

Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy

THESIS

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Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy

Dancer BA

CONTEMPORARY DANCE IN
POPULAR CULTURE:
Music video choreography

THESIS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1. INTEREST AND MOTIVATION	3
1.2. SPECIFICATION	4
1.3. KEY NOTIONS	8
2. TRANSFERRING THE KNOWLEDGE	10
2.1. CONTEXTUALIZING THEATRE-MAKING AND MUSIC VIDEO CHOREOGRAPHY	11
2.2. MUSIC VIDEO PRODUCTION	15
2.3. CREATIVE PROCESS – <i>PLAIN</i> AND <i>NOTIONAL</i>	17
2.3.1. NOTIONAL TRANSFER ANALYSIS	21
3. MUSIC VIDEO CHOREOGRAPHY	35
3.1. CHOREOGRAPHIC RELATIONS TO SOUND, TEXT AND MESSAGE	36
3.2. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BODY AND CAMERA	40
4. SUMMARY	49
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY	53

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTEREST AND MOTIVATION

I am a child of late 90s-early 2000s popular culture, R'n'B sounds, hybrid fashion styles, progressive cultural and social ideologies. As a prospective contemporary dancer and dance creator, looking back to my childhood, I find my aesthetical base and artistic thinking strongly influenced by music video art, TV and radio advertisement, lifestyle documentaries and magazines. From the very first cassette tape I had received as my 8th birthday present (an original Atomic Kitten¹ album cassette released in 2002), I began to soak in my very first tastes of early 2000s pop culture. Affected by the popular industry, I gradually met with urban dance styles which were, at the time, a dominant expression form in music videos shown on platforms such as MTV² and other smaller local platforms. Due to the sudden popularization and screening of Western music video industry³ in Croatia, it became easy to find local dance classes where you could learn a whole choreography from J'Lo's or Britney's new music video, taught by teachers who often physically appeared impressively similar to those pop stars you could watch at home on your television. Actually, most of the existing dance classes were urban dance classes strictly focused on choreographic work influenced by MTV products. Those were my first assimilating steps as a dancer within the popular culture and music video choreography.

Gathering and recognizing the effects of last two decades' pop culture on my artistic choices and preferences, in this paper, I turn to contemporary dance as a growing trend in music video industry, which is presently "*one of the most influential visual culture forms to hit youth culture since the advent of television.*"⁴ I see the music video industry overflowing with contemporary dance choreography. Already from the early 2010s, contemporary dance started to appear in popular music videos as a focal visual and narrative element. Therefore, I believe, as a goal of this thesis, it is crucial for the

¹ A British pop girl band formed in 1998. The mentioned cassette is an album named *Feels So Good* released in 2002.

² MTV is an American TV channel known for airing music videos, TV series and TV shows related to the popular culture.

³ After ending the socio-political events of former Yugoslavian countries, from 1995 on, the new generations were served with much more available information and cultural influences coming from the West through different local media platforms.

⁴ Taylor G., P., (2007.) 'Press Pause: Critically Contextualizing Music Video in Visual Culture and Art Education', *Studies in Art Education*, Vol. 48, No. 3, pp. 230-246, Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/25475827?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents, pp. 230, (Accessed: 14/01/19)

contemporary dance field to start involving these works into its cannon, giving the choreographers of such work recognition for the produced artistic and theatrical value. I believe it is necessary to do so because otherwise, neglecting those theatrical creations⁵ from the canon of contemporary dance creations might open up a major space for the exploitation of artistic goods. Moreover, including these works into the canon of contemporary dance choreography might bring revolutionary and developing methods and approaches of creation to the field of contemporary dance. From my personal experiences as an active participant in the contemporary dance field, I have learned from my colleagues that we tend to hide the work which has been done for the screen (specifically music video) and refer to it from a point of view of doing it strictly for the financial or other non-art-related reasons. Scrolling down some web-pages of live stage choreographers (for example Akram Khan, Hofesh Shechter, etc.), I came to learn that many of those do not present their choreographic work done for the screen as a part of their professional repertory. I believe it is important to understand and acknowledge the presence of this kind of work. It is growing exponentially and, through this work, a part of the contemporary dance field is being introduced to very wide ranges of audiences which, in other cases, would not have the opportunity to engage with contemporary dance. Due to all those reasons listed above, music video choreography should be characterized as a powerful and influential part of contemporary dance creation, promoting and developing the field outside of the traditional borders of live stage theatre-making. Through this thesis, I approach the problematics and offer solutions by broadening the professional terminology and bringing the fields of traditional theatre creation and music video industry theoretically and practically closer together.

1.2. SPECIFICATION

This study will be supported by three main media sources: YouTube music video materials, online critiques and interview-based articles; all used as reference points and foundation for further discussion. The video materials will be used as references for each discussion, and it is advised to follow the links to videos which will be given to the reader in the footnote section. The video materials in question were chosen through the following

⁵ In this paper I refer to any performative creation as a theatrical creation. This terminology will be introduced and explained thoroughly later in the paper.

criteria: the video must be choreographed by dancers/dance creators with past or present working experience in live stage performance creation and/or contemporary dance creation; video must be a work of strong theatrical and/or contemporary dance elements, must belong to popular culture⁶ from the early 2000s up until now; must use dance as a central dramaturgical line of the video – dance is what happens in the video. Following the comparison of theatre and music video production, analysis of chosen video material and analysis of choreographer's creative process in music video production, the paper will eventually progress into a sum up of the choreographer's creative potential inside of a music video production as a whole.

In a search for references, it soon becomes clear that the music video industry in collaboration with contemporary dance is a dim field with yet uninitiated discussions. *“What almost disappeared – after MTV switched its focus to reality TV – was a serious academic analysis of the music video. There are only a small handful of researchers working in this area today.”*⁷ In lack of more analytical or theoretical approaches, the references and sources are mainly generated online in the form of art critiques and interview-based articles. And yet, the big bang of merging music and dance industry seems to flow unstoppably. New music genres opened up and continue producing inspiration for other fields such as visual arts, dance, fashion, etc. to interact with the music industry. This is particularly apparent with genres climbing up from the electronic underground culture to the popular zone and in numerous musical fusions of wide-spread sounds in the late '90s and early 2000's up until now.

To create a starting point for this paper, staying in the predetermined periodical frames, I followed the implementation of dance in music videos since the year 2000, searching for the very first noticeable traces of contemporary dance choreography. Holding on to popular culture and its most exposed products, I decided to use the VMAs' 'Best Choreography' charts⁸ as a measurement of popular due to the specific context in which this award is given each year. The VMA as a whole has several categories for which the

⁶ Here belonging – all those cultural products such as music, video, art, advertisement, literature, etc. consumed by the majority of a society population.

⁷ Strong, C., Macrossan, P., (25.08.2016.) 'Friday Essay: From Bowie to Bieber – the under-appreciated art of the music video', *The Conversation*, Available at: <https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-from-bowie-to-bieber-the-under-appreciated-art-of-the-music-video-59794>, (Accessed: 26/01/19)

⁸ The chart of Best Choreography nominees used as a source.

MTV, (2019.) *explore past mtv vmas*, Available at: <http://www.mtv.com/vma/archive>, (Accessed: 19/02/19)

awards are presented. Most of these categories are open to the public (meaning anyone) to vote for and, therefore, I dare to address those products as a dominant part of popular culture due to the statistical nature of the award and MTV as a platform in general. However, several categories, as well as the 'Best Choreography', are closed for wider audiences and are referred to as 'Professional categories'. This means that the VMA has formed a committee specialized in the field of dance and choreography, which is an active part of the music video and dance industry. The committee is said to be voting for the best choreography on the basis of actual technical accomplishments in the field.⁹ Knowing this, I decided to accept the VMAs' experts' propositions and used the charts to find the first bigger appearances of contemporary dance in popular music videos. Starting from 2000, I noticed a very first attempt (keeping in mind that the representative examples are chosen on the basis of VMA nominations) of implementing contemporary dance in a popular music video in the year of 2005, when My Chemical Romance used a short contemporary partnering¹⁰ choreography in their video for 'Helena'¹¹. Later on, there is no trace of contemporary dance in VMA charts and urban/hip hop dance stays the most used dance form in music videos until 2008. That year Adele was nominated with 'Chasing Pavements'¹² in which dance does not have a central role, but slight implications of a new movement style in VMAs' music videos could possibly be spotted. The next bigger implementation of contemporary dance in popular music videos happened in 2012 when Anne Theresa De Keersmaeker-inspired choreography appeared in Beyoncé's video for 'Countdown'¹³. The next outset appears to be the video for 'Chandelier'¹⁴ by Sia in 2014 in which contemporary dance plays a major role with actually holding the full dramaturgical line. Furthermore, from 2016 on the trend seems to be growing

⁹ Lascala, M., (24.09.2014.) 'The MTV VMA's Are Determined by Fans... and Mysterious Strangers', *Bustle*, Available at: <https://www.bustle.com/articles/36113-the-mtv-vmas-are-determined-by-fans-and-mysterious-strangers>, (Accessed: 24/01/19)

¹⁰ A technique in contemporary dance performed in a couple or a group. The technique uses tools as lifts, weight manipulation, touch manipulation, etc. in order to create a movement dialogue between the bodies.

¹¹ My Chemical Romance, (2009.) *My Chemical Romance – Helena [Official Music Video]*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCCyoocDxBA>, (Accessed: 24/01/19)

¹² Adele, (2009.) *Adele – Chasing Pavements*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08DjMT-qR9g>, (Accessed: 24/01/19)

¹³ Beyoncé, (2011.) *Beyoncé – Countdown (Album Version – Video)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XY3AvVgDns>, (Accessed: 24/01/19). I use the term "inspired" to address that even though in the charts of VMA it is claimed that Anne T. De Keersmaeker is one of the choreographers, the video became controversial due to the fact that Beyoncé was accused to copy several Keersmaeker's works without her being consciously involved in the process of actual music video creation.

¹⁴ Sia, (2014.) *Sia – Chandelier (Official Music Video)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vjPBrBU-TM>, (Accessed: 24/01/19)

exponentially, with ‘Delilah’¹⁵ by Florence and the Machine in 2016, ‘The Greatest’¹⁶ by Sia in 2017 and many others not listed in the VMA charts, but worth mentioning later in this paper.

The rise of popular platforms such as MTV in 1981 or the VMAs in 1984 contributed to the expansion of the music video industry by making both music and video approachable to almost anyone. It gathered an influential mass audience and kicked off the imagination and social power of young artists to another level. The merge of dance and video today attracts a growing number of young and talented dancers and choreographers coming from the field of theatre and dance. It is a highly popularized art form which not only allows the creator to rethink, invent, sell and build a career but also to provoke thought on far distance, on the contrary to the less publicly exposed or consumed dance theatres. “*Music videos portray meaning*”¹⁷, they add up to and support musical artistry in order to create a finalized hybrid product ready to be served to a wide range of audiences and markets. It is becoming a win-win game in which music video and dance industry are growing parallel by constantly exchanging and merging tools for creation and marketing. Thinking linearly, the music video industry seems to offer a rich and revolutionizing playground for talented dance artists educated in choreography and dance, willing to transfer from traditional theatre forms into a fast developing music video industry.

¹⁵ florencemachine, (2015.) *Florence + The Machine – Delilah (The Odyssey – Chapter 8)*, [YouTube], (Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZr5Tid3Qw4>), (Accessed: 24/01/19)

¹⁶ Sia, (2016.) *Sia – The Greatest (Official Music Video)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKSRYLdjsPA>, (Accessed: 24/01/19)

¹⁷ Taylor G., P., (2007.) ‘Press Pause: Critically Contextualizing Music Video in Visual Culture and Art Education’, *Studies in Art Education*, Vol. 48, No. 3, pp. 230-246, Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/25475827?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents, pp.230, (Accessed: 14/01/19)

1.3. KEY NOTIONS

Music video industry is presented by all those parties involved in creating, selling and buying products related to music and its screening. The main product of this industry is a music video, which is mostly used to visually present, accompany and advertise a song or a musician.

Music video is a short format film which consists of a song and imagery of various kinds. It is most often to be found on platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo. The music video plays one of the essential roles in portraying a musician due to its visual and aesthetical power. Successful music videos often become a representative association among the audience, portraying the artistic vision of the musician. Music videos increase the popularity and selling of songs by giving it visual empowerment and are therefore one of the crucial elements of the music industry.

Popular culture is a set of cultural products and events recognized and consumed by the majority of the population. It is a dominantly consumed culture in a certain period and society. What is popular may vary from one culture to another and is never common to the whole world's population, but rather to the population of specific societal circles. For example, what is considered popular in Croatia (for example a Croatian pop-rock band Vatra) will unlikely be popular in France. On the other hand, there might also exist meeting points between Croatian and French popular culture due to the fact that both countries belong to a circle of European culture and, therefore, share some cultural products which are popular in both. When defining popular culture, it is important to predetermine the geographical, periodical and other contexts of the discussion. In this paper, popular is mainly related to and observed from the aspects of the Western culture (except when and if stated differently).

Music video choreography is the art of arranging physical actions of dancers/actors/performers for video performance. In this paper, it will be used in the context of dance choreography for music videos. Music video choreography is created by

a choreographer and executed by one or more dancers. The field of music video choreography is becoming popularized since the appearance of platforms as MTV and VMA, which opened up possibilities for dance choreography to become a part of the music video industry.

