

The creative practice present in me is a culmination of my dance training merged entirely with interdisciplinarity explorations. The job title of a *dancer*, no longer describes my work, as I no longer only serve choreography, skilled physicality and musicality. The focus of this research follows the reflection on my own disciplinary practice training, which developed into my interdisciplinary practice between dance and acting, which 'in both academic and artistic spheres have overshadowed their interdependence' (Elswit, 2018, p. 2), whilst reflecting on disciplinary ideologies present in both education and society.

My training focused primarily on a disciplinary nature, in particular, whilst on the BA (Hons) course in Dance at Bath Spa University, England. My explorative work here, however, did not always meet the traditional ideology of the discipline, as I often inadvertently challenged such traditional structures and methods (Jackson, 2004, p. 43), no longer perceiving dance as the wordless choreographed movement to music. As I reflect on my time there, I not only reflect on training but also on the social and emotional challenges that I encountered in my personal life as an international student with communication struggles due to a below-basic level of English. Through this reflection, I am able to recognise that during my training, such linguistic difficulties ultimately provoked a subconscious relation to language and, in consequence, was explored through my creative practice. The idea that new thoughts needed a new language, opened doors to interdisciplinary realms, in particular to the acting discipline. For example, in contrast to the neutral mask work of Jacques Lecoq, I explored how the action could move from the legs, torso and arms - as the tradition of the discipline of dance restrains - to the face. By experimenting with the lifting of the expression upwards from the body into the face, and as a result of language exploration, voice work emerged.

Being recently aware of the significant contribution that my personal experience had to my professional practice, I decided to investigate my past a little deeper, in an attempt to understand why acting was initially my go-to discipline, which today gives shape to my interdisciplinary practice. My thoughts suggest a link with my previous

education/training - a three-year intensive *Interpretation of Contemporary Dance* course in Portugal, where I was born and raised. I found an interesting connection between my practice and the title of this course, which led me to reflect on the word '*interpretation*'. With the Portuguese word 'performer' which translates to 'interpreter', I notice interestingly that this word holds the disciplines of dance and acting, as both dancers and actors are referred to as 'interpreters', a word that closes the divide between both disciplines. I understand now that this breakthrough within my disciplinary training was heavily influenced by my European cultural and artistic background, as Elswit supports: 'Theatre & Dance thus calls attention to a past and a present in [...] Europe in which the ampersand between theatre and dance reveals their interdependence and becomes visible as the rule, rather than the exception' (Elswit, 2018, p. 3).

Later, when in England, I started to notice that the separation of both disciplines was not only coming from institutions of training but rather was embedded into the professional arts culture of the country itself. In *Theatre & Dance*, Elswit (2018, p. 29), using British companies' examples, supports this notion: 'I know someone who was always seen as 'the actor' when he was in the rehearsal room with DV8 Physical Theatre because the company had more dance training on the whole, but as 'the dancer' when he was in the rehearsal room for Kneehigh Theatre whose performers tend to primarily come from theatre first'.

As I reflect on these examples, I compare them to Ancient Greece, where theatre, poetry, music and dance were composed by the same person for an ensemble that 'moved, spoke, and sang, with their stylised gestures responding to and commenting on the dramatic action' (Elswit, 2018, p. 25). I question why education and professional practices no longer share the same cultural interdisciplinary ideology, and my research suggests that nowadays, educational institutions are rigid in their boundaries of disciplines in an attempt to materialise careers, solidify expertise, and reach career authority through specialisation. Jackson supports this by referring to the many interdisciplinary artwork experiments that took place in the 1960s, which socially resulted in 'a struggle over authority and establishment of expertise, paired with a class conflict about the professional recognition of the intellectual and of the artist' (Spring 2002, cited in Jackson, 2004, p. 134).

In conclusion, I understand now, through this research that my interdisciplinary journey in a disciplinary training course was about digging into my cultural and artistic past to embrace the fact that 'socially and conceptually, we are disciplined by our disciplines' (Messer-Davidow, Shumway and Sylvan 1993, p. vii).

I believe this research has also allowed me to reflect on how to develop my interdisciplinary practice in the future, within the idea that dance and theatre go beyond the '&' symbol - 'a shape formed with both tangle and space [which] holds them just far enough apart [to explore] the entanglements that have been pervasive and persistent between the two' (Elswit, 2018, p. 2). However, this reflection has also allowed me to realise that my movement practice has been inviting theatre, not only because of my cultural artistic background but also because of the elements of real life that the acting discipline brings to the abstract discipline of dance, which are connected and 'in tune with an active vitalism: speaking, moving, gesturing [and] writing' (Boyd and Dutton 2009, cited in Bryon (Ed), 2017, xiv).

Understanding the connection to spoken language called on the connection to performance languages, allowing me to question my practice, in search of new vocabulary in different artistic languages, and speak beyond the discipline of dance. Such realisation allows me to identify a lack of exploration of other artistic languages and disciplines, which I believe would fully allow my practice to abandon the purity of my artistic disciplines, and to include other 'forces, matters, sensations and qualities to enter into unpredictable relations' (Bryon (Ed), 2017, p. xv), and with it, support the idea that 'art should be self-critical but not critical of boundaries between its "self" and the "other" arts' (Jackson, 2004, p. 142).

Bibliography:

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