. At the same time, we feel more strongly the dynamics and drama of music and movement, grasping information that film sources, and especially those of poor quality, tend to disguise. We might even 'interpret' ourselves, working in the spirit of a creator, a participant in the process of bringing into being the work analysed, discovering points of relationship between what we do and what we hear that we might never have experienced from watching a performance. Thus, we get a modest glimpse of what Morris's dancers must experience, the 'voice' of the performer.

Towards the Performance of Analysis

It is appropriate that on this most physical note, the survey of this analytical toolbox draws to a close, save for a few suggestions as prelude to the actual practice of analysis. First, a reminder, readers are strongly encouraged to keep in touch with the MMDG website of film clips attached to this book before approaching each analysis (<http://markmorrisdancegroup.org/jordanbookclips>) and to check the up to date list of clips available for viewing. They are also advised to keep in touch with the umbrella MMDG website with its invaluable visual resources, photographs, additional film material, as well as written items. Those who are less familiar with rhythmic aspects of music and dance may want first to practise their skills, and I recommend starting with two dances analysed in Chapter 5: *I Love You Dearly* and *Canonic 3/4 Studies*. Readers are also encouraged to refer to musical scores (where possible) and to listen to musical recordings, especially important when film material is not available. On the other hand, a useful tip for clarifying dance rhythm on film is simply to turn the music off and watch in silence.

As so much of Morris's choreography converses with musical structure and its detail, the music itself tells a major part of the whole story. For a basic

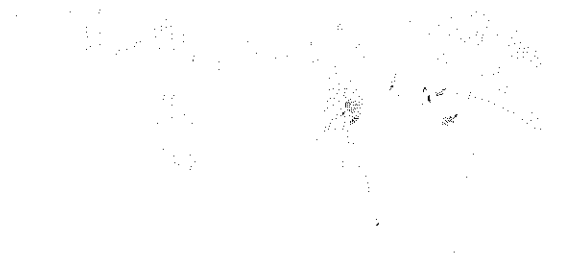
introduction to musical score being written specifically with Katherine Teck's *Ear Training* through movement, concept music theory from the point Taylor's two-part *AB Guide to*

My final point has to be an experience of dance and the Stephen Walsh once pointed as segments of score that are always to consider the way that is Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spr*

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The circularity of pro analytical method is also i methodological concepts i seeing and hearing more method can be revealing a its own refinement. The d do so. Living with the fluid Analysis is a creative act, a



introduction to musical score reading and theory, two books are valuable in being written specifically with dancers in mind: *The Muncey Music Book*, and Katherine Teck's *Ear Training for the Body*, which involves direct exploration through movement, concepts immediately put into practice. Approaching music theory from the point of view of the musician or music lover is Eric Taylor's two-part *AB Guide to Music Theory*.⁸⁰

My final point has to be about keeping in touch with the real, live theatre experience of dance and the provisional nature of all analysis. Musicologist Stephen Walsh once pointed out that '[music] analysts tend to look at music as segments of score that are static before their eyes, but performers have always to consider the way that music reaches the ears in time'. His example is Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, which, he notes:

has come down to us, after all, as a concert work with a beginning, a middle and an end and internal continuities that sustain it through the not inconsiderable lapse of more than half-an-hour on the clock.⁸¹

Walsh's point can easily be transferred to dance. We might remind ourselves of how dances are intended to be experienced. An audience member at a performance probably sees a dance once only, all the way through without a break, allowing certain moments to be forgotten, others to be emphasised and remembered, as an evolving whole, not as a choreomusical structure. In the case of *Italian Concerto*, which was something of an experiment in methodology, I avoided reading the musical score until late on during research, and I used it then largely as a means of checking observations. I wanted to keep my reactions to sound and visual motion as fresh as possible, undisturbed by knowledge of the kind of deep structures that come only from close interrogation of the score and detailed cross-referencing. Initial reactions are of the utmost importance. Sometimes, I even stage *forgetting* a dance, leaving breaks between viewings and, if at all possible, not getting fixed on just one recorded dance performance (a problem that dance analysts constantly face).

The circularity of procedure in the development and application of analytical method is also interesting. Seeing and hearing have generated methodological concepts in the first place, which in turn have generated seeing and hearing more and more distinctively. Then, while use of a method can be revealing about a dance, application of it can also lead to its own refinement. The dance speaks back to us again and we must let it do so. Living with the fluid and the uncertain is both exhilarating and true. Analysis is a creative act, another kind of performance.