Screened performance is a performance created for and presented to an audience in the form of a filmed material. The term is closely related to screen-dance, but in this paper, it is referred to through the context of music video performance. It is a performative action seen inside of a music video.

Screened stage is a physical space filmed by a camera which the dancers use to dance/perform/act. Taking the roots from screened performance, the screened stage is a term used equally as the live stage is used in relation to a live performance. In this thesis, it is referred to as a space filmed by the camera which is being used for a music video and in which the dancers are executing their choreography.

Live stage is a physical space in which the dancers and the audience are present at the same time and space of performance's execution. A conventional theatre space with the audience present in the time of the performance is one example of the live stage space. Through a broadening of terminology, in this paper, site-specific works taking place at the same time and space as being watched are also considered live stage works.

2. TRANSFERRING THE KNOWLEDGE

theatre making – performance and performance making – theatre role organization – the living and the virtual space – live stage creation / screened stage creation – music video production scheme – creative process / plain and notional – notional transfer analysis

The following sections of the chapter, being the core of this thesis, revolve around above-listed notions in chronological order. Before encountering with the crucial part of this chapter, which is the analysis of a choreographic process of live stage creation and screened stage creation, I engage in discussions related to the necessary terminology usage. I deconstruct the general understanding of theatre and performance making in order to build a stepping stone for further analytical work. Many of the notions offered, such as *theatre* and *theatre-making*, *performance* and *performance making*, *living* and *virtual*, *plain* and *notional*, might evoke a pre-assumed understanding. In this thesis, I tend to bypass those understandings and definitions by widening the terminology according to the practical knowledge and experience in contemporary dance creation which I have gained until today. Furthermore, before entering discussions about a choreographer, who is the main actor of this thesis, I offer several schemes which help to understand the role organization inside of a traditional theatre production and music video production. Those schemes help to determine the complexity and individuality of work given to each choreographer and they propose certain freedom to analyse different choreographers and their work through different lenses. The analytical part is set to serve the thesis in an exemplary way of how the knowledge gained through choreographic creation in traditional theatre production might be communicated and used inside of music video production and vice versa. It offers an idea that music video choreography and traditional live stage choreography could be and already are in many ways interrelated. This kind of theory gives space for an analysis of music video choreography creation from a point of view of traditional theatre choreography creation, which is, as a form, more familiar and relatable to me as the author of this thesis. It widens the limits of understanding performance and theatre-making, allowing the two industries – theatre and music video industry – to merge and communicate through common tools and processes. Choreography and its maker are, in this thesis, the notion which serves as a medium for that communication.

2.1. CONTEXTUALIZING THEATRE-MAKING AND MUSIC VIDEO CHOREOGRAPHY

“Since human beings started to gather in groups and communities, they sensed the necessity to transmit their experiences and knowledge – fundamentally – through storytelling. The transmission of these stories, through the ages moved from shamanism to modern forms of art on and off stage. Theatre is a tool that has existed for thousands of years. I imagine that from the first moments people wanted to transmit their experiences of the hunt, or their father and grandfather. It is both the wish and necessity of human beings to tell stories.”¹⁸

The above quotation is an important introductory statement to the following chapter. It refers to the theatre with an acceptance of its primal necessity and therefore opens up space for a broader understanding of theatre-related terminology. In this work, I think about the traditional theatre-making as the act of creating dance/acting/entertainment performances and activities for a live stage, placed in a physical space to be consumed at the exact moment and space of its execution. In other work, the term might be understood narrower from the historical and social aspects.

The importance and particularity of theatre-making profession in its traditional sense is not to be questioned at any time in this paper when taken into consideration from the point of view of its historical, cultural, social and political value. In this paper, I often refer to theatre-making similarly as to performance making, rather than referring to it as an institution or a specific genre of art. I would, in this case, prefer to define theatre as a tool for any kind of artistic and performative communication or action. Furthermore, inside of that distinct profession, it might be hard to objectively address the exact role of a theatre maker, or to get closer to the point of observation – the role of a choreographer. That is due to the complexity of theatre roles according to the necessities of each working environment and the contexts in which those roles are being played. Additionally, theatre-making, when referred to as a career path, requires one’s ability to constantly adapt to the challenges and progressive nature of its market. The following chart shows some of the theatre engagement roles in a hierarchic module.¹⁹ The chart is created for the purpose of

¹⁸ Shah, V., S., (08.05.2016.) ‘Theatre, Performance and Society’, *Thought Economics*, Available at: <https://thoughteconomics.com/theatre-performance-and-society/>, (Accessed: 11/01/19)

¹⁹ I have created the chart on the basis of an online ‘Glossary of theatre terms’ in which each role is explained individually. The chart does not include all of the existing theatre roles, but it is rather an example

depicting the above-mentioned complexity of role organization in a regular theatre production.

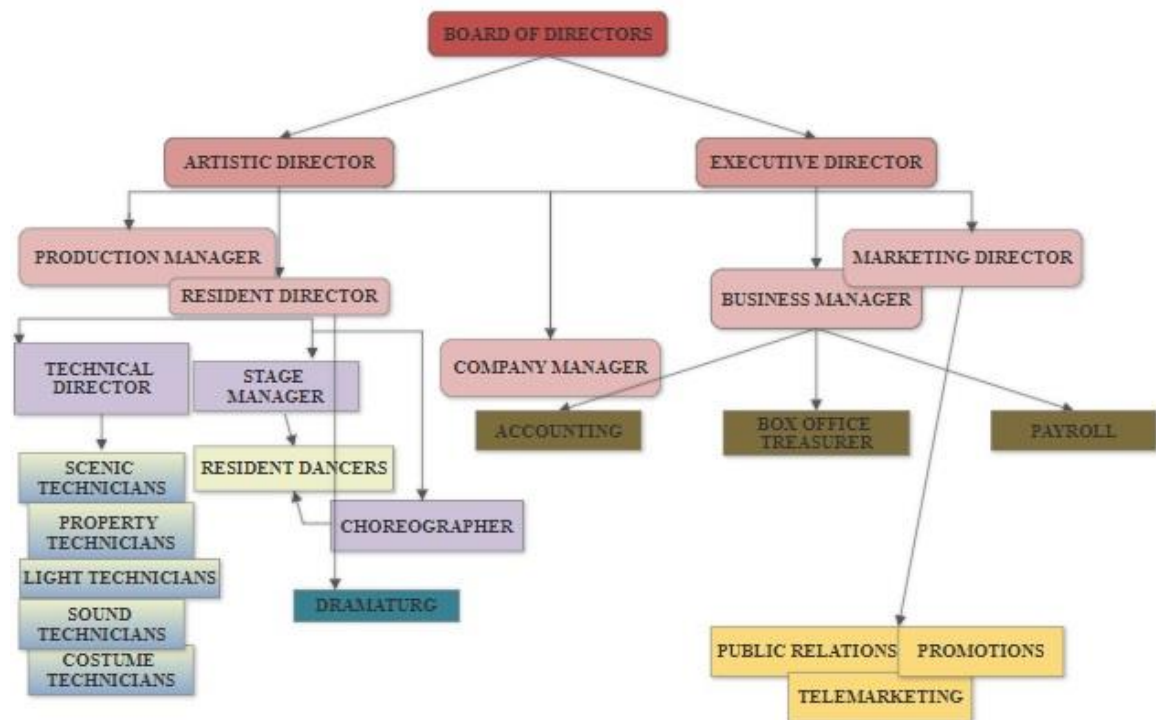


Illustration 1²⁰

Even though this specific chart consists of twenty-four roles, very often (due to the financial or other reasons) some of them are divided differently or in some cases – non-existing or played by less specialized individuals. Related to the choreographer, it is often the case that the choreographer (especially in freelancing²¹ or sometimes even low-budget or smaller company productions) plays multiple roles besides choreographing, such as being a director of the production, dramaturg and sometimes even a dancer.

If I would try to relate to the choreographer from my present knowledge and experience in creation and performance, I could imagine more than one reason why young dance artists get engaged with traditional theatre-making, whether through company work or freelancing. I place one of them on top of the hierarchy of motives – the obvious creative direction. Since a very young age, I could notice the playfulness of my artistic

of various possibilities. Theatrecrafts.com, (2012.) *Glossary of Technical Theatre Terms – Jobs*, Available at: <http://www.theatrecrafts.com/pages/home/topics/jobs/glossary/>, (Accessed: 25/01/19)

²⁰ Illustration created by me on January 25th, 2019. See footnote 19 for sources.

²¹ A term used for a type of work where one is self-employed and is not committed full-time to one external employee.

thinking and, lately, it's functional development through time. I have been feeding and trying to understand my creative impulse from the time when I decided to formalize and sophisticate my need to create dance and perform it. But, ever since entering the educational system I have been calling this creative impulse – the need to make theatre. That is because I understood that in the twenty-first century we are starting to accept more and more physical, social, political and entertaining activities as theatre. The creative possibilities are opening by widening the concept of theatre and theatre-making, allowing it to exit the formal stage frame. Theatre-making, when placed in this context, could mean that already by creating a short dance choreography and executing it on a public square could mean that one is making theatre.

Furthermore, I offer another aspect of performance understanding which could be closely related to the understanding of theatre-making as well. In her work 'Dance and Technology: An Evolving Body of Dance'²², Melissa Kaufman-Gomez offers the following example as her attempt to set the grounds of her work by defining the term *performance*. *"Digital artist Hans Dieter Huber, (...), holds that code execution is performative. This concept, while perhaps initially provocative, is not all too extreme when we consider ourselves, the users, as the computer's audience. (...) For example, if you are a Mac user, Apple is putting on a performance by welcoming you with the shining Apple logo and singing the iconic start-up sound. The aesthetic of the final product varies between dance and software, yet the user or viewer is an audience member to the execution of a practice of technology or dance."*²³ This theory serves as a support to my premise of theatre-making and performance-making being understood as an act or activity of execution, rather than narrowly placed into the context of traditional and institutional frames.

On the other hand, in this broadening of theatre terminology and its common understanding, there is an existing gap or distinction between creation for a live and creation for a screened space. These two realities – the living and the virtual, when considered broadly from a point of view of our everyday life, indeed can be gapped by many factors, but are also in a constant dialog, crossfading, making it harder to clearly

²² Kaufman-Gomez, M., (2016) 'Dance and Technology: An Evolving Body of Dance, *Dance Bernard College*, Available at: https://dance.barnard.edu/sites/default/files/melissa_kaufman-gomez.pdf , (Accessed: 25/03/19)

²³ Kaufman-Gomez, M., (2016) 'Dance and Technology: An Evolving Body of Dance, *Dance Bernard College*, pp. 5, Available at: https://dance.barnard.edu/sites/default/files/melissa_kaufman-gomez.pdf , (Accessed: 25/03/19)

draw the line between them. The central question of this chapter is how the learned information is transferred from one to the other; how music video choreography can be approached from the creative aspects of a choreography staged in a traditional theatre. To engage with the practical part of music video choreography I should first ask where it belongs to; whether music video creation can or cannot stand alongside with all the other options and possibilities of theatre-making, or is it a branch of art of its own?

Once we refer to the term *theatre* not only as a physical space but as a concept in its broader sense, similar to the one I have used earlier to explain the need to make theatre, it is possible to say that choreography of any kind is in some ways a part of theatre-making. Music video choreography, when analysed as a physical act of creating and setting up movements, could be placed as a part of theatre-making. That is due to the culturally and professionally accepted understandings of what choreography is and how it is created and executed. This understanding, whether coming from personal ideologies or learned methods about choreographic creation, functions as a part of a universal language. Coming from a field of urban dances and later on transferring to contemporary dance practice, I came to learn that this term is more or less equally understood in any community of dancers and choreographers I have met with. In these social circles, dance choreography in terminology is generally understood as not more than a set of movements positioned in time and space, executed in a sequence assigned from the side of a choreographer. A simple walk can be choreographed by adding a fixed number of steps to it. A lift of the arm can be sectioned in four elements and executed in a decided dynamics. This is what we address as choreography. Nonetheless, choreography as a profession consists of many fields, in which the processes of creation vary depending on the choreographer's artistic methods and choices. For that reason, one should be careful when determining the number of fixed steps necessary in order for a product to be named as choreography (in some cases improvisational works are also choreographic works with strongly pre-determined steps of execution). What is sure and common in all choreographic works is that the choreography comes from a choreographer, it is executed by the dancers, it consists of movements, and it is engaging with physical space and time. All the rest are creative decisions coming from the artistic imagination. Following this line, we could say that music video choreography, as well as any other choreography with performative intentions, belongs to the genre of theatre-making and performance making.

For further understanding of the following texts, I find it significant to finally emphasize my view on music video choreography making as an artistic activity born from the hybridization of knowledge we have in theatre-making, video making, popular industry, music industry, etc. Once I have broadened the theoretical views on theatre, performance and choreography, this kind of explanation allows me to refer to music video choreography as a branch of theatre-making and performance art, with a dance choreographer observed as an acknowledged dance and theatre artist. The following illustration (Illustration 2) shows my imagined design of intersections of the three fields – theatre-making and performance making, music video choreography and music video industry.

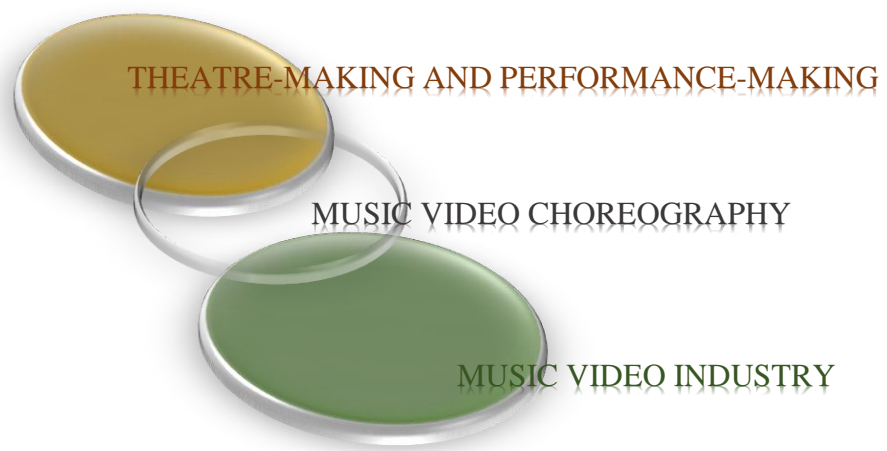


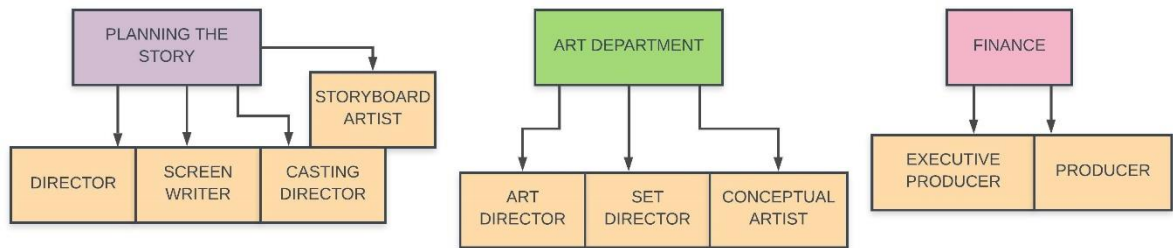
Illustration 2²⁴

2.2. MUSIC VIDEO PRODUCTION

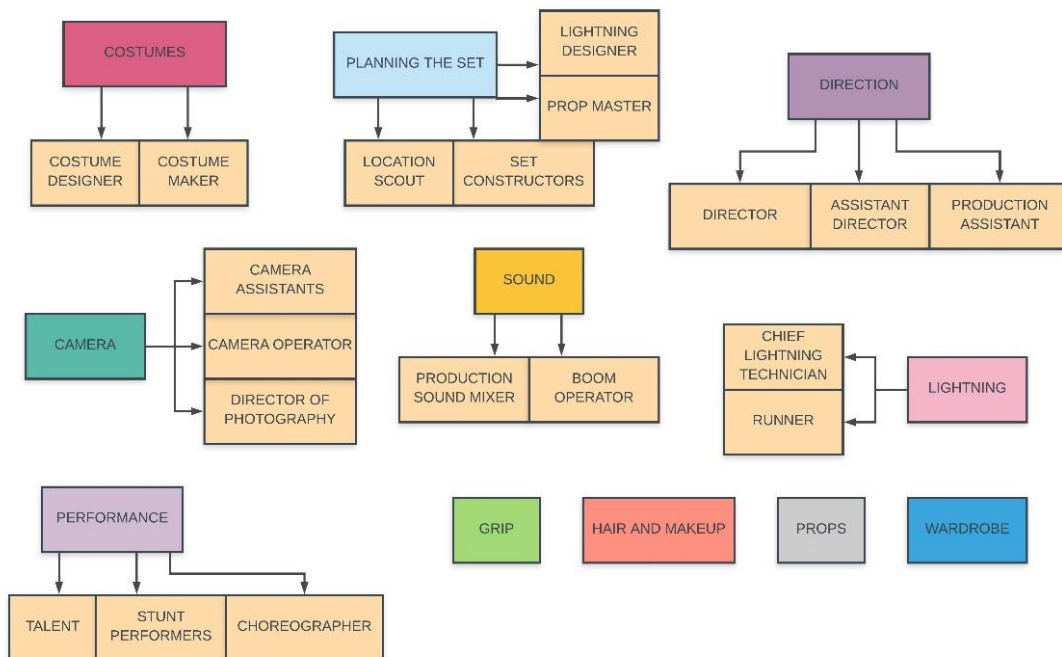
As mentioned earlier in the explanation of theatre roles (see Illustration 1), the scheme of production duties might be quite complex. That is due to the various financial and other conditions of a production which determine how much personnel will be included in the process and how rich in steps the process will be. As in theatre, it is equally applicable in the music video creation. The roles and the duties of the personnel might expand or narrow down from its original work description, according to various factors, such as budget, artistic decisions, timeframe, etc. The following charts (Illustration 3) show one possible scheme of roles inside of a music video production. The three charts represent the three stages of a music video production: pre-production stage, production stage and post-production stage.

²⁴ Illustration created by me on January 25th, 2019.

PRE – PRODUCTION STAGE



PRODUCTION STAGE



POST – PRODUCTION STAGE

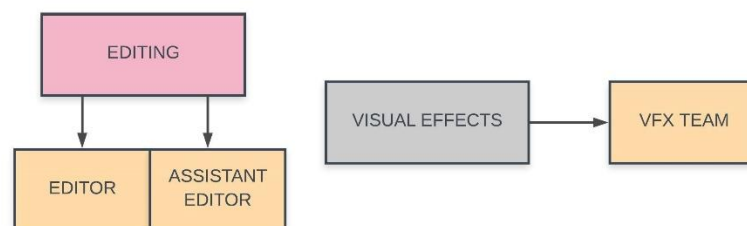


Illustration 3²⁵

²⁵ Illustration created by me on February 15th, 2019 based on the information given in the following link. Shubhit, S., (14.01.2014.) 'Music Video Production: roles and responsibilities explained', *Epik Music Videos*, Available at: <https://www.epikmusicvideos.com/blog/68-music-video-production-roles-and-responsibilities-explained.html> , (Accessed: 19/04/19)

Referring to the choreographer, the amount of work he/she is required to complete will be determined by some of the earlier mentioned factors, such as financial or personnel capacity of the whole production. The working scheme can also depend on the artistic decisions of a production team. In some cases, the choreographer will be in charge only for the physical creation of a choreography, while in others the duties might expand all the way to holding a casting, directing the dancers, or even being a dancer himself/herself. It might, for example, be a case that the casted dancer is a choreographer of the dance himself/herself, as it happened in the case of Hozier's 'Movement' in which the Ukrainian dancer Sergei Polunin choreographed and performed the dance himself, under the direction of Chris Barrett and Luke Taylor²⁶. Another example is Young Fathers' 'Shame'²⁷ in which, due to lack of time and unsuccessful castings, the director Jeremy Cole gave a choice of proposing the cast to Holly Blakey, who also choreographed the music video.²⁸ The possibilities are unlimited and depend on the creativity, experience and resources of the whole production team.

2.3. CREATIVE PROCESS – *PLAIN AND NOTIONAL*

In one of my conversations with Angelus Ivan, the director of Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy, I have introduced a music video choreographed by a Hungarian choreographer Hód Adrienn – 'Chet Faker ft. Marcus Mar: The Trouble with Us'^{29, 30}. Hód's professional background lies in contemporary dance training and later on progresses towards leading one of the most influential contemporary dance companies in Hungary with international recognition.³¹ After a very short glimpse at the video, he had stated how the details and tools which successfully work on stage equally work on screen, leaving me with a thought that it might be possible and beneficial to travel back and forth

²⁶ Hozier, (2018.) *Hozier – Movement (Official Video)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSye8OO5TkM>, (Accessed: 20/02/19)

²⁷ YOUNG FATHERS, (2015.) *Young Fathers – SHAME*, [YouTube], Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PdYvkaYsaU&list=RDEmh6ReNxMIHDKY0EgRqoLzig&start_radio=1, (Accessed: 20/02/19)

²⁸ Munday, R., (15.04.2015.) 'Jeremy Cole Captures the "Aggressive Euphoria" of Young Fathers Track 'Shame' in his Energetic New Music Video', *Directors Notes*, Available at: <https://directorsnotes.com/2015/04/15/jeremy-cole-young-fathers-shame/>, (Accessed: 20/02/19)

²⁹ Nick Murphy / Chet Faker, (2015.) *Chet Faker, Marcus Marr – The Trouble With Us*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAd--mEjcco>, (Accessed: 20/01/19)

³⁰ The informal, spontaneous conversation took place at Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy (Perc utca 2, Budapest, Hungary) in October 2018.

³¹ Hodworks Company was established in 2007 by the choreographer Hód Adrienn. Hodworks, (2019.) *Hodworks*, Available at: <http://hodworks.hu/en/en-hodworks-2/>, (Accessed: 27/04/19)

through these two media, transferring what is known of each and therefore enriching the other.

Without any intention or necessity of imposing music video creation to live stage creation and vice versa, in the following text I offer some ideas on live stage tools transferable to the screened stage and the other way around. For the purpose of the following text, I have created a terminology which helps to orientate in this 'living to virtual' and 'virtual to living' process. I divided the transfer of knowledge and tools into *plain transfer* and *notional transfer*, offering the idea that one can transfer the knowledge gained in a more and less tangible sense. In this paper, I refer to plain transfer as a transfer of knowledge used on a technical level of creation and execution – meaning that a term plain transfer could be used to describe a transfer of specific tools such as lights, stage composition, visual effects such as fog, colour of the stage floor, shape of the performance space, etc. Talking about the notional transfer, I refer to the transfer used less as a transfer of physically tangible or technical tools, but rather as a transfer of creative tools which add up to the bigger picture in a production, such as dramaturgical approach, artistic ideologies, aesthetical expression of the creator or choreographer, etc. To sum up, the plain transfer would rely on general technical knowledge and skill in creating a stage product in terms of using materials or objects other than creative ideas. The notional transfer, on the other hand, in this theory would rely on one's creative strategies and expressive style. Seeing through an example, in this context, the term notional transfer would be used to describe how Holly Blakey uses a dance choreographing method which was previously used for live stage performance and transfers it into a screened stage performance choreography. On the other hand, the term plain transfer would be used to describe how, for example, a light technician is using a certain light filter in a screened stage performance in order to create an effect typical for live stage performances.

As this thesis deals with the choreographer rather than a whole process of video production, in the following paragraphs I analytically approach only the notional transfer, in which the choreographer, along with the director, holds one of the major roles. The analysis in the following paragraphs is formed as a kind of comparison between choreographers' live stage creations and screened stage creations, with the purpose of giving a systematic overview of the notional transfer in question.

In order to be able to objectively discuss theatre and music video production (or in this case live stage performances and screened stage performances), and furthermore, to put them in any kind of relation, it is necessary to establish a set of rules or guidelines for the analysis. This could easily be related to dance performance analysis and dance/theatre critique, which do differ from one to another but most are expected to give out information and expert opinion on the product discussed. Therefore, the following material, both live and screened stage material, will be analysed through predetermined advisories.³² These advisories are set out to lead towards the goal of finding the transferrable structures of choreographic creation and will, therefore, avoid entering a deeper artistic or critical analysis of each creation per se. For that reason, the advisories focus on visual and methodological aspects of the physical choreography and its creation, rather than any other aspect (such as for example costume design, scenography, directing, etc. – as those anyway belong to the previously mentioned plain transfer analysis). The advisories have common ground and equally concern live and screened stage performance in order to be suitable for analysis of all listed products. Moreover, a wider knowledge of a choreographer's general repertoire allows to grasp the usage of certain creative methods in his/her creations, and would, therefore, make the analysis richer. However, due to the limits of this thesis, the analysis is made on the basis of two works per choreographer; one live stage and one screened stage work. The illustration below (Illustration 4) presents a template created for the following analysis. The presented illustration/template consists of two aspects – objective and subjective, created to propose additional possibilities for the reader to engage in the analysis himself/herself. For the purpose of this thesis, only the objective aspect will be used. As the later chapter is devoted to technical approaches to music video choreography, in this chapter I avoid observing in depth any external influences, such as the role of camera and other technical tools – meaning, the choreography is here analysed only through a study of dancer's physical actions.

³² For the purpose of consistent criteria through the analysis, I had to look up into examples of dance performance analysis and music video analysis. I used the following links as a frame and inspiration to create my own template.

KET Education, (2019.) *RESPONDING TO DANCE*, Available at: <https://www.ket.org/education/resources/responding-to-dance/>, (Accessed: 07/03/19),
 Suiter, G., (2015.) 'Music Video Analysis', *A2 MEDIA STUDIES – GRACE SUITER*, Available at: <https://gracesuiter.wixsite.com/a2-media-studies/music-video-analysis>, (Accessed: 07/03/19),
 Daleng, M., (2015.) 'Guidelines for Viewing Dance and Writing Critiques for Dance Performances', *University of Richmond Writing Center*, Available at: <http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/web/dance/danceguide.html>, (Accessed: 07/03/19)

	OBJECTIVE	SUBJECTIVE
CONTEXTUALIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Typology* ○ Genre characteristics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First impressions ○ Emotional reaction
BODY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How was the body used? ○ Specific movement qualities and language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aesthetical characteristics – attractive, stereotyped, unusual, etc.
MOVEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physical relationships between the dancers – unison, cannon, solos, partnering, etc. ○ The nature of actions – gestural/pantomimic, real-life actions, symbolic, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Associations with the movement
STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Space ○ Tempo ○ Rhythm ○ Dynamics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mood

Illustration 4³³

* According to Andrew Goodwin's music video theory³⁴, music videos are not independently standing products, but serve as a promotional form for music which they accompany.³⁵ Furthermore, each music video, by its content, demonstrates a specific genre. He creates the following typology: 1. Performance (could be stadium performance, studio performance or location-specific performance) – presented as a live act of the musicians on screen, showing their skill in music (for example 'The Strokes – Last Nite'³⁶), 2. Narrative – actors are participating in building a story, most often in love songs (for example 'Ariana Grande – Into You'³⁷) and 3. Concept/abstract – revolves around one idea or concept and carries out a certain message or ideology (for example 'Childish Gambino – This Is America'³⁸). Most of the dance-including music videos

³³ Illustration created by me on March 7th, 2019. See footnote 32.

³⁴ Goodwin, A., (1992.) *Dancing in the Distraction Factory: Music Television and Popular Culture*, Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press

³⁵ Suiter, G., (2015.) 'Music Video Analysis', *A2 MEDIA STUDIES – GRACE SUITER*, Available at: <https://gracesuiter.wixsite.com/a2-media-studies/music-video-analysis>, (Accessed: 07/03/19)

³⁶ The Strokes, (2009.) *The Strokes – Last Nite*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOypSnKFHrE>, (Accessed: 07/03/19)

³⁷ Ariana Grande, (2016.) *Ariana Grande – Into You*, [YouTube]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ekZEVeXwek>, (Accessed: 07/03/19)

³⁸ Donald Glover, (2018.) *Childish Gambino - This Is America (Official Video)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYOjWnS4cMY>, (Accessed: 07/03/19)

belong to second or third typology; particularly the ones this thesis deals with, due to its specific criteria (the dancers in the video must be professional dancers and dance must be the core of what happens in the video). Experience wise, I should state that it is sometimes difficult to differentiate the two (narrative and concept/abstract) due to the already existing abstract nature of contemporary dance per se.

2.3.1. NOTIONAL TRANSFER ANALYSIS

Three choreographers – Holly Blakey, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui and Akram Khan are the representatives of this chapter and the subjects of earlier mentioned notional transfer analysis. Each of those choreographers have documented experience both in live stage and screened stage creation; some more and some less in each. Each of these choreographers works with a specific and recognizable movement language, which makes them suitable for this type of research. Furthermore, their work is more likely to be found online, in a video format, than many other choreographers' work with similar experiences.

The chosen works are analysed as follows:

1. Holly Blakey – ‘Florence and The Machine: Delilah’³⁹ and ‘Woodkid + Holly Blakey: Michelberger Music’⁴⁰
2. Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui – ‘Sigur Rós: Valtari’⁴¹ and ‘Puz/zle’ (Excerpt)⁴²
3. Akram Khan – ‘Florence and The Machine: Big God’⁴³ and ‘Vertical Road’ (Excerpt)⁴⁴

³⁹ florencemachine, (2015.) *Florence + The Machine - Delilah (The Odyssey – Chapter 8)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZr5Tid3Qw4>, (Accessed: 03/03/19)

⁴⁰ 37d03d, (2017.) *WOODKID + HOLLY BLAKEY - Michelberger Music*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Px5Fgaxxpg>, (Accessed: 03/03/19)

⁴¹ Sigur Rós, (2012.) *Sigur Rós - Valtari [Official Music Video]*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfJVAoTE2PI>, (Accessed: 22/03/19)

⁴² For the purpose of this analysis, I used a duet and a solo section of the performance. The section starts at 14:57 minutes and ends at 17:55 minutes. Sviatoslav Sherstiuk, (2017.) *Puzzle - choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui 2012 | Puzzle - χορογραφία Σιδου Λαρβου Σλεγκayu 2012*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwITGJ1tcRs&t=887s>, (Accessed: 24/03/19)

⁴³ florencemachine, (2018.) *Florence + The Machine - Big God*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIrRooQwuk>, (Accessed: 03/03/19)

⁴⁴ Due to the choreographer's limitations on providing online materials of own work, I have chosen an available video excerpt from the performance ‘Vertical Road’ performed by The National Youth Dance Company at Sadler's Wells Theatre. The excerpt in the video starts at 05:25 minutes and ends at 09:32 minutes.

Holly Blakey, a UK based stage and screen choreographer raises her popularity between the rows of popular, indie and electronic music video directors by bringing a “punk, 4am vision of what contemporary dance can be”⁴⁵ both to a traditional stage and to some alternative ones. Blakey is, in contrary to Akram Khan and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, predominantly a screened stage choreographer. Her work on screen as a choreographer is most recognized in collaborations such as with Florence and the Machine, Coldplay, Ellie Goulding, and Young Fathers. Blakey professionally created inside of several dance fields, starting her career by learning ballet and later on contemporary dance at Roehampton University and dancing with Ludus Dance Youth Company.⁴⁶ One of Blakey's arguments, as stated in the linked article (see footnote 46), on turning towards popular music video making derives from a goal to bring contemporary art and dance to wider audiences. She explains how elitist creation made by theatre and dance artists is made in favour of each other, showing few signs of acceptance towards the less artistically experienced audience.⁴⁷ Now she tends to “bypass traditional dance venues, having previously shown her work at art galleries, festivals and even in a live stream on Boiler Room”⁴⁸ with an aim to reach out to people instead of imposing what the artist's vision of experiencing art is. Blakey's creations are an example of both plain and notional transfer in question, blending video industry and popular culture with traditional theatre frames.

One of the products applicable to those theories is the choreography created for Florence and The Machine's ‘Delilah’, in which Blakey has the role of a choreographer. The video was directed by Vincent Haycock in 2015 as a part of video series ‘The Odyssey’⁴⁹. In

Sadler's Wells Theatre, (2015.) *National Youth Dance Company - The Rashomon Effect - Akram Khan*, [YouTube], Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOv_794Q5E8&t=52s , (Accessed: 14/03/19)

⁴⁵ Holly Blakey, (2019.) *About - CHOREOGRAPHER / DIRECTOR / POPULAR / ARTIST*, Available at: <https://www.hollyblakey.co.uk/about/> , (Accessed: 13/01/19)

⁴⁶ Hutchinson, K., (19.06.2017.) ‘Holly Blakey: the dance punk who turned Coldplay into disco chimps’, *The Guardian*, Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/jul/19/holly-blakey-dance-music-video-florence-coldplay> , (Accessed: 13/01/19)

⁴⁷ Hutchinson, K., (19.06.2017.) ‘Holly Blakey: the dance punk who turned Coldplay into disco chimps’, *The Guardian*, Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/jul/19/holly-blakey-dance-music-video-florence-coldplay> , (Accessed: 13/01/19)

⁴⁸ Hutchinson, K., (19.06.2017.) ‘Holly Blakey: the dance punk who turned Coldplay into disco chimps’, *The Guardian*, Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2017/jul/19/holly-blakey-dance-music-video-florence-coldplay> , (Accessed: 13/01/19)

⁴⁹ A series of videos directed by Vincent Haycock for several songs by Florence and The Machine. The series revolves around a concept in which each video represents one chapter of a story. *Delilah* is the 8th chapter of the whole. Full series: florencemachine, (2016.) *Florence + The Machine - The Odyssey (Full film, directed by Vincent Haycock)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HajiEqEtIRY> , (Accessed: 14/03/19)

2016 it was nominated by MTV's VMA for Best Choreography and it is counting a bit over 11 million views⁵⁰ on YouTube. The video could be placed into the concept/abstract typology if analysed through the earlier mentioned Andrew Goodwin's theory (see Illustration 4). Another creation titled 'Holly Blakey + Woodkid: Michelberger Music' differs from 'Delilah' by its original placing as a live stage performance. It is a 15-minute-long performance which took place at Michelberger Music Festival (later in this paper referred to as 'MMF') in September 2016 as a result of collaboration with the musician and visual artist Woodkid and was performed in front of 2,000 spectators.⁵¹ The work belongs to a contemporary dance performance with live music in which the source of the music – Woodkid himself and his musical set – are in the same time and space with the dancers, performing the sound in front of the audience.

In *Delilah*, the storyline is quite ravelled at first watching and revolves around abstract, rather symbolic and gestural physical and verbal actions. Many of the symbols appear in repetitive body images in different physical situation throughout the whole duration of the screened performance⁵². As in many of her live and screened stage works⁵³, Blakey's choreography in both *Delilah* and the work with Woodkid is strongly based on choreographing head, face and arm gestures. These, along with the tendency to bring facial expressions to its limits, make Blakey's choreographing style recognizable and alike in both works analysed. Even though the body in *Delilah* is not taken to extreme physical positions and directions, the extent of exhausting one specific physical action makes it extreme in the aspect of body usage. This is another distinctive feature of Blakey's choreographic expression – repetition of short sets of movements, which is also noticeable in the compared work with Woodkid where the dancers use one specific motive to build up an improvised, symbolic dance around it. The visual style that Blakey brings to her live stage performances often revolves around animalistic, explosive and often sexualized bodily gestures executed through the repetitions of contractions and release,

⁵⁰ Reviewed on March 14th, 2019.

⁵¹ Stone, B., (29.03.2017.) "Dance exists when we run out of things to say": choreographer Holly Blakey on her life and practice', *It's Nice That*, Available at: <https://www.itsnicethat.com/features/dance-exists-when-we-run-out-of-things-to-say-choreographer-holly-blakey-on-her-life-and-practise-290317>, (Accessed: 17/03/19)

⁵² See KEY NOTIONS.

⁵³ For better understanding see the following works. Random Acts, (2016.) *Mica Levi x Holly Blakey – Wrath*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Lp-M4LPkSA>, (Accessed: 14/03/19), NOWNESS, (2018.) *12 Days of Performance: Holly Blakey*, [YouTube], Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_uUDijfj7I, (Accessed: 14/03/19), Northern School of Contemporary Dance, (2017.) *Holly Blakey | Some Greater Class*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVtz-HSZwDU>, (Accessed: 14/03/19)

throws and swings of the upper body and minimalistic gestural actions in the whole body – narrative actions in which the body has the ability to create and recreate a clear state, emotion or relation to another body or object. Symbolism in small gestures and real-life actions choreographed into movement is noticeable in both of the analysed choreographies – such as praying, chained hands, dragging a person and cutting hair in *Delilah*, crying, etc. (see illustration 5 and 6 below). Those symbols are not only related to and repeated in the storyline of the performances but are also interrelated with the sound, text and message, which will be mentioned later in the following chapters. The physical tools mentioned above, which Blakey uses to create characters on the live stage, are visibly used equally on screened stage to create a certain relation to the sound and help the imagined concept of a video, bringing it to a living, moving action. In an article discussing the work with Woodkid she says: “*Ancient Greek plays or Shakespearean plays have this huge sense of tragedy and dramatic arc, and I started wondering if I could implement those notions into this flippant way of making choreography, so that it would have this huge weight on one side, and a throwaway aspect on another*”⁵⁴. Analysing both of the proposed works, it starts to seem that this notion might be the key transferable one in Blakey’s screened and live stage performances. Furthermore, it is also bringing a new relation to the thesis in which the choreographic signature and style become a part of transferrable tools and notions.

Another visually noticeable tool which I spotted in both works is an action I have named *crowding* for the purpose of this paper. In both of the performances Blakey choreographs images, rather than long dances with highly technical dance elements⁵⁵. One type of those images is the crowding. In *Delilah*, the crowding is executed through the creation of steady images in a room filled with people in different symbolical positions (see Illustration 5 below). In *MMF* she crowded a small part of the stage with the dancers and choreographed a short unison⁵⁶ dance (see Illustration 6 below). The crowding of a small space in a big space, when transferred from the screened stage to the live one, builds a visually multidimensional space and creates a kind of a room-in-a-room image. This tool

⁵⁴ Stone, B., (29.03.2017.) “‘Dance exists when we run out of things to say’: choreographer Holly Blakey on her life and practice”, *It’s Nice That*, Available at: <https://www.itsnicethat.com/features/dance-exists-when-we-run-out-of-things-to-say-choreographer-holly-blakey-on-her-life-and-practise-290317> , (Accessed: 17/03/19)

⁵⁵ Set of determined rules and physical skills in dance.

⁵⁶ Choreography executed by two or more dancers in which the dancers move in the same time with the same movement.

might be another one in a row which Blakey repeatedly uses while transferring from screened to live stage. Other parts of this analysis, such as rhythms, tempo and other physical relations belong more closely to the following chapters and therefore will be mentioned later in chapter 3.



Illustration 5 (Delilah)⁵⁷



Illustration 6 (MMF)⁵⁸

Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, a Belgium based dancer and choreographer, created and presented more than fifty choreographed live stage performances ('Genesis', 'Sutra', 'Puz/zle', 'Faun', 'In Memoriam', 'Foi', etc.). His work for the live stage counts multiple rewards in categories of best choreography, "*artistic vision and his quest for intercultural dialogue*"⁵⁹. Along with the work he does in the frames of his company Eastman (including the collaborations with artists such as Akram Khan, Damien Jalet, etc.), Sidi Larbi is known for his work with ballet companies and opera houses, both as a choreographer and a director (Royal Ballet of Flanders, Paris Opera Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, La Monnaie, etc.). Other than live stage performances, he had created

⁵⁷ Illustration created by me on March 15th, 2019. Photos are taken from the video. florencemachine, (2015.) *Florence + The Machine - Delilah (The Odyssey – Chapter 8)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZr5Tid3Qw4>, (Accessed: 03/03/19)

⁵⁸ Illustration created by me on March 15th, 2019. Photos are taken from the video. 37d03d, (2017.) *WOODKID + HOLLY BLAKEY - Michelberger Music*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Px5Fgaxxpg>, (Accessed: 03/03/19)

⁵⁹ Eastman, (2019.) *PEOPLE / SIDI LARBI CHERKAOU*, Available at: <http://www.eastman.be/en/35/Sidi-Larbi-Cherkaoui>, (Accessed: 25/03/19)

works for the screened stage – choreographed for a film by Joe Wright, ‘Anna Karenina’, directed and choreographed Woodkid’s ‘Fall’ music video and choreographed a music video by Sigur Rós titled ‘Valtari’.

Sigur Rós are an Icelandic band who had “*given a dozen film makers the same modest budget and asked them to create whatever comes into their head when they listen to songs from the band’s new album ‘Valtari’*. The idea was to bypass the usual artistic approval process and allow people utmost creative freedom.”⁶⁰ The homonymous song – ‘Valtari’ – is the fourteenth of sixteen films directed as visual support for the whole album. It was written and directed by Christian Larson, with Sidi Larbi as the choreographer of a duet dance which carries the narrative of this 10-minute screened performance. The video was published on YouTube on November 15th, 2012 and it counts a bit over 1,5million views.⁶¹ In 2013, the video was rewarded for ‘Best Choreography in a Video’ by the UK MVA⁶². ‘Valtari’ (the song), belongs to the broad family of Alternative/Indie music and its visual accompaniment could be typologically placed into the narrative one⁶³ due to a storyline which happens chronologically between the two dancers from the beginning till the end. Another creation, ‘Puz/zle’, was both directed and choreographed by Sidi Larbi and was premiered on July 10th, 2012 in Avignon, France (Festival d’Avignon). It is a live stage performance consisting of contemporary dance, acting and live music accompaniment by A Filetta⁶⁴, Kazunari Abe⁶⁵ and Fadia Tomb El-Hage⁶⁶. For the purpose of this analysis, I have used an excerpt from the performance which consists of a duet and a solo section.⁶⁷

Being familiarized with Larbi’s work on and off stage⁶⁸, I notice certain characteristics of a movement language transferred through most of his dance-related creations. Larbi is one of the choreographers who, other than directing and choreographing performances,

⁶⁰ Vimeo, (2012.) *Sigur Rós Valtari Mystery Films*, Available at: <https://vimeo.com/valtarifilmexperiment/about>, (Accessed: 27/03/19)

⁶¹ Sigur Rós, (2012.) *Sigur Rós - Valtari [Official Music Video]*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfJVAoTE2PI>, (Accessed: 27/03/19)

⁶² UK MVA, (2013.) *2013*, Available at: <https://www.ukmva.com/Pages/Detail/77-2013>, (Accessed: 21/01/19)

⁶³ Andrew Goodwin’s theory (see illustration 4).

⁶⁴ A vocal group from Corsica.

⁶⁵ A Japanese bamboo flutist.

⁶⁶ A Lebanese vocalist/soloist.

⁶⁷ See footnote 42.

⁶⁸ In 2017 I have participated in an Intensive course offered by Eastman Company which was based on the repertory of Larbi’s most recognized works, where I had the opportunity to participate in a creative process similar to the one Larbi has with his dancers when producing a new performance.

also participates actively as a dancer and performer. It means that he both has an inside and an outside eye on the creative process. Being a professional dancer and an active performer in many of his own performances, he brings a recognizable movement language to most of his creations. In his choreographies, Larbi often deals with extreme physicality in a sense of body usage. He works with trained and skilled dancers which are able to use the body in its totality. The bodies are put in complex positions, using contortion and flexibility as a tool for the physical virtuosity and stylistic recognition (see Illustration 7 and 8 below). Even though in the excerpt of the ‘Puz/zle’ performance there is more emphasis on arms and palms articulation, and more contemporary dance technique elements are involved, the movement language stays recognizable in both ‘Puz/zle’ excerpt and ‘Valtari’. In both of the works I notice these physical features, or in other words – movement language, as a transferrable tool which Larbi takes from creation to creation. Concerning the physical relations between the dancers, Larbi usually works with many possibilities. Considering the fact that the chosen works include duet and solo sections, the possibilities for variety in physical relations (body to body) narrow down. In both of the works the dancers use a wide spectrum of possibilities (even though the fewer dancers there is, the fewer relation possibilities there are⁶⁹); from solo moments and individual isolation to contact and partnering work. What connects both of the works in this manner is the same movement language mentioned earlier in the analysis. Even though the context of dancers’ relations, the steps and the dynamical patterns change, the movement language stays ideologically and stylistically similar. This is another proof of notional transfer, in which Larbi uses the same tool of creation (in this case his recognizable movement language) and transfers it from site to site as a ground for further choreographic creation. This statement is closely related to the earlier mentioned choreographic signature (see the above analysis of Holly Blakey’s work) which could also be considered as a major transferrable tool in a choreographic creation. In this

⁶⁹ In 2018 I have participated in a creation of a performance named *Intermezzo*, created by Angelus Iván and choreographed by Bakó Tamás at Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy. This performance is an example of statistical possibilities for inner relations between the dancers. There is six dancers participating in the performance. During the performance, they switch through statistical possibilities of relations between each other. They start with solos in which the dancer doing the solo is in one possible relation to himself/herself and the audience. Then, another dancer enters and they form a duet with more possibilities – related to each other, not related to each other or maybe in an accidental physical contact. As the piece progresses, more and more dancers are on stage in the same time and they form trios, quartets, quintets, etc. The more dancers there are inside of the structure, the wider is the variation of their encounters. Budapest Tánciskola, (2019.) *INTERMEZZO - a Budapest Tánciskola Estjén a Trafóban 2018 december*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FmR6nqY8NA&t=247s>, (Accessed: 21/04/19)

movement language, the nature of actions is rather abstract, quite technical in a sense of execution and very few times pantomimic or narrative. Therefore, the body embodies abstract situations which then, when placed in a context through states and emotional expressions, become narrative. The symbolical side of this kind of choreography is often expressed through the dancers' presence and emotional statement, rather than physical gesticulation or pantomimic gestures. The dance technique and dance execution are core parts of the choreography, and other layers of expression are placed on top of it. Those points are manifested in both of the analysed creations.

Thinking spatially, in a solo excerpt in 'Puz/zle' danced by Larbi himself (see Illustration 7), even though he is visibly moving through space, the underline seems to be on the movement, which means that the movement is the one which determines the spatial pattern of the dance. On the other hand, in 'Valtari', most of the dance is stationary, which might be due to the working conditions of the performance creation. Alternatively, to remind, 'Puz/zle' is a live stage performance in which the audience is present at the same time and space of its execution. Therefore, it is important to master the given space with the body and its design in space in order to visually manipulate the multi-dimensional live view, which on camera could be easily manipulated by external plain tools. This might be one of the reasons why in the choreography for 'Valtari' there is not much effort on using the surrounding space in its full size. Furthermore, the choreography uses the space as an influential reference for the movement structure but does not necessarily use the space to travel through and demonstrate its features to the audience. It is important to emphasize that both of the performances take place in visually complex environments, which adds up to the aesthetical grounds of the dance choreography itself. This is another specific characteristic of Larbi's work which can be noticed in many of his works (such as 'Sutra', 'Foi', 'Fall', 'Puz/zle', 'Genesis', etc.). Even when the environment is not given, he tends to create one (for example in 'Sutra'⁷⁰ where he puts wooden coffins on stage and uses them both as a spatial tool and a stage prop⁷¹). In 'Valtari', the director of the video proposes an already complex space, which Larbi then addresses with performers' presence in sections of the space rather than in the whole given space (see Illustration 8). What might be transferrable in both works is Larbi's ever-present choreographic relation to

⁷⁰ Rezonans Art, (2019.) *Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui – Sutra*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qf7JxyUK1AA>, (Accessed: 22/04/19)

⁷¹ Stage prop is an object used on stage by the performers.

space. Whether on a live stage or a screened stage, he uses the potential of each given environment to help his choreographic work.



Illustration 7 (Puz/zle)⁷²

Illustration 8 (Valtari)⁷³

Akram Khan is a multi-rewarded dancer, choreographer and the artistic director of a company carrying his name – ‘Akram Khan’. *“His reputation has been built on the success of productions such as ‘Until the Lions’, ‘Kaash’, ‘iTMOi’, ‘DESH’, ‘Vertical Road’, ‘Gnosis’ and ‘zero degrees’.”*⁷⁴ Similarly to Sidi Larbi, Khan is known for various collaborations which are based on cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary frames. In his stage work, Khan uses the hybrid language which communicates between his Kathak⁷⁵ training and contemporary dance. Along with his work inside the field of contemporary dance, he had choreographed and directed live stage works for various ballet companies (English National Ballet, National Ballet of China, etc.), collaborated with visual artists, writers and composers. One of his major works outside of the traditional theatre frames is, among all, a choreography created for the London 2012 Olympic Games Opening Ceremony directed by Danny Boyle, which could be considered as the work done both

⁷² Illustration created by me on April 22nd, 2019. Photos are taken from the video. Sviatoslav Sherstiuk, (2017.) *Puzzle - choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui 2012 | Puzzle - χορογραφία Σιδου Λαρβου Σερκαγιου 2012*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwlTGJ1tcRs&t=887s> , (Accessed: 22/04/2019)

⁷³ Illustration created by me on April 22nd, 2019. Photos are taken from the video. Sigur Rós, (2012.) *Sigur Rós - Valtari [Official Music Video]*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfJVAoTE2PI> , (Accessed: 22/04/19)

⁷⁴ Akram Khan Company, (2015.) *Akram Khan*, Available at: <http://www.akramkhancompany.net/company-profiles/akram-khan/> , (Accessed: 25/03/19)

⁷⁵ One of the forms of Indian classical dance.

for the live stage and the screened stage as it was broadcasted worldwide as a screened live event.⁷⁶ Even though there is a record of Akram dealing with less traditional theatre making frames (for instance the mentioned Olympic Games), the majority of his work is made for and set on a live stage.

One of the choreographic works set outside of traditional theatre frames is a screened performance choreographed by Akram Khan and Florence Welch (singer and author of the song) for Florence and The Machine's 'Big God' video. 'Big God' has an Alternative/Indie sound and is a part of the album 'High as Hope'. The video was directed by Autumn de Wilde and it could be characterized as a concept/abstract according to Andrew Goodwin's theory. It was released on YouTube on June 21st, 2018 and it counts over 11 million views.⁷⁷ What is specific in this screened performance, especially for the context of this paper, is that Florence (the singer) choreographed parts of the dance and is performing the dance herself along with eight other professional dancers⁷⁸. It is important to notice that 'Big God' is not her first work in which she participates actively in performing dances choreographed for her music videos. Her earlier mentioned album 'Odyssey' consists of several music videos⁷⁹ revolving partially or fully around contemporary dance choreographies, for which, along with Sia⁸⁰, she could be characterized as one of the artists actively delivering contemporary dance choreography to the screened stage. I have analysed one of that kind of works earlier when describing Holly Blakey's choreography for 'Delilah'. Going back to the analysis, 'Vertical Road', Akram's live stage work, was premiered on September 16th, 2010 at Curve Theatre,

⁷⁶ Akram Khan Company, (2015.) *Akram Khan*, Available at: <http://www.akramkhancompany.net/company-profiles/akram-khan/>, (Accessed: 25/03/19)

⁷⁷ florencemachine, (2018.) *Florence + The Machine - Big God*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIrRooQwuk>, (Accessed: 03/03/19)

⁷⁸ Even though it might seem like this work breaks the rules of this paper's methodology, I consider Akram's choreography majorly created for professional dancers and the video by all means does fulfil the requirements set by the methodology.

⁷⁹ florencemachine, (2015.) *Florence + The Machine - What Kind Of Man (The Odyssey – Chapter 1)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XgeKHTcufLY&list=PLWJlkAVFZMsHQtUNU16bureSluHKFrqna>, (Accessed: 21/04/19)

florencemachine, (2015.) *Florence + The Machine - Queen of Peace & Long and Lost (The Odyssey – Chapters 5 and 6)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSM0ILbVY0o&list=PLWJlkAVFZMsHQtUNU16bureSluHKFrqna&index=5>, (Accessed: 21/04/2019)

⁸⁰ Sia, (2014.) *Sia - Chandelier (Official Music Video)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vjPBBrBU-TM>, (Accessed: 21/04/19)

Sia, (2015.) *Sia - Elastic Heart feat. Shia LaBeouf & Maddie Ziegler (Official Video)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWZGAExj-es>, (Accessed: 21/04/19)

Leicester and was both directed and choreographed by Akram himself.⁸¹ It is a live stage creation and belongs to the field of contemporary dance performance. The work analysed in this paper is not the original version of 'Vertical Road', but an excerpt from the live stage performance restaged by the National Youth Dance Company, under the choreographic leadership of Akram Khan in 2014⁸².

Similarly to Larbi, Khan creates highly physical choreographies based on a specific and recognizable movement language. As mentioned earlier, his dance practice involves technical contemporary dance elements combined and merged with traditional dances and movement practices such as Kathak, Kung Fu, etc. This kind of practice builds a dance rich in details, complex articulations of lower and upper extremities, and dynamic actions. Seeing 'Vertical Road' and 'Big God', this statement can be implemented in both, which immediately brings my attention to the transferrable aspects of Khan's work. In both of the analysed performances, as well as in many others under his direction, he works with skilled and trained dancers who are physically capable of enduring through a dynamically complex choreography. What connects both choreographies are the physical qualities based on strong grounding⁸³, wide and low leg and hip positions, strong core stability and torso working in favour of upper extremities and lower extremities. This kind of focus in both choreographies creates a common base for the movement language, which in this case is the transferrable tool which Akram Khan seems to be using from site to site to build his choreographic creations. In both 'Vertical Road' and 'Big God' there is an emphasize on choreographing complex arm articulations which come as a consequence of strong core stability and movement energy flowing out towards the upper limbs. The lower limbs and the core work, in that case, serve for Akram's dancers to create strong connectivity with the floor. Even though it could already be recognized as a common transferable point of his work, there is a slight difference from creation to creation, as well as between these two performances. In 'Vertical Road', the live stage performance, Khan focuses on the totality of the body and therefore creates some, but visibly fewer details in hand articulations than in 'Big God'. The major difference which might be the

⁸¹ Akram Khan Company (2015.) *VERTICAL ROAD*, Available at: <http://www.akramkhancompany.net/productions/vertical-road-2010/>, (Accessed: 29/03/19)

⁸² National Youth Dance Company, (2019.) *The Rashomon Effect/Vertical Road by Akram Khan*, Available at: <https://nydc.org.uk/project/the-rashomon-effect-vertical-road-by-akram-khan/>, (Accessed: 21/04/2019)

⁸³ Grounding is a term used in dance to describe the dancers connection with the floor, mainly to describe the work with gravity and physical connections which work in favour of the dancers stability while standing or moving.

reason for that is the usage of space. As mentioned earlier, live stage performances tend to be more spatially various due to the multidimensional live experience of live stage space. Therefore, while seeing ‘Vertical Road’, the focus appears to be somewhat zoomed out to the totality of a dancer’s body in comparison to the ‘Big God’ in which, due to the manipulative potentials of the camera work, it is easier to work on physical details such as for example hand and fingers articulations. That is the case in ‘Big God’, in which at some points the spectator might notice a split second of Kathak-inspired palm gestures. Furthermore, ‘Big God’ is enriched with the merge of masculine and feminine pantomimic and symbolic movements which might add up to the ideological and artistic expression of the author herself (which is, to remind, a co-choreographer of the work). As realised earlier while analysing the work of Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Khan spatially works on similar principles. ‘Vertical Road’ is a compositionally complex performance. All of the dancers in the chosen excerpt are always present on stage and therefore constantly creating and recreating complex spatial organisations. That leads to various physical relations between the dancers, which is not the case with the composition of ‘Big God’ in which the dancers are similarly always present in the space but sometimes cropped out by the camera frames or angles. In ‘Vertical Road’ excerpt, the performance progresses from a triangle-shaped unison, through a quartet based on two partnering duets, all the way to group-versus-group relations. In ‘Big God’ the spatial and physical relations between the dancers are not as complex. Once again, due to the manipulative power of camera work, the dance choreography can be determined by the spatial organisation of the screened performance. In ‘Big God’, this virtue is expressed through a static, circular spatial organisation in which the dancers are dancing in a group close to each other throughout the major parts of the performance. On the contrary, the spatial organisation of ‘Vertical Road’ is determined by the dance choreography and vice versa, as the two must work together to create a stronger visual image for the live performance spectators. Furthermore, ‘Big God’ choreography is built to function mainly as a frontal⁸⁴ structure in which the main front is the one from which the camera is filming the performance. On the other hand, in ‘Vertical Road’, Khan is not neglecting the presence of the audience but offers more variety in solutions of spatial orientation by setting up

⁸⁴ To have a front in dance choreography/performance means that the dance relates to one side of the space as the point towards which it is being performed. In traditional theatre it is often related to the side from which the audience is spectating. In less traditional performances, this practice is being broken by setting the audience in a circular or square shape (to name a few of the possibilities).

points in space in which multi-directional actions happen. Even though it seems like ‘Big God’ and ‘Vertical Road’ are compositionally far in resemblance, I can conclude that Khan uses his knowledge and experience in spatial and other visual manipulations in both cases consciously, and I can, therefore, mark this quality of understanding spatial composition and its purpose as another transferrable tool used in both live and screened stage performances. Even though the process is a bit more hidden inside of Khan’s work than in Larbi’s or Blakey’s, throughout a deeper analysis of both works it becomes clear that Khan consciously uses his knowledge gained in both fields of creation. His major tool or a medium inside of that process is the body language itself. Other important methods worth mentioning are the rhythm and tempo, which will be discussed in the following chapter.



Illustration 9 (Big God)⁸⁵



Illustration 10 (Vertical Road)⁸⁶

In her book ‘Dance Film: Choreography of the Moving Image’, Erin Brannigan indicates one of the first traces of theatre choreographers being influenced by and driven to research the film and video production industry, which directly reflects on their theatre working mindset. *“As UK based choreographer Wendy Huston states, once you’ve done film work, it is hard to go back to the rough and ready theatre – you start manipulating*

⁸⁵ Illustration created by me on April 22nd, 2019. Photos are taken from the video. florencemachine, (2018.) *Florence + The Machine - Big God*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIrRooQwuk>, (Accessed: 22/04/19)

⁸⁶ Illustration created by me on April 22nd, 2019. Photos are taken from the video. Sadler’s Wells Theatre, (2015.) *National Youth Dance Company - The Rashomon Effect - Akram Khan*, [YouTube], Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOv_794Q5E8&t=52s, (Accessed: 22/04/19)

it until it is nearly like a film.”⁸⁷ Even though, as stated in earlier chapters, I do not tend to impose music video creation to live stage creation and vice versa, I do point out the existence of interrelation between the two fields in a creative sense. As there is a growing number of choreographers coming from the field of contemporary dance who start creating for the screened stage, it is important to follow their creative processes in order to fully understand this interrelation and keep track of contemporary dance choreography expanding as a field. My attempt to do so gave life to two terms introduced earlier in this chapter – plain transfer analysis and notional transfer analysis. What Wendy Huston refers to in her above-mentioned statement would be more closely related to the plain transfer analysis. That is because she talks about the manipulation of live space and what this space offers aesthetically for performance creation with or without knowledge in screened stage creation. Nonetheless, it supports my work to the extent to which it addresses the existence of interrelation between the two fields and the innovative power of the screened stage creation itself for other performative fields. In this chapter, I had engaged with the analysis of notional transfer, which rather deals with the usage of common notional tools (creative ideas, methods, tools and processes) in both live and screened stage choreographic creation, in order to give full importance to the choreographer and his/her choreographic investment inside of the music video production.

⁸⁷ Brannigan, E., (2010.) *Dance Film: Choreography of the Moving Image*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 3

3. MUSIC VIDEO CHOREOGRAPHY

Andrew Goodwin's music video theory – sound and visuals – text and visuals – message and visuals – choreographic service – illustrating / amplifying / contradicting – choreography and the musical structure – choreographing meanings – iconic imagery – camera angles and shots – screening choreography / analysis

In the earlier chapters, when establishing methods and advisories for the notional transfer analysis, I have introduced a fragment of Andrew Goodwin's music video theory related to the typology of music videos.⁸⁸ In that fragment, Goodwin argues the possibility of variation between three types of music videos – performance-based, narrative-based and concept/abstract-based. Previously, I have used those to enrich my analysis and set up the structural frames of each chosen music video, as those groups refer to the dramaturgical structure of the music videos. In his book 'Dancing in the Distraction Factory'⁸⁹, Andrew Goodwin argues that music videos are created for the purpose of accompanying and enriching musical products and are therefore helping the industry to build recognizable labels of such products and their authors. He introduces major concepts of his music video theory, in which the typology theory is one of the key concepts. Following the typology as one of the concepts, Goodwin introduces other key concepts as follows: the relation between sound and visuals, the relation between text and visuals, genre characteristics, notions of looking, demands of the record label and intertextual references.⁹⁰ Due to the methodological frames set earlier in this paper, not all of the concepts are used as a reference for further discussion but are worth mentioning as a structural part of any music video production. In the following chapters, I have chosen to refer only to the concepts which are applicable and related to the choreographer's work – the relation between sound and visuals, the relation between text and visuals and demands of the record label. Within each concept, following the theoretical explanations, a structural analysis of the three screened performances ('Big God', 'Delilah', 'Valtari') follows. The performances are analysed from the practical aspects of music video choreography creation, referring to the work with sound, text, message and camera.

⁸⁸ pp. 20 in this paper.

⁸⁹ See footnote 34.

⁹⁰ Henley, D., (2013.) *A2 Media: Goodwin's Music Video Theory*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0dkqkxLmQM>, (Accessed: 23/04/2019)

3.1. CHOREOGRAPHIC RELATIONS TO SOUND, TEXT AND MESSAGE

When discussing the relation between sound and visuals, and furthermore, text and visuals, Goodwin states that the visual accompaniment can relate to the text and message in three possible ways: illustrative, amplifying and contradicting⁹¹. Meaning, the visual content of the music video is created to support the given text and message by either visually demonstrating the text, visually emphasizing the text by exaggerating the symbolism related to it, or visually contradicting the text by inserting surreal or even seemingly unrelated images. Thinking from the aspects of contemporary dance choreography, the same relations can happen in the communication of sound and visuals, where the choreography accompanies beats, rhythm, tempo or dynamics of the musical structure. An important virtue of dance, in general, is its illustrative power, and dance is, therefore, a powerful tool in music video making due to its ability to depict both sound and text. Another possible concept, when thinking in the context of music video choreography could be added to this theory, which would be the neglecting of both sound and text. This method could be attached to the contradicting strategy. An often used method for live stage choreographic creation, especially within the less traditional frames, is the initial detachment from the music⁹². In this kind of work, the dancers fully disconnect from the sound and its context and rather use the music as an additional layer to enrich the already existing dance. This kind of choreographies, in my personal experience, are often created or practiced without any musical background and, once the choreography is fully prepared, the music is being added as a layer of choreographic choice⁹³.

Goodwin's music video theory relates to the media studies which engage in discussion and analysis of music videos from socio-political and psychological aspects. Therefore, its key concepts are mostly oriented towards the understanding of social phenomena influenced by music video production and vice versa. To understand the exact role of contemporary dance choreography in that process and to go deeper into the

⁹¹ Henley, D., (2013.) *A2 Media: Goodwin's Music Video Theory*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0dkqkxLmQM>, (Accessed: 23/04/2019)

⁹² One of the early examples of detachment from music and narrative in live stage contemporary dance performances is the work of Merce Cunningham.

⁹³ An experience I had in 2018 with a choreographer Tijen Lawton relates to this kind of practice. We have created and practiced a material based on structured improvisation for several hours and after several days decided which exact music will be placed on top of the material. In this case the music was serving the dance, rather than dance serving the music.

contextualisation of choreographic work for the screen, it is necessary to section those concepts and search for relations through which the choreography itself serves the music video production.

The earlier analysed ‘Valtari’ music video is an example of music video choreography serving the sound in an illustrative and amplifying way.⁹⁴ In this relation, the choreography is created for both supporting the sound and finding appropriate places of support for itself. In other words, the choreography is created with the acknowledgment of the sound structure through movement qualities and rhythmical choices. The choreographer, in this case, uses the musical structure to find the appropriate sounds for movement inspiration, and to insert moments of visual and audible interrelations. This process works consequentially. First, there is a musical structure (the song) and, later on, the choreography created on top of it to underline that structure. One of the clear examples for such process is the hip-hop or break-dance choreography in which the dancers tend to ‘hit the beat’ in order to visually emphasize the musical structure. When they manage to ‘hit the beat’, not only do they empower the musical structure, but they also seemingly empower the dance choreography itself. They bring the musical structure closer to the listener in order to enhance its understanding. This process is particularly interesting in ‘Valtari’ due to the complex musical structure of the song. Therefore, the choreography helps the sound to become more relatable to its listener and builds visual imagery depicting the intentions of the musical structure. By listening and comparing the musical structure of the album version⁹⁵ and the official video version⁹⁶, the service of the choreography becomes clear. Comparing the two versions, by firstly listening to the album version and later listening and watching the music video version, I concluded that the visual imagery depicted by the choreographer’s choices brings the musical structure closer to my understanding of sound. I start to hear and understand the rhythm and tempo of the song by observing the dancers’ actions and their visual statements which underline the musical structure. Moreover, it is important to emphasize that, even though the choreography in ‘Valtari’ mostly works in favour of the song, the music video version is

⁹⁴ As I mentioned earlier, the music video for ‘Valtari’ was created after the actual song creation. The video director of ‘Valtari’ was asked to create anything which comes to his mind after listening to the song, and that is when the collaboration with Larbi as a choreographer came to life.

⁹⁵ AtomicCharge, (2012.) *Sigur Rós – Valtari*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DnPtTzUb9s>, (Accessed: 24/04/19)

⁹⁶ Sigur Rós, (2012.) *Sigur Rós - Valtari [Official Music Video]*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfJVAoTE2PI>, (Accessed: 24/04/19)

delivered to the audience with some slight audio changes. There is an additional audio section which serves to support the dancers' actions in the introduction of the music video. That is an additional point in which the spectator is given time to fully engage with the product by noticing the interrelation of the visuals and the sound. The music video and the sound merge into one and create a visually recognizable musical product. That brings the analysis to its core point in which the music video choreography indeed does become a visual support for the music artist, helping him/her to build a recognizable visual image related to his musical work.

In conclusion, the dance in 'Valtari' illustrates the sound through specific movement qualities addressed by the choreographer and amplifies its structure by inserting emphasized movements and gestures at the same time with the chosen sound. The same method could be noticed in 'Big God' video, which mostly illustrates the musical structure by working parallel on both melodic and vocal illustration through movement. Another strategy used to support this concept is camera editing, working closely with the choreographic strategies, which will be mentioned in the following chapter.

Another ability of contemporary dance choreography is to act through narrative or even pantomimic gestures. Therefore it is a useful tool in accentuating and supporting the song text and its ideological message. The method of depicting text and message through music video choreography enables the listener to understand clearly the words in the text by creating a bridge between the visual and the audible format. It also simplifies the process of understanding the message behind the text by literally depicting situations or symbols related to the message through choreography. In the earlier analysed 'Delilah', for example, this method is not as transparent as it might be in some other works⁹⁷, but it is imprinted in dramaturgically abstract situations which appear through symbolical images performed for the screened stage. In 'Delilah', there is a constant repetition of symbolical acts appearing in more and less choreographed sections. The music video of 'Delilah', before the musical entrance, starts with a monologue about self-love, self-acceptance and self-forgiveness. Analysing the text of the monologue, the text of the actual song, and researching some of the author's interviews⁹⁸, it becomes clear that the

⁹⁷ See: M.I.A., (2016.) *M.I.A. - Borders (Official Music Video)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-Nw7HbaeWY>, (Accessed: 24/04/2019). Notice the symbols such as mimicking guns with hands, or the visual narration of the topic about which the author is singing about.

⁹⁸ Donahue, T. A., (21.10.2015.) 'Florence And The Machine: Delilah', *Rookie*, Available at: <https://www.rookiemag.com/2015/10/florence-and-the-machine-delilah/>, (Accessed: 23/04/19)

general goal of the video is to communicate the desired “*vibe of the video. Florence returning home, letting go, finding herself.*”⁹⁹ That is the first notable trace of imprinting the general message to the audience’s eye through the relation of visuals with the text and message. In one of the very first scenes, after the monologue starts to fade out, Florence (the lead singer and actor) appears in a short section cutting a man’s hair. This choreographed situation comes back as a short image several times throughout the video. It communicates a direct relation to the song’s text and message by referencing the biblical story of Delilah, which in this case is both mentioned in the text and the title of the song (“*Never knew I was a dancer, 'Till Delilah showed me how*”). Furthermore, there is a relation between the moment in which she sings “*'Cause I'm gonna be free and I'm gonna be fine*” and the visual moment in which she is cutting off a lock of a man’s hair. In another moment she is singing about the sun being up and herself going blind, during which the same man is holding his palm over her eyes and caressing her face. “*Now I'm dancing with Delilah and her vision is mine*” relates to a moment in which Florence starts dancing alone with a choreographed movement quality suggesting the direct relation to the text. As the music video progresses, there are more and more choreographed situations directly illustrating the text and the message. The choreographer, Holly Blakey, inserts movements which mimic chains on hands, letting go, dragging things around, etc. Her choreography sometimes acts parallel with the text, but sometimes happens detached from it, as a reminder of the previously heard text.

As it is subjective to read through a musical text and search for meaning without the author’s explanation, I find it less important for this paper to explain the further and deeper meaning of ‘Delilah’ and the exact ways in which it is depicted visually, but rather set the grounds for further analysis for each individual spectator. To conclude, the method of choreographing visual images in relation to the text and message is a different one in its creative sense but serves the same goal as the one in relation to the sound – supporting the artist’s visual representation of own artistic ideology and helping the spectator in the understanding of the musical creation. It might also serve the choreographer as an inspiration for creating a movement quality (as Khan is doing in ‘Big God’) or even exact movements such as Blakey is choreographing in ‘Delilah’.

⁹⁹ See footnote 98.



“‘Cause I’m gonna be free and I’m gonna be fine”

Illustration 11



“Now the sun is up and I’m going blind”¹⁰⁰

Illustration 12¹⁰¹

3.2. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BODY AND CAMERA

Another concept which closely refers to the notions of this thesis is the one referring to the demands of the record label. In some aspects, this notion goes out of the frames of this thesis’ interest due to its wide relation to the music video industry and production, rather than music video choreography itself. But, on the other hand, there is an aspect of this notion which is of interest for this paper – the relation between the body and camera. To explain, Goodwin believes that *“the demands of the record label will include the need for lots of close-ups of the artist, and the artists may develop motives which recur across their work.”*¹⁰² Meaning, the industry (concretely, the record label) will tend to create a visual image of the artist in order to build a recognizable image related to that artist specifically. In order to build that image, the production will work with tools such as camera manipulation (for example lots of close-ups on gestures and face of the artist), costume design (for example using clothes of a specific brand name), usage of specific props (for example using an Apple phone in the video), etc. One of the goals of these demands would be to create an easily identifiable image of an artist through which the audience can relate to the artist and, later on, be able to connect this image with the artist by memorizing its features (for example the iconic finger tattoos of Florence Welch,

¹⁰⁰ Both lyrics taken from the analysis of ‘Delilah’ text by listening to the song.

¹⁰¹ Illustration 11 and 12 taken from the video. florencemachine, (2015.) *Florence + The Machine – Delilah (The Odyssey – Chapter 8)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZr5Tid3Qw4> , (Accessed: 24/04/19)

¹⁰² Henley, D., (2013.) *A2 Media: Goodwin’s Music Video Theory*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0dkqkxLmQM> , (Accessed: 23/04/2019)

which are also screened at the beginning of the earlier analysed ‘Delilah’ music video). The extent to which this notion is related to the music video choreography itself is the actual ability of dance to visually cooperate with the demands in terms of style and gesticulation, or in other words, project a certain ideology through the usage of abstract or symbolical gestures and movements mentioned in the previous chapter. Furthermore, the dancers and the choreographer are able to use intertextual references through movement expression (for example in the video for ‘Delilah’ there is a direct relation to the biblical story of Delilah in a choreographed scene of cutting hair¹⁰³), which helps the audience to relate with the product and the artist.

When filming a music video, there are numerous tasks to solve concerning the actual physical and technical way in which the music video is being filmed. The act of filming becomes a choreography of technical tools and elements of the camera and its operator. Depending on the record label and the director’s choice of representation of a product, the camera will operate in order to support the creation of a desired visual and ideological effect. As in the filming industry, equally in the music video industry, there are technical tools and elements of the camera operation, which serve to acquire the desired aesthetical goal. Those tricks not only produce a wanted visual effect but cooperate with other production and creation elements (such as for example music video choreography) in order to achieve the common desired goal. To name a few, I list some of the most used camera angles and shots in popular music videos.¹⁰⁴

The *eye-level angle* shot is a neutral shot of the subject. It is the exact shot in which the spectator would see the filmed object if it would be placed in front of him/her in a live moment. It is commonly used in popular music videos due to its virtue of depicting the subject (the artist) as if he/she would be present in the live moment. In this kind of shots, the camera is positioned in a way that the artist can seemingly look directly into the lens without showing any unnecessary eye movement, and without having to actually look directly into the lens. *“It is considered to be emotionally neutral and is best used for*

¹⁰³ Donahue, T. A., (21.10.2015.) ‘Florence And The Machine: Delilah’, *Rookie*, Available at: <https://www.rookiemag.com/2015/10/florence-and-the-machine-delilah/>, (Accessed: 23/04/19)

¹⁰⁴ The following paragraph is a summary of the learned terminology and an own further interpretation from the following web-page. A2 Music Video Coursework Blog, (09.04.2014.) *Stereotypical Camera Angles & Shots Used In Pop Music Videos*, Available at: <https://musicvideocourseworkblog96.wordpress.com/2014/04/09/stereotypical-camera-angles-shots-used-in-pop-music-videos/>, (Accessed: 25/04/19)

straight, factual presentation.”¹⁰⁵ Thinking outside of the context of this paper shortly, this kind of shot is often used for filming live interviews and documentaries. The *low-angle* shot is a common one in popular music videos of the 90s and early 2000s in which the subject is presented through a dominant image. The camera is filming the subject from below of his/her eye level and therefore creates a visually bigger and more powerful image of the subject. This shot was dominantly used by popular music artists of the 90s and early 2000s, such as Missy Elliott, Beyonce, Rihanna, Jessy J., Ciara, etc., and was often used to represent a female artist who sang about female individuality and empowerment. The *high-angle* shot is taken from above the height of the subject. It serves to represent the subject as inferior, weak or intimidated. It is also used to show the subject in a group activity such as a party or another social event. Other than music videos, this shot is commonly used in teenage movies, screening parties or events happening in public areas such as schools, streets, etc. The *bird’s eye* shot is filmed from directly above the subject. The height of this kind of shot may vary, depending on the production budget and the desired goal of the shot. It may vary from a few centimetres above the ground, all the way up to shots taken from the aircraft or via drones. It is a shot useful to show the ground and specific imagery related to it, or an action of the subject such as lying down or rolling/moving on the ground. Even though it is not as often in music videos, the bird’s eye shot is useful in capturing spatial compositions. Therefore, it is a beneficiary shot for the contemporary dance choreography, which among all, includes horizontal movements on the ground level. The *close-up* shot is a powerful tool in music video filming due to its power of capturing a physical definition of the subject and directing the audience’s eye to the desired details. Originally, these shots are used to capture the details and emotions of the artist’s face, which adds up to the creation of an iconic visual image of the artist. “*This type of shots is most commonly used in pop music videos, as they are one of the best ways to promote the artist.*”¹⁰⁶ Close-ups are also commonly related to the amplification of sexual symbols and gestures by zooming in on a specific body part such as hips, chest, legs, lips, etc. Furthermore, thinking in the context of music video choreography, close-ups are beneficial in addressing important details in movement,

¹⁰⁵ McCuhil, F., (2019.) 'Definitions of Camera Angle Shots', *It Still Works*, Available at: <https://itstillworks.com/definitions-camera-angle-shots-1185.html> , (Accessed: 25/04/19)

¹⁰⁶ A2 Music Video Coursework Blog, (09.04.2014.) *Stereotypical Camera Angles & Shots Used In Pop Music Videos*, Available at: <https://musicvideocourseworkblog96.wordpress.com/2014/04/09/stereotypical-camera-angles-shots-used-in-pop-music-videos/> , (Accessed: 25/04/19)

important gestures, emphasizing body parts or addressing the expressive side of the dancer by screening the dancer's face. In this manner, the camera work supports the concept or the narrative of the music video by helping the choreography to amplify its visual suggestions. The *medium shots* are the ones which portray both the subject and the background or the context in which he/she is being placed. It is done by screening the subject from the waist and above and has a similar goal as the close-ups.¹⁰⁷ Lastly, the *wide shot* is the most commonly used shot in unison dance choreography screening. This kind of shot incorporates the whole setup in front of the camera and shows a full image of all screened subjects. Due to its inclusive power, it is used to portray dance routines done by many dancers and often includes the music artist himself/herself.

In the following analysis of the three works, 'Delilah', 'Valtari' and 'Big God', I refer to the work of the camera as *camera choreography*. This term appeared during the process of analysing the various aspects of music video choreography. Finalizing the chapters of creative processes and sound-text-message relations to the choreographic work, I came to learn that the camera itself, as well as other tools involved in the music video creation process, is a choreographed tool working in favour of all previously mentioned processes. For that reason, in the following text, the camera movements and tricks are referred to as camera choreography.

'Delilah' is a set of medium shots transferring from and into the close-up shots. In several occasions, the cinematographer¹⁰⁸ chose to incorporate several high-angle shots, a low angle shot and several eye-level shots. A specific virtue of the camera choreography in relation to the artist and the dancers is the constant camera movement. There is a number of steady shots, but the camera is, mostly, constantly on the move, taking the spectator from one site to another as if he/she would be walking through the site. It is repeatedly shifting the perception of the screened stage. This kind of method gives the spectator a wider context of the location in which the subjects are being placed, giving a dramaturgical and ideological background to the events happening on screen. Moreover, when using close-ups, the cinematographer rather zooms in and out of the shot, rather than cutting the actions and images. All of the mentioned strategies imply a certain style

¹⁰⁷ A2 Music Video Coursework Blog, (09.04.2014.) *Stereotypical Camera Angles & Shots Used In Pop Music Videos*, Available at: <https://musicvideocourseworkblog96.wordpress.com/2014/04/09/stereotypical-camera-angles-shots-used-in-pop-music-videos/>, (Accessed: 25/04/19)

¹⁰⁸ The cinematographer is the chief of all camera and light activities and crews in film-making or video-making.

of filming, which could be added up to the demands of the record label and the artist's recognizable image.

The music video starts with a symbolic close-up of Florence's iconic finger tattoo (see Illustration 13 below), which I have mentioned earlier in this chapter when elaborating on requirements of the record label. Florence is the main actor in 'Delilah', which makes her the main subject of the camera choreography. For that reason, the choreography of Florence's movement is constantly in synchronisation with the camera choreography. From the very first shot, the camera starts to travel through the location, shifting the image and the context of the screened stage constantly, showing the fragments of space as a set of symbolical images on screen (for example passing next to a flamingo on the wall or entering rooms filled with people for a few seconds and shifting further) Those images serve as additional conceptual layers to the already existing choreography of actions, which altogether serve the dramaturgy of the complete music video and eventually the song itself. While traveling through the location, the cinematographer mostly works with the medium shots, and sometimes inserts an eye-level shot (mostly when the subject is traveling directly towards the camera). A noticeable example of an eye-level shot happens at the end of the music video when Florence has a monologue in the car. This shot cooperates with the text by bringing her closer to the spectator as an actual tangible character, placing her out of the abstract content of the previously seen actions.

When screening dance, the camera choreography enters a complex movement set. An example can be seen in the scene in which Florence is repeatedly performing a symbolic movement of praying on the chair and the camera keeps moving up and down with her each movement.¹⁰⁹ At this moment, the camera and the subject enter a communication of two choreographies serving each other's intentions. This kind of communication can be addressed as a choreographed duet of two tools – the body and the camera.

As mentioned earlier in the elaboration of angles and shots, the low angles and high angles have strong symbolic implications. In 'Delilah', the high-angle shots are used when the camera encounters with a group image important in its wholeness. It can be seen in choreographed images such as the crowding (which I have introduced earlier in the notional transfer analysis) and the choreographed actions on the ground level. The usage

¹⁰⁹ See 01:54 – 02:07 in the video. florencemachine, (2015.) *Florence + The Machine – Delilah (The Odyssey – Chapter 8)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZr5Tid3Qw4> , (Accessed: 27/04/19)

of those shots in ‘Delilah’ implies a certain aesthetical style, rather than the actual symbolic meaning behind it. They serve the dance choreography on a visual level, giving it a spatial reference and grasping the most out of its visual potential. To conclude, the cooperation between the dance choreography and the camera choreography in ‘Delilah’ is initiated from both sides. The camera serves the dance in an aesthetical sense, amplifying its visual and symbolic potential by bringing the core dramaturgical details closer to the eye of the viewer. On the other hand, the symbolic and abstract quality of the dance choreographed by Holly Blakey, allows the camera to transfer freely between the close-up details and the wider images of the site without endangering the dramaturgical concept.



Illustration 13¹¹⁰

‘Valtari’ is stylistically differing from the filming methods described in ‘Delilah’. An important aspect of that is that dance is all that happens in ‘Valtari’. There is no additional actors but the two dancers performing the whole screened performance. Therefore, dance and the body are the focus of the camera choreography throughout the whole music video. Most of the shots used in the filming process are wide shots, medium shots and close-ups. Moreover, on the contrary to ‘Delilah’, the cinematographer of ‘Valtari’ uses a lot of steady and cut shots, which means that the camera is mostly fixed on the spot and the image transitions are inserted through concrete cuts of the scenes. An aesthetical decision in ‘Valtari’ is that the cuts mostly exchange quick. That allows the

¹¹⁰ Illustration taken from the video. florencemachine, (2015.) *Florence + The Machine – Delilah (The Odyssey – Chapter 8)*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZr5Tid3Qw4> , (Accessed: 27/04/19)

filming process to show one scene from several different angles in the space and create a certain atmosphere which adds up to the dramaturgical line of the performance. It also creates a necessity for the spectator to closely pay attention to many sectioned details and actions happening on screen.

At the beginning of the music video, there is an introduction to the location in which the performance is happening. This is done by inserting cuts of visual features surrounding the actual site of the performance, such as nature (shown in a close-up), the landscape (shown in a wide shot) and the architectural design (shown in a low-angle close-up) of the surroundings. That is the moment in which the first dancer appears and brings the spectator inside of the actual site of the performance. That is done through a set of medium and eye-level shots, allowing the spectator to place the dancer inside of the context of her background. The very first encounter with the dance choreography is an abstract moment in which the body enters a static close-up shot by itself (see Illustration 14 below). Once the dance starts, the camera begins to engage with the choreography by inserting cuts of medium shots and wide shots. The reason for that is the virtuous nature of Larbi's dance choreography. In this kind of choreography, and in the context of the dramaturgical line of the music video, it is important for the spectator to see the body in its full size. As that body is the main carrier of the narrative, it serves as the main subject in delivering the dramaturgy and the meaning of the music video through the choreography. Therefore, it is important for the camera choreography to engage in that process by allowing the body to own a wider screened space for its movement (see Illustration 15 below). Furthermore, the wide angles help the choreography by capturing its surroundings and creating visual support (a stage) for the choreography happening in it. This strategy helps to build a visual style and to give a context to the actual performance.

On the other hand, on several occasions, there is a clear usage of close-ups. These shots are used to depict an emotional state of the dancers or the choreographically important details (such as the dancer's feet and contorted body parts (see Illustration 14)). Moreover, once the two dancers engage in a final partnering scene, the camera engages in a complex choreography of alternating close-ups and wide shots. That is how the camera engages with the choreography of the two dancers, similarly to the moment earlier described in 'Delilah' as a duet of the camera and the body. The camera serves to depict the physical relationship between the two bodies. It creates a specific atmosphere which helps the spectator to understand the narrative intention of the actual dance. In conclusion,

the camera choreography in ‘Valtari’ serves in several contexts – cooperates with space, cooperates with the dance choreography and visually simplifies the narrative by choosing how and where to capture a specific movement in time and space.



Illustration 14



Illustration 15¹¹¹

‘Big God’ is an example of earlier mentioned usage of wide shots in unison dance choreography. As ‘Big God’ is choreographed as a mostly unison dance of all-female performers, the camera choreography adds up to the ideological aspects of the dramaturgy and dance choreography through wide shots. There is a specific virtue happening in ‘Big God’ which was not mentioned earlier in any of the analysed works – a surreal visual manipulation – in which the dancers at one point jump off the ground and stay hanging from the waist below above the singer (see Illustration 16). Meaning, there is a moment in ‘Big God’ which could hardly be manipulated in live stage performances. In this screened stage performance it happens by visually cutting the frame of the real-life experience, and therefore manipulating the perception on the screen. In this case, by manipulating the physical possibilities of the performers, the camera helps the narrative of the music video to an extent which is physically out of reach to the possibilities of live stage choreography. Other than that, ‘Big God’ is a set of mostly wide and medium shots with several close-ups on the performers’ facial expressions and details in the dance choreography. In this performance, the camera mostly serves in favour of the existing dance choreography, capturing the visual virtues of unison choreography, details important for the musical structure and emotional state of the performers. Therefore, the camera choreography is mostly created according to the visual virtues of each movement

¹¹¹ Illustrations 14 and 15 taken from the video. Sigur Rós, (2012.) *Sigur Rós - Valtari [Official Music Video]*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfJVAoTE2PI> , (Accessed: 27/04/19)

in relation to the narrative of the text, and the visual potential of each compositional change in space.



Illustration 16¹¹²

Thinking about the music video choreography from the aspects of the camera choreography, it becomes clear that there is a difficulty in observing and analysing each choreographic tool without taking into consideration the other existing ones. It is noticeable that, when analysing the camera choreography, other creative tools came in question, such as the movement language, the choreographic decisions, the stylistic and ideological decisions, etc. Meaning, all of the previously analysed tools, such as the choreographic methods or the choreography in relation to sound, text and message, work in favour of each other and coincide in their making and execution. Therefore, the analysis cannot be done by fully isolating the questions relating to the camera from the questions related to the dance choreography (when referring to the full process of music video choreography). What could be analysed in the future, as a phenomenon per se, is the ability of the camera to interfere with the visual perception of the spectator, which is a unique and revolutionary ability inside of the field of contemporary dance creation. This virtue could enrich the choreographic process and open up a wider spectrum of creative ideas and possibilities for the contemporary dance creators.

¹¹² Illustration taken from the video. florencemachine, (2018.) *Florence + The Machine - Big God*, [YouTube], Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIrRooQwuk>, (Accessed: 27/04/19)

4. SUMMARY

In this thesis, I have started my research on music video choreography due to the personal artistic influence by the aesthetics and the innovative potential of popular music videos. The core methodology I have chosen to work with; the practical analysis of popular YouTube music videos and the music videos chosen by the VMA's; gave freedom to engage in research of both theoretical and practical aspects of music video choreography creation. Moreover, the lack of actual written researched material concerning the music video choreography, allowed me to engage with the creation of own terminology and theoretical definitions. I have started off with a wish to engage closely with the music video production in order to learn about the process of music video creation, but in the process realised the complexity, the enriching power and the dangers of this industry's development for the contemporary dance choreography. The core part of my analytical work is the analysis of choreographers' creative methods and influences taken from the traditional theatre-making to the screened stage. There I create an imaginary line between the fields of live stage creation and screened stage creation, and prove the existence of interrelation between the two. This interrelation opens the space for further investigation of choreographic processes inside of the music video production (such as the work with the sound, text, message and the camera), which again show relations with the live stage creation, and the potential for the artistic development of contemporary dance choreography as a field (in case the field includes music video choreography into its canon).

Following the phenomena of growing interrelation between the two fields; the music video industry and the contemporary dance choreography; the music video industry began to include choreographers' creative processes into its canon of creative tools and it is opening a whole new space full of revolutionary potentials for contemporary dance choreography development. Today, the music video industry is overflowed with contemporary dance choreography elements. Whether popular or more under-the-radar music videos, more and more of such products implement dance as their focal visual and narrative element. In favour of the music video industry, the contemporary dance choreography engages in constant cooperation with the industry in the creation of ideological imagery and visual style of music artists. While researching the very first materials of this thesis, I came to learn that contemporary dance is becoming one of the

tools of such manipulation. For that reason, I find it crucial for the contemporary dance field to include those choreographic works into its canon. Otherwise, if not doing so, I find it dangerous to allow the possibility for the music video industry to exploit the artistic investment of choreographers by neglecting the serious artistic importance and potential of each choreographic work, and therefore using contemporary dance choreography for market manipulation and own financial good. Moreover, I believe that, when teaching about contemporary dance performance and choreography today, we cannot anymore limit our theoretical and practical frames to the canon of works created for the live stage spaces. As we have once crossed the border of performance arts by stepping out from traditional theatre spaces and included the site-specific choreographic works into the contemporary dance choreography canon, I believe we should now open the same space for other forms of dance choreography to enter the field. A big stepping stone for that space was the appearance of screen-dance which, as a concept, entered the canon of contemporary dance choreography through, among all, a sudden appearance of major festivals devoted solely to screen-dance. Likewise, I believe music video choreography has the potential to enter and serve this canon by bringing the hybridized content with various artistic values and innovative creative methods. I find it important for theatre-makers to realize the potential for the growth of contemporary dance choreography market and understand the potential of its development.

Additionally, there is a growing number of well-known and revolutionary choreographers (some mentioned in this paper) working in both fields and communicating through both media with the same language, which this paper has proven when analysing the transfer of creative tools and methods (the notional transfer). Furthermore, there is an amount of choreographers working solely in the field of music video choreography and screen-dance choreography who, due to this thesis' limitations, could not be used as a reference point in this paper. Some of those choreographers, such as for example Ryan Heffington¹¹³, create choreographic work of high artistic value which is widely acknowledged by the music video industry. Therefore, I argue the necessity of including music video choreography in the canon of contemporary dance choreography in order to avoid the

¹¹³ Choreographer and director working mostly for the screened stage, known for his work with artists such as Florence and The Machine, Massive Attack, Sia, etc. and his dance studio located in LA. Ryan Heffington, (2019.) *work*, Available at: <https://www.ryanheffington.com/>, (Accessed: 29/04/19)

danger of excluding artistically important and revolutionary choreographic works from that same canon.

Professional dance is both performed and created by its educated practitioners who sometimes, in search of artistic support and motivation, turn towards alternative solutions of theatre-making. Therefore, the limits of the field are expanding and branching but not separating. Without accepting the music video choreography into the canon of contemporary dance choreography, I believe we are constructing a strong ground for the separation instead of exponential growth and expansion.

Developing this thesis chapter by chapter and approaching music video analysis from several aspects of choreographic creation, I came to learning that the music video choreography itself, as a term, cannot be referred to as mere dance choreography. It is a choreography of all involved tools working in synchronization with each other. Therefore, the music video choreography becomes a choreography only when all of the tools are set and choreographed in relation to each other – the dance, the dramaturgy, the stage, the musical structure, the artist, the camera and many more not analysed in this paper. All those are in service of the activities happening as performance activities on the screen (such as dance) and none can exist in its full extent without the others. Thinking linearly, as this paper started off through the contextualization of theatre-making and live stage choreography, I realised that this complexity is one of the many parallels drawn between the screened stage creation and traditional theatre-making. A live stage choreography, in theory, can be analysed as an isolated activity, but when placed in front of the audience, it communicates only when it is contextualized and further developed through the cooperation with other theatre tools, such as light, sound, dramaturgical and spatial composition, etc. For all the reasons mentioned, I came to realise that, in order to build a thorough and valid analysis of the real extent of music video choreography (or any other stage choreography), one should firstly isolate each involved process and later on analyse all of the interrelations between the merged processes. By working on this paper and trying to grasp the full extent of choreographic influences in a music video production, I understood the actual complexity of the stage production (whether live or screened) and how important is the communication between all involved processes (such as the text, the camera, the lights, the audience, etc.). Therefore, I realised that the next step in this work, if it would come to a future investment in it, would be to expand the search for relations by analysing the role of the dancers in the creation process (for

example how do their physical features affect their position on screen, how are the castings happening, etc.), analysing the choreographers innovative power and the ability of making professional decisions, and the post-production stage in which the created choreographic and visual work is being manipulated and polished for the releasing. That would require the methodology to change into a documentary type in which the major role in gathering materials would be the interviews with the experienced members in the field of music video production.

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